

Youth Leaders Brain

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LOBE ONE: PHILOSOPHY

What Should I Do?	1-1
Building Blocks of a Biblical Youth Philosophy	1-3
The What and Why of Tomorrow	1-5
Doctrinal Statement	1-7
Absolutes in Youth Work	1-9
Success Through Purpose	1-13
A Sample Youth Ministry Purpose Statement	1-14
Philosophy of Activities: Five A's in a Youth Activity	1-15
Giving In or Growing Up: Doing Biblical Youth Work in an Unbiblical World	1-17
Myths of Youth Work	1-21
Philosophy of a Calendar	1-23
Three Key Principles for Discipling Youth Today	1-25
The Concentric Circle Principle	1-27
What Is It About the Camp Program That Is Biblically Effective?	1-29
Examples	

LOBE TWO: PARENTS

Dealing With the Parents of Youth	2-1
Parents: The Other Side of the Ministry	2-3
Parents: The Youth Leader's Real Customers	2-5
Involving Parents	2-9
Have You Met the Couple	2-11

LOBE THREE: YOUTH

Answering the Questions of Youth	3-1
Characteristics of Youth: Physical, Mental, Social, Emotional, and Spiritual	3-2
The Spiritual Ladder: Steps to Spiritual Growth	3-5
Discipling Youth for Ministry	3-7
Characteristics of Youth: Personalities	3-11
Working with Kids	3-13
Mentoring Young Men in Your Youth Group	3-15
Instilling in Teenage Girls a Passion for God	3-17
Mentoring Our Young Ladies	3-21
The Basics of Children's Ministry	3-23
A Youth Worker and His Questions	3-25
Developing Leadership in Your Group	3-31

LOBE FOUR: STAFF

Enlisting and Training the Volunteer Help You Need	4-1
Qualifications of a Good Counselor	4-5
Building Bridges to Teens	4-7
The Future of Youth Work in the West in the 21st Century	4-9
A Shield About You: Minimizing Ministry Risks	4-13
Team or Rival: The Youth Leader's Relationship with the Pastor	4-17
On Board for the Long Haul	4-21

LOBE FIVE: NITTY GRITTY

One-liners from Past Experience	5-1
77 Habits of an Unsuccessful Youth Leader	5-3
Policies and Procedures	5-7
TNT: Tips and Tricks for Youth Ministry	5-13
Policies and Procedures: Travel and Services	5-19
Ten Things You Should Have Known Before You Became a Youth Leader	5-23
Milestones in Youth Ministry	5-24
Idea Share: Discipleship and Curriculum	5-25

LOBE SIX: HOW TO

Build a Youth Group	6-1
Demoralize and De-motivate People	6-5
Plan Effective Activities	6-7
Creative Activities	6-10
Teach Convictions to Your Teens	6-11
Developing Convictions	6-13
Lead (Not Follow) a Good Discussion	6-15
Plan a Missions Trip	6-17
Work with a Theme	6-19
Run a Successful Vacation Bible School.....	6-23
Develop a Simple Filing System for Youth Ministry	6-25
Set Up Committees in Your Youth Group	6-27
Run an Optional Wednesday Night Program	6-33
Run a Scripture Scholarship Program.....	6-35
Set Up a Memory Program	6-37
Run an Effective Junior Church Program.....	6-43
Do a Community Survey	6-45
Use Puppets	6-47
Example	

LOBE SEVEN: MESSAGES

Developing Messages for Teenagers	7-1
Apprenticeship in our Homes	7-9
The Message of Faithful Witness	7-11
Aspirations of Greatness.....	7-13
60 Theses on Issues of Youth Work and Contemporary Music	7-15
Teaching Biblical Modesty.....	7-21

LOBE EIGHT: RESOURCES

Annotated Bibliography	8-1
Put On-Put Off	8-5
Sample Emergency Contact Form.....	8-7
Permission Slip/Medical Release Form.....	8-8
Youth Worker Bibliography	8-9
Book Review: <i>The Bridger Generation</i>	8-19
Book Review: <i>Purpose Driven Youth Ministry</i>	8-21
Spanish Materials Sources.....	8-25

TRI-CITY BAPTIST CHURCH

YOUTH MINISTRY—TEMPE, ARIZONA

A. Our Purpose

1. What it is not—We are not a babysitting service (though we do watch the teenagers), nor are we an entertainment program (though we do have a lot of fun). While many youth groups have gone this direction in their ministry, we believe that we have a more Biblical and higher calling with teenagers.
2. What it is—The purpose of our youth group is found within Christ's purpose for the Church—discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20). Our motto, “Discipling Youth For Ministry,” describes the people (youth), the process (discipleship), and the product (ministry) of New Testament service.

B. Our Priorities

1. God and the Bible are more important than programs and entertainment.
2. The youth ministry exists to assist the parents in their role as the primary discipler of their teens.
3. Teenagers should be integrated with, not isolated from, the authority structures in their life.
4. Spiritual quality is always more important than numerical quantity.
5. Godly maturity leads to productive ministry.

C. Our Principles

1. We strive to be Biblical, centered on God, the Bible, parents, and the church.
2. We strive to be flexible, complementing the home, church, and school.

D. Our Programs

1. Weekly
 - a. Youth Bible Fellowship, Sunday Morning: Emphasizes receiving the truth.
 - b. Teen Small Group, Wednesday Night: Emphasizes giving the truth.
2. Monthly
 - a. Outreach Activities, Saturdays: Emphasizes evangelizing the unbeliever.
 - b. Fellowship Activities, Sundays: Emphasizes edifying the believer.
3. Yearly
 - a. Mission Trip, spring
 - b. Teen Camp, summer
 - c. Recreation Trip, fall
 - d. Teen Retreat, winter

LEADERSHIP STANDARDS OF CONDUCT TRI-CITY BAPTIST CHURCH YOUTH GROUP

All adult and teen leaders in the youth program at Tri-City Baptist Church should adhere to the following leadership standards:

1. Every leader must be a member in good standing at Tri-City Baptist Church.
2. Every leader must readily subscribe to the doctrinal statement of the church and teach nothing that is in conflict with it.
3. Every leader must faithfully attend both the regular and special services of the church, its youth activities, and a small group.
4. Every leader must faithfully attend and participate in the leadership meetings of the youth group.
5. Every leader must faithfully maintain a consistent devotional life consisting of Bible study and prayer.
6. Every leader must faithfully support the church, its pastors, and its ministries, both publicly and privately.
7. Every leader must faithfully prepare and carry out service opportunities with commitment and compassion.
8. Every leader must dress modestly at all times and avoid worldly clothing.
9. Every leader must use godly discretion in the use of recreation and entertainment and avoid all activities that are inconsistent with a godly testimony.
10. Every leader must be above reproach in conduct—avoiding tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs—and pursue a growing conformity to the image to Christ.

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

TRI-CITY BAPTIST CHURCH YOUTH GROUP

January 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

February 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29				

March 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

January

- 15 Youth Leadership Meeting
- 16 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)
- 22 Youth/Family Picnic
- 23 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)
- 29 All-Church Visitation (a.m.)
Prayer Meeting (p.m.)
- 30-31 Steve Petitt Meetings

February

- 1-4 Steve Petitt Meetings
- 4 Activity—After Steve Petitt Meeting
- 5 All-Church Visitation
- 12 Men's Rally
- 19 Ski Trip—Sunrise
Visitation—Pathway Baptist Church
- 20 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)
Activity—Sunday Night Fellowship
- 26 Teen Work Day
- 27 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)

March

- 11 AWANA Olympics—Junior Varsity
- 18-25 Mission Trip—Utah
- 19 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)
- 26 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)
- 30 Teen Outreach Program—Visitation
- 31 Junior/Senior Career Day

April

- 1 Activity—Battleship Competition
- 16 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)
- 23 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)
Activity—Sunday Night Fellowship
- 27-29 Youth Leaders Retreat—Ironwood
- 30 Reaching the Heart of Your Teen (Parents)

Coming Up: Teen Summer Camp—Ironwood, July 30-August 5

PROPOSAL FOR A YOUTH PROGRAM AT TRI-CITY BAPTIST CHURCH

In order for a youth program to be successful, it should be Biblical in its foundation and adaptable in its presentation.

Biblical—A youth program should be centered on God, the Bible, the parents, and the local church. It should see itself as a contemporary extension of the program of New Testament discipleship. The goals of such a program should involve the honoring of God, obedience to Scripture, the development and continuation of a Christian heritage from parents to child as evidenced in maturity and growth, and the spread of the truth in service of speech and life.

Adaptable—A Biblical youth program must be flexible in order to fit into the structured life of the home, the local church, and the school. To impose a program of good content against the practice of both home and church can cause confusion, division, and mixed spiritual results.

Having evaluated the structure of programs at Tri-City Baptist Church, the following is a proposal for a youth program that will provide ministry to God, the home, the church, the teens, and to the world. This ministry will seek to work at three different levels to provide a balanced and multi-faceted approach to youth ministry that is both conservative and contemporary. This program endeavors to reach the three basic categories of teens: the Committed, the Christian, and the Crowd. Each element of the youth program has as its primary focus one of these categories.

Program Element	Day and Time	Primary Focus
-----------------	--------------	---------------

Sunday School	Sundays, 9:15-10:15 a.m.	Christian
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Description: Sunday School will be designed with a focus primarily on the Christian. With different levels of commitment involved, the morning hour (9:15-10:15) will provide a basic gathering of Christians for music, preaching, and teaching. Meeting together as one group will help to develop a youth identity and give a singular focus of leadership and direction. Separating into different classes will help to involve the youth workers in mentoring and teaching as well as to provide the one-on-one ministry that is needed to direct and evaluate each teen.

Parents' Meeting	Third Sunday of each month 5:00-5:45 p.m.	Parents
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Description: On the third Sunday evening of each month prior to the service, the parents of the teens will meet with the youth pastor and his workers from 5:00-5:45. This meeting will seek to accomplish several objectives: to acquaint the parents with the youth pastor and his workers, and to give opportunity for them to receive teaching and instruction about philosophy of youth ministry and other valuable subjects (such as communication, leadership, and teaching). This meeting will also give the parents an opportunity to find out what the youth program is doing and to share their thoughts on the church's ministry to their children.

Program Element	Day and Time	Primary Focus
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Teen Small Group	Wednesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m.	Committed
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Description: While Sunday is focused on the “Christian,” Wednesday will be focused on the “Committed” in the form of an evening teen small group that will meet at the youth pastor's house. This will be a time (7:00-8:30) where the youth pastor can work at developing a "core group" of teens that will provide leadership for their peers.

Outreach Activity	Saturdays as scheduled 5:00-8:00 p.m.	Crowd
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Description: This part of the youth program will focus on the “Crowd.” Witness and outreach will direct the use of activities which will be intended to provide not only fun for the Christians of Tri-City, but also an opportunity to invite other Christians and unbelievers to a time of play and preaching. From 5:00-6:00, the teens of Tri-City will visit prospective teens and invite them to the activity. From 6:00-8:00, an activity will be provided for physical and spiritual development. During this time, the youth pastor’s youth workers and teen preacher boys will have a preaching opportunity to develop their skills and minister the Gospel to the “crowd.” Because this event occurs on Saturday night, it will lead to inviting visitors to Sunday School and worship the next morning. During the summer months, this event could occur twice a month; during the school year, it would occur once a month.

Conclusion: This proposal seeks to provide a youth program that is both Biblically structured and socially contemporary. It seeks to function within the New Testament program of discipleship with its emphasis on development of the different groups of ministry (Committed, Christian, and the Crowd) and an emphasis on the mentoring process of learning and service. This proposal also seeks to integrate the teens into the life of their home and church while giving them a distinct role of ministry both to their peers in the youth group and to those who are without. With this stable structure in place and planned months in advance, it will provide strength to both the home and church and will build a platform for a weekly ministry in both the Academy and the public schools.

PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH SILVER VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

- I. Support parents in the upbringing of young people who are balanced in their spiritual, mental, and social lives.
 - A. Spiritual
 - 1. Sunday School
 - 2. Camp
 - B. Mental
 - Discussion time
 - C. Social
 - 1. Game nights
 - 2. Activities

- II. Support our church by transitioning our young people from being served to being servants.
 - A. Youth nights
 - B. Clean up and set up for dinner on the grounds
 - C. Help in service areas (nursery and junior church)
 - D. Puppet ministry
 - E. Attitude towards family nights (not just fun but a chance to serve)
 - F. Youth-centered outreach

Note: Outreach in our youth department will occur as our two primary goals are met. As youth pastor, I will do my best to build the youth we have now. As the Lord wills, our youth group will grow spiritually and numerically.

What is a successful teen?

Timothy Team

Philippians 2:20-22

- 1. One who is consistent
- 2. One who serves in the Gospel
- 3. One who cares for others
- 4. One whose actions prove beliefs

TIMOTHY TEAM OPPORTUNITIES SERVING IN THE GOSPEL

EVENT	DATE	VOLUNTEERS
Dinner on the Grounds	Jan. 31	_____
Paintball Tournament	Feb. 6	_____
Valentines Banquet	Feb. 15	_____
Family Night/Ugly Pageant	Feb. 24	_____
Dinner on the Grounds	Feb. 28	_____
Missions Conference	Mar. 26-28	_____
Dinner on the Grounds	Mar. 28	_____
Easter Sunrise Service	Apr. 4	_____
Family Night/Price is Right	Apr. 21	_____
Dinner on the Grounds	Apr. 25	_____
Father/Son Campout	Apr. 30-May 1	_____
Ladies Spring Event	May 8	_____
Dinner on the Grounds	May 23	_____
Family Night/World Records	May 26	_____
Dinner on the Grounds/Northland	Jun. 27	_____
Family Night/Missions	Jun. 30	_____
Encouragement Sunday	Jul. 25	_____
Family Night/VBS & Puppets	Aug. 20	_____
Dinner on the Grounds	Aug. 29	_____
Dinner on the Grounds	Sep. 26	_____
Harvest Party	Oct. 30	_____
Christmas in November	Nov. 3	_____
Anniversary Sunday	Nov. 7	_____
Thanksgiving Praise Service	Nov. 25	_____
Christmas Party	Dec. 17	_____
Christmas Program	Dec. 19	_____
Candle Light Communion	Dec. 24	_____
New Year's Eve Service	Dec. 31	_____

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

YOUTH MINISTRY—SIMPSONVILLE, SC

The following is an excerpt from the Calvary Baptist Church Youth Manual.

PHILOSOPHY OF OUR PROGRAM

As stated in the introduction, this is not a comprehensive statement of our youth program. This is for the Calvary Youth Staff as it pertains to the teen ministry.

Our goal is to bathe every teaching opportunity, every trip, every activity, and every opportunity we have with these statements in mind. We believe these to be Biblically centered, not just Biblically based. We believe these to be the key elements from the Scriptures that will allow us to have the greatest impact on the young people from our community.

THE GOAL OF THE CALVARY YOUTH STAFF

To impact the teenagers of Calvary and the community for Christ

THE MEANS FOR ACCOMPLISHING THIS

Lead them to a place where they internalize the Word of God for themselves. For many young people, the Word of God is a vain thing to them because it never impacts their daily lives. Our goal is to lead them to the place where it is their life (Deuteronomy 32:47). This is done primarily by exhibiting the impact the Word has in our lives and verbalizing this to them.

Lead them in ministering one to another as “Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister...” (Mark 10:45).

Lead them in proclaiming the Gospel every opportunity they have (Philippians 1:27). Our goal is to see them become soulwinners for life, not just while we are leading them. This is done not only through our program, but more importantly by our own example.

Lead them in availing themselves in the power of God through prayer. It is our goal that they experience the power of God in their own lives and that this is done through their prayer lives (Psalm 78:4; Jeremiah 33:3).

Lead them to conform to the image of Christ (1 John 2:6). This is done through renewing and transforming, not mere outward conformity. Getting a young person to merely conform outwardly is not a lasting change. Renewing and transforming is primarily accomplished by exhibiting the process first and foremost in our own personal lives.

Lead them to tenderly submit to the Holy Spirit by doing exactly what God wants us to do and when God wants us to do it (Psalm 34:18, 51:17; Genesis 31:16). This must be seen and demonstrated in the youth staff first before we will see it in the teens.

THE PEOPLE OF THE PROGRAM

YOUTH PASTOR:

As the ministry at Calvary grows, it is essential that the role of the youth pastor expands and grows with it. The sheer numbers of people under his ministry in all areas of the church demand that there be

not only more ministries added, but also more delegation of tasks so one person can be over many areas of ministry. This is essential in understanding who the youth pastor is in relation to the youth staff.

It is vital that the youth pastor be able to oversee and manage teen ministries as a “manager.” Otherwise, he will not have time to keep up with study time, counseling, visiting, and managing the other youth ministries for which he is responsible. For instance, it is a tremendous help to have someone scheduling and taking care of the singspirations. It is also helpful for several youth staff members to be visiting and keeping up with the teens. The larger the teen ministry gets, the more impossible it becomes for the youth pastor to know which teen has family needs, which is in the hospital, which is not attending, which needs counseling, etc. Only as the youth staff shares the load and informs him of the needs and what they have done, can he have an effective impact.

The youth pastor of a large ministry must be able to initiate goals and direction and then distribute the burden and outworking of these to others. These youth staff members will then need to report to the youth pastor. A youth pastor who holds on to goals and burdens himself with the tasks associated with those goals can only be as effective as one super-human juggling many tasks. The youth pastor who surrounds himself with godly, like-burdened people can accomplish all the ministries, goals, and their tasks as God directs his burdens. The youth pastor’s responsibilities as associated with the teen ministries are as follows:

- Establish God-given goals and burdens for the ministry at Calvary.
- Choose people who can assist in these goals and burdens and assign them to individuals.
- Teach and preach these goals and burdens to the young people and schedule people who will do the same (Ephesians 4:11).
- Organize the teen ministries calendar.
- Maintain personal contact with the teens.
- Maintain the majority of the counseling load associated with teens and their families.
- Organize the outreach ministry for the teens.
- Choose qualified youth staff and conduct regularly scheduled meetings for schedule and training purposes.
- Follow up and organize the follow-up prospects, missing teens, new converts, etc.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

We are obliged at a given moment to accept necessary sacrifices. It is a painful thing to say to oneself, “By choosing one road I am turning my back on a thousand others.” Everything is interesting, everything might be useful, everything attracts and charms a noble mind; but death is before us. Mind and matter make their demands. Willy-nilly we must submit and rest content, as to the things that time and wisdom deny us, with a glance of sympathy which is another act of homage to the truth.

Do not be ashamed not to know what you could only know at the cost of scattering your attention. Be humble about it, yes, for it shows our limitations; but to accept our limitations is a part of virtue and gives us a great dignity, that of the man who lives according to his law and plays his part. We are not much; but we are part of a whole, and we have the honor of being a part. What we do not do, we do all the same; God does it, our brethren do it, and we are with them in the unity of love.

Therefore, do not imagine you can do everything. Measure yourself, measure your task. After some experiments, make up your mind, though without rigidity, to accept your limits. Preserve, by reading and if necessary by a certain amount of writing, the advantage of your early studies, your contact with wide fields of knowledge—but for the main part of your time and strength, concentrate. The half-informed man is not the man who knows only the half of things, but the man who only half knows things. Know what you have resolved to know; cast a glance at the rest. Leave to God, who will look after it, what does not belong to your proper vocation. Do not be a deserter from yourself, through wanting to substitute yourself for all others.

II Corinthians 4:17

What is temporal?

What is eternal?

BUILDING BLOCKS OF A BIBLICAL YOUTH PHILOSOPHY

1. God's Word works.
 - Psalm 119
 - Psalm 19:7-11
 - Hebrews 4:12
 - II Timothy 3:16-17
 - II Peter 1:19-21

2. Glorifying God occurs through obedience to God.
 - I Corinthians 10:31
 - Philippians 2:1-11
 - Matthew 5:16

3. Man is sinful.
 - Romans 3:10
 - I Corinthians 2:14

4. People need God.
 - Romans 3:23
 - Romans 6:23
 - John 3:16
 - Isaiah 64:6
 - Romans 11:33-36

5. Youth are their parents' responsibility.
 - Deuteronomy 6
 - Colossians 3
 - Ephesians 6:1-4

6. Youth workers assist the church and the family in their responsibilities.
 - Proverbs 22:6
 - Luke 2:52
 - Ephesians 4:11-12
 - Romans 12:3-8
 - Matthew 28:18-20
 - Hebrews 5:11-14

7. Our body, if we are saved, is the temple of God.
 - I Corinthians 6:19-20
 - I Timothy 4:8
 - I Corinthians 3:16-17
 - I John 2:15-16

THE WHAT AND WHY OF TOMORROW

WHAT AM I DOING?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

WHY AM I DOING IT?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

WHAT COULD I BE DOING?

1.

2.

WHY SHOULD I DO IT?

1.

2.

WHAT ONE AREA IN OUR YOUTH PROGRAM IS GOING WELL?

WHAT ONE AREA COULD USE SOME IMPROVEMENT?

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

I am a born-again believer, and I believe . . .

- in the Biblical account of creation.
- in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Bible.
- in the eternal, triune God.
- in the incarnation and virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- in the sinless life and substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross.
- in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave.
- in the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- in the eternal punishment of the unsaved in a literal, burning hell.
- in salvation by faith through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.
- in a separated stand from the world and unto the Word of God.
- in a separated stand from any ecumenical group such as WCC and NCC, from cults, and from the charismatic movement.

ABSOLUTES IN YOUTH WORK

Introduction:

Thing I believe that must be developed. (It is a process.)

I. A Philosophy

- A. If you do not have a philosophy, you will be inclined to give teens what they want, rather than what they need.

- B. Your philosophy will be a guiding force in what you accomplish with your teens.

- C. Your philosophy must cover every area of your ministry.

Some examples:

1. Philosophy of Success

2. Philosophy of Preaching

3. Philosophy of Biblical Counseling

4. Philosophy of Discipline

II. A Training Program

- Our desire is that every teen that graduates from A.C.T.S. will have been disciplined.

A. Why do we disciple?

1. It is Biblical—Jesus and His disciples, Paul and Timothy (1 Timothy 1:2; Galatians 6:6).
2. It is effective.
3. It promotes accountability.
4. It is fruitful (Galatians 6:8).

B. What is discipleship?

1. It is a one-on-one time spent instilling Biblical principles into the life of someone else.
2. There are two different types of discipleship.
 - a) Formal Discipleship
 - b) Informal Discipleship

C. Who should be disciplined?

- Is every teen a candidate for discipleship?

III. A Team

A. The success we have seen has come from the attitude of teamwork we have attempted to foster.

B. This team involves many players.

1. The Lord (Acts 5:38-39)

2. The Parent (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)

a. If we want to minister to teens over a lifetime, we must desire to minister to the entire family.

b. Parents are not the _____

- c. Why would one not promote this relationship?
 - 1) Because of being intimidated
 - 2) Because of viewing the parents as the enemy
 - a) Our role is not defined in Scripture; a parent's role is.
 - b) Our role is helpful, but a parent's is crucial.

How does one develop a relationship with the parents?

- (1) Meet them.
- (2) Memorize names.
- (3) Spend time with them.
- (4) Keep them informed (communication).
This can stop potential problems.
- (5) Add parents to your sponsor team.

3. The Sponsor

4. The Teen

IV. An Outreach

V. An Opportunity to Minister

SUCCESS THROUGH PURPOSE

DEFINING A YOUTH MINISTRY PURPOSE STATEMENT

How does a youth leader accomplish what is truly important in the lives of the teens with whom he is working?

- I. Understand the role of being a true leader. There are certain implications to the word *leader*. Matthew 4:18-20 gives us an excellent example of leadership.
 - A. The leader is pursuing an objective (Matthew 4:18-19).
 - B. The leader is responsible for setting and maintaining the objective (John 5:30).
 - C. The leader motivates followers to respond to direction (Matthew 4:20).
He who thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk.—John Maxwell
 - D. The leader gives direction and instruction to followers on how to attain the objective.

As a leader, you must accept the role and lead. You are not merely a chaperone to keep the parents happy, or just "wheels" to take teens where they want to go. The cause of Jesus Christ is worth a lifetime of sacrificial service. Lived in joy, that life beckons others to enlist in this worthy endeavor.

- II. Clearly define a Biblical purpose of youth ministry. Ask at least these five questions, adapted from Rick Warren, when identifying purpose.
 - A. Why does the youth group exist?
 - B. What does God want our youth group to be?
 - C. What are we to do as a youth group?
 - D. How are we to do it?
 - E. What should teens *know* when they leave the youth group?

Youth leaders need to have a focused and defined purpose that leads to attainable goals, which give them direction and guide their decisions.

In youth work, many people are placed in leadership because of a need. Often the leader has been drafted without foundational teaching and instruction on how to be successful with youth, or even without teaching on what the objectives and expectations for success are. Many try to fulfill the job without a clear focus on the purpose of the job.

- III. Communicate and fulfill the purpose of youth ministry.
 - A. State the purpose in a manner that can be easily remembered.
 - B. Ask the question, "What are we trying to accomplish?"
 - C. Teach it to the parents and their teens.
 - D. Measure all you do by going back to a particular objective of the purpose. Discard anything that does not fit within that purpose.
 - E. Prayerfully set goals to accomplish.

A SAMPLE YOUTH MINISTRY PURPOSE STATEMENT

It is our goal to *win* the lost of the Northwest Valley, *welcoming* teens into Christian fellowship, training them to *walk* in truth and obedience to the Word of God, *worshipping* the Lord with our whole hearts, learning and doing the *work* of the ministry.

WIN the lost.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15

WELCOME teens into Christian fellowship.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:14, 17

WALK in truth and obedience to God.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matthew 28:20

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. 1 Thessalonians 2:13

WORSHIP the Lord.

Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. Psalm 29:2

WORK for the Lord.

This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. Titus 3:8

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. Ephesians 4:16

When you plan the year's activities, focus on the objectives you need to accomplish to fulfill your purpose statement. Make sure that you are providing the right environment for the objectives. Often youth workers feel guilty when a certain objective is not accomplished at an activity that does not lend itself to accomplishing that objective. Plan ahead for a certain objective, and judge your success by the accomplishment of that objective.

Example: If you want to have an activity with a lengthy prayer time but half of your teens are unsaved visitors, the chances are that you or the teens will be frustrated with the outcome.

PHILOSOPHY OF ACTIVITIES

FIVE A'S IN A YOUTH ACTIVITY

- I. Approach: Remove pressure by good planning.
 - A. Properly plan in advance for the activity.
 - B. Propose the objective of the activity.
 - C. Prepare your leaders for what is happening and how they are needed.
 - D. Prepare your teens for what they are expected to do.
 - E. Pray with the teens and leaders for the success of the activity .
 1. Make lists of the names of teens who have been invited.
 2. Pray through the list as a group.
 - F. Announce the activity.
 1. With flyers that they can give to their friends
 2. With enthusiastic speeches to both parents and teens
 - G. Prepare an alternate plan.

- II. Atmosphere: Be attentive to the atmosphere or tone of an activity.
 - A. Every person there affects the tone of the environment.
 - B. There is a battle for the tone at every activity.
 - C. The leader can set the tone, but teens must maintain it.
 - D. Remember to prepare for a number of unsaved or unruly teens.
 - E. Often teens judge the worth of the activity by the way they felt during it. (“They liked me here.”)

He who fails to consider the atmosphere may have an exciting activity that is a spiritual failure.

- III. Attendees: Value who you have present, or you may lose them.
 - A. Assign certain leaders and teens to welcome visitors.
 - B. Assign someone to pass out and collect visitor cards.
 - C. Have teens look for newcomers to take under their wing for the activity.
 - D. Before the activity, clearly communicate standards to the regular attendees.
 - E. During the activity, be clear to all teens in your instruction of the rules or expectations.
 - F. Separate close, exclusive friends if it will help the activity.
 - G. Do not separate visitors from their friends if it can be avoided.
 - H. If you expect many unsaved visitors, prepare your teens ahead of time and recruit more leaders.
 - I. Visit your guests soon after the event.

- IV. Activity: Make the action worth coming to without compromising purpose.
 - A. Use a variety of activities throughout the year, considering the likes and dislikes of the whole group.
 - B. Emphasize the participation of all regular attendees at all activities.
 - C. Choose games where anyone can be the hero.
 - D. Discourage a win-at-any-cost attitude.
 - E. Plan well for the refreshments.
 - F. Establish a clear time schedule with a good flow.

- G. Establish a message time at all activities.
 - 1. Do not surprise visitors with a message; announce it in the flyer and at the beginning of the event.
 - 2. Put as much energy into the preparation and preaching of the message as into the game time.
 - 3. Make the message time a highlight.
 - H. Put the message at the point where it will be best received.
 - 1. Preaching towards the end of an activity gives the visitors a greater chance of feeling comfortable. Seldom do people make spiritual decisions where they are not comfortable.
 - 2. Preaching at the end of an all-nighter only provides rest for the motionless.
 - 3. Expect the Lord to work.
 - I. Have teens looking for opportunities to lead into a salvation discussion.
 - J. Treat the “ride” time as part of the activity and plan to accomplish one thing during that time.
 - K. Keep the teens together. Do not allow teen drivers to follow in their cars.
 - L. Control the music of the activity. Sensual music destroys any spiritual overtones!
 - M. Keep a couple of leaders behind until all have left. Do not get stranded waiting with just one teen.
 - N. Be careful of who takes who home.
- V. Afterthought: Review and evaluate your activity.
- A. Did it accomplish your purpose?
 - B. What did you accomplish?
 - C. Was it cost prohibitive?
 - D. Did your teens do their job?
 - E. Did you build people spiritually?
 - F. Did this bring glory to God?
 - G. How might you do this better?
 - H. Should you do this again? Was it worth it?

Activities can be outstanding evangelistic tools, or they may just be something that stirs up a little dust. You decide the difference.

GIVING IN OR GROWING UP: DOING BIBLICAL YOUTH WORK IN AN UNBIBLICAL WORLD

Everyone seems to be working with teenagers. Whether it is the community providing sports and counseling programs, or church providing youth groups and assistance to parents, people today are recognizing the need to reach out to our teenagers and help them spiritually, physically, socially, educationally, and emotionally. While most parents and adults in our society see the needs that teenagers have, most “youth work,” whether by churches or communities, is not attempting to solve their problems Biblically.

Christian churches have gone to great lengths in recent years to help their children and teenagers honor God and parents, follow a Biblical worldview, and avoid the growing number of pitfalls that the world presents to them. Great amounts of time, money, and effort have been contributed to Christian youth ministry. Yet most parents and youth leaders agree that not enough spiritual and numerical progress is taking place. Therefore, youth leaders feel a tremendous pressure to find the magical “key” that will accomplish both their goals and the parents’ goals for teenagers.

One of the great temptations of our day is for parents and youth leaders to “give in” to teenagers and their desires. It is increasingly thought that the only way to keep teenagers interested in church and Biblical things is to play a game of “bartering,” where the teens are given something in order for the parents and youth leaders to get something from them. It is tempting to leave the Biblical paths of working with parents and their teenagers and search for more “successful” methods from the world.

In contrast to the “giving in” approach, which caters to teenagers and their desires, the Biblical approach is to assist them in “growing up” in the faith. While this approach does not ignore the interest of teenagers, it does not base its philosophy and programs primarily upon what entertains teenagers and keeps them occupied. Biblical youth work is built upon the truth that God knows best, not the world.

The design of this paper is to provide some theological and practical contrasts between the worldly approach of “giving in” and the Biblical approach of “growing up.”

1. The Biblical approach is centered upon God and the Bible. The worldly approach is centered upon the teenager, entertainment, and programs.

The Biblical approach recognizes that teenagers will save their lives by losing them to God. **WE NEED GOD’S POWER TO CHANGE THE HEARTS OF OUR TEENAGERS.** Therefore, we need to worship Him and honor Him through His Word. The worldly approach basically denies the sufficiency of God and His Word to change lives, and instead uses the world’s methods of manipulation. This may keep certain teenagers attending church for a while; but in the long run, it will produce spoiled teenagers who feel used and mistreated, and who are looking for greener pastures in some other church or out in the world.

2. The Biblical approach seeks to develop and maintain the unity of the family. The worldly approach seeks to split the family and isolate its members.
3. The Biblical approach recognizes that parents and the family must be a primary focus of New Testament youth ministry. **WE NEED THE PARENTS’ SPIRITUAL INVOLVEMENT TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF OUR TEENAGERS.** The worldly approach ignores the parents, shifts the teenagers’ focus from parents to peers, and seeks to replace the parents as the primary directors of the teenagers’

lives. This approach dishonors God, unnecessarily angers parents, and teaches teenagers to bypass their parents in the pursuit of happiness in life.

3. The Biblical approach uses standards to protect teenagers and to build godly relationships. The worldly approach tends to soften standards and to allow extensive dating.

The Biblical approach seeks to have godly and consistent standards as a means to preserving and building spiritual relationships that stay focused upon God and others. Standards are not an end in and of themselves; however, when properly used, they can help to protect the purity of the teens and assist in the development of genuine friendships. The worldly approach allows the teenagers themselves to determine their standards. This freedom leads to various degrees of immodesty and immorality as teens center the youth group on selfishness and sexuality.

4. The Biblical approach is committed to serious evangelism and discipleship. The worldly approach distorts evangelism and makes discipleship optional.

The Biblical approach draws a clear line between saved and lost teenagers. It presents a clear and strong Gospel message that causes teenagers to see the seriousness of sin and the need of salvation. Salvation is more than a fire escape from Hell; it is a God-given change of heart and life that involves a life commitment to God, the Bible, and the Church. The worldly approach tends to soften the differences between saved and lost teenagers, to water down the Gospel message, and to make true commitment to God something that is encouraged but not required. This approach gives lost teenagers a long-term comfort in staying around a youth group and keeps truly saved teenagers from growing in the Lord the way they should.

5. The Biblical approach seriously addresses the problems of teenagers and points to God and the Bible as being sufficient to solve their problems. The worldly approach seeks to rely upon worldly philosophy, psychology, and emotions to solve the problems of life.

The Biblical approach takes the problem of sin seriously, pointing out specific sins and their destructive consequences. It points to God and His Word as the place of hope, and it highlights the need for repentance and true heart decisions as necessary in the process of Christian growth. Based upon the latest “key” for instant spirituality, the worldly approach avoids negative topics and presents easy solutions to life. This approach does not prepare teenagers for the difficulties of life as adults in this society.

6. The Biblical approach is committed to conservative music that is not fleshly. The worldly approach embraces Christian rock music and contemporary Christian music, most of which is dominated by the rock beat.

While the Biblical approach allows for a variety in music, this diversity must exist within the boundaries of Biblical principles for good music. Biblical music is spiritual, not fleshly; rational, not irrational; and peripheral, not the center of everything. The worldly approach to youth ministry tends to build its programs upon Christian rock music through the use of concerts, rock bands, and the idolizing of musicians. This approach lessens the importance of strong preaching and teaching, teaches teenagers to focus on emotions, and breaks down their ability to think clearly and seriously about life.

7. The Biblical approach believes in the primacy of the local church. The worldly approach tends to view the church as a social club that is secondary to other Christian ministries.

The Biblical approach follows the church-centered focus of New Testament ministry as set up by Christ and His apostles. It views church and youth group attendance—Sunday School, activities, sings, re-

treats, camps, visitation, etc.—as a necessary part of Christian growth and maturity. The worldly approach tends to get enamored by all the fancy para-church ministries that specialize in one particular area such as music, family, finances, and the various “keys” to spiritual growth. Attendance and participation in church functions becomes optional and based upon feelings, schedules, and other “important” activities.

8. The Biblical approach seeks to put teenagers into full-time Christian service. The worldly approach lessens the importance of putting laborers into the harvest field.

The Biblical approach recognizes that all Christians should use their vocation, whatever it may be, to serve God and others. Yet it also highlights the importance of getting teenagers to seriously consider full-time Christian service as a pastor, missionary, teacher, etc. This approach aims to get teenagers into solid, Christian colleges that will give them the opportunity to find the will of God in a Bible-saturated environment. The worldly approach puts all vocations on the same level of importance and fails to highlight the need for a Christian college. Making money becomes more important than a life of selfless ministry, and the greatest needs of the harvest field are ignored.

9. The Biblical approach places spiritual quality above numerical quantity. The worldly approach tends to highlight numbers and results as the proof of successful youth ministry.

Although the Biblical approach does not discount the need to have results and reach as many teenagers as possible, it is committed to doing God's work in the right way. Everything from beginning to end is conducted by Biblical principles, and holiness is not sacrificed in order to get more teenagers. The worldly approach is pragmatic, catering to popularity and people. It tends to remove the “offensive” things of Christianity and emphasize what Christians have in common with the world. This approach creates a shallow ministry that will bring the world and its views into the church.

10. The Biblical approach creates teenagers that are spiritually stronger than their parents and the adults in their church. The worldly approach creates teenagers that break down the spirituality of a church and its families.

The Biblical approach is ultimately seen in the successful continuation of the spiritual heritage of a church and its families. Teenagers grow into adults whose love for God is demonstrated by their obedience to His Word and their spiritual function as leaders in their families, churches, and society. The worldly approach may have some occasional successes, yet the overall youth program has ultimately been counterproductive, contributing to the decay of families, churches, and society. This is a sad fact that has been evidenced in numerous youth ministries across the country over the past two generations.

The ten contrasts listed above are in some ways ideal statements, because all youth programs have both strengths and weaknesses. Yet they do broadly capture the two basic directions of youth ministry in Christian churches over the past two generations. The Biblical approach is reflected in fundamental churches, while the worldly approach is reflected in new evangelical churches. This paper is designed to be an evaluation of messages and ministries, not a question of motives. There are many godly Christians working with teenagers in a variety of situations and places. Our desire is for contemporary youth ministries to evaluate themselves in light of the Bible, to renew a commitment to follow the Biblical approach to youth ministry, and to eliminate worldly elements from our youth ministries. This process will assist us in honoring God and truly helping our teenagers achieve Christian maturity as they “grow up” in Him through the truth that is spoken and manifested in love (Ephesians 4:15).

MYTHS OF YOUTH WORK

SOME YOU KNOW AND SOME WE'RE LEARNING

- 1**、 Youth work is all fun and games.
- 2**、 We're leaving at 5:30 sharp.
- 3**、 We'll be back at 9:00 p.m.
- 4**、 Look at all these people; we must be doing something right. (Numbers determine success.)
- 5**、 If I keep them busy, I'll keep them out of trouble.
- 6**、 Parents don't know anything.
- 7**、 If you're funny and/or crazy, you belong in youth work.
- 8**、 Activities make a youth group.
- 9**、 We could have reached them if we would have done more.
- 10**、 I get paid to have fun.
- 11**、 This plan will work; it always does. (Any statement involving "always" and never")
- 12**、 It was just a little joke.
- 13**、 The bus runs well.
- 14**、 Practical jokes are harmless fun.
- 15**、 All kids are the same.
- 16**、 Teens do not think.

PHILOSOPHY OF A CALENDAR

Fact #1—There is a lack of written material in the area of developing a youth calendar.

Fact #2—Many youth leaders haphazardly develop calendars.

Fact #3—Youth calendars CAN be more of an obstacle than a help to your ministry.

Fact #4—Calendars reveal your priorities and philosophy.

Goal: To introduce concepts and a helpful philosophy to encourage the evaluation of your youth calendar. By the end of this seminar you will be able to identify ways to produce a balanced calendar that will assist you in youth ministry.

COMING SOON TO A CHURCH NEAR YOU!

EFFECTIVE YOUTH CALENDARS

Introduction:

- Matthew 18:20—“In my name . . .”
- Calendars are a necessity in ministry because of their effectiveness.
- As in every area of youth ministry, a calendar must be balanced and promote the goals and purposes you have established

1. THE VALUE OF A CALENDAR

- a. Will having an effective calendar benefit my ministry?
 - 1) Builds organization
 - 2) Builds accountability
 - 3) Builds respectability
 - 4) Builds unity
 - 5) Builds trust
- b. Will having an effective calendar be easy?



.....
 : Is this the focus of :
 : my calendar? :



2. THE OBSTACLES THAT A CALENDAR CAN CREATE

- a. Creativity
- b. Accountability
- c. Activity (not fulfilling purposes of personal youth ministry)
- d. Productivity

3. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY YOUTH CALENDAR

- a. Promotes the purpose of the youth ministry
- b. Promotes relationships, not activities
- c. Is not carbon copied from another youth ministry
- d. Allows other people to serve, not just the youth leader
- e. Targets the students
- f. Supports the family, not divides the family

4. A CALENDAR CHECKLIST

- a. Examine your purpose.
- b. Examine your time framework. How long does your calendar cover?
- c. Reference youth calendar to church calendar.
- d. Reference youth calendar to leaders' schedules.
- e. Maintain balance.
- f. Communicate youth calendar to parents, not just teens.
- g. Check spelling.
- h. Be sensitive to school calendars.
- i. Be sensitive to family schedules—allow families to be families.
- j. Do not violate the testimony of the church.
- k. Involve prayer and the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion:

Does my calendar meet the standard of excellence that God has set for me?

THREE KEY PRINCIPLES FOR DISCIPLING YOUTH TODAY

I. The Faithful Leader Principle

- A. The ability to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2)
- B. The requirement of God (1 Corinthians 4:2)
- C. The power of example (1 Timothy 4:12)
- D. The basis of servant leadership (1 Peter 4:10)

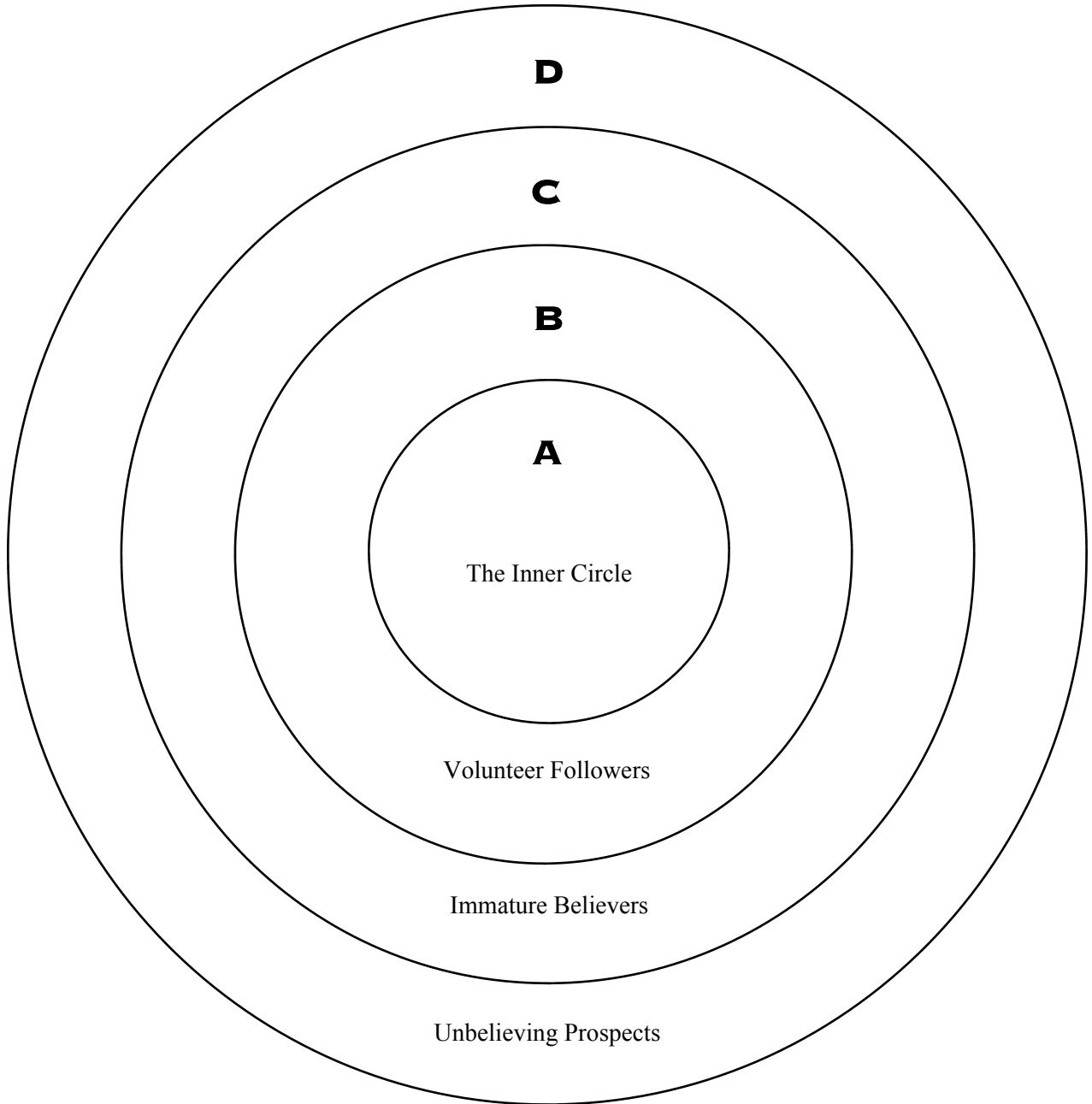
II. The Concentric Circle Principle—Christ's example (See diagram on next page)

- A. The inner circle
- B. The volunteer followers
- C. The immature believers
- D. The unbelieving prospects

III. The Balanced Focus Principle

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52).

- A. What will they learn?
- B. How will this strengthen their physical development?
- C. What spiritual benefit, growth, or lesson will result?
- D. Will this improve their social skills?
 - 1. Friendships
 - 2. Manners
 - 3. Appropriateness



THE CONCENTRIC CIRCLE PRINCIPLE

This principle comes from the example of the ministry of Jesus Christ. He worked with many different “circles” or groups of people, all with differing spiritual needs, and He did it through a variety of methods: teaching, preaching, and meeting needs, both physical and spiritual.

In the **first** and broadest circle, we find Him preaching and teaching to the multitudes. This was basically a message of choice: will you be a believer or will you choose to go your own way? He had compassion on this group and spent a good deal of His time on these presentations, but not to the exclusion of ministry with the believers, which make up the second circle.

The **second** circle is smaller than the first. It was comprised of those who were basically believers and were in the process of learning from Him whenever He would come to their town and teach. In Jerusalem, these may be characterized by the 120 in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. They formed the basis of this first local church’s membership role. Today this type of young person will attend most youth programs, but he has not yet grown to the point of any kind of voluntary service or leadership with the other youth. We work with and teach this young person, bringing him to the point of wanting to please the Lord and making decisions in life to do so (Romans 12:1-2).

Obviously, there was then, as there is now, a crowd of people in between these two circles. They were “almost” believers, not quite sure if they wanted to make the commitment or not. Jesus never made it easy for these folks, as is characterized by His response to the “rich young ruler” (Matthew 19:21-22) who did not want to give up what he had in exchange for belief in Christ. So Christ just identified for him his choice. We cannot give this group a circle of their own because they are basically unbelievers. Difficult to identify as “tares,” they may outwardly look like believers and may even be fairly faithful for a while, but sooner or later they will either decide to believe or will eventually leave because of the offense of the Word (Matthew 13:20-21). With these young people, we do not need a special program to reach them. We just preach and teach to the believers on one hand and to the unbelievers on the other hand. Occasionally, something will happen to open the door; or they will open a door through a question they ask. At that time, all we can do is what Christ did: answered their question with a question, “Will you choose Jesus Christ even if it means giving up what you are holding on to, or will you choose to hold on to whatever you value more than Christ?” It is their choice and we cannot make it for them any more than Christ could. They must make their own decision. Then we can begin to help them.

The **third** circle Christ kept for His disciples, the ones who had responded to the challenge to “follow Me and I will make you to become fishers of men.” This group Christ often had with Him for teaching, service, and daily example. They heard Him talk to others one-on-one or in groups and crowds. They witnessed His miracles, His prayers, His weariness, His compassion, His reprimands to the Pharisees, and His reactions to the difficulties of life. He gave them service projects and sent them out preaching and practicing the life of faith. They were called “disciples” for good reason. He was constantly mentoring them, using the “opportunities” of life as a backdrop for the teachable moment. This circle must be much smaller than the second one because it requires much more time, toil, and tears. This is the circle of followers that Jesus used to change the world forever within the time frame of their own lifetime.

Remember, this group did not come to Him at the very beginning. After a season of prayer, He went after them, presenting to them the opportunity to follow and learn; and they accepted. Their agreement to follow Him gave Christ permission to get involved in their growth and development and in their lives. He was not successful with all of them, and they all grew at their own individual pace. As He left them for the last time at His ascension, they certainly did not appear to be “finished” products. This should give us confidence as we let those we work with go. Christ knew for a fact what we must believe by faith “that he which hath be-

gun a good work in you will perform it...” (Philippians 1:6). We can do just so much for anyone; then we must allow them and Jesus Christ to do their part.

The **fourth** and final circle is the smallest of all, the inner circle that He was training for future leadership. They witnessed the transfiguration and participated in special prayer meetings. They experienced failures but never rejection from the Savior. It is quite obvious that there was a special bond and emotional attachment between them and the Lord; and because of their willingness to go the extra mile, He gave them greater challenges and more responsibilities. Then the day came when they thought they were alone and wondered if all they had learned was for nothing. Their time with the Master and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit answered that question forever; their inner circle experience had changed them forever.

Name the concentric circles A, B, C, and D. Can you identify the youth in your group that are the “A-inner circle” ones? Can you identify the “B-group of volunteer followers”? Can you identify the “C-group of basic believers”? Can you identify the “D-circle of unbelieving prospects”? Tailor various aspects of your youth program to reach each of these groups. Set your priorities for each group based on the current needs and past neglect of each group. Sometimes you can, as Christ did, reach two groups or more at the same time by using the teaching of one group to have an impact on the others by direct involvement or by indirect example.

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WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE CAMP PROGRAM THAT IS BIBLICALLY EFFECTIVE?

Several key advantages are found in a camp or retreat setting such as Ironwood:

- Campers are away from the cares of this world.
- Many offenses of the world are eliminated.
- Campers hear almost a whole month's worth of preaching within a few short days.
- A new location and situation heightens campers' awareness and attention level (Psalm 46:10).
- Campers do not miss any services at camp so that the Word can build "line upon line" and "precept upon precept."
- Pastors and youth leaders have often told us of unsaved people accepting the invitation to come to camp after steadfastly refusing the Gospel at home.
- Campers are in a setting that encourages them to consider and meditate on the Word for the purpose of making life-changing decisions.
- Pastors and church leaders who come with their people have many opportunities to counsel and also mentor them in the relaxed schedule and setting of camp and during the time of travel to and from camp.

Listed below are some biblical principles that make camping an effective tool for reaching young people, strengthening the family, and serving the local church.

CHANGE OF PACE AND PLACE PRINCIPLE

In Mark 6:31, our Lord told His disciples that it was time to take a little retreat which he used not only for their physical refreshment, but also for the imparting of spiritual truths through object lessons and direct teaching.

And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

EFFECTIVE AGE PRINCIPLE

In Matthew 18:3-4, Jesus was very clear that the young children had at least one less hurdle (pride) to get over before they could be saved.

And said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

ELIMINATION OF OFFENSE PRINCIPLE

Matthew 18:6-9 teaches that the removal of offenses affects a child's likelihood of believing on the Lord and making decisions consistent with God's will.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

EXTRA EFFORT PRINCIPLE

Matthew 18:12-14 is in the direct context of Christ's comments about reaching children for Him. The shepherd that the Lord was commending here certainly expended extra effort to reach that one lost "sheep." Applying this principle to camp ministry, the extra effort to get young people to camp will often make the difference in whether some lost sheep are ever found or remain lost forever.

How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

DILIGENT TEACHING PRINCIPLE

In Deuteronomy 6:7, God instructs us to diligently teach the children, meaning to teach in such a way that the Word of God "penetrates or pierces" the mind. Sometimes this is accomplished by simply telling children what to believe. More often, as the example of our Lord's teaching methods would indicate, a variety of methods and styles of teaching are helpful in reaching different people in their different stages of life.

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

These various methods are used in the Ironwood program to present the truths of the Scriptures throughout a typical camp day. A sampling of our Lord's teaching methods are listed here; we use all of them and more at camp.

- One-on-one method—The woman at the well, Nicodemus, and Peter received individual attention and instruction
- Small group dynamics—The disciples, the inner circle, and a chosen few who were ready to learn (Mark 9:31)
- Large group preaching—The multitude—Sermon on the Mount (Mark 2:13; Matthew 5:2)
- Various other methods—Question and answer, discussion, object lessons, parables, lecture, and sequential repetition. ". . . as he was wont, he taught them again" (Mark 10:1).

NATURAL WITNESS OF CREATION PRINCIPLE

A power beyond the natural and an answer to the origin question are powerful witnesses to God's existence, nature, and power. At camp, we have a better view of what God has done, as opposed to the view of what man has done in the cities.

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:19-20).

CHALLENGE OF DECISIONS PRINCIPLE

In the Scriptures, seldom, if ever, did Christ leave a discussion, counseling situation, teaching lesson, or message to a large crowd without a challenge to make a decision or consider carefully what He was saying. That opportunity comes very naturally at camp because of the setting, the schedule, the seclusion, and the subjects addressed.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me (Matthew 16:24).

Jesus said unto him [rich young ruler], If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me (Matthew 19:21).

When we look at the whole spectrum of how we are *pardners* together in the program, John 13:35 sums up the focus of both *pardners*: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

DEALING WITH THE PARENTS OF YOUTH

BUILD THE RIGHT FOUNDATION FOR A YOUTH GROUP

Luke 6:46-49; Psalm 127:1

1. Parents are the key to a successful youth group. (Remember, the Devil desires to destroy or weaken the family.)
2. Remember the two “P’s.”
 - a. You may be the pro.
 - b. You are not the parent.
3. The family is the first institution ordained by God. The Bible makes parents responsible for the following important areas:
 - a. Education—Deuteronomy 6:6-9
 - b. Discipline—Ephesians 6:4
 - c. Support—I Timothy 5:8
 - d. Example—Proverbs 23:26
4. Youth workers must never undermine the parents.
 - a. When counseling and teaching the teens
 - b. When dealing with unsaved parents (Teach the Biblical principles in 1 Peter 3:1-5.)
5. Youth workers need to communicate with the parents Biblically and clearly.
 - a. Show your love and concern.
 - b. Share your goals and plans.
 - c. Ask for their input and ideas.
 - d. Explain to the parents that you are provided by the church to help them fulfill their God-given responsibilities. If parents restrict teens from coming to youth group in order to discipline them, you have failed . . .
 - 1) In communicating your goals.
 - 2) In implementing your plans to achieve your goals.
6. Youth workers need to know what the Bible teaches about the family so they can . . .
 - a. Teach adults the importance of being good husbands and wives.
 - b. Teach adults the importance of being good parents.
 - c. Teach teens the importance of being good children.

*The young adult Sunday School class is the most important class in the church for the youth pastor.
7. In your relationships with parents, apply the principles concerning trust and confidence from the sheet entitled “Enlisting and Training the Volunteer Help You Need” (page 4-1).

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PARENTS: THE OTHER SIDE OF YOUTH MINISTRY

It is shocking to realize that the people who have the most available time, the God-given authority, and the greatest opportunity for impact are often not an active part of youth ministry. When approaching teen ministry, a leader must understand that teens live with parents in a family. Whatever ministry the youth pastor pursues must be conducted with the parents in mind.

SEVEN STEPS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENT RELATIONSHIPS

- I. Understand the parents' role and authority (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, 20-25).
 - A. The well-being of the child is their responsibility.
 - B. The training of the child is their choice.
 - C. The youth leader's role is secondary; the parents' are primary.

- II. Get to know the parents by spending some time with them.
 - A. Arrange a time to visit.
 - B. Earn the right and then ask them about their relationship with God.
 1. Make a point to hear each parent's salvation testimony.
 2. Present the Gospel to any unsaved parent (2 Corinthians 4:3-6).

Witnessing to parents who do not attend your church may be uncomfortable; but you must take the opportunity God has given to present the Gospel, and give Him an opportunity to work in their lives.

Time spent with parents, even at the expense of time with the teens, is time well spent. Parents (all of them) are keys to healthy, eternal ministry with the teens.

- C. Acknowledge their role and your supporting one (1 Peter 5:5-7).
 - D. Explain your intentions (2 Corinthians 4:1-2).
- III. Listen to parents talk about their children and their children's needs. Seek to know:
 - A. The strengths of their child.
 - B. The relationship between them and their child.
 - C. Their perception of the best way you can help their child.
 - IV. Consider the family as you plan youth meetings and activities.
 - A. Be predictable on the dates and times of activities. Perhaps using a certain week (every third) of the month for activities would be helpful.
 - B. Announce activities and camps well in advance.
 - C. Talk with parents about the best summertime events.
 - V. Include parents in your activities.
 - A. Have at least one activity where the parents are invited to participate.
 - B. If the parents are concerned about an activity, invite them to come.
 - C. Use parents as youth leaders where you can.

- VI. Teach the parents (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- A. Plan regular group parent meetings.
 - 1. Seek a time good for the majority of them.
 - 2. Schedule them four to six times a year.
 - 3. Use them to inform.
 - 4. Use them to instruct.
 - a. Cover pertinent topics.
 - b. Give practical and Biblical instruction.
 - c. Instill hope.
 - 5. Use them to unify.
 - B. Make personal time for parents when they want help or have questions.
 - 1. See this as a valuable opportunity.
 - 2. Be sure of the counsel you give.
 - 3. Make sure your instruction has a Biblical foundation.
 - 4. Seek help from the pastor on tough questions.
 - 5. Be sure to hear the whole matter before you formulate a response.
 - C. Build a parent's library of good resources.
 - 1. Give them a "TBR" (to be read) list.
 - 2. Assist them in finding books (titles, web sites, publishing information).
 - 3. Share what resources you have.

Often God uses the problems and questions of others to teach us something He wants us to know.

- VII. Pray for the parents (James 5:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12).
- A. Pray specifically with knowledge.
 - B. Pray regularly with discipline.
 - C. THEN tell parents that you are praying for them.

The youth leader's role in the spiritual and physical guidance of teens should be governed by the parents' God-given wisdom and authority. Remember, both parents and teens form the "youth ministry."

PARENTS: THE YOUTH LEADER'S REAL CUSTOMERS

PARENTS COME IN THREE VARIETIES

1. Unconcerned—almost totally uninvolved with their young people unless there is a problem to deal with
 - a. It is their life . . . let them make their own decisions . . . exposing them to many options is good.
 - b. “Kids will be kids!”
 - c. Permissive
2. Engaged—intimately involved with their children's lives. Much of their lives focus on raising their children, and they want not only to watch, but also to be fully involved in the process. If these parents cannot be involved, their children will not be either. You will find three categories of these parents, depending on what their world view is.
 - a. Biblical—
 - b. Secular—
 - c. Syncretistic—a mixture of Biblical and secular (cultural, sometimes ancient, sometimes modern) ideas often expressed in “Christian” terminology
3. Traditional—in the limited sense of the word, for the last 50 years of American life
 - a. On the positive side, this is usually a family that is not “child-centered”; yet parents are loving and concerned about their children's development, fulfilling to the best of their ability and knowledge their responsibilities as parents, choosing the best schools, involved in church and the youth group, and increasing their teens' freedom and responsibility as the young people prove they can handle them.
 - b. On the negative side, these parents love their children, yet are too busy about their own lives (job, hobby, home, or service) to be really involved in the details of their children's lives. They often seem more concerned about the material things of life than spiritual matters.
 - Concern for others' opinions
 - Pragmatic about moral issues
 - Emphasis on consequences, not on character

As strange as it may seem, all three of these “types” of parents can also come in a variety of spiritual conditions: the natural unsaved man, the spiritual Christian, and the carnal Christian.

These parents can be mixed and matched in a variety of ways. It would be possible to have saved parents, who are spiritual, and involved in the lives of their children, yet raising them according to secular principles. They have read a “self-help” book, gone to a secular seminar, or were themselves reared by parents who were influenced by Spock's theories of life on demand, no spankings, and letting children's personalities “blossom.” They have never considered what the Scripture has to say about bringing up children. Likewise, it would be possible to have someone in your youth group with unsaved, unconcerned parents who allow their children to go to church as long as someone picks them up. Within any church fellowship, there may be a great assortment of parents whom we must work with and serve.

For the most part, the traditional youth group concept that we have been used to in our churches was created primarily before the totally engaged church, as typified by the Christian school movement, or before the advent of the totally engaged parent, as typified by the home school movement. Almost any church that is preaching the Gospel and seeing people saved is going to have some children from families who send their children to a public school, some families who sacrifice to send their children to a Christian school, and some who home school their children out of a deep-seated conviction. We must get used to this fact in this

generation, determine what our Biblical responsibilities are in relation to all the youth of our church, and develop a youth program that will meet the needs of all the families in our church.

The Bible gives us examples of all of the three scenarios. Moses was reared in the secular schools of his day; Samuel was reared in the temple, receiving his instruction from the priests; and Isaac undoubtedly sat at the feet of his father Abraham, staying within the context of an extended family structure for 75 years until Abraham died. Those three examples all seemed to turn out as leaders for God.

We face a dilemma. On the one hand, our best chance of evangelizing the greatest numbers for the Lord lies in the statistical bosom of reaching today's youth before or soon after puberty. The Lord Himself in Matthew 18:3-4 seemed to indicate there was an advantage to their being given the truth early before they became hardened by pride and sin. Thom Rainer said in his book on this current generation that of those who will be saved eventually that ". . . if we look at the age frame from six through fourteen, over 70% of persons will have made decisions for Christ . . . by the time they graduate from high school the odds are stacked against such a choice to a staggering degree" (*The Bridger Generation*, 168).

On the other hand, experience would teach us that too much exposure to unrighteousness could lead to the loss of an entire generation for God. Lot and his family are a good example of that problem. So we must find a balance that works in our situation, all the while realizing other churches may come to a different balance without it being a "wrong balance." The church and the youth leaders must view themselves as servants of all the parents in the church and do what they can to meet their needs and help them fulfill their God-given responsibility. This, of course, includes developing programs and working with the children of unsaved, unengaged, or traditional parents whose young people need a much more involved program than do the parents who are fully engaged with their own children.

WHY PARENTS RESTRICT THEIR YOUTH FROM COMING TO YOUTH GROUP

1. Restriction—With this discipline ploy, if the young person disobeys, the parents restrict him from doing what he enjoys. Your challenge here is to convince the parents that you are their servant and that you are reinforcing what they are trying to accomplish in the home. Communicating with the parents before they make their rule, not after the fact, is the key.
2. Priority—A family activity or event is conflicting with what you have going on. The best thing you can do here is to plan and publish your calendar as far in advance as you can without ever canceling an event. In the end, some family gathering or vacation will always conflict; but you have to remember that you serve the families, and not the other way around.
3. Fear—Safety is always a big concern of parents, as it should be. They are concerned not only about physical safety, but also about spiritual safety, specifically improper exposures from peers, places, or programs. Communicate the physical safety measures on which you operate, your philosophy of youth activities, and your "spiritual" protection plan.
4. Lack of information—Parents have no knowledge of what you are doing or any way of putting in their "two cents" without seeming as if they are "butting in" or questioning the church leadership. Tell them everything, in many different ways, and often. Then ask for their opinions and ideas with surveys and discussion groups.
5. Distrust—For some reason, parents have lost their confidence in the youth group's leadership. Such loss of confidence can usually be traced back to some glitch in communication. Other reasons include:
 - a. Differences in what you say and what you do, i.e. arrival times, costs, etc.
 - b. Cancellations or constant changes in what has been announced.

- c. Poor decisions showing a lack of wisdom
 - d. Lack of preparation and forethought
 - e. Lapses in dependability, follow-through, and responsibility
 - f. Teachings by word or example, which are different than what the church as a whole teaches (in doctrine, word, action, or attitude)
6. Lack of worth—Here the parents do not believe that you are a help or of any value in the lives of their teens. There is much evidence to prove that parents will leave a church quicker over perceived problems with the youth group than they will over doctrinal issues. Encourage testimonials from the pastor, youth sponsors, parents, and young people.
 7. Conviction—Parents believe that they have the God-given responsibility of doing all the teaching in the lives of their children. They will never put them under another authority for any reason. You can do nothing about this reason, but understand and do whatever you can to communicate your desire to be of service to them in any way possible. Only the pastor of the church can deal with this issue; and if you have a large group of these parents in your church, you will need to plan and operate accordingly.

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INVOLVING PARENTS

If we are going to learn a life of holiness in the mess of history, we are going to have to prepare for something intergenerational and think in centuries.—Eugene Paterson, The Contemplative Pastor

A very popular trend in youth ministry today is building a family-oriented ministry. Certainly this is Biblical, but how effective are we at involving parents in their child's life? Most fundamental youth ministries do a good job *talking* about it but lack in the *implementation* of parent-youth ministries. A parent-involved ministry will never occur by accident. There must be purpose and philosophy driving this area of youth work.

MINISTRY ACTION PLAN (M.A.P.)

Allow me to suggest in every area of ministry that you devise an action plan filled with purpose, philosophy, and programs to guide you as you progress in your ministry. The following is a three-year, ministry action plan (M.A.P.) for our parent ministry.

YEAR #1- IMPLEMENTATION OF PARENT MINISTRY

What is the purpose of involving parents in the youth ministry?

- A. It is Biblical (Deuteronomy 5:20-6:9).
 1. Understand your role is limited as a youth worker.
 2. Understand their role as parents is commanded.
 3. Be cautious of controlling your young people and their lives with arrogance.
- B. It is logical.
 1. Consider these statistics.
 - a. 80 % of children who worship with their parents will continue to worship after they leave home.
 - b. 30 % will continue to worship if only a mother worshipped with them.
 - c. 70 % will continue to worship if they worshipped with their fathers.

—Statistics from *Focus on The Family*, July 2001 Newsletter
 2. Consider their availability.
 - a. Parents are youth leaders waiting to be asked to assist in your ministry.
 - b. Most parents are yearning for opportunities to be involved in their teen's life.
 - c. The maturity level of most parents is above younger leaders.
- C. It is helpful . . .
 1. To the parents. It is our goal to be helpful in three key areas:
 - a. Keeping the parents involved
 - b. Keeping the parents informed
 - c. Keeping the parents instructed
 2. To the youth ministry.
 - a. It has been said that if you reach the parents, you will stand a better chance of reaching their teens.
 - b. If you want the family to be supportive of your ministry, be supportive of their ministry. (Allow parents the opportunity to be involved with their teen.)
 - c. Many parents are "been-there" parents. Parents have experienced many things and can be a valuable asset to various aspects of ministry.
- D. It is possible to involve parents in your ministry.
 1. In teen services
 2. In visitation ministry
 3. In discipleship

4. In a monthly parent meeting
5. Through a monthly newsletter
6. On camp and mission trips
7. In small group Sunday School classes
8. On activities

YEAR #2- PROGRESSION OF PARENT MINISTRY

How do I go beyond just involving parents in my ministry?

- A. Broaden your ministry boundaries.
 1. What is the focal point of your ministry? It should be family-focused, not just teen-focused. (Develop the family as a unit.)
 2. Spend quality time with parents to develop relationships. (There will always be time to spend with a teen)
 3. Focus on a primary target: DADS.
 4. Allow the parents to take credit for progress in their teen's life.
- B. Develop programs that strengthen the family.
 1. Parent Pride Night
 2. Family Game Night
 3. Family Olympics
 4. Family Sunday School
- C. Add parents to your lay staff team.
- D. Build a reputation that you care for the success of the families to whom you minister.

YEAR #3- EVALUATION AND CONTINUATION OF PARENT MINISTRY

How do I know if my parent ministry is successful or not?

What might be considered success in the eyes of teens may be looked upon as failure to a parent. The only way to measure success is by:

- A. God's Word—Is what I am doing in accordance with the Bible?
- B. Time—Short-term ministries are rarely as successful as long-term ministries.

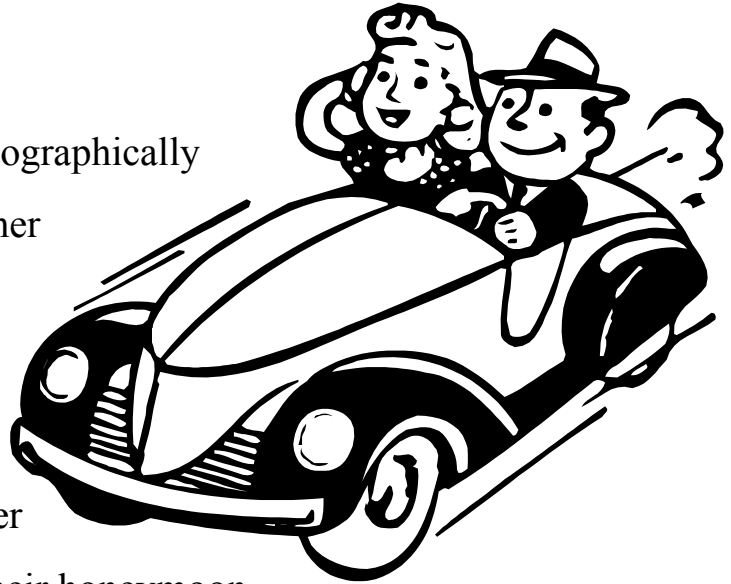
Philippians 3:13-14—Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

PRESS ON

HAVE YOU MET THE COUPLE . . .

Standard couples mixer. This one gets each couple talking to many others.

- With one middle name the same as one of yours
- Who are closest in age
- Who are farthest apart in age
- Who were born farthest apart geographically
- Who have been to Europe together
- Who had an outdoor wedding
- Who had a June wedding
- With the most grandchildren
- Who work for the same employer
- Who went to Niagara Falls on their honeymoon
- Who are both native Californians
- Who met at Bible college
- Who own a station wagon
- Who have already begun playing Christmas music
- Who met on a blind date
- Who have the most children
- Who planned all their children (no accidents)
- Who have lived in the same house for more than 10 years
- Who have had pancakes for dinner in the last year
- Whose husband cooks at least two meals a week
- Whose wife knows more about the car than her husband



ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS OF YOUTH

1. They have questions even if they do not ask them.
 - a. Make sure you answer certain basic questions from time to time.
 - 1) How can I know I'm saved?
 - 2) Why don't my parents let me do certain things? (or love me?)
 - 3) Why can't I do this or that?
 - 4) What can and should I do on dates?
 - b. Try to encourage them to ask questions; the silent ones many times have questions too.
2. Their questions may require complex responses. Example: "I've done this or that . . . I know it is wrong, . . . but what can I do now to solve the situation?"
 - a. Remember some general principles.
 - 1) The average teen will not come to you until he has been caught.
 - 2) He thinks that by avoiding punishment he has solved the situation.
 - 3) He will not want you to tell his parents.
 - b. Counsel the teen, one step at a time.
 - 1) Show him that the problem is a spiritual one.
 - a) Is he a Christian?
 - b) Does he understand repentance, confusion, and forgiveness (1 John 1:9)?
 - 2) Show him he needs to have a Scriptural attitude toward the problem, that it is not the end of the world.
 - 3) Show him everyone involved must be dealt with fairly and justly—including his parents—which usually means telling them about the matter.
 - 4) Show him God still loves him (Psalm 51:17b).
 - 5) Help him determine the steps that led him into the sin (hog + mud = habit).
 - 6) Help him see what God wants him to do now.
 - a) Do not feel guilty after confession and restitution.
 - b) Have daily devotions.
 - c) Resist the temptation to do it again.
 - d) Determine to do right no matter what.
 - e) Witness to others.
 - f) Separate from the world (1 John 2:15-17; Romans 12:1-2).
 - g) Help him to see that the Bible should be his final authority in all matters of faith and practice.
3. Realize that some of the questions a teen asks are not the real questions he wants answers to. He is testing to see how you will react to these issues before proceeding to the real ones.
4. Be frank and truthful in your answers.
5. Admit when you do not know the answer; then find it.
6. Remember that if one teen has a question, several others in the group probably will have the same question.
7. Help him look unemotionally at the situation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Youth of all ages want

1. To be loved.
2. To be accepted for who they are.
3. To have friends.
4. To confide in someone, no matter how foolish their thoughts may seem.
5. To be treated like a VIP.
6. To have a fantastic time.

Youth of all ages need

1. The security of consistent, loving authority.
2. To hear the “Good News” of God’s salvation, presented in a manner which they can understand.
3. To see how they fit into God’s eternal plan, beginning today.

SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH GRADES 1-3

Physically

Enjoy movement games
Possess hearty appetites, sometimes larger than their stomachs
Tire easily
Would rather do than watch
Enjoy building projects

Mentally

Have a 20-minute attention span
Enjoy pretending and using their imagination
Ask many questions and want answers
Can follow clear, simple rules and instructions
Are literal-minded
Enjoy counting and writing
Sometimes have a hard time distinguishing between fact and fantasy

Socially

Are learning to share
Enjoy the opposite sex
Want to be “grown up”
Respect solid authority
Enjoy group games
Are developing leadership

Emotionally

Are easily excited
Are sometimes reclusive due to shyness
Are impatient
Have many fears
Are willing to trust older folks they respect

Spiritually

Are curious about God, death, and heaven
Have faith in prayer
Enjoy Sunday School
May be ready to accept Christ as Savior
Understand the meaning of Christ as a personal friend

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH GRADES 4-6

Physically

Are growing slowly, but are generally active, strong, and healthy
 Love the out-of-doors
 Need 10 hours of sleep
 May reach puberty (girls)
 Enjoy the challenge of difficult and competitive activities

Mentally

Are in the “golden age of memorization”
 Enjoy reading, writing, and collecting
 Are very curious, want to know “Why?”
 Enjoy true-to-life stories
 Have the ability to reason
 Are developing a personal system of values

Socially

Are indifferent or antagonistic to the opposite sex
 Are hero-worshippers
 Enjoy being part of the “gang”
 Are becoming more independent

Socially, continued

Have a healthy respect for and loyalty toward consistent authority
 Demand fairness and justice
 Enjoy teamwork

Emotionally

Enjoy slapstick humor
 Dislike outward displays of affection
 Are developing controls on their emotions

Spiritually

Are able to recognize sin as sin
 Are genuine in their decision to trust Christ as their Savior
 Are willing to apply Biblical standards of conduct to their lives
 Dislike emotional displays and appeals
 Are concerned for the lost
 Can begin daily quiet time

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH GRADES 7-8

Physically

Are experiencing rapid, uneven growth, about which they are embarrassed
 Are extremely sensitive about their appearance
 Experience low endurance
 Are going through puberty—girls are developing sooner than boys

Mentally

Are able to memorize well
 Enjoy adventure and activity
 Have a tendency to daydream
 Tend to make snap judgments
 May have a “know-it-all” attitude
 Highly critical of inconsistency, hypocrisy
 Are interested in the here and now

Socially

Attracted to the opposite sex, cautiously
 Belong to a gang or clique
 Want to act like adults, at times
 Have *crushes* on older members of opposite sex
 Desire approval of the group
 Need recognition, love, and patience

Socially, continued

Become “show-off” at times
 Desire to be independent of adults

Emotionally

Are unstable, from mountaintops to dark valley in a short span of time
 Often feel misunderstood, will confide in someone they trust
 Are extremely self-conscious
 Want to be treated like adults

Spiritually

May question many childhood beliefs
 Want to do something for the Lord
 Can establish habits of Bible study and personal devotions
 Can become effective witnesses for Christ
 Make life-changing decisions for the Lord
 Want to learn more about the Bible and apply it to their lives personally
 Advertise root problems with outward misbehavior or bad attitude

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH GRADES 9-12

Physically

Are reaching maturity
Love to eat
Are establishing physical habits
Need instruction concerning their body being the temple of God
May be experimenting—smoking, drinking, and/or drugs
Are at different levels of metabolic rate—boys need more physical activity than do girls
Enjoy recreational sports
Desire challenge in activities to measure themselves (boys, mostly)

Mentally

Tend to be idealistic
Remember ideas more than words
Are interested in the process of success
Are able to see other points of view
Are beginning to do abstract thinking

Socially

Desire popularity and social approval
Want to be with the opposite sex
Care about their personal appearance
Tend to rebel against authority
Enjoy being in a crowd
Are interested in fads, will copy that which appears to be grown-up
Enjoy writing letters (girls, mostly)
Are interested in dating and love affairs

Emotionally

Often hide their true feelings under a false front
Are seeking a thrill
Are often emotionally intense and fluctuating
Are greatly influenced by peer group
Face “insurmountable” problems

Spiritually

Often consider their religion to be personal
Desire the best that God has for them
Begin to understand concepts like victorious Christian living and counting the cost
Many times feel that the Bible is hard to understand
Are capable of genuine “full-time” surrender decisions

THE SPIRITUAL LADDER

STEPS TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

- I. Identification with God
 - A. Call on the Lord for salvation (Romans 10:13).
 - B. Tell others (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:11).
 - C. Be baptized (Acts 2:41).

- II. Fellowship with God (1 John 1:5-9)
 - A. Bible study (1 Peter 2:2; Joshua 1:8)
 - B. Prayer (John 16:24)
 - C. Sin confessed (1 John 1:9)

- III. Desire to please God
 - A. Willingness to “Do God's Will,” obey the Bible (1 Samuel 15; Hebrews 13:20-21)
 - B. Decision for **FULL SURRENDER** to always seek to do God's will in life (Romans 12:1)
 - C. Decision for **DEDICATION OF LIFE** to full-time Christian service
 1. Volunteer
 2. Call of God
 - a) Through leadership—Timothy
 - b) Through God Himself—Paul

- IV. Transformed Life—A Continuing Process (Romans 12:2)
 - A. Conforming to God
 1. Change at salvation (2 Corinthians 5:17)
 2. Spiritual growth (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 3. His workmanship (Ephesians 2:10)
 - B. Developing convictions

These are just a few; every person has some specific areas that need transformation.

 1. Friends (Ephesians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14; 1 Corinthians 15:33; Proverbs 13:20)
 2. Speech (Ephesians 4:29)
 3. Attitude (Philippians 2:5, 14)
 4. Appearance (1 Thessalonians 5:22)
 5. Money (1 Timothy 6:6-11; Luke 6:38)
 6. Sex (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)
 7. Life goals and motives (Matthew 6:33)

- V. Fruit
 - A. Reproducing Christians (John 15:1-11—Fruit/More, Fruit/Much Fruit)
 - B. God working in us (Galatians 5:22-23—Fruits of the Spirit)

DISCIPLING YOUTH FOR MINISTRY

Why do we have youth groups in our churches and how should they function? A survey of many youth groups in our country displays that they often function as little more than a “babysitting” service or as an “entertainment” program designed to merely shelter and spoil our teenagers until they become adults.

Games and athletics have become a dominant factor in contemporary youth work, while training teenagers in listening, learning, and living out the truths of the Bible seems to have faded into the background of a misplaced priority system which elevates the physical over the spiritual. Should we then be surprised when our teenagers display lives of selfishness rather than service?

How should youth groups function in our churches? They should participate in the program of world discipleship that Christ gave to the local church to fulfill during His physical absence from the earth. The motto of the youth group at Tri-City Baptist Church is “Discipling Youth For Ministry.” This reflects the people (youth), the process (discipleship), and the product (ministry) that we are seeking to follow as we are equipping all our members (including our teens) to serve God and others with their lives.

Teenagers need to learn to serve God from their heart with all of their strength. Parents and pastors are united in wanting this to be the result of their years of investment in the lives of their children; yet, how does this spiritual product come about? Have we unknowingly been sabotaging our own goals by following the world's manner of entertaining teenagers rather than God's method of discipling our teens? I am not arguing for an absence of games, sports, and other activities from our youth programs; however, I am questioning the prominent role that we have given to them in our fundamental youth groups so that they seem to function as the goal of our program rather than as a means of achieving our main purpose of equipping our teenagers to know God and live for Him in this world.

There are four steps that we are using at Tri-City to get our youth involved in spiritual service to God and others. First, we are demonstrating the priority of ministry to our teenagers. Is ministry important? Is it important that we equip our teenagers to effectively witness to the lost, solve conflicts with parents and other people, display an accurate and heart-felt understanding of the truths of God's Word? Is it truly important to preach the Gospel to every creature? Do the lost have any other hope than the message of the cross? As a youth pastor, it is my job to make sure that the matter of ministry is mentioned constantly in messages, announcements, activities, and in my personal life. There is a desperate need for strong preaching and teaching in our churches about the priority of serving God and others rather than serving self. We must emphasize building godly relationships with our teens so that they see that we are serious about our Christianity as adults. Teenagers need godly relationships and godly leadership to provide clear examples of dedication to God. In a world that is driven by greed, we must clearly communicate to our teens that ministry is more important than money! Leadership must be a priority in any ministry, including youth ministry. Dissension and a lack of dedication in leadership will create a mixed message to our teens and lead to apathy and hypocrisy. If teenagers are loved and led, most of them will follow us.

Second, we are describing the privilege of ministry to our teenagers. As parents and adults, we often make the mistakes either of not leading our children into ministry as a lifestyle, or of pushing them into ministry opportunities without training them, and requiring spiritual growth as a prerequisite for giving to others in ministry. At Tri-City, there are different levels of service available to our teens. Some opportunities are available to all teens, while other ministry opportunities are available only to those teens that demonstrate a consistent direction of holiness in their lives. Climbing the ladder of service and ministry is emphasized as a great privilege that requires great responsibility. If teenagers have strong godly relationships with their parents and church leaders, they will respond to the challenge of responsibility. Such a response gives purpose and meaning to life. The vision of ministry that they catch as teenagers can be used of God in leading them into a vocation of ministry for the rest of their lives. As the youth pastor, my job is to make sure that we

portray our “heroes” as those who serve God with their lives. We need to publicly praise teens and others who do acts of service. We need to develop and maintain Biblical standards for service that give meaning to our activity. Ministry must be preceded by maturity.

Third, we are developing the process of ministry for our teenagers. How do we actually get youth to become involved in a life of service at church, at home, at school, and in the community? We need to give them the ability to do a good job by discipling them and discovering their strengths, interests, and opportunities. Teenagers need quality in what they receive so that they will have quality in what they give. Discipleship is dedication and education that centers upon the institutions that God primarily designed to accomplish this task, namely the church and the home. The church is the spiritual institution that God set up for this age to help assist the home in building a heritage of godly children who will grow up to love God and serve Him. Although other institutions such as Christian schools can help with this task, the primary agent for this job in helping the home must be the local church. The church and youth group cannot give this task up to Christian schools and para-church institutions. Youth groups that believe in this priority will not be satisfied with entertaining their teens; they will want to train the parents and teenagers to serve God inside and outside the home.

Teenagers also need to be given activities or opportunities to serve God. The job of the youth pastor and staff involves working with the teens and their parents to set up occasions when the teenager can use the training and instruction that he has received. Teenagers can do a variety of tasks. At Tri-City, on every other Sunday morning, we have a youth service (not during the adult worship service) where the teens participate as much as possible. This past summer, on Sunday nights, our teenagers ran (under adult supervision) eleven weeks of Vacation Bible School. Teenagers are extremely talented and energetic. Put their energy to good use. Teens also need to be given accountability (supervision). I find that this is one of the places where youth groups do poorly. Teenagers need adult supervision. All of the ministry that our teens perform is done under the direct supervision of adult youth leaders who are trained and held accountable by myself as the youth pastor. Ministry comes about through mentoring.

Fourth, we are determining the product of ministry by our teenagers. How do we know that we are doing ministry well? Are there any criteria to which we can look? Let me suggest three criteria that we use. First, have we produced faithfulness? This question must be asked constantly in order to keep a youth group on the right path. Is our youth program faithful to God and His Word? Second, have we produced fruit? Have we seen spiritual and numerical growth as a result of our service to God and others? Third, have we produced Fundamentalists? Going back to the Great Commission in Matthew 28, it can be observed that true faithfulness is pursuing and developing disciples that become Christians (born again), Baptists (immersed as believers), and Fundamentalists (taught to observe everything taught by Christ). We should not be satisfied with mere professions of faith. That is not the end but only the beginning of the process that must be structured and supported by the church and its youth group. Can our teenagers lead someone to Christ, see them baptized and become members of the church, and train others to follow the truth with the type of tenacity that Jesus demonstrated? The teenagers in our churches should be able to listen, learn, and live out all the areas of truth on this spectrum so that they grow as disciples of Christ and have the ability to produce this godliness in other teenagers, children, and even adults! Ministry leads to multiplication.

Fulfilling the Great Commission means that we as parents, pastors, and youth leaders cannot be satisfied with merely babysitting or entertaining our teenagers. Our job is to disciple them so that they can disciple others. If we wait until they become adults, we will lose many of them to the desires of the world that have created evil habits in their lives where there has been an absence of Biblical discipleship from us as adults.

We have a responsibility from God to disciple our teenagers. We must avoid the extremes of affiliating with the world (the predominate problem with youth in New Evangelical churches) and isolating from the world (the predominate problem with youth in Fundamental churches, especially if they go to a Christian school).

The Biblical position involves separation from sin but contact with sinners in order to confront them with their sin and the Savior. This balanced position can only be achieved by adults in godly churches practicing Biblical discipleship. Our failures with our teenagers come from our failure to follow God's program in our churches and in our youth groups. If the design of our youth groups is not discipleship, I believe that we will continue to have many teenage casualties like the prophet Jonah who failed to fulfill the ministry of confrontation as given by God. As a result, his life was filled with apathy (Jonah 1) and anger (Jonah 4). Our teenagers need to live for ministry, not live their lives in a monastery! They too are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Let us Biblically prepare them and put them to work in God's harvest field because the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH

Introduction

- I. The Power-Oriented Personality
- II. The Competitive Personality
- III. The Aggressive Personality
- IV. The Rebellious Personality
- V. The Self-Demeaning Personality
- VI. The Dependent Personality
- VII. The Conforming Personality
- VIII. The Responsible Personality

Additional Thoughts: Devastating Trends in the Life of a Teen

TOO MUCH	TOO LITTLE
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

Conclusion: How these personalities should be viewed.

Taken from *Why Teenagers Act the Way They Do* by Dr. Keith Olson

WORKING WITH KIDS

Introduction

How can one stay young?—by continuing to grow

How can you effectively minister to children and youth?

- I. Perspective—a point of view; how we see things (John 13:1-17)
 - A. It begins with a proper perspective of:
 1. Who you are—servants
Jesus even served Judas by washing his feet (John 13:1, 13).
 2. Who they are—the ones we are to serve (teens and parents)
 - B. Understand that God is no respecter of persons. He uses the ones who are willing.
 1. Woman at the well
 2. Lepers
 3. Rich
 4. Poor
 5. Beggars
 6. Rulers
 - C. God is interested in willingness, not age (1 Samuel 2:18-26).
 - D. It is not just a job, it is a ministry
 - E. What is your perspective of teens, children, and those with whom you work?
- II. Purpose
 - A. What is your purpose as a youth worker?
 - B. Why do you do what you do?
 - C. What is your purpose statement? Writing one will help you keep a clear focus.
 - D. Our ultimate purpose is to glorify God in all we do (1 Corinthians 10:31).
 - E. There are some foundations for formulating a purpose.
 1. Fear the Lord (Proverbs 1:7).
 2. Disassociate from the wicked (Proverbs 1:10).
- III. Plan
 - A. Develop a plan of action so that you can effectively minister to those with whom you are working.
 - B. What are your goals and objectives?
 1. Salvation
 2. Bible knowledge and application (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 3. Spirit-filled life
 4. Christian growth
 5. Personal commitment—loyalty
 6. Christian living
 7. Christian service
 8. Strong family

—taken from *“Focus on Youth”* by Glen Percifield
 - C. Plan to interact with the youth and to get involved in the teens’ lives.



IV. Passion

- A. When working with teenagers, you must have a sense of enthusiasm and excitement about what you are doing.
- B. Have a desire to serve the youth of today, for they are an integral part of our ministry now, not just our future ministry.
- C. Ask God for a passion or burden for your teens.

V. Problems

- A. Every teen has problems, and you can help them through their difficult times.
- B. If you can identify with those you serve, as Christ did (Luke 2:41-52), you will be able to minister more effectively.
- C. There are many problems teens are experiencing.
 1. Loneliness
 2. Doubt
 3. Fear
 4. Acceptance
 5. Discouragement
 6. Anger
 7. Bitterness
 8. Lack of love
- D. Stress the values found in 2 Peter 1:5-7.
 1. Faith—more than lip service of a Biblical belief; a behavior
 2. Virtue—moral excellence
 3. Knowledge—of God (Hosea 4:6; Proverbs 23:12)
 4. Temperance—self-control; moderation
 5. Patience—perseverance
 6. Godliness—seeking God first (Joshua 24:15)
 7. Brotherly love—kindness
 8. Charity—not a feeling but an action
- E. Because problems will arise quite often, teach teens to use Biblical principles.



VI. Patience (Ephesians 6:1-4)

- A. "Patience is a virtue."
- B. Depend upon God for strength (Ecclesiastes 12:1-8).
- C. Develop a relationship with God.

VII. Prayer

- A. Emphasize prayer often.
- B. Through you example, teens can learn about the power of prayer (Acts 12).
- C. Ask God to create in you:
 1. Self-control/right attitude
 2. Endurance/patience
 3. Love
 4. Understanding
 5. Discernment

VIII. Persistence

- A. Working with teens can be extremely discouraging as well as delightful.
- B. Because things do not usually happen overnight, keep at it.
- C. "More is caught than taught."—Howard Hendricks
- D. Teach by example in word and deed (Deuteronomy 6:1-25).
- E. Practice what you preach. Be faithful!

MENTORING YOUNG MEN IN YOUR YOUTH GROUP

I. The Importance and Urgency of Discipleship (John 11, Galatians 6)

A. The Importance

B. The Urgency

II. What a Discipleship Program Can Do for Me

A. Increase your interest in others.

B. Increase your level of spiritual maturity.

C. Increase your accountability.

D. Increase your time in God's Word.

III. Key Factors in Developing True Disciples

A. The model

B. The choosing

C. The investment

D. The Goal

IV. A Distinction between the Christian and the Disciple

A. The Basis of Choosing

B. The Boundaries of Choosing

V. Materials for an Effective Discipleship Program

A. Informal

B. Formal

INSTILLING IN TEENAGE GIRLS A PASSION FOR GOD AND A DESIRE TO BE USED OF HIM NOW

PSALM 42:1-2

I want deliberately to encourage this mighty longing after God. The lack of it has brought us to our present low estate. The stiff and wooden quality about our religious lives is a result of our lack of holy desire. Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us He waits so long, so very long, in vain.—A. W. Tozer

If this is difficult for mature adults to understand, how much more difficult must it be for teenagers to grasp with all the distractions they have today?

I. The Need

Why is it important for us to try to instill in our girls a passion for God and a desire to be used of Him now?

- A. Many teens have unsaved parents.
- B. Some teens have saved parents who go through the motions of Christianity but who lack a passion for God.
- C. Even those teens who have godly parents need reinforcement.

II. The Example

What can we learn from Esther's life that instills a passion in teenage girls to love God and to have a desire to serve Him?

A. Esther's Story

- 1. She lived in a heathen land. (God's name is not even mentioned in the book of Esther.)
- 2. The book of Esther reveals her inner beauty, as well as her natural beauty.
- 3. She looked to Mordecai for guidance although she was the queen.
- 4. She stood for right despite the cost.

B. Esther's Attributes

- 1. Loyalty
- 2. Love
- 3. Faith
- 4. Humility
- 5. Obedience

C. God's Providence

III. The Method

How do we instill this passion in our young people?

- A. Have Bible studies.
 - 1. Power teens
 - 2. Monthly girls' Bible study
 - 3. Split Sunday School sessions
 - 4. Esther Club
 - a. I have a weekly Bible study during lunch with the girls at my school.
 - b. Using Esther's life as an example, I teach them the following:
 - 1) God uses ordinary people with ordinary gifts.
 - 2) Teenagers need teenagers as examples/leaders.
 - 3) They may be here "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14).
 - 4) There was a risk for Esther's doing the right thing: "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16).
 - 5) The teen girls also have a risk: "If I lose my popularity, I lose my popularity" (friends, boyfriend, etc.).
- B. Do one-on-one devotions/discipleship.
- C. Speak passionately about God and His work. Never complain or show despair.
- D. Challenge parents.
- E. Seek counsel from your pastor.
- F. Involve leading young people who are already examples.
- F. Call teens to commitment (accountability).
- G. Notice godliness in the girls and nurture it.

IV. The Benefits for Individuals

What are the advantages of serving the Lord even as a teenager?

- A. A long life of service
- B. A ministry in others' lives
- C. Increased personal growth as a Christian
- D. A deepening understanding of and wisdom from God's Word

V. The Results as a Whole

What results will we see as our young people gain a passion for God?

—Spiritually strong young ladies who:

- A. Are able to make wiser choices/decisions.
- B. Have a submissive spirit/desire to serve.
- C. Are humble.
- D. Are modest.

When a girl has a passion for God and a desire to be used of Him, she carefully considers each decision she makes, and asks herself if God would approve of it.

Conclusion: Because teenagers will be most influenced by other teenagers, our desire is for them to begin serving the Lord now, setting an example to their peers. In order to see this happen, we must have an organized purpose and plan of action to try to instill in our young people a passion for God and a desire to be used of Him now.

MENTORING OUR YOUNG LADIES

I. Definition of Mentoring

II. Examples of Effective Mentoring

III. Areas in Which Our Young Ladies Need Mentoring

IV. Personalities and Mentoring

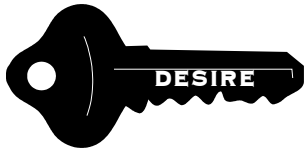
V. Ideas and Discussion

THE BASICS OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

NINE KEYS TO WORKING WITH CHILDREN



- a. Be devoted to the Lord first and foremost in your life.
- b. Be devoted to the parents of the kids with whom you work; help instill Biblical principles in the lives of their children. *Remember, you are not to take the parent's place.*
- c. Be devoted to the children with whom you work. Let them know you are there for them; take an interest in them.
- d. Be FAT (Faithful, Available, Teachable).



- a. Desire to make an impact on the lives of those with whom you minister.
- b. Possess a genuine love, interest, and compassion for each child.
- c. Know where the children are in their lives.
- d. Recognize their backgrounds.
- e. Do not be afraid to sympathize (feel for) or empathize (feel with) with the children as they relate to you what they are facing; this will show them that you are real.



- a. Do not give up or quit on any child, no matter what!
- b. Be sincere, not flippant.
- c. Be fair.
- d. Be dependable.



- a. Use discipline; it is absolutely necessary.
- b. Employ positive reinforcements. You do not always have to point out negative behavior. Instead, praise good things that kids are doing.
- c. Reward good behavior, i.e., quiet seat prizes.
- d. Discipline in love, not anger or retaliation.
- e. Do not show favoritism, but be consistent in your love for all the children and in your discipline with all the children.



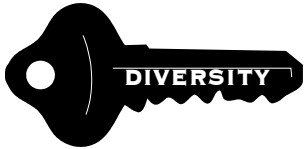
- a. Determine to make a difference for the cause of Christ.
- b. Determine to be fresh in your lesson presentations.
- c. Determine to make yourself better by evaluating yourself.
 - 1) What are my strengths?
 - 2) What are my weaknesses?
 - 3) What do I need to change?
- d. Determine not to give up.
- e. Determine to depend upon God.



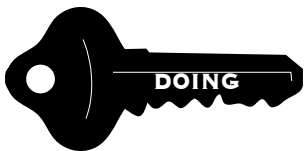
- a. Be prepared. Know where you want to go and how you plan on getting there with regard to your lesson.
 - 1) Determine your lesson theme.
 - 2) Select the methods and materials you will be using to teach your lesson.
 - 3) Write the lesson out.
 - 4) Use illustrations that relate to the children's lives.
 - 5) Plan for ways to involve the students.

- b. Use four ingredients for a productive lesson.
 - 1) Hook—Capture the student’s attention.
 - 2) Book—Explore the Word.
 - 3) Look—Present the lesson.
 - 4) Took—Apply the Word.
- c. Because of your lesson, what do you want the student to **know, feel, and do**?
Use the five keys to the mind—the five senses.

Teach from the heart, not from the head.



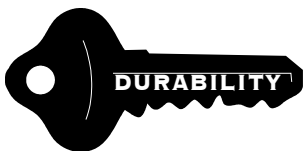
- a. Use variety in your lessons.
 - 1) Object lessons
 - 2) Stories
 - 3) Pantomimes/role playing
 - 4) Puppets
 - 5) Games
 - a) Tic-Tac-Toe – correctly answered questions get an *X* or an *O*
 - b) Memory verse puzzles and games
 - c) 20 Questions
 - d) Bible trivia
 - e) Bible baseball
 - f) Bible Sword Drill
 - 6) Puzzles
 - 7) Crafts
 - 8) Gospel illusions
- b. Do not always be predictable in your teaching.
- c. Use your imagination to bring variety to your lessons; it will keep the kids wanting to come back for more.



- a. Employ Bible learning activities.
 - 1) Activity means that the learner is active in the learning process, not passive.
 - 2) Learning refers to the change which is to take place—conforming to the image of Christ.
 - 3) Bible indicates that the task cannot be completed without examining God’s point of view.
- b. Remember, students learn more by doing and seeing than by just hearing.
- c. Create meaningful activities, not just lectures (involvement).

Maximum learning is always the result of maximum involvement.—

Howard Hendricks



- a. Work with the kids, even when you get tired and frustrated.
- b. Be patient.
- c. Be faithful.
Proverbs 28:20—A faithful man shall abound with blessing.
1 Corinthians 4:2—Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

A YOUTH WORKER AND HIS QUESTIONS

WHY SHOULD A YOUTH WORKER QUESTION?

Because it builds relationships and gives common ground
 Because it is a main source of information gathering
 Because a question stirs the conscience; an accusation hardens the will
 Because we are not able to read thoughts and motives
 Because Christ, the Wonderful Counselor, used them consistently
 Because understanding a person's beliefs, thoughts, actions and motivations is key to uncovering sin problems and coming to a biblical solution

WHAT IS A YOUTH WORKER SEEKING TO DISCOVER?

Thoughts
 Feelings (emotions)
 Behavior
 Attitudes
 Beliefs
 Actions/words
In other words: what is going on in the heart!

WHAT IS A YOUTH WORKER NOT LOOKING FOR?

Every problem in the person's life
 Everybody else's faults played over and over

WHAT TYPES OF QUESTIONS ARE USEFUL?

I. "GET-ACQUAINTED" QUESTIONS

Visiting, relationship builders, "common ground" finders, looking for spirit and outlook on life, all help determine how someone wishes to have fun, show various attitudes, concentrate on the fact that I'm a person and you're a person—in so many words say, "I like you, and I'm interested in you."

What's your name?
 How many are in your family?
 Who lives in your home with you?
 Have you visited this church before?
 What church do you attend?
 What do you like about (your) church?
 Do you enjoy sports? Which ones? What teams do you like?
 When you have a little time, what do you enjoy doing?
 What do you do with your friends?
 What are your hobbies?
 What do you most look forward to on the weekend?
 Where do you go to school?
 What grade are you in?
 What's your favorite subject(s)?
 What do you do during the summer?

Have any plans for when you graduate from high school?
Any plans for college? Which college? Why that one? What major?

II. X-RAY QUESTIONS (A DEEPER QUESTION, WHAT MOVIVATES?)

Searching “Why?” questions, framed concretely as “What?” questions, seek “Who or what is this person looking to for satisfaction?” Timing is critical, not always questions to ask directly. Different ways of formulating these motivational questions will ring the bell of different people.

What do you want?

What would make you really happy?

What will solve your problem?

What do you really deserve that you’re not getting?

What is so important to you that you would even think about disobeying God to get it?

What do you feel like doing? Do you want what you want, or do you want what God wants in your life?

What do you feel might happen that might even ruin your life?

If one thing would happen that would take away a lot of your frustration, what would it be?

If a genie would pop in to give you any one wish, what would it be?

Who or what do you sacrifice for rather than God?

Who do you tend to obey more than God?

In the morning, what is the first thing your mind goes to normally? What is the thing you can’t wait to do throughout the day or on the weekend?

During the day, what do you think about or dream about?

When you think about your rights, what one right always gets trampled and shoved aside?

In your opinion, which one of your friends or acquaintances “has the perfect setup”? In what ways does he “have it made”?

Whose opinion of you counts most with you?

From whom do you most love to get approval? From whom do you most fear rejection?

What are you banking on to really “make it happen” in your life?

What would make you feel rich, secure, prosperous?

Was there ever an event or happening that made you think that God forgot about you or abandoned you?

When was it? What happened?

What is the hardest temptation for you to overcome?

What is the hardest thing you will face as you go back home and do what God says is right?

What is the hardest thing you will have to do when you get back home?

III. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS – SPECIFIC AREAS

Help gain a clearer picture in a specific part of life, give information to plan Put off/Put on projects, may uncover further problem areas that God wants to change

Area 1: Salvation, Assurance of Salvation

What does a person need to do to be saved?

Do you know what the term “born again” means?

Tell me about the time you got saved.

What are the Bible reasons why you believe you are saved?

Have you ever doubted your salvation? Very seriously? Very often?

What do you think causes these doubts?

Are you willing to face eternity in the next few moments with the hope you have now?

Tell me the reasons why you believe God would let you into His Heaven?

What is the difference between the way a Christian lives and the way an unsaved person lives?

Area 2: Family, Authority

Who are you closest to . . . your mom or your dad? Why do you think that is?
Are your parents saved?
Is everyone treated fairly at home? Who isn't? Is anyone favored? Who?
How would you describe your parents? (too strict, too easy-going, just right)
Does your family do things together? What do you do?
What do you appreciate most about your dad? least?
What do you appreciate most about your mom? least?
What one thing would you change that would make your home happier?
Has anyone ever said, "You're just like your mother/father"? Does that make you sad or happy?
Why?
What do you do (or not do) that bothers your mom most? What do you do or not do that bothers your dad the most?
Does anyone "get away" with things in your home? Who? What's done?
What's the one thing in your home that makes you happiest? saddest? most angry?

Area 3: Friends

Who are your three closest friends? What do you like most about them?
Would you say they have a definite positive influence on you in your Christian life?
What do they do that brings you closer to Christ?
Is there anything they do that leads you farther away from Christ?
Do your friends get along with their parents?
Do you get along with your parents when you discuss things about your friends?
Do you discuss spiritual things with your friends? How often? When was the last time you had a discussion about God?
Which friend would you like to be like? Why?
What is the hardest thing you face with your friends?
Whom do you want to talk to when you are really hurting or in trouble?

Area 4: Dating, View of Sex

Do you date?
Are your parents in favor of the idea of dating? What rules have they set up for your boy/girl relationships?
What do you think is the purpose of dating?
Is it okay in certain circumstances for a Christian to be in a dating/social relationship with someone who is not saved?
When would it be okay?
Where do you normally go on a date?
Do you double, single, or group date?
Is there any occasion when sex would be acceptable in a dating relationship?
Would your friends say the same thing?
Do you have access to a car?
Do you have a curfew?
Have you ever written down any Bible commands for your relationship with a person of the opposite sex? Could you give me one?
Tell me a few things that will be true about the girl/boy you will marry?
Around your school or youth group, what is the biggest pressure when it comes to dating?

Area 5: Bitterness, Forgiveness

Have you ever been wounded deeply ? What happened? What is your relationship with this person right now?

Who would you least like to be like? Why?
 Do you find it easy or hard to forgive someone who does you wrong?
 Has anyone ever asked your forgiveness? How did you respond?
 Did you ever lose something or someone very dear to you? When? How have you responded to that?
 What have you wanted more than anything that you have never gotten?
 Have you ever considered suicide? When? What seemed to be so hopeless?
 How do you ask someone's forgiveness when you've done them wrong?
 When was the last time you asked someone's forgiveness? What had happened?
 If you do something wrong to someone and you ask God's forgiveness, do you believe you need to ask his/her forgiveness too?

Area 6: Bible, Church, School

What is your favorite book in the Bible? Why?
 Do you understand the Bible when you read it?
 Do you read your Bible regularly? What does it do for you?
 What have you gotten from your devotions lately?
 What Bible character would you most like to be like?
 When was the last time you had a problem and the Bible showed you what to do about it?
 What church do you attend? How long have you attended?
 How often do you go? Do your parents go?
 Where do you normally sit? With whom?
 If you could change one thing about your church, what would it be?
 What do you think of your pastor and/or youth pastor?
 What do you like most about your church?
 What is the best part of going to church?
 What school do you attend? How long have you attended the school?
 If public school, would you like to attend a Christian school? Why?
 If Christian school, would you like to attend a public school? Why?
 What is your opinion of the rules of your school?
 Would you change them? How?
 Is everyone treated fairly within the rules?
 What teacher or administrator do you most admire?
 What do you like most about your school?
 What do you like least about your school?
 What is the hardest thing you face at school?

Area 7: View of God

If the Lord were to come in here today and invite you to ask any question on your mind about what has happened in the past or what might happen in the future, what would you ask?
 Do you believe God loves you? Have you ever doubted it? When? What happened?
 Tell me some of the things you know about God.
 As you think about God, what is He like?
 Imagine the face of God. What would be the expression on His face most of the time when He watches you? (pleasure, anger, concern, sadness, love)
 What do you know about God that gives you the most help when you think about it?
 Can you trust God? Why or why not?
 When someone says God is your heavenly Father, what does that bring to your mind?

Area 8: Temporal Values, Goals

If you could meet one person in the world, who would it be? Why?
 Who is your favorite entertainer—the one you would really rather listen to or watch?

What are your favorite TV shows? How much do you watch each week?

Do you have your own TV? Do you have cable or satellite access?

What is your life's ambition?

How do you classify the way you like to dress?

With whom would you like to trade places?

When are you the happiest? the saddest?

What one thing could you do or change that would make you more accepted by more people?

What would you like to do when you get out of school and/or college?

Write your own ticket. Where would you work? Where would you live? What kind of salary would you want?

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DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN YOUR GROUP

“During the American Civil War, when the rival forces of the North and the South were engaged in fierce battle in the great conflict of the Shenandoah Valley, General Sheridan, in command of the Northern forces, hearing the roar of the artillery and the rattle of the musketry, rode down the valley to see how it fared with his forces, and was horrified to find the entire Northern Army being driven before the Southern troops. The moment was a crucial one. Was it possible for his army to be saved from complete defeat? Rising in his stirrups and flashing his sword in the air, he shouted, ‘We are going the wrong way, boys; we are going the wrong way!’ The next moment that rabble, retreating host was transformed into a compact army. Facing about, with their trusted General leading them on, they rushed upon the enemy and converted flight and defeat into pursuit and victory. Following their leader, they won the day.” (*2,400 Outlines, Notes, Quotes, and Anecdotes for Sermons*, Naismith, p. 133)

Ezekiel 22:30 “And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.”

I. WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

- A. “Showing the way for; to cause to do something as by teaching or setting an example.” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*)
- B. “Leadership means setting an example worth following.”
- C. “A leader is anyone who has two characteristics: first, he is going somewhere; second, he is able to persuade other people to go with him.”
- D. “Leadership is influence.”
- E. “Leadership is serving.”

II. WHY IS LEADERSHIP IMPORTANT?

- A. Without the right type of leadership, our youth groups will lack direction and lose out on opportunities for service.
- B. Christ gave us an example to follow in His calling of the Twelve (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 2:13-14; John 1:38-49).
- C. God’s plan and desire is to use His people to accomplish His purpose.

III. A BIBLICAL BASIS FOR LEADERSHIP

- A. Throughout Scripture, people were used by God to set an example for others to follow in serving Him.
- B. Moses, David, and Christ are examples of the shepherd.
- C. Joshua and Gideon are examples of leaders.

IV. WHY DO WE NOT HAVE THE LEADERS WE DESIRE?

- A. Is it because teens are not willing to stand up and take leadership responsibilities?
- B. Is it because there is a lack of teens to do the work?
- C. Perhaps it is because adults do not give them enough examples to follow. How can we expect them to do something that we ourselves do not even do? Do we stand for what is right?
- D. Do we challenge our young people enough to step up and be leaders?
- E. Do we give our young people opportunities to lead?
- F. Are we ourselves students of the Word? “Leaders who are worth their salt and who will truly lead others spiritually must be a person of the Word” (*Be The Leader You Were Meant To Be* by LeRoy Eims, p. 23).

V. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND DANGERS OF DEVELOPING STUDENT LEADERSHIP?

A. Benefits

1. Prepares them for adult leadership
2. Open to everyone
3. Ministry participation and involvement
4. Helps provide ownership of the ministry in which they are involved
5. Creates a spirit of unity
6. Creates excitement about serving
7. Helps them see that God can and wants to use them for His service and for His glory

B. Dangers

1. Can result in a popularity contest
2. Accusations of favoritism because you spend more time with some kids (Why do they always get to do everything?)
3. Pride and arrogance
4. Feelings of neglect
5. Jealousy because one teen may not have the same gifts or abilities as another teen

VI. HOW CAN I TEACH LEADERSHIP?

- A. “A life of obedience by leaders is the greatest motivation to the people who follow them” (*Be The Leader You Were Meant To Be* by LeRoy Eims, p. 27).
- B. Instruction—give instructions as a group and one-on-one (small group/large group)
- C. Participation—provide opportunities for service to develop leadership skills
- D. Evaluation—evaluate service of participants – it has been said that “you can’t expect what you don’t inspect”
- E. Challenge—encourage a Christ-like spirit in their life
- F. Example—the best way to teach leadership is to model it

VII. WITH WHOM DO I WORK?

- A. How many leaders do I need? There is no specific number of kids that you need to lead, but encourage 100% participation.
- B. Consider a teen’s salvation, character, age, and maturity.
- C. The best thing to do is to work with those kids who are willing to be worked with.
- D. If it is something exciting, others will want to get involved.

VIII. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A LEADER?

- A. Developing in maturity
- B. Faithful
- C. Teachable
- D. Dependable
- E. Humble
- F. Servant
- G. Willing and desirous
- H. Possesses character
- I. Strives for excellence
- J. Takes initiative
- J. Hard working
- K. Right attitude
- L. Godly example
- M. Involved
- N. Others-centered, not self-centered
- O. Seeks unity – team player

IX. WHAT ARE SOME PROGRAMS FOR DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP?

- A. Hot Teens
- B. R.E.A.L. Teens
- C. Service Committees

—People who are leaders stand out. They “step up to the plate” when the occasion arises.

“It is extremely difficult to lead farther than you have gone yourself.”

“Don’t ever follow any leader until you know whom he is following.”

ENLISTING AND TRAINING THE VOLUNTEER HELP YOU NEED

I. Enlisting

A. Pray (Matthew 9:37-38).

B. Build and develop the trust and confidence of the adults in the church.

1. Keep your word. Be dependable.
 - a. Departure and arrival times
 - b. Visits and prayer
 - c. Their requests
 2. Give them information. They want to know.
 - a. Announcements to adults and kids
 - b. Newsletters
 3. Become a specialist. *Know your field.*
 4. Look at things from the parents' point of view.
Parents are the key to building a youth group.
 5. Never cancel anything.
 - a. The only exception to this is . . . NEVER.
 - b. Do not announce dreams. Announce facts.
 - c. Do your homework. If you cancel anything, it is your fault—not someone else's.
 6. Have good discipline on your youth activities and trips.
 7. Be organized!
“Nothing destroys confidence like disorganization.”
 - a. Overall youth program
 - b. Activities
 - c. Youth visitation
 - d. Each age group
 - e. This year and the next seven years
 8. Always say, “Thanks!”
 9. Evaluate and correct.
 - a. Ask questions.
 - b. Listen to comments and answers.
 - c. Make a mistake once but not twice.
 10. Do not be a know-it-all, even though you are a “specialist.”
 11. Build confidence by your outward conduct.
 - a. Dress and appearance
 - b. Talk
 - c. Behavior
 - d. Appropriateness
 - e. Maturity
Do not act like a kid (all the time). Parents should be able to say, “That’s what I’d like my son to be like.”
- C. Build your case: the importance of the youth group.
1. Build it in public and private conversations.
 - a. Lunch and dinner
 - b. Meetings
 2. Use facts and examples.
 3. Share your vision. (You do have one, do you not?)

4. Talk to everyone, including the “right people.”
 - a. Official leaders
 - b. Unofficial leaders
5. Do not get a reputation for talk and no action. All talk must result in timely action.
- D. Love others and show it.
 1. Children
 2. Young people
 3. Parents
- E. Stay there year after year. Make this a life’s calling.
- F. Establish convictions and standards.
 1. Be Biblical.
 2. Be honest.
 3. Be reasonable.
 4. Be consistent.
 5. Be teachable.
 6. Be loyal.
 7. Be simple.
 8. Require more of your leadership than your general youth group.
- G. Draw people into your core of workers using their strengths. (Examples: bus driver, nurse, cook, bookkeeper, construction, etc.)
- H. Know what you are looking for.
 1. Establish levels of qualifications.
 - a. Driver
 - b. Cook
 - c. Phone caller
 - d. Activity sponsor
 - e. Visitation driver
 - f. Counselor
 2. Work with and train adults to move up your ladder of qualifications.
 - a. Experience
 - b. Instruction
 - 1) Individually
 - 2) Small groups
 - 3) All youth sponsor training seminars
 - 4) “Parents and the Youth Group”
- I. Recruit them personally.
 1. Always be on the lookout for new prospective helpers.
 - a. Do not take just any volunteer.
 - b. Check out their reputation, background, reference, and testimony.
 - c. Build a list of prospects: parents, young adults, or senior citizens.
 - d. Use caution when choosing new members or non-members.
 2. Make the enlistment process important.
 - a. Do not ask for help from the pulpit or in the church foyer.
 - b. Go to their home or make an appointment to meet them at the church office.
 3. Make the meeting important and Christ-honoring.
 - a. Begin and end with prayer. Stress the spiritual and eternal value.
 - b. Share your overall goal and vision for the youth ministry.
 - 1) How it fits with church
 - 2) How it fit with home
 - c. Present the duties and requirements as a challenge, not as a “cinch.”
 - d. Present the duties and requirements clearly and completely.

- e. Recruit at the level of responsibility you are sure the person can perform (i.e. driver, chaperone) without implying any “glorious” duties (counselor). Clearly present the qualification and job requirements.
 - f. Do not put high pressure on them or make them feel guilty if they say, “No.”
 - g. Be sure that kindness and gentleness prevails during the conversation.
 - h. Let them know that you will always be there to help them if necessary.
- J. Remember the following considerations.
1. Schedule their time to help in advance—at least once a month.
 2. Remind them often.
 3. There are times when you will have to just keep on asking.
 4. Do not be easily offended.
 5. Do not burn them out.
- II. Training
- A. Start where they are and take them as far as you can at this time. (If they need to keep learning, so do you!)
 - B. Give them time: *necessary for real growth*.
 - C. Teach by example (Philippians 4:9). They will learn best by watching you do it.
 - D. Teach by word.
 1. One-on-one
 2. Sunday School classes (substitute or special class)
 3. Other small groups
 4. Youth sponsor training seminars
 - a. Seminars at church taught by you
 - b. Other seminars
 - E. Build a library of resource materials.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A GOOD COUNSELOR

1. Spirituality
 - a. A person of strong Christian convictions and of unquestioned Christian character
 - b. A person who believes that the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior is the basic need of mankind
2. Personality
 - a. A person who by the force of his personality commands a following
 - b. A person sufficiently strong intellectually, emotionally, chronologically, and spiritually to be admired and respected by youth
3. Interest
 - a. A person who has demonstrated a definite interest in youth
 - b. A person who has tolerance for youthful characteristics
 - c. A person who has interest in human nature and character development
4. Emotional Stability
 - a. A person who meets problems or unusual circumstances calmly
 - b. A person who is not easily upset or confused
 - c. A person who is not too easily swayed by nagging or pressure; can say NO or YES and mean it
5. Resourcefulness
 - a. A person who is sufficiently resourceful and alert to youth needs to be able to lead the group in its thinking
 - b. A person who has a minimum basic understanding of age characteristics
6. Personal Habits
 - a. A person who has a clean mind. Wholesome thinking is contagious.
 - b. A person who has habits of personal cleanliness. For health as well as for appearance, physical cleanliness cannot be neglected in camp.
7. Power of Evaluation
 - a. A person who gives time to what is most important, i.e., not allowing the group to take so much time in getting ready for bed that there is no time for devotions, etc.
 - b. A person who can set up definite objectives and guide the group to accomplish these objectives
 - c. A person who has a sense of balanced program in both devotions and other activities
 - d. A person who can lead the group to face really important issues, such as...
 1. What is the chief purpose of life?
 2. What shall I do with my life?
 3. How can I become a Christian?
8. Loyalty
 - a. A person who is in harmony with the policies of Ironwood, its traditions, and practices. All camps are different. This one, as all others, has convictions and traditions that are its own.
 - b. A person who is willing to take orders or suggestions from supervisors. Supervisors are responsible to their superiors for the conduct of the group.

BUILDING BRIDGES TO TEENS

I SAMUEL 16

I. Introduction

- A. How can we who are no longer teens relate to someone who is ever changing?
- B. How can we youth leaders relate to teens in an eternally effective way?
- C. Are we effectively building bridges to teens and reaching them where they are?
- D. How many teens leave our youth groups after graduation and stay in our churches?
- E. Do teens think we have done a good job relating to them and making our ministries relevant?
- F. Does God know we have related His truths and principles to our teens?
- G. All teens have the same needs.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- H. How is it possible to meet those needs?
 - By building bridges (relating) to them
 - 1. Make your messages relevant.
 - 2. Make your ministry enjoyable.

II. Making Your Messages Relevant (2 Peter 1:3)

*God's Word has the ability to change lives.
We must effectively use it and communicate it.*

- A. Walk in their world.
- B. Put yourself in their mind set.
- C. Survey them.
- D. Know what you believe and why.
- E. Deal with issues that are related to the life of a teen

III. Making Your Ministry Enjoyable

- A. Advantages in making it fun
- B. Dangers in making it fun
- C. How does one make it fun?
- D. Key ingredient in making it fun: ENTHUSIASM
 - E-
 - N-
 - T-
 - H-
 - U-
 - S-
 - I-
 - A-
 - S-
 - M-

IV. Conclusion: What is the purpose of reaching our teens?

- A.
- B.

THE FUTURE OF YOUTH WORK IN THE WEST IN THE 21ST CENTURY

As a youth pastor who grew up in the West and who now is pastoring in the West, I am looking toward the future of youth work with both excitement and fear. There are numerous blessings, including the growth of this youth conference, that are and will be of great value in youth work. There are also some alarming and difficult circumstances that will make youth work in the Western United States harder in the next decade or two. What will it look like? How will youth ministry change? How will it stay the same?

I. Future Blessings of Western Youth Work

- A. We will have more resources to assist us in reaching and discipling teenagers.
 - 1. Growing number of camps, retreats, and seminars designed to minister to families, churches, and their teens
 - 2. Growing number of materials published and available to use in the area of youth work
 - 3. Better technology for organization and communication of God's Word
 - 4. Growing network of churches, camps, youth groups sharing information, fellowship, and assisting one another through prayer and programs
- B. We will have more focus upon teenagers and their problems.
 - 1. Churches and communities are becoming more aware of the difficult problems that families, marriages, children, and teenagers are facing.
 - 2. Many parents are more interested in bringing their teenagers to counseling in order to have a setting where they can talk about their problems.
 - 3. Many churches are spending more time and money on their youth.
- C. We will have more trained leadership.
 - 1. Bible colleges are growing in the West, both in number and in size.
 - 2. More educated men are moving to the West to plant and pastor churches.
 - 3. Christians from the East are beginning to see the West as a tremendous mission field.
 - 4. More churches, camps, and Christian ministries are moving into second generation ministry.

II. Future Difficulties in Western Youth Work

- A. Population growth will continue to bring mixed blessings and difficulties.
 - 1. The growth of cities generally brings a further breakdown of the family.
 - 2. Crime will continue to be a problem.
 - 3. People bring their false religions with them.
- B. Financial matters will continue to be a great difficulty.
 - 1. Land will be harder to secure and build upon.
 - 2. Costs will continue to go up.
 - 3. More mothers will work outside the home.
 - 4. Christian schools will be more difficult to maintain.
 - 5. Medical insurance will increase in cost.
- C. Family life will continue to break down.
 - 1. Divorces will be more frequent than marriages.
 - 2. More people will live together than will be married.
 - 3. Abuse will be more frequent.
 - 4. Children and teenagers will continue to "grow up" faster and faster.
 - 5. The family unit will no longer be the defining factor in a teenager's life.
- D. Society will continue to deteriorate.
 - 1. There will be a growing opposition to Christianity, including legal problems.
 - 2. Most Christians will compromise in order to avoid persecution and problems.

3. Rebellion against God will manifest itself in a variety of ways.
4. Technology will continue to accelerate the spread of evil.
- E. Doctrinal problems will continue to surface.
 1. Most churches will depart from a conservative, Christian position.
 2. Many churches will ignore doctrine in favor of a "practical" Christianity.
 3. Some churches will unnecessarily divide over secondary matters.
- F. Churches will have difficulty in growing Biblically.
 1. People in the West tend to be more independent and less committed.
 2. Many people move to the West to get away from problems.
 3. Some church leaders lack integrity.
 4. Some church leaders lack skill.
 5. Some church leaders lack help and support in their churches.

III. Future Opportunities for Western Youth Work

- A. Churches can have a great influence for good.
 1. Churches will have a growing number of people to whom to minister.
 2. Churches can provide answers to the many problems of life.
 3. Churches can help growing communities in the process of development.
- B. Youth work can have a great influence for good.
 1. Youth ministry will have a strategic role in the development of churches.
 2. There is a great need to build strong yet simple youth and children's programs.
 3. Good programs give much needed help to parents and pastors.
 4. Pastors can focus on the adults, on building marriages, and on church growth.
 5. Strong youth and children's programs attract new families to churches.
 6. Strong youth and children's programs keep families in churches.

IV. Future Changes in Western Youth Work

- A. Some things should not change.
 1. Keep a strong commitment to God and His Word.
 2. Assist pastors and parents.
 3. Engage in serious discipleship and training.
 4. Continue strong preaching and teaching.
 5. Build honest relationships.
 6. Direct teens toward Bible college and full-time service.
 7. Maintain a commitment to reach public school teenagers.
- B. Some things will change.
 1. Technology will have a greater role in the lives of teenagers.
 2. Teenage problems will become more severe.
 3. More teenagers will be homeless.
 4. Teenagers will lack basic skills of reading and writing.
 5. Teenagers will act more like adults.
 6. Teenagers will act more like children.

V. Conclusion

- A. The West is the fastest growing area of the *country*.
 1. We need to prepare for growth.
 2. We lack the churches needed to do the job.
 3. We need strong churches that are able to stand.
 4. We need to reach people where they are.
 5. The West is still a "frontier."

- B. The West provides great opportunities for ministry.
 - 1. Each church and youth ministry can make a significant difference.
 - 2. Many people are searching for answers.
 - 3. Each town and city needs at least one strong, New Testament church.
- C. The West needs strong youth ministries in its churches.
 - 1. This is one of the keys to long-term stability and church growth.
 - 2. There is a way to build these strong ministries.
 - a. Have a vision for the great need in this area.
 - b. Support the pastors and parents in their work.
 - c. Obtain resources to do the job.
 - d. Keep things Scriptural and simple.
 - e. Stay focused upon priorities.
 - f. Fellowship with other youth leaders.
 - g. Rely upon God to bring results.
 - 3. Youth leaders need to see the greatness of their work.
 - 4. Youth leaders need support, training, and resources.
 - 5. Youth leaders need to be appreciated.

A SHIELD ABOUT YOU: MINIMIZING MINISTRY RISKS

Innovation is a needed and welcome trait in youth workers. We have developed the reputation for playing outside the box, coloring outside the lines. But that entrepreneurial spirit means that sometimes we take risks—and that sometimes we act before we think. Unfortunately, it also means that sometimes we do not believe the rules apply to us.

Jack Crabtree, youth worker and author of *Better Safe than Sued* (Group) has this to say: "The risk of being a youth leader in North America has increased greatly in the past 10 years. While the value of each young life has remained priceless, the legal and monetary damages involved have skyrocketed. The youth leader who overlooks the crucial role of safety in his or her ministry risks substantial losses in ministry opportunities, relationships, reputation, time, and finances."

But the good news is that thinking ahead can help manage some of the risks you take as a youth worker. The following is a simple checklist that can assist you in avoiding unnecessary risks. *One caveat:* Develop a working relationship with a lawyer and an insurance carrier. Get familiar with your local and state laws—especially as they apply to teens, churches, and organizations. It is a good idea to run all forms, contracts, and paperwork for major events through a lawyer, preferably one that specializes in religious, charitable, or not-for-profit organizations.

A common mindset among youth workers is, "It'll never happen to me." Common, that is, until it does. And what is *it*? An angry confrontation with a parent. A lawsuit. A "requested resignation." Thinking ahead can help circumvent the possibility of these things happening to you.

PERMISSION SLIPS

These need to go beyond parents merely okaying their children to participate in an activity. They are also medical-release forms: they allow doctors to treat students who get sick or are injured. Although they do not free you from ultimate responsibility, they do show that you took preventative, thoughtful steps. Check with a lawyer to see how long after an event you should file your permission slips. (It is usually one to three years.)

Warning: Do not allow students to participate in an excursion with only "verbal permission." If you are tempted to do this, just imagine what you would tell hospital staff when they need to treat injured students and you do not know how to reach the parents for permission.

The permission slip itself should include phone numbers where parents can be reached in emergencies and alternate numbers. The more the merrier—cell phones, pagers, et cetera. I have taken numerous students to emergency rooms with everything from dislocated fingers to potential head injuries. In almost every case, I had to call the alternate number in order to locate a parent or guardian.

INSURANCE

Do not assume that because you are a church employee or are on church grounds or are on a church-sponsored ministry event that you are covered by the church's insurance policy. Find out what your organization's insurance policy covers. Ask questions like, "If a student gets injured on a retreat, who pays?—the parent, the camp, the church?" "If we rent a van for a missions trip, who is the primary insurance carrier?"

One youth worker I know told me that she assumed her church was the primary insurer for the van she had rented. As it turned out, however, if she had been in an accident, she would have been held responsible.

If you are planning a high-risk activity (e.g., rock climbing), you will need to check with your insurance carrier to see if additional coverage is needed.

If your event will be at a location other than the church, you need to have a Certificate of Insurance. According to Paula Hensel, former financial advisor at Willow Creek Community Church, "Many people planning events aren't even aware of what a Certificate of Insurance is! It is required by many facilities to prove that the church or organization has its own liability insurance. This certificate has to be separately produced for each individual event and facility. They aren't stock items kept in church business offices. They have to be requested—usually by whoever handles insurance in the church—from the church's insurance agency."

VEHICLES

Always remember to check the age restriction your insurance company may have set for those who operate church-owned vehicles. If the policy states all drivers must be at least 21, obviously your youth group members should not be behind the wheel of a church-owned van—no matter how slowly it putters around! In fact, some insurance companies now check the driving records of people who are designated as church-vehicle operators. I was amazed to find that one of our key small group leaders had a series of speeding tickets, and our insurance company would not allow her to operate a church vehicle. Besides the obvious insurance risk, I also realized we were putting students' lives in potential danger by letting this person drive.

CONTRACTS

For many of us, reading Greek or Hebrew is easy compared to interpreting a contract. We mistakenly assume that the facility we are negotiating with (or the band or speaker's agent) has our best interests in mind; They are actually trying to protect their interests and to negotiate the best deal they can. So when it comes to planning large events off-site—especially at a hotel—you should consider using a professional meeting planner. Good meeting planners know just how to service their clients and can even help protect you from falling unnecessarily into debt if you have to cancel your retreat or event. Because meeting planners work for several clients, they can also negotiate better prices for you. Consult a meeting planner (and a lawyer) before signing a contract.

COPYRIGHTS

If you use song sheets, transparencies, slides, movies, videos, or other created works in your ministry, you need to make sure that you have obtained proper permission to use the materials.

A good place to start is the Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) Web site at www.ccli.com.

FINANCES

Tiger McLuen, a fellow youth ministry educator and speaker, has said that in the first year out of college, a youth worker will literally handle more cash than any other new graduate. Because of all the money that floats around for retreats, mission trips, fundraisers, and camps, you need to be under a system of financial accountability.

"Aside from the sexual immorality of its leaders, a church's fall is most likely to come from mishandling financial matters," Hensel advises. "Of course, getting receipts for any church money you spend is very important, as is responsible handling of any money you may have collected for an event. Reimbursement checks to church leaders don't look very good without receipts to back them up—and neither does the disappearance of large amounts of unaccounted-for money." So make sure you do not put off turning in receipts or depositing money. And request honorarium and payment checks far enough in advance so they can be processed in time—not two hours before you are scheduled to begin and the church treasurer is trying to go home.

GAMES

Mud football, spaghetti wars in the narthex, "Honey, If You Love Me," Chubby Bunny—all are fun games, and all can get you into trouble. Some are a danger to kids; others are a danger to property. Some place students in awkward and embarrassing—and sometimes compromising—positions. What was considered humorous in youth ministry twenty years ago can get you into a serious predicament today.

PERSONNEL

While good volunteers will provide invaluable services to youth ministries, we must choose them wisely. Poor choices can destroy everything. Here are some components to the hiring process you might want to study or revamp.

1. The application. Beyond the typical data (name, employer, education, et cetera), other information the applicant should provide includes:
 - All the ministries for which the applicant has served, to whom the applicant reported, and why the applicant left those positions. (You want to avoid a volunteer with a track record for hopping from church to church, ministry to ministry.)
 - A background check. Has the applicant ever been rightly or wrongly accused of child abuse or neglect? Has the applicant ever been arrested or convicted of anything more serious than a traffic violation? Will the applicant grant you permission to contact appropriate government agencies in order to determine if the applicant would be suitable to oversee adolescents?
 - Character references—at least three—in writing. Include a place on the form where a reference can indicate if he or she wishes to talk with you about the applicant. I have found that people are frequently hesitant to put anything negative in writing but that they will open up in person.
2. The interview. You or a trusted team member should interview each applicant.
 - If you give the okay for the applicant to serve as a volunteer, keep all applications and interview notes on file for at least as long as the person is involved in your ministry—if not longer.
 - How far should you go in screening potential volunteers? Crabtree states, "The law wants to know if an organization has taken reasonable and consistent steps to obtain information that will help predict any potential dangerous behavior by an employee (volunteers too)...reasonable action means following any leads or concerns a person's initial application might generate. If an applicant says he has been convicted of a criminal offense, the reasonable action is to find out the details of that situation. If he says he hasn't and there is no contradicting evidence to raise suspicion, the process should not go any further."

ESSENTIALS

Every ministry needs certain "dos and don'ts" in writing—and they should be revisited and reevaluated annually. What are some essentials to consider?

1. Clarifying what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate touching
2. Explaining what is suitable discipline
 - a. Never shame the student.
 - b. Never use physical punishment.
 - c. Never discipline in public.
3. Describing unacceptable activities
 - a. R-rated—perhaps even PG-13-rated—movies
 - b. Group-sponsored lock-ins with only one leader in attendance
4. Explaining any personal behavior standards you expect from the team.

RELATIONSHIPS

A reason many of us get into youth ministry is that we enjoy building relationships with students. Here are four crucial things to keep in mind when working with them:

1. Confidentiality. Define your limits. Never promise students you will not tell their secrets to anyone else. If students demonstrate they will harm themselves or others, you must take immediate action. Make sure you have at your disposal a network of licensed counselors who you can call and to whom you can refer students—and from whom you can receive advice.
2. Mandated reporting. Each state has its own set of laws that deal with clergy confidentiality (e.g., reporting suspected child abuse to authorities). Whether or not you are required by law to report an abuse situation, it is always a good idea to consult a licensed therapist to see what action would be the most appropriate depending on the circumstance you encounter.
3. Liability. Because you are counseling students, whether formally or informally, check with your lawyer and your insurance carrier to see if you need to carry liability insurance that relates specifically to counseling.
4. Boundaries. When working with students of the opposite sex, make sure your one-on-one meetings are in public or visible places. Never agree to drive a student of the opposite sex home unless you are accompanied by another person. One youth worker told me how he broke this "rule" and was accused of raping a female student! Although the senior pastor believed the youth worker, he was removed from any contact with students until the case was preparing to go to court—and only *then* did the student admit she had fabricated her accusations.

When all is said and done—when all the legal, ethical, and moral standards are in place and running—the ultimate goal is not merely to protect ourselves and our reputations. The ultimate goal is to remain worthy of the trust that parents have placed in us to care for their kids. And it is up to us to keep and nourish that trust.

Formerly the associate junior high director for Willow Creek Community Church in suburban Chicago, Ginny Olson has been heading the youth ministry program at North Park University in the Windy City for almost four years and is a respected speaker and teacher.

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TEAM OR RIVAL: THE YOUTH WORKER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PASTOR

Many people who work with youth today are involved in ministry for all the wrong reasons. It should not be your purpose to build yourself up or to draw attention to yourself. The main reason you should desire to work with teens is to point them in the direction in which they can possess a relationship with God. Because many youth workers possess selfish ambitions, there is often great conflict between the youth worker and the pastor. Some of the problems that arise in the pastor's eyes might be the following:

1. The youth worker is too much of a kid.
2. There is no communication between the pastor and youth worker.
3. There is a loss of confidence in what the youth worker does.
4. The youth activities are poorly administered.
5. The youth worker is "in another world."

(Benson, *The Complete Book of Youth Ministry*, Moody Press, 1992, pp. 113-114)

The youth worker must understand that he is an extension of the pulpit ministry of the church and that what he does reflects upon his pastor. It is of great necessity that between the pastor and the youth worker there be a spirit of cooperation, which is nurtured through each one's relationship with Christ. This cooperation is also revealed in one's relationship with his spouse and family. It is imperative that you be a **TEAM** player and not be a RIVAL.

How can you be a **TEAM** player?

- I. Be **T**eachable.
 - A. A teachable spirit is a must if you are going to be successful in your dealings both with your pastor and with your youth.
 - B. How is this attitude cultivated?
 1. Be willing to learn.
 - a. "Take my yoke upon you, and **learn** of me..." (Matthew 11:29).
 - b. Observe what others have done.
 - c. Ask questions.
 - d. Read books.
 - e. Evaluate yourself.
 2. Be willing to be helped.

"And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and **help** us..." (Joshua 10:6).
 3. Be willing to be corrected.
 - C. Constant learning is necessary for spiritual growth (Deuteronomy 5:1-33, note verse 1).
 1. Hearing – absorbing and accepting information about God
 2. Learning – understanding its meaning and implications
 3. Following – putting into action all we have learned and understood
(Taken from *The Handbook of Bible Application*, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, Ill., 1999)
 - D. Learning often results in discovering something that needs to be changed. Be willing to make that change.
 - E. Learning is something that continues throughout one's lifetime. Be patient. You cannot learn everything you need to know overnight.
 - F. Those who have a desire to be taught and who are willing to take the time to learn will benefit greatly from what they discover. Do not think you know it all already.

- G. Peter, a know-it-all, constantly put his foot in his mouth; yet he learned how to be taught by the Master.
- H. A flowing stream encourages life, while the stagnant pond encourages death (leads to nowhere).

II. Be Supportive

- A. Your role is one of great significance! Both Joseph and Daniel took their supportive positions seriously. Though neither of them ever became the top man, they both realized the significance of their position. As a result, they were able to glorify God.
 - 1. Joseph—Genesis 45:5-7
 - 2. Daniel—Daniel 6:26
- B. Youth workers must be supportive of the people with whom they work.
 - 1. The pastor
 - 2. The parents
- C. If you cannot be in full support of what the pastor is doing, then you have no business serving with the youth.
- D. Do not allow others to divide you; efforts to create division are common (1 Corinthians 1-3, note 1:10).
 - 1. Do not betray confidences; be trustworthy.
 - 2. Do not blame your pastor for decisions with which you do not agree.
 - 3. Adjust to your pastor and to the way he leads.
- E. Understand that what you do is an extension of the pulpit. Youth work is not an entity unto itself.
- F. How can you be supportive?
 - 1. Follow the pastor's leadership.
 - 2. Enthusiastically adhere to your pastor's plans and opinions, even if you do not think he is right.
Altruism = for the good of the whole
 - 3. Do not let your negative opinions of your pastor be revealed.
 - 4. Encourage your pastor.
 - 5. Pursue your pastor for time to build a relationship.
 - 6. Pray for your pastor regularly.
- G. What diminishes your support?
 - 1. Negative attitudes
 - 2. Going against the pastor
 - 3. Speaking negatively about your pastor
 - 4. Doing what you want rather than what your pastor wants

III. Be Cooperative.

- A. Unity between the pastor and youth worker is vital (Psalm 133:1).
- B. This spirit of cooperation is based on our relationship with God.
- C. There should be a desire to become one in the following areas:
 - 1. Thought
 - 2. Intent
 - 3. Actions
- D. Philippians 2:1-11 teaches us about the spirit of cooperation.
 - 1. Unity ought to be a distinctive mark of Christians—verses 1-2.
 - 2. Teamwork is the product of genuine love for one another—verses 3-4.
 - 3. Servitude is the result of following Christ's example—verses 5-7.
 - 4. Humility and obedience will be evident when an individual truly desires to please God—verses 8-11.
- E. We are fellow workers with God. We are not running a one-man show (1 Corinthians 3:1-9, note vs. 9).

- F. Each of us has a specific purpose; accomplishing that purpose with the aid of others is essential (Ephesians 4:1-16, note verse 12).
- G. Do you possess a spirit of cooperation (unity) with your pastor?

IV. Be Co**M**mitted.

- A. The average stay of a youth worker is extremely short. Be committed and endure through both the easy and difficult times.
- B. Commitment is essential to true friendship (Proverbs 17:1-28, note verse 17).
- C. Our commitment to Christ must be complete (Matthew 8:18-27, note verse 22).
- D. Our commitment to God must be consistent (Joshua 24:14-27, note verse 15).
- E. Follow Christ's example (Romans 5:1-11, note verse 8).
- F. "Commitment is the beginning of trusting God" (Psalm 37:1-39, note verse 5).
- G. Be a finisher. Do not have to be asked twice to do something.
- H. Pay close attention to details.
- I. Earn your pastor's trust.
- J. Be consistent.
- K. Be content (Philippians 4:10-19).
- L. Be authentic.
- M. Be encouraging.
 - 1. It takes effort (Philippians 1:27).
 - 2. It is contagious.
- N. Discuss priorities with your pastor and commit to those priorities.

How can you be a **RIVAL**?

I. Be Un**R**eliable.

- A. Be late.
- B. Be unorganized.
- C. Be unprepared.
- D. Be inconsistent.

II. Be **I**ndividualistic.

- A. Do not seek to work as a team, but fulfill all your own desires.
- B. Go against your pastor's wishes; do not follow his advice.
- C. Pass the blame.
- D. Please yourself.

III. Be Destructi**V**e.

- A. Do not be a part of the ministry, but rather be a ministry unto yourself.
- B. Tear your pastor down every chance you get.
- C. Belittle your pastor and blame him for everything negative that takes place.

IV. Be **A**rrogant.

- A. Have a know-it-all attitude, and do not learn anything.
- B. Seek to gain attention for yourself.
- C. Take credit for the positive things that take place in your teens' lives.
- D. Be filled with pride.

- E. Do not be willing to learn.
- F. Do not be willing to change.

V. Be Un**L**oving.

- A. Do not love your pastor.
- B. Do not love your workers.
- C. Do not love your teens.
- D. Do not love what you do.
- E. Do not love your God.

Conclusion and Application: As a youth worker, you should seek to be a team player that can be in full support of your pastor. Being part of a team is what ministry is all about—serving one another with one another. God does not want us to do things on our own; He desires that we labor together, relying upon His strength.

ON BOARD FOR THE LONG HAUL

Purpose: To teach ladies in ministry (lay ministry or full-time ministry) some principles on priorities that will help them to have long-term ministries, avoiding burnout, or being put on the shelf.

I. ONE PRIORITY. ALL OTHER PRIORITIES MUST GO THROUGH THAT ONE

A. Jesus' one priority—to do the will of His Father

In the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39).

He told His disciples, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me" (John 4:34).

He willed to do one thing: the will of His Father.

B. David's one desire

Psalms 27:4—One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

C. Paul's one goal

Philippians 3:13-14—This one thing I do . . . press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

D. My one priority—to do the will of my Father

II. PRINCIPLES ON PRIORITIES

A. **There is no difference between the secular and the sacred.** How do we put Christ first?

B. **Order is not the primary issue; obedience is.**

C. **"Q and A" Times are okay.**

James 1:2-6—My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

Problems:

1. Questions
2. Questions and Prayer
3. Un-Biblical Answers
4. Answers and Obedience

DO THE NEXT THING

From an old English parsonage down by the sea
 There came in the twilight a message for me;
 Its quaint Saxon legend, deeply engraven,
 Hath, as it seems to me, teaching from Heaven.
 And on through the hours the quiet words ring,
 Like a low inspiration: DO THE NEXT THING.

Many a questioning, many a fear,
 Many a doubt, hath its quieting here,
 Moment by moment let down from Heaven,
 Time, opportunity, guidance, are given.
Fear not tomorrows, Child of the King,
Trust them with Jesus. DO THE NEXT THING.

Do it immediately; do it with prayer;
 Do it reliantly, casting all care;
 Do it with reverence, tracing His hand
 Who placed it before thee with earnest command,
 Stayed on Omnipotence, safe 'neath His wing,
 Leave all resultings. DO THE NEXT THING.

Looking to Jesus, ever serener,
 (Working or suffering) be thy demeanor.
 In His dear presence, the rest of His calm,
 The light of His countenance be thy psalm.
 Strong in His faithfulness, praise and sing!
 Then, as He beckons thee, DO THE NEXT THING.
 (source unknown)

D. God's purpose for you and me is Christlikeness.

1. God never intended for us to be able to handle the pressures of life on our own.
 - a. Matthew 4:4—Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
 - b. John 15:4-5—Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. . . For without me ye can do nothing.
 - c. 2 Corinthians 3:5—Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.
 - d. 2 Corinthians 4:7—. . . that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. (We are just clay pots.)
2. God does intend for us to handle some pressures.
 - a. This is part of His plan (Romans 8:28-29).
 - b. Our plan would probably be different (Isaiah 55:8-9; Jeremiah 10:23).

E. Rehearsing God's truths strengthens us in overwhelming times. GOD IS. . .

- Too loving to ever reject me (Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 5:8; Romans 8:35-39).
- Too compassionate to ever be uncaring (Psalm 103:13-14; Isaiah 63:9; Lamentations 3:32-33).
- Too faithful to ever leave me (Isaiah 41:10; Deuteronomy 31:8; 2 Timothy 2:13; Psalm 36:5; Genesis 28:15).
- Too generous to ever withhold anything that I need (Philippians 4:19; Psalm 84:11; Psalm 103:5; 2 Corinthians 9:8).
- Too powerful to ever fail (Ephesians 1:19-20; Ephesians 3:20; Luke 1:37; Jeremiah 32:17).
- Too knowledgeable to ever be caught by surprise (Matthew 6:8; Hebrews 4:13; Psalm 139:1-4).
- Too near to ever be late in coming to my rescue (Psalm 46:1; Jeremiah 23:24; Psalm 139:7-10).
- Too wise to ever make a mistake (Psalm 18:30; Romans 11:33; Col. 2:3; Psalm 147:5; 1 Cor. 1:25).
- Too holy to associate with evil. Habakkuk 1:13; Hebrews 7:26; Isaiah 6:3; Psalm 99:9; James 1:13

—Taken from Pat Berg

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES: GRADES 1 - 6

Mission statement - The children's ministry of Emmanuel Baptist Church will seek to see children saved (Matthew 19:14) and to lay a foundation of Christian character in their lives (Ephesians 6:4). This will give them a basis for not only future ministry but also present ministry as they impact those around them.

How - We will seek to accomplish this in five ways.

1. Sunday School - This time will primarily be used for teaching the basic Bible stories and truths and will be broken down into 4 areas: 1st-3rd grade boys, 1st-3rd grade girls, 4th-6th grade boys, 4th-6th grade girls.
2. Children's Church AM - This time for 1st – 3rd graders only will be during the entire morning worship service and will primarily be used for evangelization and the early steps of obedience. It will also follow up on the Sunday School Lesson that was taught. Newly-saved children will go through a 9-week discipleship program. Boys and girls will be together.
3. Children's Church PM - This time for all 1st-3rd grade children will be Sunday evenings after the music service in church and will be primarily used to develop in the children a taste for music that will be pleasing to the Lord. The basics of music will be taught and times to sing will be provided.
4. Master Clubs - This time will be on Wednesday evening and will be used primarily for edification and application. Most awards given out will be through the Master Clubs. There will be two divisions within the Master Clubs: 1st-3rd grade children (each grade will have its own class and booklet) and 4th-6th grade (everyone will be together but each person will be able to advance at his own pace).
5. Bus Ministry - The bus ministry will use the Sunday School structure as well as the Sunday AM Children's Church. They will also have outside activities as the Bus Director sees necessary. Their rewards come primarily through the bus ministry. The main purpose of the bus ministry of Emmanuel Baptist Church is to seek individuals (ages 4 and up) in our local community that do not regularly attend a Bible believing and preaching church, with the intent of inviting and transporting them to the Sunday morning services at Emmanuel Baptist Church (Luke 14:23, Matthew 19:14). Our desire is that they would trust Jesus Christ as personal Savior (Romans 10:12-13) and then grow in faith and obedience to the Lord as they are discipled (Proverbs 22:6). A secondary purpose is to develop a relationship with the parents of the children that ride the bus in order for us to share with them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Fourth-sixth grade bus children will be "adopted" by church families they will be able to sit with in the service.

Activities - These will be run through the Master Clubs, with the Bus Ministry being separate. We will have a children's emphasis night on a Sunday evening, approximately every six weeks. Other activities will be scheduled at the discretion of the youth pastor, Sunday School director and Master Clubs director. All activities must have the approval of the youth pastor. A week of special emphasis for children will be planned every year such as V.B.S. and day camp. Children, who earn the privilege, will also get the opportunity to go to national competition with Master Clubs. Information and dates will differ from year to year.

Promotion - Promotion for all areas will take place the Sunday immediately following the Youth Awards Banquet. Promotion will affect all areas of children's ministry immediately.

Discipline - Minor discipline problems will be handled in the classroom or with the teacher. Major problems should be handled as follows:

1. If the parents are in church, they should be notified to handle the problem because it is their responsibility (Proverbs 22: 6).
2. Bus children should be sent immediately to the bus director.
3. If the children did not ride the bus but someone other than their parents brought them to church, that adult should deal with the problem. If their parents just dropped them off at church, then they should be contacted.

In the event the situation is getting out of hand, then the person above you in responsibility should be notified. For example, if this problem happens in Sunday School, the Sunday School director should be notified. He should in turn notify the youth pastor. If this happens in Master Clubs, then the director should be notified. He would in turn notify the youth pastor. At no time should an adult worker at Emmanuel Baptist Church try to use corporal punishment on a child or physically restrain him in any way. Although we are not fathers to these children we should follow the example of Ephesians 6:4 at all times.

Adult Conduct - All adults must fill out and sign the attached application form, which is used for everyone's protection, as well as for legal purposes. No one should at any time be alone with a child in a secluded area such as a car, a room with the door closed, or a rest room. We must use extreme caution in this area and be above reproach (Romans 14:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:22). No activity with children should go on under the protection of this ministry without a person in charge knowing about it. Whenever possible, the youth pastor should be informed of all activities. Only members in good standing should be working with children in any area. All workers should meet the approval of the Pastor and Youth Pastor. If a guest speaker is asked to speak to the children who is not a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church it should have prior approval of pastor and youth pastor. Please do not ask someone to fill your class or position until you have it approved. There may be reasons that a person is disqualified to work in a position, but it may not be public information. All workers should be above reproach. Christ gave some stern warnings to those who would offend little children (Matthew 18:6). Our workers should dress with the utmost modesty, being conscious of the needs of working with children, such as running, bending over, and so forth (1 Timothy 2:9). Workers should abstain from all kinds of worldly behavior, such as the wrong kind of music and television. We are to be an example to the believers (1 Timothy 4:12).

Positions and Definitions -

SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR - is responsible to order all supplies for Sunday School but may employ the Sunday School secretary's help with this. He will communicate with the preschool director as to what to order for that department. He also will make sure equipment, including attendance books, is put out and up for Sunday School. Working with the youth pastor, he will fill all positions in the Sunday School and be responsible for all teachers under him. He will ensure that the purpose of Sunday School is accomplished. He will handle any discipline as prescribed in the discipline section of this manual.

- **SUNDAY SCHOOL SECRETARY** – is responsible for the copying and distributing of Sunday School material. She also will fill supply request forms when necessary and will coordinate all the Betty Lukens flannel graph distribution. She will set out teacher boxes Sunday morning and assist the director as he sees fit.
- **TEACHERS** - are responsible for teaching the Bible to their classes. They will maintain the record books as prescribed by the director. Creativity in the classroom is helpful. Teachers should arrive no later than 9:45 a.m. At the conclusion of the class, they should ensure that their children are taken to the next classroom and properly turned over to the next authority. If the new workers are not present, a teacher should wait with the children until they arrive. They will

contact and pray for their students often. Any outside activities with their classes must meet the approval of the director and youth pastor.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH DIRECTOR-AM - is responsible for the overall running of the Children's Church AM Service, including scheduling preachers (with approval of youth pastor). He will ensure that bus children are safely escorted to the bus. He will be responsible for all workers in his department and will answer directly to the youth pastor.

- **MUSIC LEADER** - is responsible for all music that the children sing, including singing new songs and old ones. He should coordinate with the director the amount of time and when songs would be appropriate.
- **COUNSELORS AND HELPERS** - are responsible for the discipline of the children during the service, assist the director and music leader, help with restroom breaks, and so forth. At the conclusion of the service, they will assist the director in counseling the children on decisions made. They will take the children to the proper place of dismissal and assist with general clean-up of the room.
- **DISCIPLESHIP TEACHER** - is responsible for taking children through a 9-week course which will include; salvation, eternal security, baptism, going to church, praying, reading the Bible, witnessing and obedience. He will have only 10 students maximum and will be responsible for all areas of that service. These children will be separate from the others. At the conclusion he will be responsible for the "graduation" of these children. There will be three of these classes a year.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH TEACHER- PM - will conduct the Patch the Pirate Club with the children. We will use only portions of this material, such as the music and story. He needs to have a knowledge of music and be creative with children. He will ensure that the purpose of Sunday night Children's Church is followed and will be responsible for letting the youth pastor know what materials he will need. He will also be responsible for communicating with the Master Clubs director on when children will get a music badge. He will have the children ready to sing approximately every six weeks on children's night, something the youth pastor will schedule. He will answer to the youth pastor.

- **PIANO PLAYER** - will be responsible to play the piano and help the children learn their music. He will assist the teacher in anyway the teacher sees fit.

MASTER CLUBS DIRECTOR - will oversee the general running of Master Clubs, including schedules, snacks, and follow-up. He will also be responsible for all activities for the children's ministry. He will communicate with other workers in various departments and be responsible for those who work under him. He will answer to the youth pastor and direct orders for material to him. He will have awards ready as often as possible to keep the morale of the children up. The youth pastor will schedule this night. He will coordinate any special events such as coloring contest, preaching, national awards, and so forth with Master Clubs Headquarters .

- **TEACHERS** - will be responsible to counsel their students and supervise them in games, snack time, and preaching. They will listen to their verses, check their projects, and assign tests where necessary. They will be assisted by helpers and will answer to the director.
- **GAME DIRECTOR** - will plan and direct games for all age groups. If possible, they will play the same game as the youth. When not possible, he will coordinate with the youth game director the equipment needed for his game. This should be done before service time not during. Games should be prepared ahead of time and well organized. He will also help referee the youth games.

BUS DIRECTOR - will be responsible for all areas of the bus ministry. He will ensure that his workers are carrying out their responsibilities. He will schedule bus activities through the youth pastor. He will communicate with the teachers in Sunday School and help with discipline as prescribed in previous paragraphs. During special weeks for the children, he will coordinate the bus to run for these events.

- **SONG LEADERS** - will lead the children in singing Christian songs that will help prepare their hearts for worship and will teach them Christian truths. Songs should always be sung on the way to church. A list of favorite songs will be kept on the bus. However, song leaders are encouraged to teach the children new songs from time to time. Writing the words to a new song on poster board is a good teaching tool for some of the older children.
- **BIBLE VERSE TEACHER** - Each month, we will have a theme and a Bible verse for the kids to memorize (Psalm 119:11) which will support the theme. All the workers should also memorize this verse, which will be written on poster board. The responsibility of the Bible verse reviewer is to help teach the children the Bible verse, explain its meaning, and offer areas of personal application. The Bible verse should be taught on the ride home. Awards will be given on the last Sunday of each month to those kids who can recite the verse and reference from memorization.
- **BUS VISITATION DIRECTOR** - Bus visitation is conducted at 10:00 a.m. every Saturday. All bus workers are strongly encouraged to participate in visitation. If you cannot visit at the regular visiting time, other arrangements can be made. The duty of the visitation director is to plan and coordinate the visits and to direct workers as needed. Children that attend regularly should be personally visited at least once every two weeks. New riders (have come for 3 weeks or less) should be personally visited weekly. Children that live in remote areas must be contacted weekly, either in person or by telephone to see if they will be riding the bus the upcoming Sunday. Workers are encouraged to attempt to make new contacts in the general areas where the bus currently runs and to encourage children to invite friends that live in the same neighborhood. After attempts to make new contacts on the current bus route have been completed, we will begin to visit other areas in Kings Mountain.
- **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES/PROMOTIONS DIRECTOR** - Special activities/promotions will be held for the bus children to reward and encourage those children who are riding the bus and to promote the bus ministry to new children. All activities must be submitted to and approved by the bus director no less than four weeks in advance of the date of the activity. Fliers will be printed and distributed to children promoting the activity. A signed permission slip is required for any activity that is not held immediately following the Sunday Morning services or that will not take place at Emmanuel Baptist Church. A standard permission slip developed by Emmanuel Baptist Church must be used. A handout must also be given to the parent or legal guardian of all children participating in an off-church activity. The handout should include the following information: 1) type of activity and who can participate, 2) date and time (starting and finishing) of activity, 3) address and phone number where the activity will take place, 4) name of adult in charge of activity (if other than bus director), 5) name and phone number of the bus director. The responsibilities of the activities/promotions director are to come up with ideas for activities/promotions and to regularly schedule them every 4-8 weeks. However, all workers are encouraged to contribute ideas of activities.
- **RUNNERS** - are responsible to leave the bus during a stop and to knock on the doors of those who will be riding the bus. The runner should then escort the children safely to the bus. On the ride home, the runner should see that the children get safely back to their home. Their secondary responsibility is to make sure the bus is clean before beginning the route and after the route.

- **BUS DRIVER** - is responsible for inspecting the bus for any safety problems and fill out an inspection ticket before departing the church grounds every time the bus is used by the bus ministry. The driver is also responsible for taking the attendance of the riders and making sure that all kids who rode the bus to church are accounted for on the ride home. If any unusual incidents occur on the bus route (behavioral, injury, etc.), the driver should notify the bus director. The bus director will then inform the youth pastor upon completion of the route.
- **RECORDS KEEPER** - is responsible for collecting and filing records of each rider. Records include, but are not limited to 1) attendance, 2) general permission slip and medical release form to ride the bus, and 3) permissions slips for special activities.

These policies will be taken before the church for approval.

Motion: Motion made by _____ to adopt the Children's Ministries Policy" as presented by the deacons to be effective for the church as of the 1st day of January 1998.

Seconded: _____ seconded the motion.

Secretary:

Date:

Date approval for entry:

YOUTH MINISTRY: 7TH GRADE - ENTRANCE INTO COLLEGE

Mission Statement: In order to glorify God, the youth ministry at Emmanuel Baptist Church will evangelize, exhort, and edify youth staff, youth, and their parents to make an eternal impact on youth around them and ultimately the world.

How: We will seek to accomplish this primarily through "Sigma" during the school year and various activities in the summer. Sigma is based on James 1:22: "But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only..." .

1. Sunday school - is designed to use 5-week studies on a variety of issues based upon the need of the young people. A question and answer session will be used every 6th week. P.A.N.I.C. meetings for parents will be every other month.
2. Youth Hour - is designed to be used for a variety of things such as Preacher Boys Class, choir and orchestra practice, dating series, mission series, drama, deaf class, music series, and projects.
3. Wednesday Soulwinning - is designed to train the young people in personal evangelism and give opportunities to go out into the Kings Mountain area with the Gospel.
4. Wednesday Night - is designed to be one of our primary outreach times. This is also the main time for Sigma. We will study through books of the Bible in the message time. The youth devotion guide will coordinate with this study. Team meeting times will take place on this night where young people can plan projects and quote memory verses.
5. Activities - are designed to be a fun time of competition. Each week will differ from another. The Bible will always be preached. Special times such as camps, mission trips, retreats, rallies and others will be scheduled as the youth pastor sees need.

Positions and Definitions -

YOUTH PASTOR - will be responsible for the overall ministries of children: babies through high-school graduates. Each director of these various ministries will answer to him in regards to their ministry. He will oversee the budget, choosing of workers, activity planning and curriculum to be taught. He will have a hands-on approach to the youth ministry including preaching, counseling, activities planning, devotional guides and overall running of Sigma. He will answer to the pastor.

TEAM LEADERS - will be responsible for their individual teams. They will meet the qualifications of a worker and answer to the youth pastor. They will help each teen grow spiritually throughout the year. On Wednesday nights, they will oversee the saying of verses, team planning, games and other things as the youth pastor sees fit. They will be expected to be involved in the life of the teens and pray for them daily.

The college advisors will assist their adult couple in every aspect of running the team. They will be verse listeners and game referees, helping to set up and tear down the game when necessary.

GAME DIRECTOR - will be responsible for the running of all the games in the youth program. He will set up and break down all equipment for the games. He will coordinate with the Master Clubs game director the equipment needed for the games. He will explain and referee each game. He will keep the youth pastor advised on equipment needs and will answer to the youth pastor.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS - will be responsible for teaching their class following the curriculum the youth pastor has selected. They will be involved in other areas of the teens' lives in order to better minister to them. They will answer to the youth pastor.

* See the Children's Policies for discipline and adult conduct.

TEEN LEADERS - will be leaders in training. They will answer to their team leaders and then the youth pastor. They will help in all functions of their team. By the year's end, they will be handling the majority of the work. They must meet the attached qualifications.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEENAGE LEADERS

1. Must be growing towards Christlikeness (Ephesians 4:13)
2. Must be baptized and a member of E.B.C. (Acts 2:41)
3. Must attend 90% of services and activities of E.B.C. When you are forced to miss, you must tell Bro. Jim before the missed time (Hebrews 10:25).
4. Must do your best to resolve conflicts which occur with church activities. Church should be a priority (Colossians 1:18).
5. Must meet and be friendly with all visitors (Proverbs 18:24)
6. Must be willing to lay aside personal preferences for the cause of Christ. Example: Sitting with your friends all the time instead of a visitor or an "outsider" (Phillipians 2: 3-4)
7. Must have consistent devotions and report to Bro. Jim (Joshua 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:17)
8. Must weekly memorize a passage (Psalm 119:11)
9. Must complete one of the Christian growth series. If you have completed one previously, you must complete another one (2 Peter 3:18).
10. Must always have a positive attitude about all events and activities (Philippians 4:4)
11. Must conform to the church dress code at all times. You must be above reproach (1 Timothy 2: 9-10). (See copy of attached dress code.)
12. Must not be in any relationship with the opposite sex, other than as friends as you would be with anyone else (1 Corinthians 7:32-34)
13. Must take and pass all Moses leadership series test (Hebrews 13:17)
14. Must read a book as chosen by the youth pastor and give a one-page report during the summer (Hebrews 13:17) "Be the leader you were meant to be."

Teenager _____ Parent/Guardian _____

DRESS CODE FOR EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH YOUTH LEADERS

GUYS:

1. Dress slacks, shirts, and ties are to be worn on Sundays and special services, such as revival meetings and Missions Conferences (1 Corinthians 14: 40).
2. Shirts and pants should always be neat and clean. They should not be worldly in any manner (1 Thessalonians 5: 22).
3. Hair should be kept short and well-groomed (1 Corinthians 11: 14).

GIRLS:

1. Clothes should always draw attention to your face, not your body. Your face is where you show what is in your heart (1 Peter 3:3).
2. All clothes should check with the standard of Romans 12: 1-2.
 - a. Lots (meaning lots of material)
 - b. Loose (not tight or form fitting)
 - c. Long
 - d. Ladylike
3. Shirts are not to . . .
 - a. be form-fitting
 - b. be sleeveless
 - c. be low in front or back (A good rule for the front is that there should be no more than a three-finger's width between the collar bone and your neckline.)
 - d. be so short that when you raise your arms straight up, skin shows at the waist
 - e. be see-through
 - f. be unbuttoned with another shirt underneath. Long sleeve shirts may be worn as jackets, as long as the shirt under it could be worn and still meet the standard (1 Thessalonians 5:22; Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Matthew 5:28).
4. Skirts, Dresses, and Culottes are . . .
 - a. not to be form fitting (Matthew 5:28)
 - b. to come to the knee or below when sitting or standing (Matthew 5:28)
 - c. not to be see-through (Matthew 5:28)
 - d. not to have several buttons left unbuttoned (1 Thessalonians 5:22; 1 Corinthians 10:31)
5. No pants - Romans 14:13, 19

These policies will be taken before the church for approval.

Motion: Motion made by _____ to adopt the "Youth Ministries Policy" as presented by the deacons to be effective for the church as of the 1st day of January, 1998.

Seconded: _____ seconded the motion.

Secretary:

Date:

Date approval for entry:

CHILDREN'S/YOUTH WORKER QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Birthday _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Churches in which you have worked before - (Name and Address)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Have you ever been arrested or in suspicion of sexual misconduct Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Why do you want to work with children/youth? _____

Please give your personal testimony: _____

Please list any references other than churches above:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I have read the Policies Manual; and with the Lord's help, I will strive to uphold the testimony of this local church, as well as my Lord by keeping these things!

Signature

Date

ONE-LINERS FROM PAST EXPERIENCE

Some of the greatest activities come from implementing Plan B.
Do not let numbers affect your attitude concerning the success of the activity.
Do not let visitors set the tone of the activity.
Take control and do not give it back.
Plan every minute, even if it is a plan to have free time.
Enlist your teens in reaching out to the guests.
Plan activities for a purpose, and only do things to accomplish that purpose.
Keep couples from pairing and tight friendships from being exclusive.
Exclusive dating undermines unity.
Plan to have enough help and faithful attendees to offset the visiting teens, in order to win the battle of atmosphere.
Make the preaching a highlight in your enthusiasm, in your preparation, and in the appropriateness of the message for those who are there.
Have the youth pray for invited visitors by name.
Share the burden for the success of the activity, and teach the teens their roles for success.
Share the duties, the responsibility, and the victory with your leaders.
Use the gifts that God has given, but do not neglect things that are difficult but necessary.
Set good standards for the teens and enforce them with the regular attendees.
Do not feel you have compromised the faith if a visitor arrives nowhere near the standard.
Do not expect your visitors to act like Christians before they accept Christ.
Keep your rules short but complete.
Have reasons for your rules.
Keep hot food hot and drinks cold!
Remember the weather when planning an activity; avoid needless sun stroke and frost bite!
Spend time with the visitors; build for future relationships.
Let the teens know that their friends will be your focus.
Allow the teens to have input on activities but not final say.
Use teens in the activity.
The Bible will yield its fruit in God's time.
Often I can over emphasize what I can do and under emphasize what God can do.
Make a big deal of answered prayer.
Maturity is doing the right thing, at the right time, with the right attitude.
If you are bored, it is because you are a boring person.
Two of the most contagious attitudes are boredom and enthusiasm.
Making light of sin is making fun of God.
We use the ministry to build people instead of using people to build the ministry.
The mind can only absorb what the seat can endure.
Who cares what you are saying if nobody is listening.
Service is a privilege.
Everything means something.
A mistake is clear evidence that at least somebody tried to do something.
Everybody is a nobody to somebody.
A ministry focuses on others; a job focuses on self.
The end does not justify the means.
Always be careful of using words like *always* and *never*.
Comparison kills contentment.

77 HABITS OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL YOUTH LEADER

Is the youth group your personal habitat? Is it a display of your personality? Do you allow personal comfort and natural pragmatic thinking rule how you minister? Are your actions an asset or a liability? Youth leaders must follow the example of Paul who fleshed out a demonstration of the truth in his faithful daily ministry.

*He did not pull down by his living what he built
with his preaching.—Matthew Henry*

Reading:

- Acts 20:18-21
- Colossians 1:9—For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
- Acts 20:18—And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,
- 2 Timothy 3:10—But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience.

Paul's manner reflected his habits, because a habit is the foundation of one's manner. And Paul's habits reflected a changed life driven for the purpose of making Christ-like disciples.

What is a habit? Definition: a) a thing done often and hence, usually done easily; practice or custom, b) a pattern of action that is acquired and has become so automatic that it is difficult to break.

Key Thought: You must evaluate your habits in youth leadership. HOW? By recognizing and imitating nine habits of the Apostle Paul.

1. Habit of prayer—Beware of doing the physical work without the spiritual work.
2. Habit of humility—Beware of getting proud; humble yourself.
3. Habit of compassion—Beware of getting hardened and calloused.
4. Habit of endurance—Beware of allowing discomfort and fear to keep you from doing the work God has called you to.
5. Habit of generosity—Beware of hoarding resources. Beware of making quick indictments.
6. Habit of openness, transparency—Beware of being defensive.
7. Habit of teaching—Beware of losing our purpose and our students.
 - Publicly
 - Privately
8. Habit of longsuffering and patience—Beware of vindictiveness.
9. Habit of inclusiveness, of reaching out to all—Beware of getting comfortable. Keep the vision of the lost before your eyes.

Note: This manner of life was practiced from the onset. A necessary habit should be added right away!

HABITS THAT HINDER

1. Have favorites: Let some things slide with the “good” kids and stick it to the “bad” ones.
2. Prepare messages at the last minute, and do not give God time to teach you the lesson throughout the week.
3. Stay with pre-planned topics; leave no room for specific topics of need or interest.
4. Do not give any thought to curriculum or other teaching helps; do it all yourself.
5. Allow the teens to use the youth group participants as targets for their infatuations.
6. Encourage exclusive relationships in the teen group.
7. Select ministry teams by personal subjective standards; avoid clear qualifications and objective self-defining standards.
8. Evaluate your effectiveness by asking teens, “Did you have fun at that activity?”
9. Make sure all teen activities are always exciting and entertaining.
10. Be sure to have plenty of adult leadership, mainly for the preparation and clean-up of activities.
11. Never use parents as adult sponsors since the teens live with them all the time.
12. Compete with parents for the loyalty of their children.
13. Remind yourself continually that as a youth leader you have special insight that overrules parental insight and discretion with a teen.
14. Minimize your mistakes before the teens and be sure to justify what you have done, even if it was clearly a bad choice. You must not lose the respect of the teen group.
15. Be sure to make all the major decisions by yourself.
16. Plan one week at a time.
17. Cancellations are an effective way to do youth work and yet keep good family time.
18. Be sure to constantly push the limit; this makes for an exciting youth ministry.
19. Cancel an activity if only a few show up.
20. Be discouraged and speak about how much you are limited by a small youth group.
21. Make sure you keep activities highly competitive and be sure to compete with the teens every chance you get.
22. Always play to win.
23. Listen to all of the teens’ suggestions in order to keep up with the times.
24. Keep up with the latest innovations of the largest churches, no matter what you have to change.
25. Make sure everyone feels comfortable in the group.
26. Pick games which include a great deal of physical contact between the guys and girls; they seem to really respond to these.
27. Understand that teens are a class best left to themselves without the interference of other misunderstanding generations.
28. Do not bore the teens with too much Bible.
29. Remember that all good youth leaders run a little late; parents understand.
30. Rationalize why you do not have enough time to visit the teens.
31. Pray that teens will return since you just have not had the time to visit them.
32. Always encourage socialization among the teens; never separate teens from their buddies. (Pooled ignorance will pay off every time.)
33. Avoid dealing with tough problem situations: hope they will go away or the people will move away.
34. Remember your pastor is busy; do not bother him with policy changes.
35. Speak only to moms, as opposed to dads, about issues with their teens.
36. Focus on the ninety and nine and forget about the lost sheep since he was too stupid to stay in your flock anyway. (Ministry is not about pastoring people but about protecting yourself.)
37. Be a black sheep backer; the faithful do not need your attention—Focus on the Fringe.
38. Beware of delegating tasks to others since they might make a mistake.
39. Make the youth your own personal domain and be defensive of those who try to horn in.
40. Keep everything general in order to have an impact on the largest group.

41. Be willing to continually sacrifice your family's time for the youth; the greater good is done with the larger number.
42. Do not run a new activity until you have taken a vote with the teens.
43. Minimize the roles of teens on activity function and planning.
44. Jump at your latest ideas. Keep things spontaneous; if you think too much, you may never do it.
45. Assume you will never have injuries. Plan for the activity, not the emergency.
46. Let the fear of any injury keep you from having challenging activities.
47. Trade motion for meditation.
48. Do not worry about keeping records; they're just a waste of time.
49. Listen to those who enthusiastically praise your work, and ignore criticism.

Can you add a few?

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

WHAT ARE THEY?

A policy is a previously determined rule, that by consideration of what is wise and expedient, safeguards the participants, the institution, and the purpose of the institution. Whereas a formal procedure is a preplanned course of action that illustrates step-by-step methods to accomplish one's goals, policies are often developed because of bad or unplanned procedures that have brought improper or harmful results. Good procedures often prevent negative, mandated policies.

Policies are established in the following two ways: 1) With foresight, through previous consideration, a policy is set to prevent a problem from occurring. 2) With hindsight, in reaction to a problem that has happened, a policy is made to prevent this problem from happening again. Ministries make policies both ways, but those established with foresight are helpful, not devastating to the ministry and its reputation.

*Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour:
so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.—Ecclesiastes 10:1*

*Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:
be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.—Matthew 10:16*

Let all things be done decently and in order.—1 Corinthians 14:40

One's youth ministry may be very effective, but a few "flies" in the ointment can severely limit and undermine future trust and effectiveness.

You must develop both policies and procedures in order to have a more effective ministry with youth.

WHY HAVE THEM?

They help create and maintain a youth ministry which functions decently and in order.

1. Preparation—gives structure for preparations
2. Prevention—gives guidelines to prevent problems from occurring
3. Protection—gives protection to the ministry, the ministers, those ministered to
4. Proficiency—provides a way for improvement
5. Pressure—relieves pressure from the leader in intense situations

HOW TO WRITE THEM?

Writing policies and procedures requires thought.

1. Consider the purpose. What is the reason for your youth group's existence?
2. Consider the past.

- a. What problems have we had?
- b. What did you learn from the past?
3. Consider the input of youth workers. What do your leaders say?
4. Consider your peers. What are fellow youth leaders doing well around you?

WHO SHOULD THEY INCLUDE?

Policies and procedures affect more than the youth.

1. Pastors
 - a. What steps will you take to support and not to undermine the pastor's ministry? Never announce to the teens what he has not approved.
 - b. When will you discuss the purpose and direction of the youth group?
 - c. How will you report to him what is happening in the youth group?
2. Parents
 - a. How are you helping them reach their goals?
 - b. When do you communicate with them about your goals and desires?
 - c. How are you involving them?
3. Youth Leaders
 - a. Have you defined a process of recruiting committed, faithful adult leaders?
 - b. Do you have a list of qualifications for adult leaders?
 - c. Have you defined and communicated the expectations of a youth leader?
 - d. What steps will you take to protect the reputation of the youth leaders?
4. Youth
 - a. Counseling—How and when do you counsel with teens?
 - b. Discipline—How do you keep order and deal with those who will not obey the rules?
 - c. Teen Relations—How can you have a group of teens that reach out and is unified?
 - d. Teen Leadership—What places have you made for student leadership?
 - e. Attire—What expectations do you have in the area of teen dress?
 - f. Time-honored Traditions, Rites of Passage—What are the special events that teens can only participate in when they are the right age?
 - 1) When will you promote upcoming seventh graders?
 - 2) How long will a senior remain in the youth group?

WHAT SHOULD THEY CONTROL?

Policies and procedures govern a variety of activity areas.

1. The ACTION of an Activity
 - a. Should all activities have an evangelistic focus? What about service-oriented activities?
 - b. What type of physical contact is appropriate in a game?
 - 1) Will this lead to injury?
 - 2) Will it undermine teen conduct?
2. The MESSAGE of the Activity
 - a. When is the most effective time to preach to the teens?
 - b. Do you have a message at every activity?
 - c. Will you give an invitation?
 - 1) Who will your counselors be?
 - 2) Who will watch the rest of the teens?
 - 3) Will you have any literature to leave with the teens who respond to the invitation?
3. The TRANSPORTATION of an Activity
 - a. What expectations do you have for drivers?
 - b. Will you allow teens to drive for an activity?
 - c. What is your objective on a road trip?
 - 1) How do you make traveling fun?
 - 2) How do you keep unwise physical contact from happening?
 - d. What will your dining procedures be?
 - 1) Will everyone go to the same place?
 - 2) If you split up for dining, will a leader be with each group?
 - 3) What will be the minimum size of a group?
 - 4) How will you get everyone safely across a busy intersection?
 - e. What will your procedures for rest stops and boarding the vehicle be?
 - 1) How will you prevent someone from taking a teen?
 - 2) How will you keep from leaving a teen at a stop?
 - 3) Do you have some sort of buddy system?
4. The COST of an Activity
 - a. How do you provide for teens who do not have the money to attend?

- 1) Without embarrassment?
- 2) Without diminishing their sense of responsibility?
- b. Who collects the money?
- c. How is the money accounted for?
5. The CLEAN-UP after an Activity
6. The SAFETY at an Activity
 - a. First Aid
 - 1) Is there an accessible, practical first aid kit? Does it have band aids?
 - 2) Is anyone CPR certified?
 - b. Permission Slips and Medical Releases
 - c. Adult Leadership Screening Forms

HIGHLIGHTED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. The Relationship with Your Pastor

A youth leader, whether paid or unpaid, who has accepted the responsibility of working with the youth, must treat his responsibility with faithfulness and loyalty. One cannot look at youth work as doing someone a favor; it is accepting and being accountable for a position. Therefore, it is understood that the pastor has the last say. Seek to have regular times to discuss calendar for youth activities and new ideas for the youth.

2. Permission Slips and Medical Releases

These are a must. Set a time each year when the youth have permission slips and medical releases signed and notarized. Keep these forms on hand; three years is a recommended time.

3. Adult Sponsor Recruitment

- a. Meet with interested leaders before you give them a leadership role.
 - 1) Ask questions that give you a chance to see what their expectations are.
 - 2) Communicate your expectations.
- b. Have a plan to bring them into greater leadership over time.
- c. All leaders should fill out a Child Abuse Screening Form.
- c. All leaders should sign a Leadership Guideline Agreement.

4. Adult Sponsor and Teen Interaction

- a. Male leaders should focus on relationships with young men, and women with the ladies.
- b. Male leaders should not be alone with young ladies, nor women leaders with young men.
- c. Leaders should report to the church office with parental permission when dealing one-on-one with the same gender.

5. Keeping Discipline with Teens

- a. Leaders should not use physical force in dealing with unruly teens. If a teen will not obey verbal instruction, he should not participate.
- b. Develop a teen obedience agreement stating that the teen will obey the rules. Have each teen sign the document.
- c. Have clear instructions for leaders on how to prevent disorderly behavior.
- d. Deal with repetitive disobedience following four basic steps.
 - 1) First offense: Publicly ask the teen to stop the behavior.
 - 2) Second offense: Warn the teen a second time; speak with the teen privately after the incident.
 - 3) Third offense: Confront the teen and contact the parent.
 - 4) Fourth offense: Confront the teen, contact the parent, and have the parent keep the teen with him until the behavior is changed.

6. Including and Reaching Visitors

- a. Have attendance cards for visitors completed at every activity.
- b. Have a handwritten postcard ready to send to visitors. Mail it out right away after an activity.
- c. Recruit teens to call on visitors and to invite them back for another event.
- d. Assign a leader from each age group to welcome visitors, make sure they feel included, and visit them within the first two weeks after their attendance.
- e. Consider having one activity where visitors come free of cost.
- f. Prepare leaders to counsel with those who respond to the message. Have tracts to send home with any who seem sensitive to the Gospel.
- g. Devise a plan to disciple each newly saved teen.

7. Student Leadership

- a. The most successful youth groups develop serving teens.
- b. Consider having a box with a student comment card, allowing even the shy teen a chance to give input.
- c. Consider setting up youth committees to plan activities under adult supervision.
 - 1) One committee for youth activities and outreach
 - 2) One committee for service projects
- d. Set up a process whereby teens begin to help in teaching.
 - 1) Involve them for a pre-determined amount of time—no shorter than a quarter—that develops relationships and faithfulness.
 - 2) At least every six months, if not sooner, set a time for the teacher to evaluate the teen's teaching for effectiveness and weaknesses. Then communicate these for the purpose of growth and maturity.

- 3) Consider rotating the teens through different areas in order to give them well-rounded training in many areas.

8. Student Attire

- a. As ministers in a youth group (all teens should be), they need to consider the message they send with their clothes.
- b. Communicate with parents the goal for modest attire, and explain what you mean by modest. Parents are the key to their children's attire.
- c. Clearly communicate dress expectations.
- d. Consider what is appropriate attire for the activity. Teach the teens to dress appropriately for what they are doing.
- e. Consider how you will deal with the unsaved in an area that takes spiritual understanding.
- f. If individual instruction is necessary, choose wisely who will speak to the teen who is immodest—ladies with ladies, men with men.



TNT: TIPS AND TRICKS FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

"Sometimes when I consider what tremendous consequences come from little things...I am tempted to think...There are no little things." Bruce Barton

Proverbs 15:22-23—Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established. A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

Have you ever been doing the right motion and yet seeming to accomplish little? When we were building our auditorium in order to save money, the men in the church did much of the labor. One day I was drilling self-tapping screws through sheet metal only to notice the screws were not going in. The last ten had gone in right. As I was pondering my problem, right past me walked another man who said, "If you aren't in reverse, the screws go in better." Yes. In taking out a misaligned screw, I had forgotten to switch directions. We can do the same things in working with youth. We go through the right motions, but by missing one important facet, we do not accomplish our purposes. Here are a few tips and tricks that may help you.

GETTING STARTED RIGHT

Problems to Consider:

1. Starting on time sets the tone of the whole activity and builds respect for the leadership.
2. Late arrivals are to be expected but they should not be paralyzing to the activity.
3. One cannot sacrifice the effective starting of an activity for the late.
4. One cannot sacrifice his target teens because of lateness.

Ideas for solutions:

1. Enlist help and delegate duties that normally keep you from beginning on time—taking money, attendance, and setting up refreshments.
2. If you are picking up teens who need a ride, communicate a specific time they need to be ready. Leave enough time for minor delays. Communicate prior to your picking them up the time you need to arrive at the activity.
3. Begin the activity on time with some game or event that will encourage on-time attendance. It needs to end around the time you have all the stragglers. Allow the late arrivals to watch until you are ready to start another event.
4. Wait on your key event until all have arrived so you do not have to go through instructions twice.
5. If you are traveling to a different location, make the start of the activity early enough to be prepared to leave without being in a rush and giving time for late attenders to arrive. This will relieve the stress of catching up on time.
6. If you know of stragglers, you may want to leave a van or car with leaders to follow later with those teens.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Considerations:

1. Is a Bible message mandatory for every activity?
2. When is the best time for the message?
3. How do you settle an active crowd?
4. What do you do with belligerent and disobedient teens?
5. How do you keep a flow and order to the activity?
6. How do you make visitors feel welcome?
7. How do you encourage attendance ?
8. How do you build a participation mentality and not a consumer mentality in teens?
9. How do you make servants of the naturally selfish?
10. What do you do when the activity seems to be stalling or failing?

Ideas and solutions:

1. Plan the activity around the message.
2. Placing the message in the middle or at the end of the activity seems to be one of the most helpful times. If you preach right away, you have had little time to deal with the first-time jitters. Being new can be a distraction from making a needed personal decision. Having the message later gives teens a chance to know you and to begin to feel they can trust what you say and to become willing to make a personal decision.
3. Teens should know and tell their friends that there will be a message from the Bible at every activity. It is not a good practice to trick teens into coming as they feel misled and often angry about it. Openness and boldness from teens help, not hinder.
4. Expect the Lord to work, but do not dictate what that work will be.
5. Do not get discouraged if teens do not respond at the first activity. Many things about our society teach teens to be careful and guarded.
6. Do not assume you have to finish a certain list of things before a teen may accept the Gospel. The Holy Spirit is at work, and you do not know where He is.
7. Write out your activity plan from start to finish with a timetable. If you have no plan or timetable, you will have no flow; and the activity will seem unorganized.
8. Give your leaders a copy of your plan with the rules of the games included in advance. They will help you keep on track and keep the teens headed the right direction.
9. Include alternate games in your activity plan for unexpected problems.
10. Give opportunity for the teens to make the transition from fun to seriousness by singing or asking a thought-provoking question to which they can respond.
11. Prepare your leaders to deal with decisions.
12. Involve teens in the area of prayer. Have them pray for their friends by name, even weeks before the event.
13. Involving teens in the planning and the running of the activity builds participation and minimizes a consumer or critical spirit. Have a teen speak at one of your activities.

14. Giving teens the task of recording visitor cards and having a few getting-to-know-you questions as a part of the visitor card naturally bring about communication relaxing natural wariness.
15. Include service activities regularly when planning your calendar.
16. Consider setting up a time for teens to plan the activities with you.
17. You may wish to make committee groups who have specific activities for which they are responsible.
18. Tweaking a game or a part of an activity may be needed, but a complete facelift will do more damage than good.

ENDING EFFECTIVELY

Problems to consider:

1. Rides for teens who do not have one
2. Returning and finishing on time
3. Timely departure of teens
4. Clean-up of vehicles

Ideas for solutions:

1. Arrange with parents and leaders (prior to the activity or at the beginning) to take home teens who need rides. People are often willing to help with this ministry.
2. Make sure that enough leaders stay long enough to avoid an unwise situation—a teen being left alone with one leader.
3. Communicate ending time clearly, and have a person available who can communicate to parents in case of emergencies or unavoidable delays in return.
4. Announce to parents that teens need to have a part in cleaning the vehicles before they leave. Do not just surprise them with an unannounced expectation.
5. Encourage teens to leave and not hang around after the activity so that they will arrive at home on time and so that the activity does not become a pivotal point for conflict with parents.

Note: Use the departure time as time to make quick contacts with parents of your visitors and fringe teens. At this time, youth leaders should try to be available to thank parents for bringing their teens .

TRAVEL

Considerations:

Ideas:

1. Plan on having certain objectives completed during the travel.
2. Start a riddle that the teens can solve for a reward. Queen Ann's riddle is a favorite.
3. Have teens do devotions with a friend on the start of a long trip.
4. Bring up discussion topics with teens.

5. Spread leaders throughout the bus with a plan to build relationships. Have leaders not guards.
6. Give your leaders a specific group of teens to work with while traveling.
7. Rotate the groups on stops.
8. Camp or retreats start when you leave the church and end when you return.
9. If you do not plan the activity on the bus, you will have to contend with it.
10. Carry a "tool box" of fun and plan to pull it out right away.
11. Use travel time as a part of your activity. "The bus ride is the best part of camp." This is a comment that we have been saying for years; it was heard last week when camp was brought up.

DISCIPLESHIP

Considerations:

1. How do you disciple those recently saved?
2. How do you get them to the services for growth?
3. How do you reach the families of the teens?

Ideas and solutions:

1. Have the leader who counseled the teen send a card announcing that he is praying for the teen and would welcome any further questions.
2. Visit the family of the teen and use the decision as a means to explain salvation to the family. Be bold!
3. Seek to start discipleship right away.
4. Have a follow-up discipleship course available and seek to make an appointment with teens to begin discipleship.

WORKING WITH ADULT SPONSORS

Ideas and solutions:

1. When enlisting help, communicate expectations and standards.
2. Remember to be team-oriented and not I-oriented.
3. Take the time to see things from their point of view.
4. Pray together and for each other.
5. Have a time to meet to communicate ideas, to plan, and to build vision.
6. Seek to understand your leaders' particular strengths; then lean on them.
7. Give leaders important roles in working with the teens.
8. Make a clear plan to deal with the disorderly.
9. Teach leaders to be in the mix yet still available to react to unexpected needs.
10. Do not reprimand a leader in front of the teens.
11. Lovingly hold your leaders to their commitments.

12. Hear a person out even if you think you already know the answer to the question. Give new thought to their comments.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEENS

Considerations:

1. Relationships are the reason for youth ministry. The teens are the ministry.
2. Teens are in the process of growth immaturity, and illogical thinking is part of the territory.
3. How do you get past the facade of the teen?
4. How do you get teens to open up?

Ideas and solutions:

1. Openness is earned. Value it and guard it.
2. Communicate care by listening. Do not try to dominate the conversations.
3. Ask for prayer requests; then follow up until they are answered.
4. Send them cards or notes on various occasions, or for no particular occasion.
5. Give opportunities for teens to have your complete attention.
6. When you are going places, include teens whenever you can—preparing for youth activities, visiting other teens, or just having fun.
7. Hear both sides of a story before you take a side or offer adamant advice.
8. Ask questions to provoke thought and discussion. Ask, “Anything bugging you lately?” or, “If you could get rid of one problem, what would it be?”

WORKING WITH FAMILIES

Considerations:

1. How do you get teens to an important activity?
2. How do you build a good report with parents?
3. How do you get across goals?
4. What role should parents have in a youth group?

Ideas and Solutions:

1. Communicate early, clearly, often, and to the right people.

Early: Plan events in advance so that those who would like to participate can. Remember to be a family-friendly youth worker. Successful activities are made or broken by early communication. It is discouraging to hear, “We wanted to come to this, but we did not know soon enough.”

Clearly: Put it in print. Make sure all the information is correct and easily understood. Changing times or places midstream will always confuse someone.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

USING TRIPS TO FURTHER YOUTH MINISTRY

Shared Procedures

SUGGESTIONS OF SOME IMPORTANT TRIPS FOR YOUTH GROUPS

Camp: Youth groups should take advantage of the good camps and be sure to make attendance to camp an important focus of the summer.

Mission Trips: Few events make a greater impact on teens than taking them from their comfortable surroundings to a place of need and service. “Discipleship runs full circle when the disciple becomes the discipler”—Pastor Jason

College Trips: In a time when the teaching of our state schools are at best indifferent to Christianity and at worst actively undermining it, efforts must be given to encourage education at colleges that will not undo all that the parents have tried to do. Taking time to present to parents and teens a variety of good Christian colleges will help families make wise decisions for their teens.

Vacation Bible School Trips: Taking teens to serve or run in Vacation Bible School outside their church’s ministry is a valuable training and unifying time.

Adventure Trips: Many youth groups bring unity to their youth groups by taking trips of adventure. These vary from river rafting and canoe trips to back packing and even amusement park trips.

PROCEDURE CONSIDERATIONS

Vehicle Safety

1. Take extra precautions with the vehicles as their condition affects the lives of many.
2. Before trips, plan to make sure that the vehicles are in proper working order. Do this early enough to be able to fix the problems.
3. Assign regular fluid checks to the drivers during each refueling stop.
4. Buses need to be checked to see that they pass all the required tests. These include having proper safety equipment, properly working windshield wipers and fully functioning air brakes system. A driver must not drive a bus that does not pass these tests.
5. Each vehicle should have a mileage log and a checklist to record proper inspections. Anything not in proper working order should be included in the log, which should be given to someone who will see that the problems are repaired.

Drivers

1. Have enough drivers to keep them fresh and alert during the trip. Spell each other regularly. Take extra precautions when driving through the night.

- 2. Consider having someone talk with the driver to keep him alert while driving at night.
- 3. Bus drivers need to be sure to keep up their bi-yearly physical.

Order and Supervision

- 1. When taking a mixed group on a trip, there should be a balance of men and lady leaders.
- 2. When traveling overnight, leaders should take extra precautions to give no opportunities for improper physical contact. Some of these precautions may include spreading leaders out for proper supervision and splitting the guys from the gals in seating. Ministry and reputation can be severely damaged by small lapses of supervision.
- 3. When staying overnight in hotels or other facilities, at least one leader should be in each occupied room.
- 4. Leaders should seek to build relationships with the teens and avoid giving off the idea of prison guards. It is important to treat teens with dignity and respect.
- 5. Use careful methods to keep track of each teen when leaving after a stop. Do not take for granted that each teen is back on the bus.
 - a. Use teens as team leaders and assign them a small group for which they are accountable.
 - b. Counting for the proper number is a good safety net.
- 6. Communicate clear guidelines for taking meals at various restaurants. Spread your adult help out and be sure to enforce proper road crossings and proper guidelines for which eating facilities are permissible. Do not allow teens to go alone or just in pairs. Larger groups are safer and allow for proper adult supervision.

What policies do you think you need? _____

SERVICES

Churches can vary greatly in the ways and times they choose to have specialized youth services. Youth ministry is not meant to divide families, and churches should endeavor to build the relationships of the families. Dividing the youth from the adults is not for the purpose of the teens doing their own thing. Rather, it is to deal with the issues teens are facing and to Biblically teach them on an appropriate grade level while . It is wise to reinforce in many ways that the youth group is a training ground to build families, not divide them.

Midweek services:

1. Consider using this time as an outreach and discipleship time for teens.
2. Teach practical topics which allow for discussion.
3. Teach teens to pray in various ways:
 - a. Focus on the church's missionaries by having teens obtain some of the missionary letters and reading them to the teens. This allows for specific prayers and personal interest in God's work abroad. Pray that God will send more laborers and that some may come from the youth .
 - b. Pray for the friends who are being asked to the youth activity. Pray for outreach opportunities. Pray for the activity and the work of God upon the preaching and the spirit of the activity.
 - c. Pray for the lost whom the teens know, for lost family members.
 - d. Teach teens to participate in activity planning. You may consider setting aside 30 minutes once a month for the teens to plan future activities. Specify duties. Give teens important roles in the success of the coming event; then help them succeed.
 - e. Teach the teens to enjoy singing. Consider having a youth choir. A youth group who is taught good songs will enjoy good songs. Churches should be training teens to love good music and to enjoy ministering in music.

TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BEFORE YOU BECAME A YOUTH LEADER

1. Youth work is a lot of hard work.
2. You need to know your definition of success.
3. You need to know what your full responsibilities are.
 - a. Is there a written job description?
 - b. Will there be periodical re-evaluations of the job description?
 - c. Are there a youth budget and resources allocated to the youth ministry?
 - d. What is your relationship to Christian school and/or home school parents?
4. You cannot do youth work alone; you will need a support team.
5. It takes time to build a successful youth ministry. (See next page for milestones.)
6. You and your youth program need high visibility.
7. In order to see lives changed in your youth group, you have to be a man of God yourself, not just a program promoter
8. You need to know the attitudes of key parents in the church toward the youth group. Therefore, you need to know the following:
 - a. What your view of family life is
 - b. What the Bible says about the family
9. Youth work involves more than just loving the youth and being with them. It requires fundraising, promotion, administration, teaching, organization, counseling, management, and more.
10. You need to consider the following:
 - a. Your personal physical condition
 - b. Your ability to handle criticism
 - c. Your ability to be a good follower (of your pastor)
 - d. The attitude of your wife
 - e. The example of your children

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MILESTONES IN THE YOUTH MINISTRY

YOUTH

Pre-Puberty

Puberty

Post Puberty

Youth

Pre-Adult

Young Adult

MINISTRY

By Goals

By Spiritual Ladder

By Concentric Principles

By Results

LEADERSHIP

Helpers: before, during, and after; behind the scenes; pray; cook; answer the phone

Givers: funds, things, location, supplies, equipment

Chaperones: maturity and balance (no personal agenda)

Drivers: mature and not show-offs

Activity Sponsors: responsibility and likeability

Teachers: Sunday School small group (Teach them first.)

Counselors: can help with teens making decisions; able to answer the questions of youth

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IDEA SHARE

DISCIPLESHIP

There is not a final answer to when discipleship is over; it is a life-long process.

Scott Olson taught the parents of his teens to decide what things they wanted their teens to know by the time they were old enough to move out of the home.

Regarding Committees in Youth Group (p. 6-24), select a committee for teens to work on; do not have peers elect others to do all the work.

Resources 9-15—preparing teens to be good parents, establishing dating standards before dating, being good adults in the area of financing, characteristics of a good wife/mom/family/etc.

The Lost Art of Disciple Making plus a 7-book series on steps to discipleship by Leroy Eims. The series is entitled *Designed for Discipleship*.

Idea for a Sunday School class—Dads ‘n Lads

In Their Sandals (Positive Action for Christ)

Sour Grapes (Positive Action for Christ)—kids blaming parents

Share reasons for not allowing teens to do something; do not just say, “Don’t.”

You can’t run a group on a long list of rules. Have a few that are reasonably understood and adequately explained.

CURRICULUM

On relationships: Creator/creation, mom/dad, draw up a “Want Ad”—what you want in husband, wife, parents

Money Matters for Kids by Lauree Burkett and Christie Bowler, Moody Press, 1997.

The Body Book by Nancy Rul, New Life Treatment Center, Inc., Zonderkidz, Zondervan Publishing House, 2000.

The Beauty Book by Nancy Rul, New Life Treatment Center, Inc., Zonderkidz, Zondervan Publishing House, 2000.

Talking to Your Children About God by Rick Osborne, Harper Collins, San Francisco, 1998.

Wellsprings of Life by Don Orthner—a study of Proverbs

Changed Into His Image by Jim Berg (for teens and a video series)

A youth group does not make godly teens; godly homes make godly teens. Therefore, train parents, especially dads, to solve problems from the Bible (as an individual and as an individual helping others)

Kids feel hopeless that they are not able to have a godly home of their own.

Kids need answers, not announcements

Debates are good in order to make teens willing to talk about hard issues. Have teams do research on opposite sides of the issue and use Scripture to argue their points. The youth leader should be ready to pull it all together at the end.

Debate on issues relevant to the time and area of the country (Ex: Mormonism)

Hold debates at a time when you have your core group, not when you are doing a huge outreach.

Life Application Commentary series—good tool for study

A leader serves—no exceptions.

Keys for Kids—devotional series that is free

Frogs in Pharaoh’s Court—devotions for kids

Seven Ducks in a Dirty Pond—devotions for kids

Growing Kids God’s Way

Growing Teens God’s Way

Patch the Pirate

Shepherding a Child’s Heart video series

Disciplines of A Godly Man by Kent Hughes published by Crossway Books, a study guide is available

TEAM 2001

TEENS EQUIPPED AS AMBASSADORS IN MISSIONS

Greetings,

Dave Peters here with some information about an upcoming mission trip! I am in the process of formulating a plan to involve the sr. high teens of your church and your pastor's fellowship in a Fit For Life Mission Trip this coming summer. Some exciting things have already fallen into place towards that trip, and it would appear that God is leading us toward that goal. One of the first things I need to accomplish is to convince our pastors of the need, so they can tell their churches about it and rally around our common cause.

As a teen, I attended the Shell Rock church, and we had about four or five of us teens at the time. We had a great time together, but we never could have gone on a mission trip or anything like that. As a youth pastor, I have seen the value in summer mission trips, and I believe it is wrong for only large churches to be the ones that get in on that significant ministry opportunity. Of our Iowa churches, only about 10% have staffed youth workers. A few others are large enough even without a youth pastor to go on their own, but the majority are not able to go by themselves. This, I believe, is where Fit For Life can be of help. It is my desire to put churches together by area, train them, get them to help in a local VBS together, train a couple from that area to take along on the trip, and go to another church where the teens can put on a VBS program and see God at work in their lives!

The benefits are huge! As a youth pastor, I have seen many lives changed through these trips. These teens see the purpose of Christian living by serving God and others. Many will have the opportunity to lead a child to Christ, or to be instrumental in that. Getting the teens together creates a strong bond between those who are longing to seek God in their lives. As a result, many of them build long-term friendships. Because the adults that I will be training may be able to do a similar trip on their own the next year, we can spread this out from year to year. The qualification process is a time of discipleship and learning. The whole church gets in on the mission trip, pouring excitement for missions into the local body.

Two Training Locations: Berean Baptist in Pella and Walnut Park Baptist in Muscatine have agreed to host three pre-training sessions and VBS programs. Also, these two churches have agreed to send at least one couple that Robin and I will train to go on the trip. It appears right now that the VBS week at both churches will be June 4-8. The dates for the pre-training sessions will be given later as we try to arrange our schedules together. We would like to have a joint retreat for both Mission Trip groups on Friday and Saturday, June 1-2.

Expenses: In addition to the teens coming up with \$50 on their own, we are asking the churches to raise \$100 for each teen that is going. I think that is a healthy way to go about it, allowing the church to have a part of this mission, and allowing the teen to participate as well.

Location: Not yet selected, but probably within a one-state region of Iowa. Pray with us about this that we would be led by God for the right selection.

Trip Dates: As you have already noted, Fit for Life will be doing two trips this summer. We are looking at three possibilities to do these two trips. They are as follows: July 7-14, July 21-28, and July 28-August 4. I will try to have this more narrowed down very soon.

Vans Needed: For one of these trips, a 15-passenger van will be needed. Would your church be able/willing to allow us to use yours? Let me know if that is a possibility.

IN THIS PACKET YOU WILL FIND THE FOLLOWING:

Mission Trip Proposal: I hope that this packet will contain all the vital information that we have right now to share with parents, teens, and church leadership at your church.

Memory Verse Attachment: There are two sheets with the memory verses on it. One is putting them into the six categories, and the other is a check-off sheet. The parents will be involved with this process, which takes the pressure off the youth staff. It is also very good to have the parents responsible for this qualification. On the top of the sheet, put the teens' names vertically, then check the verse off as they master them! It would be very helpful for someone, a youth leader or Sunday School teacher, to drill them on these verses. They will be used on the trip.

Reference Forms:

1. Parents Reference Form—Pretty self-explanatory
2. Personal Reference Form—This needs to be someone in the church, but not a deacon, and not a family member.
3. Spiritual Leadership Reference Form—This is to be filled out by the pastor or one of the deacons. I like to say just deacons, because it helps them be involved in this process, but I also think it would be very helpful to have the pastor's point of view – so it's your call!
4. School Teacher Reference Form—This is to be either a teacher, or if home-schooled, then someone outside the church (employer, neighbor...), preferably someone unsaved. Their point of view is very helpful.

Application / Release Form: The release form side is a VERY IMPORTANT PIECE OF PAPER! This will allow us to get medical treatment if an accident or sickness occurs. Without it, we will not be able to get a signature to start medical proceedings if need be. Also, it is important for the parent to realize that they are the ones liable for an accident.

The application side will be used in interviewing the teen to see where his motivation is for going on the trip, as well as to find out his testimony.

Qualifications: Notice on the Mission Trip Proposal Sheet that the qualification period starts on March 1. Note also that each teen needs to have daily personal devotions. Please remind them of that now, rather than their being disqualified because they did not know they had to.

MISSION TRIP PROPOSAL

Purpose:

1. To allow churches to send their teens who would not otherwise have the opportunity on a life-changing trip
2. To teach teens the importance of Evangelism, Service, Local Church Ministry, and Teamwork in Ministry
3. To encourage a sister church in their community through evangelism and Biblical training of children
4. To train teens in the value of the Christian walk, applying God’s Word through the process of the trip

Mission Trip Dates: July 7-14

Location: Wisconsin; more info later

Training Times: Three evening sessions as well as a retreat. The retreat would probably occur on June 1-2.

Qualifications: The churches must play an active part in this area! The trip succeeds or fails on the quality of the students going, and on how prepared they are for the trip. These qualifications must be kept by all in order for the integrity of the group to be established. The suggested list is as follows:

1. Possess and display a servant’s attitude and work well with other members.
2. Complete an Application/Release Form to be signed by the parent and the teen (due by April 15).
3. Have four Character Recommendation Sheets (due by April 30).
4. Read two missionary biographies and give one-page book reports. One book is to be completed by April 15 and the other to be completed by June 15. The exception is if the book is over 250 pages; then there will be only one book requirement, and the report will be due by April 15.
5. Memorize 36 designated Scripture verses. Eighteen verses will be due April 15, and the other 18 will be due June 15. These verses will be appropriate for the trip, including six verses from six areas of interest including salvation, servanthood, self-control, surrender, single-mindedness, and spotlessness.
6. Attend all training sessions and the teamwork retreat, and participate in all five days of VBS.
7. Faithfully attend all the regular services of the church, including Sunday School, Sunday morning and evening services, and all midweek services.
8. Maintain regular daily devotions with a devotional diary. (Fit for Life devotions are a great resource for this because they will stay on the same theme with one another.)

Overview of Dates: All of which are tentative at this time. The training dates are not included yet.

- March 1Beginning of qualification period (Attendance records, devotions)
- April 15First biography, first 18 verses, and Application/Release Form due
- April 30Character Recommendation Sheets due
- June 1-2 Teamwork Retreat
- June 11-15 VBS at Walnut Park, Muscatine, or Berean Baptist in Pella
- June 15Second biography and second 18 verses due
- July 7-14Possible Mission Trip Dates
- July 21-28Possible Mission Trip Dates

MISSION TRIP MEMORY VERSES

These are the designated memory verses for Mission Trip 2000. They fall into six categories. Half the verses are due by April 30, and the other half due by June 30.

Salvation

- Romans 3:23
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 5:8
- Ephesians 2:8-9
- John 14:6
- John 3:16-18

Self-Control

- Daniel 1:8
- Romans 13:14
- 1 Corinthians 9:27
- James 4:7
- 2 Timothy 2:4
- 2 Corinthians 10:5

Spotlessness

- Titus 2:12
- 1 Peter 1:22
- Proverbs 4:23
- 2 Timothy 2:21
- John 15:2
- 2 Corinthians 6:14

Servant Attitude

- Matthew 20:28
- 2 Corinthians 5:14
- 1 Corinthians 4:2
- Ephesians 6:6
- Ephesians 4:32
- Romans 12:10

Surrender

- Romans 12:1-2
- Psalm 37:4-5
- Galatians 2:20
- Luke 9:23
- Proverbs 3:5-6
- Isaiah 6:8

Singlemindedness

- Philippians 3:13-14
- Hebrews 12:1-2
- Colossians 3:23
- Proverbs 20:4
- 2 Timothy 2:15
- Luke 6:40

TEAM 2001

TEENS EQUIPPED AS AMBASSADORS IN MISSIONS

PARENTAL REFERENCE FORM

Parent's Name _____ Date _____

Teen's Name _____

Please answer the following questions as completely as possible and return to your church point person by April 16, 2001.

1. In what ways do you expect your child's participation in **T.E.A.M.** to contribute to his/her overall spiritual development?

2. How would you describe your child's current spiritual maturity (include strengths and weaknesses)?

3. How would you expect your child's participation to affect the rest of the **T.E.A.M.** ?

4. How would you describe your child's ability to respond to authority and follow instructions obediently?

Parental Permission

Permission is granted for _____ to participate in the **T.E.A.M.** summer mission trip program. I understand that my teen's participation on **T.E.A.M.** is a privilege and is contingent upon their qualifications, their cooperation, and their attitude. I will be supportive of the commitment my teen has made to participate in **T.E.A.M.**, and with the rest of the members of this ministry. I also understand that applying to this ministry does not guarantee that my teen will be selected to go. If not chosen, I will help my teen graciously submit to that decision.

Parent Signature Date Parent Signature Date

TEAM 2001

TEENS EQUIPPED AS AMBASSADORS IN MISSIONS

CHURCH LEADERSHIP EVALUATION FORM

_____ has applied for the **T.E.A.M.** 2001 trip, a summer mission trip supported by the church. Please complete the following evaluation form and return it to the church **T.E.A.M.** point person by April 30, 2001. (This form will not be seen by the applicant).

1. Rate the applicant on the following:

	LOW				HIGH
Reverence in Dress	1	2	3	4	5
Attentiveness in Services and Classes	1	2	3	4	5
Teachable Spirit	1	2	3	4	5
Respect for Adults	1	2	3	4	5
Interested in Spiritual Things	1	2	3	4	5
Respect for His Parents	1	2	3	4	5
Respect for His Peers	1	2	3	4	5
Desire for Godly Living	1	2	3	4	5
Responsiveness to Correction	1	2	3	4	5
Good Testimony in the Community	1	2	3	4	5

2. What have you seen in the applicant's life that would qualify him for being a part of **T.E.A.M.**?

3. Is there anything in the applicant's life that would disrupt or hinder the **T.E.A.M.** in its purpose? If so, what?

4. Would you feel comfortable providing prayer and financial support to this ministry if the applicant were a member of the **T.E.A.M.**?

Signed _____ Date _____

Thanks so much for helping us by filling out this form. It will be a great help as we formulate the **T.E.A.M.** for this special ministry!

HOW TO . . . BUILD A YOUTH GROUP

SOME IDEAS I'VE GLEANED FROM MY YEARS AS A YOUTH PASTOR AND PARENT

1. Parents must have confidence in the youth director. To gain that confidence, a youth leader needs to:
 - Keep parents informed.
 - Get the teens home early.
 - Do not exclude parents; get them involved.
 - Ask parents their goals.
 - Teach parents.
2. Be dependable. Never cancel an activity or meeting, especially after it has been announced.
3. Show teens a **genuine** love and concern. Give them:
 - Time
 - Total attention
 - Touch (appropriate)
 - Talk
 - Tell them
4. Never cut down adults in any way in order to build up the teens.
5. Youth must be involved in **many**, but **not all** decisions.
 - Activity ideas, but not final decisions
 - Peer leadership, not popularity contest
6. There must be a proper mixture in the youth group program.
 - Fun . . . Excitement . . . Adventure . . . Bible teaching . . . Spiritual exercise
7. To build a solid group for the future, concentrate on keeping and training the junior high (7th and 8th grades). See age characteristics on 3-2 through 3-4.
8. As much as is practical, coordinate the youth program with the Sunday school program and the Christian day school so that they can complement each other in **teaching, activities, and personnel**. Cooperate; do not compete.
9. The key to the teenager is the family.
 - Study diligently what the Bible says about family, children, and youth.
 - There is no greater influence on children than their family.
10. Have something for everyone (varied interests).
 - Give them a menu of choices.
 - Realize young people have busy, full schedules.
 - Do not expect any youth to be at everything except church services.
11. Increased attendance will usually result when food is served . . . something salty, something sweet, and something wet. Experience says food is worth 15% in attendance.
 - Announce ahead of time that there will be food.
 - Plan this fellowship time.

12. Because the youth are part of the church, the pastor of the church will generally set the tone for the youth group. Follow the pastor's lead, and do not try to make the youth group the "conscience" of the church.
13. Consistency in leadership is an absolute essential. One teaches by example. (This consistency should be evident among the teenage leaders as well as the adult leaders.)
 - Learn how to lead others.
 - Learn how to manage others.
 - Know the difference.
 - Teach and exemplify **servant** leadership.
14. Build your program to reach, hold, and develop boys; girls will be drawn by boys. Be sure to teach and set an example for male leadership.
15. Develop an esprit de corps through projects, group accomplishment, group pride, theme song, special meeting place, youth night, etc.
16. Create as much involvement from the parents and church members as possible, but never have any adult or sponsor doing more than one or two activities per month.
 - Protect your volunteers from burnout on youth activities.
 - Bring them along slowly into more and more responsible positions.
17. Standards + teaching + discipline = convictions.
 - Know what your standards are based on.
 - Be honest.
 - Precept comes from principle. Principle comes from person of God.
18. Youth are happiest when they have definite boundaries for behavior.
 - Be consistent in discipline.
 - Be fair in application.
 - Be in charge; a youth group is not a democracy.
19. The youth director should show an interest in the hobbies and interests of his teens. They are real people and should be treated like it.
20. Divide your group into junior high, senior high, and college.
 - Tailor your activities and teaching to age group needs.
 - We lose the majority of kids between grades 7 and 9.
21. Variety is extremely important. The youth director should find a good source of new ideas.
 - Ironwood Program Team resource center
 - Newsletters regarding youth
22. Combine the junior and senior high groups every two or three months for special activities to give a feeling of size.
 - Use this for the "big event" activity.
 - Combine with another church for a youth rally, etc.
23. Know your teenagers' current problems and help them solve them through practical application of the Bible to their lives.
 - Secular surveys are usually accurate to within five percent when applied to church kids.

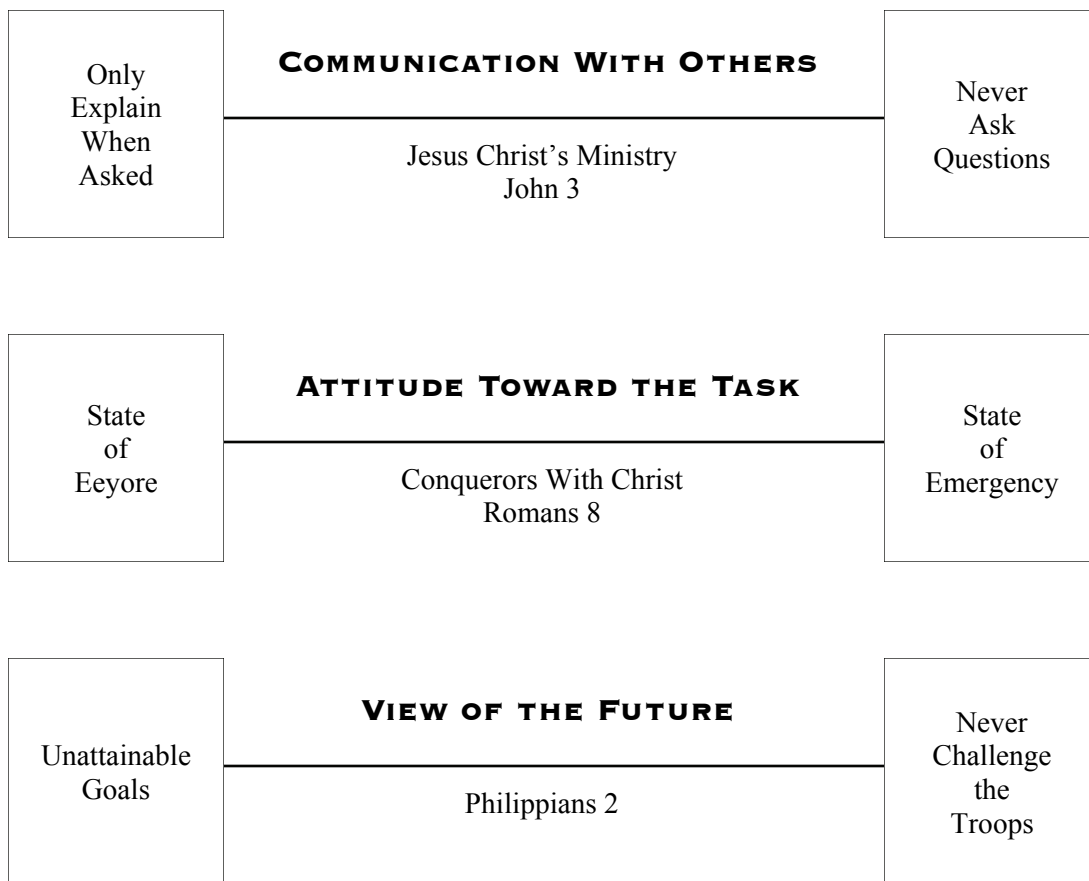
- Conduct your own surveys with youth and with parents—puberty, sex, substance abuse, independence, authority, parents, etc.
Design lessons which teach the Biblical foundation for dealing with their problems; do not just “preach” about their problems.
24. Set definite goals for the year, for the month, for the week, for the day, and for each activity. Why are you doing what you are doing?
There should be a four-way balance in our focus (Luke 2:52).
Write down your goals. Publish them in the church. Evaluate your success by these goals.
25. Involve your youth group in regular camp and retreat programs. Camps and retreats will function as a springboard for the youth group for the next several months.
Be sure the camp will reinforce what you do and teach in the youth group.
Be sure you let the camp leaders know what you would like to see accomplished at each camp and retreat.
Camp is the youth group’s equivalent to a revival in the church and basically functions as an “evangelist” for the local church.
Youth director and sponsors should attend camp with their teens. This will provide an opportunity for a closer relationship with teens and also provide the youth leaders a firsthand knowledge of what spiritual progress was made at camp, thus better enabling them to keep the ball rolling when back at home.
Check out the great variety of youth-related retreats at Ironwood during the school year.
26. Develop a plan to get your kids involved in regular spiritual renewal.
Daily Bible reading
Thinking about the Word of God (meditation)
Time of prayer—weekly volunteer prayer meetings for youth
Note: Be sure none of these are tied in any way to fulfilling homework requirements for a Christian school Bible class; assignments should always be separate from personal time with God.
27. Remember each teen is at a different level in his spiritual growth.
Identify where he is.
Help him take the next step in spiritual growth.
See the Ironwood *Spiritual Ladder* in the Summer Staff Training Manual.
28. Stay put in your leadership. Young people thrive on consistent leadership.
It takes at least seven years to see the fruit of a youth ministry.
The grass is not greener.
Solve problems. We all have problems . . . big problems.
29. Keep learning about how to do it better. You will be doing the same thing—stuck in the same rut—five years from now except for . . .
The people you meet, question, and learn from
The books you read and find a seed-thought idea from.
How much is **one** good idea worth to you? To me it was \$25.00.
30. “Men ought always to pray and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).
Pray, pray, pray, . . . pray.
Do not faint—quit, cave in, or give up.

HOW TO . . . DEMORALIZE AND DE-MOTIVATE PEOPLE

How to Demoralize and De-motivate People

1. Only explain when asked.
2. Never ask questions.
3. Live in a “state of Eeyore.”
4. Live in a “state of emergency.”
5. Set unattainable goals.
6. Never challenge the troops.

The list of six can be broken down into three categories in which we leaders should be striving for balance.



HOW TO . . . PLAN EFFECTIVE ACTIVITIES

- I. Set goals for your youth group.
 - A. Establish what part activities will play in meeting those goals.
 1. Define the scope of your youth group in relation to the total church ministry.
 - a. Ages of youth participating
 - b. Christian school
 - 1) Some kids in school go to other churches.
 - 2) Some kids in church do not go to your school.
 - 3) There is very little contact with public school kids.
 - 4) The school calendar is usually very full.
 2. Make sure the type and time of the activity result in meeting your goals.
 3. Answer the question: Why have any activities?
 4. Set goals for the following:
 - a. All activities
 - b. Each activity
 - B. Know what a teenager is. What are his characteristics and needs?
 1. Physically
 2. Emotionally
 3. Socially
 4. Mentally

He is a person in the difficult process of growing to adulthood, which is not a state of perfection.
- II. Ask and answer practical questions when planning activities.
 - A. What are the parents' desires and goals?
 1. Safety
 2. Influence on teens
 - B. How frequently will we have activities?
 - C. Will this activity help to meet one or more youth department goal?
 - D. What kind of environment will youth be exposed to?
 1. Live in world
 2. "Woe to them by whom offense cometh."
 - E. What will the cost be?
 1. Youth department budget
 2. Cost to teen/family
 - F. How much time and labor will be necessary to prepare for the activity?
 1. Your time
 2. Youths' time
 3. Volunteer helpers' time
 - G. How much time and labor will be necessary at the activity itself?
 - H. What are the transportation requirements?
 1. Safety
 2. Drivers
 3. Cost
 - I. What are the advertising and promotional needs?
- III. Use these general principles for planning effective activities.
 - A. Know your goals.
 1. Remember the evangelism goal.
 - a. Personal soul-winning among friends

- b. Visitation program
 - c. Activities
 2. Try to not divide the sacred from the secular.
 - a. Do not just tack on Bible time.
 - b. Do not have a pious attitude.
 - c. Deal with real issues.
 3. Have an activity that is full of excitement, adventure, and fun.
 - a. Something that is exciting just because it is new will probably not be exciting tomorrow.
 - b. Keep all activities moving and end them at a high point.
 - c. Use the old stand-bys.
 - 1) Disneyland
 - 2) Sports
 - 3) Water
 - 4) Camps
 - 5) Parties
 4. Do not make every activity a “big” activity.
 5. Avoid the bigger and better syndrome.
 6. Variety is extremely important, but some activities work well when repeated.
- B. Consider the teens.
 1. Get the teens involved in the planning and execution of activities.
 - a. Use your inner circle and officers.
 - b. Keep veto power.
 - 1) Make it clear.
 - 2) Explain yourself.
 - c. Give them responsibility, but you be accountable.
 - d. Do not let it flop!
 2. Do not try to entertain the teens. Provide a means for them to entertain themselves. (Christians are to serve others, not to be served.)
 3. Provide time for kids to fellowship and look for “loners”.
 - a. Slack times
 - b. Bus rides
 4. Discourage dating to most activities.
 - a. Pairs do not usually participate.
 - b. Never plan a junior high dating activity (Example: Valentine’s Banquet).
 5. Do not expect every teen to come to every activity.
 - a. Other plans
 - b. Family
 - c. Emotional ups and downs
- C. Make your plans.
 1. Have something for everyone throughout the year. Plan an activity for your worst losers!
 2. Never cancel an activity.
 - a. Cancelling causes teens and parents to lose respect for you and the youth department.
 - b. Do not officially announce anything you doubt.
 3. Plan, organize, lead, and evaluate (Murphy’s Law).
 4. Use some key parents as activity sponsors.
 - a. Deacons
 - b. Unofficial leaders
 5. Plan activities to attract boys.
 6. Divide your youth group (junior high, senior high) as much as possible.
 7. Make sure your activity calendar does not conflict with overall church calendars.
 - a. Get your plans on the calendar early.

- b. Ask for written calendar rules if problems develop.
 - c. Plan around major events.
 - 1) Revival meetings
 - 2) Graduations
 - 3) Christmas holidays
 - 4) Camp
 - 5) VBS
 - d. Reveal your calendar gradually.
 - 1) 12 months—you and church leadership
 - 2) Six months—you and youth leadership
 - 3) Three months—you and youth leadership and all youth
 - 4) One month—you and youth leadership and all youth and all church
- D. Enjoy the activity.
- 1. Control the environment as much as possible.
 - a. Do not be surprised by what is there.
 - b. Examples
 - 1) Beach
 - 2) Roller skating
 - 3) Disneyland
 - 2. A good activity usually has food (something sweet, salt, wet).

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CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

“Good” activities are necessary because:

1. Young people enjoy laughing, having fun, being around friends, and stretching themselves physically.
2. Although we know that activities do not make a youth group successful all by themselves, all “successful” youth groups have good activities.

Creative activities should have the following constants:

1. Fun
2. Participation
3. Food
4. Safety
5. Flexibility
6. No calendar conflicts
7. A focus on glorifying God

Variable activities should include something for everyone, such as the following:

1. Socially exciting vs. boys/girls only
2. Competition vs. no pressure
3. Educational vs. fun only
4. Physically challenging vs. sedate
5. Cost vs. free
6. Go vs. stay
7. Physical only vs. mental challenge
8. Daytime vs. nighttime
9. Spiritual only vs. little spiritual value
10. Self-serving vs. serving others

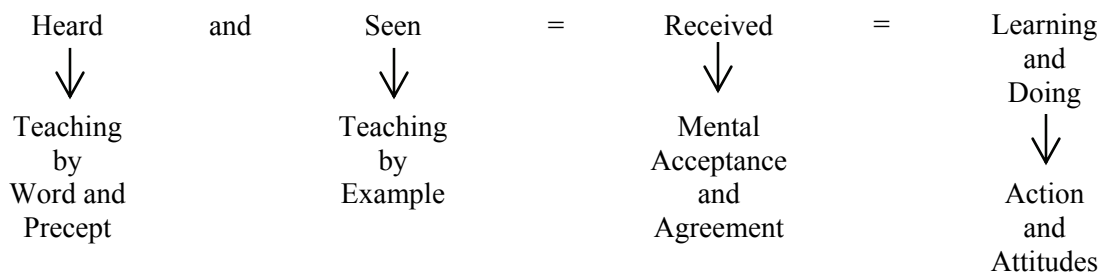
HOW TO . . . TEACH CONVICTIONS TO YOUR TEENS

- I. Consider the influence of the family.
 - A. Know where the families in your church stand.
 - B. To growing kids, what Mom and Dad say and/or do is more important than what you say.
 - C. The convictions you teach must:
 1. Be preached by your pastor from the pulpit.
 2. Have a broad base of acceptance by the reasonable, general population of Christian adults in your church. Without this, a double standard will exist that will be very harmful to your youth and the church.
- II. Teaching convictions to young people must be a long-term goal of the church.
 - A. Teach to young children through college-age young people.
 - B. Edify means to “build up,” and building takes time and step-by-step procedures.
 - C. Write out your goals.
 - D. Find out where your young people are today (survey).
 - E. Formulate a plan to meet the goals.
 - F. Organize to carry out your plan.
 - G. Provide leadership in carrying out the plan.
 - H. Evaluate and correct to stay on track with your goals.
- III. In order to teach convictions to young people, you must become an expert on how to understand and know young people.

Remember that there are at least six levels, at least six ways to teach, and at least six ways to handle kids.
- IV. While in the process of teaching convictions to teens, one must:
 - A. Be honest with the teens.
 - B. Be honest with the Scriptures (Proverbs 30:5-6; Revelation 22:18-19; Deuteronomy 12:32; 4:2).
 - C. Not be afraid to say, “I don’t know.”
 - D. Not be afraid to allow teens to ask hard questions.
 - E. Encourage the teens to search the Scriptures to see “whether those things [are] so” (Acts 17:11.)
 - F. Always maintain the authority of the Scriptures.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.—2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - G. Know one’s own motives for wanting to teach certain convictions.
 - H. Be sure to provide something to fill the apparent void.
- V. Use good teaching techniques.

Philippians 4:9.



VI. The following things need to be taught.

- A. The necessity for each person at some time in his life to decide what his convictions are, preferably before pressure points are reached
- B. The Biblical doctrine of separation
 - 1. It can be found in each book of the Bible.
 - 2. Young people should grow up thinking it is normal for a Christian not to be conformed to this world.
- C. The difference between Bible absolutes and Bible principles
 - 1. "Activity Checklist"
 - 2. "Scriptural Principles for Questionable Activities"
- D. How to use Bible principles in forming their convictions
 - 1. Help them learn how to reasonably apply Bible principles in establishing standards and rules for themselves.
 - 2. Help them to understand that other good fundamental Christians may make a different application and thus have differing convictions.
- E. The differences between Biblical convictions and personal preferences
- F. The higher responsibility of leadership

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DEVELOPING CONVICTIONS

What is a conviction? It is a personal belief, a strong conclusion regarding the rightness or wrongness of some activity or practice.

Convictions are developed through:

1. A study of God's Word.
2. The prompting of the Holy Spirit.
3. The influence of important people in your life (Hebrews 13:7).
4. Urgings of the conscience.

Convictions are not:

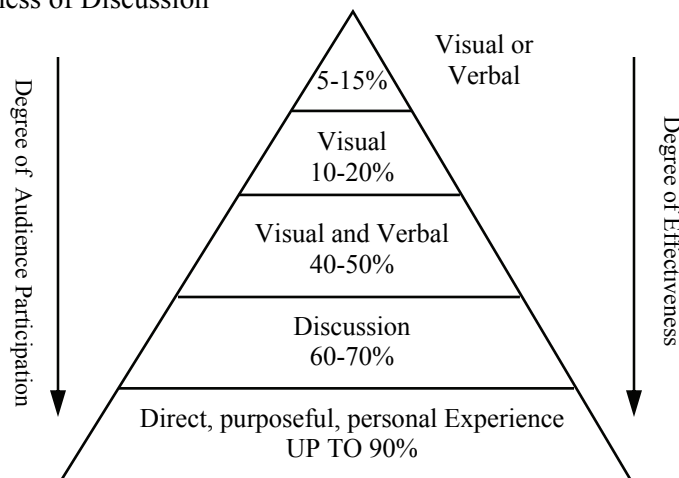
1. Clear Biblical commands—Where there is no doubt as to the meaning of Scripture, commands ought to be obeyed without question!
2. Preferences—A personal attitude of like or dislike for something. You could violate a preference without it being a sin.
3. On the level with Scripture.
4. The same for all people (Romans 14).
 - a. Cultural considerations
 - b. Societal considerations

Convictions are:

1. To be obeyed or kept. They are given to you by God or are the application of God's Word.
2. To be respected.
3. Our convictions should not be put on the level with Scripture or used to judge another.
4. Crucial in maintaining a strong Christian testimony and influence in the world.
The stronger our convictions, the clearer our testimony will be and the safer our walk will be from Satanic attack.

HOW TO . . . LEAD (NOT FOLLOW) A GOOD DISCUSSION

I. Effectiveness of Discussion



Based on
Dale's Cone of Learning
by Edgar Dale
Professor of Education
Ohio State University

II. Rules of Discussion

- A. Do not interrupt other people.
- B. Do not belittle others' comments or questions.
- C. Ask thought-provoking questions.
- D. Submit to Scripture as the final authority.

III. Ingredients of Discussion

- A. Relevant, specific topic
- B. Open-ended questions—defining and analyzing the topic
Avoid:
 1. Fill-in-the-blank questions
 2. Rhetorical questions
 3. Intimidating questions: "If you really loved God, what would you do in this situation?"
 4. Forced answers
- C. Honesty
- D. Conflict: "bread and butter" of discussion
- E. Participation
 1. Listening
 2. Discussing
 3. Asking questions

IV. Problems of Discussion

- A. Discussions can get sidetracked.
 1. What is your goal?
 2. Write questions which are goal-directed.
 3. Recognize and cut off rabbit trails.
- B. Discussions can include controversial issues.
 1. Know what the Bible says.
 2. Prepare questions which will turn kids to truth.

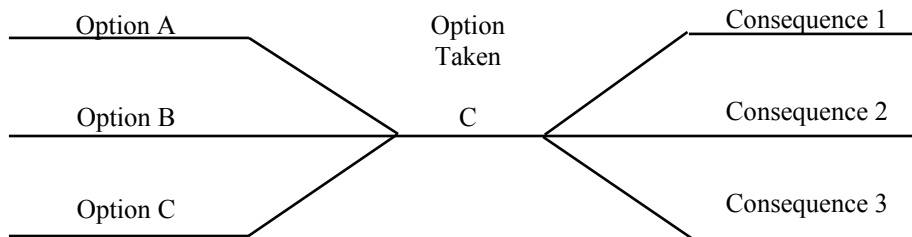
- C. Discussions may never get off the ground.
 1. The group is too large.
 2. The setting is bad.
 3. There is a large age difference.
 4. There are too many leaders.
 5. Seating hinders speaking and listening.
- D. Individuals make discussion practically impossible.
 1. The Expert—know-it-all
 2. The Talker—about anything
 3. The Silent One—reason for silence (rebellion or just quiet)
 4. The Negative One
 5. The Peacemaker—go with the flow
 6. The Bomb
 7. The Dominator—Do not let him take over.
 8. The Comedian
 9. The Philosopher

V. Tips for facilitating discussion

- A. Get everybody to express his opinion or definition in one sentence.
Example: The primary reason friendships are destroyed is . . .
- B. Express an opinion yourself and let them react to it.
Example: I believe the root problem of all friendship failures is pride. What do you think about that?
- C. Ask for feelings or actions to be taken concerning a hypothetical situation.
Example: Your best friend just started dating your ex-boyfriend. He seems to be telling her stories, and your friendship is beginning to unravel.
- D. Do not be shocked; try to have an open mind, and watch your body language.

VI. Discussion Starters

A. Options



- B. Hypotheticals
 1. What would you do? Why?
 2. Counseling a boy who does drugs and does not believe he will be able to stop
- C. Role-playing
 1. I will be the camper. You be the counselor.
 2. A worldly man translated the King James Bible; therefore, the Bible cannot be true.
- D. Object lessons
- E. Comparison studies (Bible/world)
 1. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*
 2. Dear Abby

Primary Source: *Get 'em Talking* by Mike Yaconelli and Scott Koenigsaecker (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House).

HOW TO . . . PLAN A MISSIONS TRIP

7. Evaluate

6. Report Back

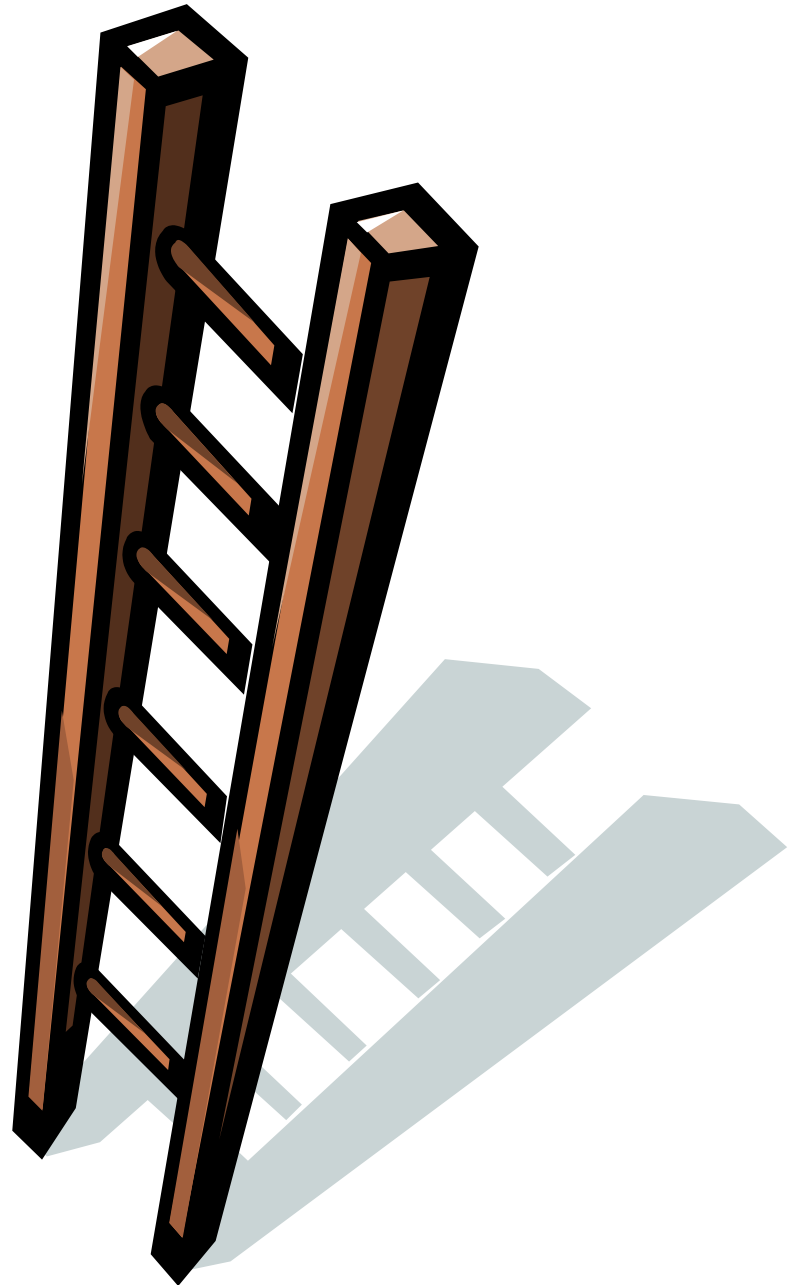
5. Go

4. Make Preparations

3. Establish Requirements

2. Create an Interest

1. Develop a Purpose



Money (Finances)

Involvement

Service

Snares (Dangers)

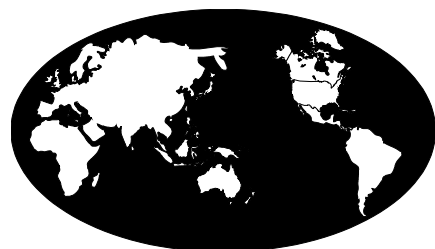
Intentions (Purpose)

Objectives (Plan)

Neglect

Stipulations (Requirements)

**“I SEND THEE TO OPEN
THEIR EYES . . .”**



HOW TO . . . WORK WITH A THEME

VALUE OF A THEME

Where in the world do you start when planning an event? How do you move from an event listed on a youth calendar to a quality activity? With an incredible number of ideas in the world to choose from, what a youth leader really needs is something to help refine and edit all the quality ideas that are available. Nothing helps in the decision making process like first deciding on a theme.

Using a theme will help the youth worker in the creation, implementation, and enthusiasm for your event. A theme will greatly increase the general expectation of your event in these three and other areas.

CREATION

Creativity starts with setting boundaries. When faced with the project of hosting a youth activity or banquet, we can sometimes run into a creativity brick wall. “What am I going to do? What are we going to eat? What should we play?” Instead of staring at a piece of blank notebook paper with a handful of potential ideas in your head, start by setting boundaries. Choose a theme.

Thinking to yourself, “I need a game,” has limitless possibilities that only overwhelm the schedule maker in making a decision. But setting boundaries and saying, “I need a game that will fit nicely with our military-theme afternoon activity,” graciously narrows down your options and may lead you to the perfectly appropriate adventure competition.

IMPLEMENTATION

A winning idea is a winning idea no matter what your theme might be. Any great idea can be made to fit into your theme without much work. On the other hand, an old or used idea that you might hesitate to reuse can be given new life by simply changing a few terms and titles to complement your theme.

A menu of food items can be directly related to your theme, or just renamed to help it along. Eating a flying saucer with extra cheese at your outer space activity might even allow the fact to be overlooked that this is the third time in a row you have had pizza.

Choosing a menu from the foundation of a theme also helps to make your decisions for you. Use the Theme Planning Worksheet to help you fully utilize your event theme.

ENTHUSIASM

We have all had fun with a good competitive game of Capture the Flag, but you should see the excitement rise when any game has an adventure story line that goes well with your theme. Setting up a story line with characters, rescue, and intrigue enhances the excitement.

Maintaining the theme talk throughout the activity is essential. Your teens calling your youth workers by their rank throughout the night will only cause the adventure of your military theme to grow. Do not sit down for refreshments during your Cattle Drive night; that’s Ol’ Cookie who is ringing the triangle and yelling, “Chow is on, Come’n get it!” Maintaining the theme throughout the event with terms and setting helps create a tremendous memory.

Take time to think all the way through your activity. How can you make your theme fit with the particular details of your event? Taking a few minutes to implement your theme throughout the activity goes a long way in the adventure of your event. Do not feel as if you must use every idea listed here in order to have a successful theme. You can have a very exciting theme without spending too much at all!

SELECT A THEME Choose something that will easily take you to a different time and place. A few examples are jungle safari, Sherwood Forest, boat cruise, medieval times, trains, old West, mystery, pirate, Tom Sawyer, secret agent, and sports.

TERMS Take a few minutes to change as many terms from your schedule, props, and titles to fit your theme. Consistently use these terms in conversation or announcements. You will want to have your youth group using these terms commonly.

MENU Choose food that is theme appropriate. Common food that is re-named for your theme will also work well. Doritos, for some reason, are just more fun to eat when they are mini-pyramids for your Egyptian theme.

NAME TAGS This is a common tool that is not often used in youth groups but can be a big help for your major events. Consider making your name tag fit in with the costume of your theme. Your pirate theme can have a parrot name tag that sits on everybody's shoulders. Use your name tags to help you easily split up teams for your competitions based upon how they are colored or decorated.

TITLES Both your youth and your youth leaders need to step into a role to help your adventure. Refer to your group as your band of merry men and maidens during your Robin Hood theme. Call your big loveable teen/leader Little John. Friar Tuck will be giving your devotion that evening. Take a moment to establish a character who will be the host for the event.

PROMOTION/FLYERS Choose font and clip art that is theme appropriate. Laying the groundwork early for your theme will help your group find the adventure of a theme quicker.

COMPETITION Sometimes the adventure of your theme will play right into the hands of a great game you have been wanting to play. Other times you can give a classic game that your group enjoys a few twists to make it fit well with your theme.

SPEAKER TOPICS A Biblical passage applied rightly with your running theme may take some extra planning and communication, but is well worth the effort. Speakers are often looking for a direction to go; a well-planned theme can be a great asset.

MIXERS Your opening game or activity can really help set the tone for your entire theme. Use your terms commonly at this point to let your group know you are going to be consistent in carrying out the theme.

SKITS Find humor that is theme appropriate. Sometimes that might be easy to find, but sometimes you will have to dig deep. Most classic skits can be altered in such a way to help your theme along.

MUSIC You might find good, spiritually encouraging music that will be appropriate for both your theme and your service.

THEME PLANNING WORKSHEET

Take time to fill in this worksheet when planning an event. This is a mass spattering of ideas that was compiled to help you think of all the different ways you might incorporate your chosen theme.

Theme	_____
Titles	_____
Character Names	_____
Schedule Terms	_____
Preaching Sessions	_____
Music	_____
Game Time Terms	_____
Skits	_____
Mixers	_____
Activities	_____
Games	_____
Contests	_____
Stunts	_____
Announcements	_____
Promotion	_____
Flyers	_____
Costumes	_____
Giveaways	_____
Menu	_____
Snacks	_____
Name Tags	_____

HOW TO . . . RUN A SUCCESSFUL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

- I. Why
 - A. For effective outreach—un-churched children become acquainted with the church
 - B. To strengthen children in the church
 - C. To build and sustain summer attendance
 - D. To train leaders how to minister and serve
 - E. To build other programs in the church
 - F. For creative teaching
 - G. To gain community awareness

- II. When
 - A. Time of year—generally though not exclusively in the summertime
 - B. Days of year—traditional VBS is one five-day week; once a week all summer is becoming popular
 - C. Time of day—evenings can sometimes work; daytime is most popular
 - D. Length of VBS—a one-day event or up to 10 weeks

- III. What
 - A. Items to include—Bible study, crafts, music, games, snacks, puppets, etc.
 - B. People to include—teenagers with adult supervision
 - C. Curriculum—pre-packaged material vs. create-your-own material
 - D. Places to consider—facilities, size of rooms, equipment, resources

- IV. How
 - A. Before
 - 1. Set a date well in advance.
 - 2. Set goals concerning what you want to achieve.
 - 3. Determine primary leadership.
 - 4. Choose and order curriculum.
 - 5. Budget your expenses.
 - 6. Plan your setting and the schedule.
 - 7. Promote early and often.
 - 8. Brainstorm about possibilities, both good and bad.
 - 9. Gather together and train leadership.
 - 10. Conduct pre-registration.

 - B. During
 - 1. Begin with registration.
 - 2. Keep good records.
 - 3. Run competition.
 - 4. Encourage visitors.
 - 5. Run your program ON TIME as much as possible.
 - 6. Have strong opening and closing programs.
 - 7. Take pictures.
 - 8. Send items home with the children.
 - 9. Set up a store.
 - 10. Supervise and make adjustments as necessary.
 - 11. Keep parents and church informed on progress.

12. Continue to promote VBS.
13. Keep VBS centered on the primary theme.
14. Begin visitation and follow-up.
15. Do not run out of supplies.
16. Clean up after each day.
17. Send out postcards and letters.
18. Promote the last program to get parents to attend.
19. Get to know the children.
20. Always be aware of SAFETY!

C. After

1. Continue follow-up on children.
2. Store leftover supplies.
3. Show gratitude to VBS workers.
4. Evaluate your VBS while it is fresh on your mind.
5. Share the victories of VBS from time to time.

V. Don't's

- A. Don't use curriculum that you have not evaluated.
- B. Don't get just anyone to work in VBS.
- C. Don't leave children or teenagers unsupervised.
- D. Don't allow public criticism of the program; settle differences in private.
- E. Don't let children go without their parents.

VI. Do's

- A. Enjoy your program; the children and teens will notice.
- B. Supervise your program; make sure that everyone is ready.
- C. Always be prepared for problems; be ready for plan "B."
- D. Always maintain control.
- E. Provide strong preaching and teaching.
- F. Keep God and the Bible at the center of everything that you do.

HOW TO . . . DEVELOP A SIMPLE FILING SYSTEM FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Have you ever been frustrated by losing something that you knew you had "somewhere"? Do you have a "pile to file" which is growing and spreading, covering pieces of furniture and even entire rooms? Have you ever wasted valuable time trying to find the game or illustration that you just have to have? I know that I could answer "yes" to these questions and others like them.

One of the marks of good youth ministry is simplicity and organization. Churches and youth ministries of all sizes accumulate materials that are worth keeping and saving. Many of the materials are bought and used, while the church and its leadership may create other materials. Whatever the source, it is a good thing to have a personal filing system that is efficient and comfortable to use.

Reasons for a Filing System

1. It will help you save good materials that you can use over and over again.
2. It will save you time in locating and using your youth material.
3. It will help to keep your desk and room organized and clean.
4. It will help you determine what is immediately important and what can be filed away.
5. It will keep you from having to remember everything.

How to Build a Filing System

1. Start simple. Do not build an elaborate system unless you need it.
2. Look at different filing systems to see what you like.
3. Build your system around the material you use most often.
4. Keep almost everything at first. Later you can determine what to throw away.
5. When a file gets too full, subdivide it into other files.
6. Make sure the system is easy to adapt if you decide to make changes later.

An Example of a Filing System

My filing system is only a pattern to learn from; I have found it helpful over the years and hope that you can glean some ideas from it. Make a system with which you are comfortable.

1. I have three different levels to my filing system. First, at home I have ten cabinets that encompass everything of mine. Second, at work I have a cabinet that is dedicated to youth ministry. Third, I have four small shelves and a small drawer for the material that is most pressing and important. Most youth leaders probably need only a small cabinet for youth ministry and a couple of shelves on a desk for the most important things.
2. I started my filing system back in college with a cardboard file about a foot square, a handful of manila folders, and about fifteen main labels for all my material. The main categories were Bible, Biography, Church, Education, Eschatology, God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Man, Missions, Music, Religion, Sins, and World. Each of these categories was later subdivided two times only; otherwise, it became too complicated for me. Each category and subcategory was alphabetical in order. For example, Church was divided with categories such as Bulletins, Deacons, Finances, Pastors, Weddings, etc. Later, I subdivided

each subcategory alphabetically. For example, Bulletins was divided into Bulletins (Easter), Bulletins (Normal), Bulletins (Thanksgiving), etc.

3. My youth filing system has the following main categories: AWANA, Bible, Budget, Bus, Camp, Catalog, Churches, Colleges, Counseling, Fliers, Fundraising, IBC (International Baptist College), Ministry, Missions, Music, Parks, Pictures, Seminaries, Sports, School, TCA (Tri-City Christian Academy), TCB (Tri-City Baptist Church), Trips, VBS, and Youth.
4. Each main youth category is subdivided two times. For example, Camp has an alphabetical listing of different camps—Apache Creek, Ironwood, Pinerock, WILDS, etc. Each of these is subdivided into years such as Ironwood (Junior Camp 1997), Ironwood (Teen Camp 1999).
5. I place my main categories on the far left of the file in bold letters and a bold color (mine are blue). Any time I do not have a subcategory for something, I either create the category or file it in the main category file. At a later time, I will come back and file it more specifically. This allows me to file everything whenever I get it and not wait until later. It is usually best to look at materials right away, assess their importance (keep, throw away, put into important file, or file it away) and file them as soon as possible.
6. My subcategories are in bold print, in the middle or right side of the file system. In my case they are colored yellow to distinguish them from the main categories that are blue. The second subcategory is usually put in parenthesis and is often put in a manila folder within the hanging file system.

Note: Hanging files are nicer than manila folders for long term storage of material, but manila folders are easier to transport and use on the go. Sometimes I will take contents out of a hanging file and temporarily put them in a manila folder to carry when traveling.

7. The small filing shelves on my desk and small cabinet drawer in my desk are for materials that are the most pressing and most important items that I will need in the near future. The four shelves on my desk are for messages, ministries, special events, and visitation. I try to go through these shelves on a regular basis to keep up with the most important things happening. When working on a special event such as our College Days every November, I will take previous materials from the file and place it on one of the shelves to keep it in front of my attention.

Advantages I Have Found to This System

1. It is flexible, simple, and personal. While I have borrowed ideas from other sources, the system is basically unique and built around the material that I have and use in youth ministry. This saves me time and energy in the week-to-week operations of youth work.
2. It prioritizes my material and keeps the most important things within reach. Materials can move from my shelves to the main filing system and back to the shelves when working on a project.
3. It is adaptable. One of the things that I have noticed about most filing systems that I have seen is that they become increasingly difficult to use as the system gets larger. They get too complex. Therefore, it is easy to lose something within a filing system because you cannot remember where you put it.
4. It is alphabetical. This makes it easy to create and place new files into the system. Also, it allows for easy usage by someone else that has permission to use your file. All three categories—main, first subcategory, and second subcategory—are from A through Z.

HOW TO . . . SET UP COMMITTEES IN YOUR YOUTH GROUP

DEVELOPING STUDENT LEADERS / SERVANT-BASED MINISTRY

1. What are your goals for the _____ of your church?
2. Is youth ministry important to God?
3. If so, what does He say about it? (Deuteronomy 6; Deuteronomy 32; Psalm 78)
4. What is our main goal in ministering to teens? _____ (Ephesians 4:13)
5. What was Christ like? Among other qualities, He was a _____ ! (Matthew 20:28)
6. What quality then do we need in order to be like Christ? _____ !
(Romans 1:16; Psalm 119:9; Hebrews 4:12)

Principles to Remember:

- Expect much—Get much! Set high standards first for yourself and then for your teens.
- Eternal, not Temporal focus—Look down the road ten years, not ten weeks or months.

TWO CAMPS OF YOUTH MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY

ENTERTAINMENT PHILOSOPHY

1. Has big parties that rival anything the world has to offer
2. Always has to be something new
3. Uses the excuse of luring in unsaved, but rarely brings about change in lives
4. Uses the excuse of “keeping them off the streets”
5. Not cool to be “too spiritual”
6. Has the false concept that because the world has a better idea, we should be just like them
7. Has new and worldly music
8. Measures success by the amount of fun had, or by the numbers

SERVICE-BASED MINISTRY

1. Gives a purpose for living
2. Changes the hearts of teens to want to make an impact on their world
3. Is not as concerned with “the success of the party” as about the result of a changed life.
4. Teaches teens not to worry as much about their own needs being met as about their meeting someone else’s needs.
5. Is designed so that huge evangelistic events are not as necessary, because teens are bringing their friends on a regular basis anyway.
6. Focuses on growing in the Lord, not on entertaining parties.
7. Ultimately brings more fun, but as a by-product, not as the main goal.
8. Teaches teens “real” Christianity and looks to serve, not to be served.

Used with permission

PRACTICALITY

Some Principles:

1. Do not have the adults do for the teens what they could do.
2. Do not just be their buddy.
3. Be creative in giving them service opportunities.
4. You get what you honor.
5. They will learn by doing, not just hearing.

Why Servanthood Philosophy?

1. It gives purpose.
2. It is Christ's mission statement.
3. It is long-lasting.
4. It is satisfying.
5. It is the opposite of the world system.
6. It gives ownership to the teens of the group.

How do we implement and "sell it" to the teens?

1. Long-term strategy
2. Mission trips
3. Service activities
4. Fifth Sunday Youth Nights
5. Fifth Sunday Children's Church
6. Youth committees
7. Regular ministry assignments
8. Discipleship
9. Limited number of sponsors

COMMITTEE IMPLEMENTATION

We want our teens to serve the Lord, but how do we go about helping them do it? One way is by having youth committees to implement the concept of servant-based ministry.

Teens need to be involved in serving the Lord. They also need to feel a sense of ownership of the youth group. They need to realize that they are responsible for the success of the youth group as much as anyone. If they do not do their part, it will not be as successful as it could be.

Instead of the usual set-up that our culture is so accustomed to of having a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, the committees are designed to involve any teenager who desires an opportunity to serve. The youth group president idea usually involves a popularity contest and puts him/her in a figure head position, but does not really give him a specific job description. It also makes the rest of the group feel as if they do not have to do anything else, because they are not as high on the pecking order. For this reason, they start to complain about how the youth group is being run: they do not sense that they have anything to do with it (no ownership).

The committee structure eliminates a lot of those potential problems in youth ministry. There are many leaders who can take on significant responsibility, and virtually everyone can have a major part in the function of the ministry. There is more sense of ownership, because they can see that it is their idea that is being put into effect. There is much higher involvement, because those that planned activities are certainly going to be promoting it; after all, "That's my idea." There is also a lot more purpose of the activities than, "Well, I guess we gotta have an activity this month, so what are we gonna do?" The first question asked in the activity committee is, "What is the purpose?" They must answer that before they move forward.

JOSHUA COMMITTEE

- CHRISTIAN SERVICE -

Joshua was known as a great spiritual leader of God's people. He had been Moses' right-hand man and had seen his organization. Joshua had great foresight as a spy in Canaan and was later given the entire leadership of the country because of his complete faithfulness and obedience to God. One of his most famous quotes was, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua is our namesake for this committee because of his leadership abilities and his desire to see his people serve the Lord. It will be important for this group to exercise uncompromising leadership, to plan, and to execute Christian service opportunities to the glory of God.

5TH SUNDAY JOY CHURCH

- Class Assignments
- Curriculum Distribution
- Songs
- Skits & Object Lessons
- Puppets
- Main Lesson
- Invitation
- Interaction w/ Regular Workers

NURSING HOME SERVICES

- Song Leading
- Scripture Reading
- Skit
- Message
- Piano Playing
- Special Music
- Transportation
- Evaluation of Ministry

EASTER SUNRISE BR. & SERVICE

- Breakfast (See Folder)
- Service (See Youth Night)
- Special Events

COMMUNICATIONS

- Thank You Cards
- Sympathy Cards
- "We Missed You"

LITERATURE MINISTRY

- Managing the Tracts
- Stocking Current Tracts
- Look for New Tracts

5TH SUNDAY YOUTH NIGHT

- Song Leading
- Special Music
- Offertory
- Inclusion of Jr. Highers
- Scripture Reading
- Skits, Poems, or Readings
- Special Music Groups
- Personal Testimonies

SUMMER MISSION TRIP

- Qualifications
- Goals
- Preparation Studies
- Teacher Training
- Publicity
- Music
- Responsibility Checklist
- Puppet Ministry

YOUTH CHOIR

- Needs of the Group
- Special Practices Needed

SPIRITUAL NEEDS

- Daily Devotions
- Prayer Time
- Unity
- Building Others Up
- Knowing God's Will
- Depression
- Witnessing
- Peer Pressure
- Attitudes
- Temptations

NEHEMIAH COMMITTEE

- ACTIVITIES -

Nehemiah was a “man who had a mind to work.” With tremendous persistence, he organized a building program to provide walls around the city of Jerusalem. Facing persecution and tribulations from without and within, he forged ahead with an unwavering faith in God. He was single-minded. He knew what it was that he had to accomplish, and he stayed on the task until it was completed. This committee will want to model Nehemiah in “getting their hands dirty” so to speak. Also, they will need Nehemiah’s single-minded purpose and dedication to not give up. We need to build activities around purposes, not just plan a “party” to fill up the calendar.

WHAT’S OUR PURPOSE?

- Outreach?
- Inreach?
- Group Unity?
- Group Involvement?
- Community Testimony?
- Involving Newcomers?
- Getting to Know Others Better?

PUBLICATION

- Posters
- Flyers and handouts
- Photo poster
- Announcements
- Info to church office

LOCATION

- Best Location?
- Easy to Find?
- Used recently?

THEME

- Are we remembering our purpose?
- How can we accomplish it?
- Related games, etc.

WORKDAYS

- Who needs encouragement?
- When can we get the most to help?
- What equipment will we need?
- What about transportation?

COST

- Is it cost prohibitive?
- How can we cut costs?
- Can EVERYONE afford it?
- Establish costs early.
- Will we pay a speaker?

DETAILS TO PLAN

- Devotional
- All jobs completed, etc.
- Games
- Music
- Photographer

FOOD

- Cost
- Preparation
- Who’s purchasing? How?

TRANSPORTATION

- How many are coming?
- How many vehicles are needed?
- Does the church office know?

AFTER CHURCH FELLOWSHIPS

- Music
- Devotions
- Activities

HOW TO . . . RUN AN OPTIONAL WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROGRAM

The framework of this idea has been adopted from the founders of *King's Kids*, who have developed a program for Teenagers called T.R.A.C. (Teens Redeemed And Called). They do have a supply of curriculum if you need it, as well as shirts and other logo items. Their address is King's Kids Int. Baptist Mission, 22648 Groesenbach Road, Washington, IL 61571, (309) 698-2001). We have adopted the name and have adapted the structure to meet the needs of our own group. For us, this program takes the place of the weekly Saturday evening activity. The following is some information regarding what we do.

PHILOSOPHY

Because our church has an on-site Christian school, we were finding that fewer and fewer kids were interested in coming to an activity held at the "school" each Saturday. Many would attend Sunday services and school in the same facility and then come to an activity at the same place. This would mean that teens would be at the church/school seven days a week. We then decided to move the weekly activity to Wednesday nights, allowing the kids to have Saturday to work, spend time with their families, and the like.

PROGRAM

Our weekly T.R.A.C. meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. with an hour of games and competition. This may include some of the typical sports such as basketball, volleyball, and indoor soccer or maybe a version of a popular board game, relays, and scavenger hunts, wiffle ball, or a theme night. Typically, at 6:30 p.m. we have dinner for the teens. We have burritos or tacos or order Domino's pizza. The kids help with the cost of food by paying \$2.50 for dinner. At 7:00 p.m., we begin our Bible study time with singing, a prayer time, or a simple game. This is followed by a time of studying God's Word. The activity ends around 8:00 p.m.

PURPOSE

The T.R.A.C. program has been adopted by our church to help meet the physical and spiritual needs of our teens. Through this program, it is our purpose to reach teenagers with the Gospel and encourage spiritual growth in the lives of those who have already accepted Christ as their Savior. We went from an average of six to eight teens at a Saturday activity to a consistent attendance of 50 to 55 at T.R.A.C. each week by implementing this program. It has enabled us to minister to a variety of young people both church and unchurched, saved and unsaved.

HOW TO . . . RUN A SCRIPTURE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scripture Scholarship is a faith-based program where camp-aged youth memorize a book of the Bible (1 John, James, selected passages of similar length) and earn a week of camp for their effort. It is faith-based as the scholarships come from money gifts from the congregation. If there is a shortage of funds, the amount given is divided and given towards the cost of camp for those who complete the requirements. If there is a surplus of funds, it is set aside for the following year. Each year, our number has grown in those completing the requirements; and each year, the full camp costs for the Scripture Scholars have come in completely. We have seen large numbers succeed and go to camp. Adults participate by becoming proctors who listen to the verses and by giving as God directs them. Many adults have also begun to enter the program themselves for the benefit of Scripture memory and to encourage the youth by working with them towards the same goal.

The process for the Bible memory is precise in order to maximize true Bible memory. As verses are memorized by chapter, the context is not disrupted. Scripture Scholarship concludes with a review week where one whole chapter, usually chosen by a random draw, is the last required week to pass. The youth who complete the requirements remember these verses for years and know the verses in context.

Records are kept of all participants, and rewards are given at the end for the highest positive scores. Points are deducted for each error, but points can be earned by reciting definitions, doing extra work, and reviewing a chapter already completed. Halfway through the 15 or 16 weeks, we give a week off and throw a party for those who have made it halfway, in order to give them a rest and encourage them. During this party, we have a fun quiz on the material already accomplished, which rewards extra points to their overall score for each correct answer.

First, second, and third places are given for the best positive scores. For these places, we award prizes such as Bibles, Christian bibliographies, or concordances. We give a t-shirt, with a special design relating to the book they memorized, to each one who finishes. Recognition and awards are given the Sunday Night after the completion of the program.

Included on the next several pages is the material on 1 John which was our first year of Scripture Scholarship. Since then, the youth have done James, the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), assorted Psalms, 2 Timothy, Philippians, and selected passages from Romans.

This form of Scripture Scholarship was designed and written by David and Barbara Rowley.

HOW TO . . . SET UP A MEMORY PROGRAM

Proctor Checklist

Preparation Tips

1. Use your list of qualified students to pray for those whom you will be proctoring each week. They will need much support from us and anointing from the Holy Spirit to finish this journey victoriously.
2. Make sure you have read and reread the current week's recitation several times. Use scoring sheets for the preparation. Reading aloud to yourself will help give you the feeling and the timing of the recitation. It will also alert you to common mistakes and the parts that are hard to say or understand.

Session Tips

1. A session is a single sitting for a proctor. It may be composed of multiple recitations from multiple students.
2. Each student gets 10 minutes to complete the weekly recitation and any bonus point recitations.
3. Make certain you have enough time for each student at each session. Try not to use the session for casual conversation until all students have been proctored.
4. Make certain each session is private in order to eliminate distractions, assure accuracy of scoring, and reduce pressure on the student.
5. Make certain you and the student are not facing each other during the recitation. No assistance may be given and no aids may be used.

Scoring Tips

1. Make certain you have enough correct scoring sheets for each student. Fill out a scoring sheet for every recitation (including bonus point recitations) of every student each session.
2. Fill out the scoring sheets in pen, complete all the information, and return all scoring sheets to the head proctor's box after each session.
3. Each recitation must have less than 10 (0-0) added, deleted, or changed words to pass. If the student fails, he may not survey the sheet and say it again. The student must get another recitation appointment not sooner than three hours and never more than two a day. He can attempt to say the passage again without looking at it if it is within the 10-minute time period.
4. Make a slash through each word that is changed or deleted. Make a slash through each space where a word is added. Cancel a slash with an additional slash through the same space or word. Reversing two words is the same as changing two words.
5. If after the recitation you are unsure of what you heard or that you marked it correctly, you may have the student repeat a section. The score must never go down as a result of repeating.

SCRIPTURE SCHOLARSHIP BIBLE MEMORY PROGRAM

Purpose for Scripture Scholarship:

1. To reward our youth for their success in memorization of the Word.
2. To provide a way for the entire church family to be involved in the spiritual development of our youth.
3. To prepare our youth spiritually for the climax of summer.
4. To reduce the financial impact on youth and families attending summer camp.
5. To encourage and reward the development of personal discipline.

Method: Any qualified youth will be invited to earn a camp scholarship by joining the Scripture Scholarship Bible memory program. The successful completion of the pre-defined requirements will entitle the student to a single scholarship. This is a faith program and is dependent on the gifts of the church members. In the event that there is not enough gifts for the entire camp fee, the monies will be divided evenly among those who have completed the requirements.

Definitions

1. Qualified Youth: Any youth qualified to go to camp. Church membership is required.
2. Scripture Scholarship: The total fees that would have to be collected by the church from every youth to attend camp.
3. Successful Completion: To remain qualified during the program. This will be determined by the proctor(s).
4. Pre-defined Requirements: The following requirements must be met to remain qualified:
 - a. Reciting the passages on the correct date for that passage (See schedule.)
 - b. Obeying the following rules for recitation:
 - 1) No aids may be used except for memory.
 - 2) No prompting will be given.
 - 3) References must be quoted for each recitation.
 - 4) Each recitation must be within ten minutes.
 - 5) Each recitation must have less than ten added, deleted, or changed words.
 - 6) The recitation cannot be past the date for which the passage is required unless approved by the head proctor. These will be for real emergencies. (Head Proctor: Mrs. Sharon Stahl (602) 843-8240)
 - 7) If the student fails, he may not survey the sheet and say it again. The student must see a proctor in a new session not sooner than three hours and never more than two a day.

- 8) Each student must notify the Head Proctor if it seems like he is going to fail the requirements.
 - c. Reciting a pre-chosen passage on the last week of the program
 - d. Registering for camp at the beginning of Sunday School (\$40.00)
5. Bonus points: Will be assessed and accumulated by the proctor(s). Bonus points will be assigned as follows.
 - a. Minus one point for each added, deleted, or changed word.
 - b. Plus five points for each vocabulary definition with references.
 - c. Twenty points for review (recitation) on previous chapters (one time per session)

SCRIPTURE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CAMP

Purpose of Scripture Scholarships

The Scripture Scholarships has a four-fold purpose:

1. To reward our youth for success in memorization of the Word.
2. To provide a way for the entire church family to be involved in the spiritual development of our youth.
3. To prepare our youth spiritually for the climax of summer camp.
4. To reduce the financial impact on youth and families of attending summer camp.

Methods: Any qualified youth will be invited to earn a Scripture Scholarship by joining a Bible memorization scholarship program. The successful completion of the pre-defined requirements will entitle the student to a single scholarship. If there are more scholarship winners than there are scholarships, the scholarships will be given to those who earn the most bonus points.

Definitions

1. Qualified Youth: Any youth qualified to go to camp. Church membership is not required. Application must be received during Scholarship Registration time.
2. Scripture Scholarship: The total fees that would have to be collected by the church from every youth wishing to attend camp.
3. Successful Completion: To remain qualified during the program. This will be determined by the proctor(s).
4. Pre-defined Requirements: The following requirements must be met to remain qualified:
 - a. Reciting 1 John on the following published schedule:

Week 1.....	Chapter 1:1-10.....	January 21
Week 2.....	Chapter 2:1-6.....	January 28
Week 3.....	Chapter 2:7-14.....	February 4
Week 4.....	Chapter 2:15-19.....	February 11
Week 5.....	Chapter 2:20-29.....	February 18
Week 6.....	Chapter 3:1-6.....	February 25
Week 7.....	Chapter 3:7-15.....	March 3
Week 8.....	Chapter 3:16-24.....	March 10
Week 9.....	Chapter 4:1-6.....	March 17
Week 10.....	Chapter 4:7-15.....	March 24
Week 11.....	Chapter 4:16-21.....	March 31
Week 12.....	Chapter 5:1-5.....	April 7
Week 13.....	Chapter 5:6-15.....	April 14
Week 14.....	Chapter 5:16-21.....	April 21
Week 15.....	Chapter ? at random.....	April 28

- b. Obeying the following rules of recitation:
 - a. No aids may be used except for memory.
 - b. No prompting will be given.
 - c. References must be quoted for each recitation.
 - d. Each recitation must be within ten minutes, including any bonus recitation.
 - e. Each recitation must have less than ten added, deleted, or changed words.
 - f. Each recitation appointment time must be kept.
- c. Reciting a randomly selected chapter on the last week of the program.
5. Bonus Points: Will be assessed and accumulated by the proctor(s). Bonus points will be assigned as follows:
 - a. Minus one point for each added, deleted, or changed word.
 - b. Plus two points for each vocabulary definition.
 - c. Fifteen points for quoting “The Seven Certainties” in 1 John in one recitation.
 - d. Twenty points for quoting the previous chapter in one recitation.
 - d. One to ten points for a dramatic recitation of chapter of choice if a tie must be broken.
6. Proctor(s): Those appointed by the staff to listen to the recitations for the purpose of determining continued qualification and keeping score of bonus points. Points will be recorded and accumulated by the proctor(s).

THE SEVEN CERTAINTIES*Bonus Points*

1 John might be entitled, “The Letter of Certainties.” It opens with a positive statement of personal knowledge of Christ (1:1-3). 1 John strongly emphasizes the spiritual “knowledge” available to believers. The word *know*, or its equivalent, appears over thirty times. From 1 John, we can be certain of or *know* through seven important facts about Christianity.

Memorize each of the seven statements of knowledge and the supporting verses with references. All seven statements must be recited at one recitation. The entire recitation is worth fifteen points, and the score is all or nothing. The recitation can be done any week of the schedule, but only one attempt per week is allowed. Six or more errors will be considered incomplete.

1. We know that a righteous life indicates regeneration.

We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not (5:18).

2. We know that we shall be like Christ at his coming.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is (3:2).

3. We know that Christ came to take away our sins.

And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin (3:5).

4. We know that brotherly love indicates that we have passed from death to life.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death (3:14).

5. We know that Christ lives in us by the witness of the Spirit.

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us (3:24).

6. We can know that we have eternal life.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God (5:13).

7. We know that our prayers are answered.

And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him (5:15).

Score: _____

SUGGESTED VOCABULARY*Bonus Points*

I John contains many key words that are often used in Scripture. They are particularly important to our understanding of doctrine and our relationship with God through Christ. Each definition is worth two bonus points. You can get bonus points for each definition only once. You may recite as many or as few as you wish at each recitation. Scoring is all or nothing for each definition. Each recitation must include the vocabulary word, the entire definition, and one example verse with reference.

- Manifest (v) – 1:2, 2:19, 3:5, 3:8, 3:10, 4:9; appear; declare; show
- Deceive (v) – 1:8, 3:7; cause to roam from safety, truth, or virtue; go astray; seduce
- Advocate (n) – 2:1; intercessor; supporter; defender; one who “sticks up” for you
- Propitiation (n) 2:2, 4:10; atonement; expiator; an appeasement or conciliation to an offended power; something to soften justified wrath
- Abide – 2:6, 2:10, 2:14, 2:17, 2:24, 2:27, 2:28, 3:6, 3:14, 3:24; to stay in a given place, state, or relation; dwell; endure; be present; remain
- Lust (n) – 2:16, 2:17; a longing for what is forbidden; intense craving; concupiscence; desire
- Antichrist – 2:18, 2:22, 4:3; an opponent of the Messiah
- Anointing, Unction – 2:20, 2:27; the special endowment of the Holy Spirit; to be selected and empowered by the Holy Spirit
- Bestow (v) – 3:1; give; commit
- Righteous (adj) – 2:1, 2:29, 3:7, 3:10, 3:12; just; right; innocent; holy
- Unrighteous (adj) – 1:9, 5:17; unjust iniquitous; wrongful, guilty
- Wicked (adj) – 2:13, 2:14, 3:12, 5:18, 5:19; hurtful; evil; calamitous; diseased; bad
- Purify (v) – 3:3; make clean; sanctify
- Sin (v) – 1:7, 1:8, 1:9, 1:10, 2:1, 2:12, 3:4, 3:5, 3:6, 3:8, 3:9, 4:10, 5:16, 5:17, 5:18; offense against God
- Perceive (v) – 3:16; know; be aware of; understand
- Assure (v) – 3:19; make confident, persuade, convince, cause to trust
- Condemn (v) – 3:20, 3:21; find fault with, blame
- Confess (v) – 1:9, 4:2, 4:3, 4:15; assent; acknowledge; admit; profess
- Begotten (v) – 4:9, 5:1, 5:18; born; brought forth; conceived
- Perfected (v) – 2:5, 4:12, 4:17, 4:18; completed; consummated; finished; accomplished
- Witness (n) – 1:2, 5:6, 5:8, 5:9, 5:10; testimony, evidence; record
- Petition (n) – 5:15; a thing asked for, requirement; request

Score:

HOW TO . . . RUN AN EFFECTIVE JUNIOR CHURCH PROGRAM

If you have visited other churches, you have seen as many different ways of running Jr. Church as there are churches that you may visit. A simple definition of Jr. Church is simply “church for juniors.” In order to define Jr. Church then, we need to define church. There are several functions that the church has, including evangelism, fellowship, edification, worship, and service. Many times Jr. Church just becomes a glorified nursery for children too old to be in the nursery. Instead, it should be viewed as an excellent opportunity to train children for what they can expect in “Big” church.

The Audience: Children ages 3-8

These young people are characterized by (I will get this to you tomorrow)

The Purpose:

- To teach children what church is like
- To reach children who are unsaved
- To challenge children to obey God
- To show children how to love God and others

The Chapter Method: Begin with a theme . . . pick your helpers

- Bible lesson
 - New Testament
 - Old Testament
- Flannel graph
- Object lesson
- Impromptu object lesson
- Bible memory
- Missionary time
- Puppets
 - Transitions
 - Definitions
 - Review
 - Practical application
- Prayer time
- Review
 - Past weeks
 - This week
 - Reward
- Show and Tell
 - Chemical
 - Tricks
 - Bible-time stuff
- Song Time
- Sword Drill
- Offering
 - Offertory
 - Ushers
 - Prayer

- Explaining church - Why do we do what we do in “Big” church
 - Communion
 - Baptism
 - Salvation
 - Preaching
 - Offering
 - Invitation
 - Service Options
 - Worship/Reverence
 - Prayer
- Secondary Chapter options
 - Craft Time
 - Read a chapter from a book
 - * *Those Kids From Proverbsville*
 - Visitors
 - Birthdays
 - Rewards
 - Competitions

Possible Pitfalls:

- Disorganization
- Unwillingness to fail
- Impatience
- Lack of Prayer

How To . . . Do A COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey can be an effective tool to allow your church members to get to know other folks in the community. This example can be tweaked and changed to accomplish your purpose.

“Hello. My name is _____ and this is _____. We are from _____, and we are taking a quick survey in our community. May we ask you a few brief questions?

1. How long have you lived in _____? _____
2. What do you think is the biggest need in our country during these times?

3. What do you think is the biggest problem teens face today?

4. Do you attend a church in the area?
YES _____ If so, what type? _____
NO _____
5. How often do you attend church services?
Weekly Monthly Holidays Rarely Never
6. Do you own a Bible? YES NO
7. How much of the Bible have you read? _____
8. In your opinion, what should be the main purpose of a church in our city?

9. If someone were to ask you how he could get to Heaven, what would you tell him? _____

10. Do you think a person can know **for sure** that he is on his way to Heaven when he dies?
11. If I could show you from the Bible that what you just told me was not the way to Heaven, would you want me to show you? _____

I appreciate your taking time to answer these questions.

12. Would you be interested in having someone else stop by and bring you some information about our church or talk to you about spiritual things?

YES NO

Name _____

Address _____

Apt. # _____ Building # _____

Phone Number _____

So that person can contact you before he comes.

Thanks again for taking time to answer these questions. Have a good night!

HOW TO . . . USE PUPPETS

Value: Puppets can be a great asset to any children’s ministry program. They are often used to help teach a Biblical truth in a manner which the audience can easily identify with and understand. Children respond to puppets, despite their mood or circumstances.

Purpose: Develop a purpose for your puppet ministry which will serve as a guiding tool for your scripts, lessons, songs, stories, and general interaction.

Philosophy: Each puppet ministry philosophy will probably be a little different. You need to decide *why* you have a puppet ministry and what you want to accomplish with it.

Ideas for use: Puppets can be used in a variety of ways. The following is a list of some ideas:

1. “Sing” a special music number
2. Help lead songs during song time
3. Teach a Bible verse for the theme of the day
4. Humor
5. Question and Answer time
6. Tell a story
7. Act out a skit dealing with a particular theme

Do not have extremely lengthy puppet scripts and stories. It can bore the kids and cause them to be distracted by something else

Tips and Tricks: Becoming a “Master Puppeteer” does take some work, but with a little effort puppets can play “big” in your ministry. Here are some helpful ideas for you to consider and practice when you are working with puppets:

1. Puppet care
 - a. Do not lay them on the floor.
 - b. Keep food and drink away from the puppets.
 - c. Treat the puppets with care. They are easy to damage.
 - d. Always put the puppets away when you are done using them.
 - e. Store the puppets properly. Do not just throw them in a box.
2. Hand movement
 - a. As you move your hand, you should keep your hand flat and only move your thumb.
 - b. Moving your other fingers results in “flipping the lid,” which is when the puppet’s head moves back and forth instead of just his mouth.
 - c. One way to help prevent “flipping the lid” is to cross your middle finger over your index finger and then move your thumb
 - d. Open the mouth wide enough to emphasize the words you are saying
 - e. Make sure you speak loudly from behind the stage so the audience can hear you.
3. Arm position
 - a. The arm used to manipulate the puppet should be held straight in the air, locked in position by your head.
 - b. Your hand should be slightly angled downward so the puppet can have eye contact with the audience.
4. Lip synchronization
 - a. Start each word with the puppet’s mouth closed.
 - b. Be sure to speak each syllable.
 - c. Practice saying your name and counting to fifty.

5. Your eyes
 - a. Keep your eye on the puppet you are manipulating. This will help you make any adjustments necessary.
 - b. Do not be a distraction to other puppeteers.
 - c. Pay attention to what is taking place.
6. Entrances and Exits
 - a. Entrances and exits should be a gentle stepping motion, not an elevator motion.
 - b. Make the puppets appear life-like and natural.
7. Eye contact
 - a. The puppet should make eye contact with the audience as well as with the puppet(s) to whom he is speaking
 - b. Do not get caught having your puppet talking to the ceiling or to the floor.
8. Proper height
 - a. Your puppet's "belly button" should be at the height of the curtain bar for your stage.
 - b. It is easy to be too high and have your arm show, or to be too low and have your puppet shrink.
9. Proper spacing
 - a. When working with several puppets at one time, you want to be sure to space the puppets out: you do not want them to be too close, nor do you want them to be too far apart.
 - b. Make sure that you do not lean on the stage; it could fall over.
10. Puppet's posture
 - a. Keep his back straight
 - b. Be careful about his leaning forward, back, or to the side.
11. Puppet's movement
 - a. Remember—*Transfer your life into the life of the puppet*
 - b. A puppet's movements can make him seem realistic
 - c. Caution: Do not overdue the movements
 - d. Practice the following:
 - 1) Walking—gentle bounce
 - 2) Running—quicker bounce
 - 3) Skating—a gentle glide from side to side
 - 4) Jumping—a short run, a jump and gliding motion with a little lean forward on the landing, then a gentle stop
12. Rod arm movement
 - a. Rod arms are useful in helping the puppet come alive.
 - b. The key here is to practice using one rod at a time until you feel comfortable using two.
13. **Practice, Practice, Practice, Practice, Practice, Practice**

Odds and Ends: Miscellaneous information

1. Character Puppets:
 - a. Choose a voice that you will use for that puppet all of the time.
 - b. Choose a name for the puppets that will be easy for the kids to remember.
 - c. Be creative in developing the character's character. Will he be smart, slow, old, young, talk with an accent, etc.?
2. Puppet Stages:
 - a. Puppet stages can be very expensive to purchase, but you can make your own for very minimal costs.
 - b. There are some material that can be purchased to give you plans for making a puppet stage to suit your needs.
3. Proper Care:
 - a. If at all possible, keep your puppets off the floor; this will help them keep clean and prevent them from being stepped on or sat upon.

- b. Keep food away from your puppets and make sure your hands are clean when you are using your puppets
- c. Always be cautious when handling puppets. Treat them with care.
- d. Storage ideas:
 - 1) Store them in a flat storage box, which is easy to stack and transport.
 - 2) Store them in a plastic storage bin. I wrap them in a plastic bag and then place them in the bin. (Labeling the box also helps you know where each of your puppets goes.)
 - 3) Construct a puppet rack with a 1" x 6" block and a dowel rod. You can place the puppets on the rod and cover them with a bag to keep them clean.
 - 4) Store them in a packing trunk.
4. For the shorter puppeteer, kneeling pads are a nice thing to have. Large pieces of foam stacked up works very well, and it is also comfortable.
5. Puppet Resources:
 - a. One Way Street, Inc., P.O. Box 5077, Englewood, CO 80155-5077, Orders: 1-800-569-4537; Customer Service: 303-790-1188; Web: www.onewaystreet.com
 - b. Puppet Productions, P.O. Box 1066, DeSoto, TX 75123-1066, 1-800-854-2151
 - c. Christian Book Distributors, P.O. Box 7000, Peabody, MA 01961-7000, 1-800-247-4784; Web: www.Christianbook.com
 - d. Axtell Expressions, Inc., 230 Glencrest Circle, Ventura, CA 93003-1305, 805642-7282; Web: www.axtell.com
 - e. The Train Depot, 5015 Tampa West Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33634-2423, 1-800-229-KIDS

Some of the material comes from *A Puppet Training Manual* by David and Elaine Cole, 1994 by Children's Outreach, 210 Tracy Road, New Whiteland, IN 46184-1024 ISBN 1-883426-03-0.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Age of Opportunity by Paul David Tripp
 Paul Tripp takes a look at the pessimistic view of the trying teenage years and optimistically attacks the thinking that these are just years to endure. His thoughts on how culture affects people and the qualities of a spiritual warrior will get you thinking. It is a good resource to share with parents.

Armed and Dangerous..... compiled by Ken Abraham
 This little book is a topically-arranged reference volume of Scripture, compiled specifically for teens. It includes topics that are crisis issues for teens, as well as promises and basic Bible doctrines. The price is right too! It sells for under \$5.

Balancing Life's Demandsby J. Grant Howard
 When someone is busy in a ministry, leading a family, and working in a job, it seems that everything starts to conflict in his/her life. This book is excellent for placing life into a Biblical perspective and developing a balance in the life that helps someone be able to say yes or no with confidence that he/she is doing the right thing.

Be A Motivational Leader by Leroy Eims
 How will you ever get anything done without doing it through motivated people? That's simple, you won't! But how do you motivate people to do what you want them to do? That's simple, you don't! The best thing you can do as a leader of a group that is essentially a "volunteer" group is to not de-motivate them. Remember the old adage, "You can only control your side of a relationship"? Well, that applies in leadership as well; and the best thing you can do to motivate others to follow you is to do all you can as a leader to be a motivating and not a de-motivating leader. This book is a classic, written over forty years ago; yet each of its twelve chapters is on a timeless principle of leadership that must be evidenced in us if we do not want our followers being apathetic to our ideas or yawning when we get up.

Changed Into His Image.....by Jim Berg
 This book is a carefully prepared and clearly presented study of the process of sanctification. The text is filled with powerful object lessons and saturated with Scripture. The process is broken down into three basic parts: restraining the flesh, renewing the mind, and reflecting the Lord. Each chapter includes study questions and helps for group lessons. (Study Guide is *Taking Time for Change*.)

Changed Into His Image, Youth Edition.....by Jim Berg
 The same excellent teaching on sanctification is now available in abbreviated form for teens. Your teens will learn much as they use this interactive book in their daily quiet time with God. One does not need a copy of the regular edition to benefit from this powerful tool.

Forming a New Generation..... by Walter and Judy Fremont
 This is an excellent overview of youth ministry with many helpful and practical suggestions. The section on youth philosophy is one each youth leader should read and think through.

Harmony at Home by Tim Fisher
 This is a help to parents for teaching and setting good music standards in the home. The book is divided into two sections. First, it has very practical teaching on basic music knowledge and gives suggestions for building good taste in music. Then, the author deals with answers to the 20 most often asked questions, by teenagers, about music. These are helpful, especially for the musically unskilled.

The Heart of Angerby Lou Priolo
 Anger is a topic which most parents face. The author has a helpful list of 25 ways parents provoke their children to wrath. He also deals with communication issues and proper discipline. This is a very important book for parents and counselors to read.

Hearts of Iron Feet of Clay by Gary Inrig
 This book is easy to read, yet it takes a powerful look at the book of Judges. No book could be more appropriate to our lifetime than the book whose motto is “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” This study will inspire you personally and will give you a great series of lessons for your teens. Judges is a book filled with people just like us. In it we find some of the greatest stories ever told, as well as some of the greatest heroics and saddest failures by God’s people. We are challenged to just not survive this age but to make a difference in it!

How to Be a Team Playerby Matt Williams
 Since rarely is anyone ever in a ministry all by himself, we need to get along with others and enlist their help in order to get done what needs to be done. In this way, not just the youth group will prosper, but the whole church as well. This book is written primarily for the full-time church staff member, but the principles in it are universal in their leadership and management aspects. We are all on the Lord’s team, and we all need to act more like it.

How to Help People Change by Jay Adams
 Everyone should have in his mind a Bible formula to use in helping people grow and change. This book is an in-depth look at 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and demonstrates very clearly how we can help those to whom we are ministering to grow and change in their Christian lives. It is a classic and ought to be in every youth worker’s library.

How to Really Love Your Teenby Ross Campbell
 Although this book is written primarily to parents, it contains some good practical ideas on how we can demonstrate our love to the kids with whom we are working. All we have to do is figure out how we can prove that love to them so that they will respond to our efforts in helping them grow. Your ministry with youth will go nowhere unless the teens believe that you love them.

How to Say No to a Stubborn Habit by Erwin W. Lutzer
 This book contains some excellent helps in discipling others through life-crippling habits, whether they are open habits or secret habits. The solutions presented are not easy, but they are Biblical, and they will work if honestly “worked.”

Come and Dine compiled by Ironwood staff members
 If you fix food for large groups of kids or church banquets, this Ironwood cookbook is an invaluable resource. Many recipes are converted for large groups. The best part about the book is that the food is GREAT.

Loving God With All Your Mind by Elizabeth George
 This book would make a fantastic study for a girls’ Sunday school class or Bible study. It is difficult to look at life’s challenges from God’s perspective. Elizabeth George spends much time reminding us to not allow our emotions to rule us but to be ruled by the truth of God’s Word. This book will be a personal blessing and a helpful study for any woman wanting to be used and transformed by God.

Pursuit of Holiness and Practice of Godliness by Jerry Bridges
 These are great Bible study books that will challenge your core group and staff. Both books have a workbook. The chapters on the fruits of the Spirit are excellent.

Self-Confrontation by John Broger
 An exhaustive discipleship tool, this book will help you develop your own curriculum. It is loaded with Scripture.

Shepherding a Child's Heart by Ted Tripp
 This solid book on proper discipline in the home reminds one that many problems faced in a child's life are merely symptoms of the real problem. Solve the real problem; do not just fight symptoms.

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney
 Donald Whitney deals with the crucial issue of disciplining one's self for the purpose of godliness. This book serves as a reminder and an overview of the personal disciplines that must be the foundation of the life one lives or there will be no real lasting ministry.

Spiritual Leadership by Oswald Sanders
 This book would best be used with the parents of your teens. Anybody who leads others would appreciate the section on the costs and benefits of leadership.

Taking Time to Change by Jim Berg
 This companion volume to *Changed Into His Image* was written for use by small groups, Sunday schools, and youth groups. The book is laid out into a thirteen-week study with daily interactive activities to help apply the truths taught in *Changed Into His Image*. It is excellent for personal devotions.

Vanishing Ministry by Woodrow Kroll
 This is a good book for the pastor or youth pastor to help him evaluate his ministry with others for the Lord. It will be a help to him in deciding whether or not there will be any real long term eternal value in what he is doing. The author devotes a whole section in his book to answering the following questions: How are we really doing? How did we get where we are? What attitudes do we need? Where do we go from here?

Quality Friendship by Gary Ingrid
 In this excellent book for studying the risks and rewards of friendship, Gary Ingrid follows the friendship of David and Jonathan to discover the cost and benefits of a good friendship. This book will support any teaching you do on positive peer pressure and also covers the importance of choosing the right friends and keeping them.

PUT ON—PUT OFF

"...LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT, AND . . . SIN." HEBREWS 12:1-2

"PUT OFF"

1. Anger *Proverbs 14:17*
2. Bad language *Ephesians 4:29*
3. Bad motives *1 Samuel 16:7*
4. Bitterness *Hebrews 12:15*
5. Boasting (conceit) *1 Corinthians 4:7*
6. Bodily Harm *Proverbs 16:29*
7. Complacency *James 4:17*
8. Complaining *Jude 15-16*
9. Covetousness *Exodus 20:17*
10. Discontent *Philippians 4:11-13*
11. Disobedience *1 Samuel 12:15*
12. Doubt (Unbelief) *1 Thessalonians 5:24*
13. Evil Thoughts *Proverbs 23:7a*
14. Gossip *1 Timothy 5:13*
15. Hatred *Matthew 5:21-22*
16. Hypocrisy *Job 8:13*
17. Idle Words *Matthew 12:36*
18. Impatience *James 1:2-4*
19. Irritation to Others *Proverbs 25:8*
20. Jealousy *Proverbs 27:4*
21. Judging *Matthew 7:1-2*
22. Lack of love *1 John 4:7-8, 20*
23. Lack of Submission and/or Disrespect *James 4:7*
24. Lack of Rejoicing *Philippians 4:4*
25. Losing Temper *Proverbs 16:32*
26. Lost First Love *Revelation 2:4*
27. Lying *Ephesians 4:25*
28. Murmur *Proverbs 19:3*
29. Murder *Exodus 20:13*
30. Other Gods *Deuteronomy 11:16*
31. Pride *Proverbs 16:18*
32. Profanity *Psalms 109:17*
33. Rebellion *1 Samuel 15:23*
34. Sassing *John 6:43*
35. Selfishness *Philippians 2:21*
36. Strife *James 3:16*
37. Stubbornness *1 Samuel 15:23*
38. Unforgiving Spirit *Mark 11:26*
39. Ungrateful *Romans 1:21*
40. Worry (fear) *Matthew 6:25-32*
41. Wrath *James 1:19-20*

"PUT ON"

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ⇒ Self-control | <i>Galatians 5:24-25</i> |
| ⇒ Edify | <i>1 Timothy 4:12</i> |
| ⇒ Meditation on God | <i>Psalms 19:14</i> |
| ⇒ Tenderhearted | <i>Colossians 3:12</i> |
| ⇒ Humility | <i>Proverbs 27:2</i> |
| ⇒ Gentleness | <i>1 Thessalonians 2:7</i> |
| ⇒ Diligence | <i>Colossians 3:23</i> |
| ⇒ Contentment | <i>Hebrews 13:5</i> |
| ⇒ Yield Rights | <i>Colossians 3:5</i> |
| ⇒ Satisfaction | <i>Hebrews 13:5</i> |
| ⇒ Obedience | <i>Hebrews 5:9</i> |
| ⇒ Faith | <i>Hebrews 11:1</i> |
| ⇒ Biblical Thinking | <i>Philippians 4:8</i> |
| ⇒ Speak with Praise | <i>Romans 14:19</i> |
| ⇒ Love or Kindness | <i>1 Corinthians 13:3</i> |
| ⇒ Honesty | <i>Ephesians 4:25</i> |
| ⇒ Bridle Tongue | <i>Proverbs 21:23</i> |
| ⇒ Patience | <i>Luke 21:19</i> |
| ⇒ Preferring in Love | <i>Philippians 2:3-4</i> |
| ⇒ Trust, Preferring Others | <i>1 Corinthians 13:4</i> |
| ⇒ Search My Own Sin | <i>John 8:9; 15:22</i> |
| ⇒ Love | <i>John 15:12</i> |
| ⇒ Broken Will | <i>Matthew 6:10</i> |
| ⇒ Rejoice | <i>1 Thessalonians 5:16</i> |
| ⇒ Self-control | <i>Romans 5:3-4</i> |
| ⇒ Meditate on God's Love | <i>1 John 4:10, 19</i> |
| ⇒ Speak Truth | <i>Zechariah 8:16</i> |
| ⇒ Gratefulness | <i>Ephesians 5:20</i> |
| ⇒ Love | <i>Romans 13:10</i> |
| ⇒ Jesus First Place | <i>Ephesians 4:6</i> |
| ⇒ Humility | <i>James 4:6</i> |
| ⇒ Edify | <i>1 Timothy 4:12</i> |
| ⇒ Submitting—Jesus, Lord | <i>Joel 2:12-13</i> |
| ⇒ Respect for Authority | <i>Hebrews 13:17</i> |
| ⇒ Death to Self | <i>John 12:24</i> |
| ⇒ Esteem Others | <i>Luke 6:31</i> |
| ⇒ Submission | <i>Romans 6:13</i> |
| ⇒ Forgiving Spirit | <i>Matthew 6:14</i> |
| ⇒ Thankfulness | <i>Ephesians 5:20</i> |
| ⇒ Trust | <i>1 Peter 5:7</i> |
| ⇒ Trust | <i>Galatians 5:24-25</i> |

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Burying talents	<i>1 Corinthians 4:2</i>	⇒	Perfecting abilities	<i>Luke 12:48</i>
2. Conduct in Church	<i>Hebrews 10:25</i>	⇒	Reverence	<i>Ecclesiastes 5:1</i>
3. "Copping Out"	<i>Galatians 6:9</i>	⇒	Discipline	<i>Luke 14:27</i>
4. Inhospitable	<i>1 Peter 4:9</i>	⇒	Hospitable	<i>Romans 12:13</i>
5. Irresponsibility (Family/Work)		⇒	Responsibility	<i>Ephesians 4:1</i>
6. Laziness	<i>Ephesians 5:15-16</i>	⇒	Diligence	<i>Proverbs 6:6-11</i>
7. Neglect of Bible Study	<i>2 Timothy 3:14-17</i>	⇒	Devotions	<i>Psalms 119:9-11</i>
8. Neglect of Prayer	<i>1 Thessalonians 5:17</i>	⇒	Praying	<i>Psalms 55:17</i>
9. No Soul-winning Desire	<i>Proverbs 11:30</i>	⇒	Soul-winning	<i>Proverbs 11:30</i>
10. No Tithing	<i>Malachi 3:10</i>	⇒	Tithing	<i>2 Corinthians 9:6-7</i>
11. Not Doing Your Best (Sloth)	<i>Ecclesiastes 9:10</i>	⇒	Doing best	<i>Colossians 3:23</i>
12. Procrastination	<i>Proverbs 27:1</i>	⇒	Discipline	<i>Luke 12:24-31</i>
13. Unfaithfulness	<i>1 Corinthians 4:2</i>	⇒	Faithful	<i>Psalms 31:23</i>

WORLDLY MINDEDNESS

1. Adultery	<i>Matthew 5:27-28</i>	⇒	Fidelity	<i>Exodus 20:14</i>
2. Cheating	<i>Proverbs 15:3</i>	⇒	Honesty	<i>Luke 8:15</i>
3. Crowd	<i>Mark 8:36</i>	⇒	Jesus Christ	<i>Matthew 6:33</i>
4. Dancing	<i>1 Thessalonians 5:22</i>	⇒	Glorify God	<i>1 Corinthians 10:31</i>
5. Dating Wrong People	<i>2 Corinthians 6:14</i>	⇒	Equally Yoked	<i>Amos 3:3</i>
6. Drinking	<i>Proverbs 23:20</i>	⇒	God's temple	<i>Proverbs 23:29-33</i>
7. Drugs	<i>Revelation 21:8</i>	⇒	God's temple	<i>1 Corinthians 3:16-17</i>
8. Fornication	<i>1 Thessalonians 4:3-7</i>	⇒	Purity	<i>1 Corinthians 10:8</i>
9. Gambling	<i>Proverbs 28:19-20</i>	⇒	Stewardship	<i>1 Thessalonians 4:11-12</i>
10. Hair Styles	<i>1 Corinthians 11:14</i>	⇒	Glorify God	<i>1 Corinthians 11:14</i>
11. Homosexuality	<i>Romans 1:26-27</i>	⇒	God's purpose	<i>1 Timothy 5:22</i>
12. Immodest Dress	<i>Proverbs 11:22</i>	⇒	Modest	<i>1 Peter 3:3-4</i>
13. Improper Dating Relations	<i>1 Corinthians 15:33</i>	⇒	God's standards	<i>Philippians 1:20</i>
14. Lack of Moderation	<i>Philippians 4:5</i>	⇒	Balanced life	<i>2 Peter 1:5-10</i>
15. Lust of the Eyes	<i>1 John 2:16</i>	⇒	Pure thoughts	<i>Philippians 2:4</i>
16. Lust of the Flesh	<i>1 John 2:16</i>	⇒	Pure desires	<i>1 Peter 2:11</i>
17. Movies	<i>Proverbs 23:7</i>	⇒	Example	<i>2 Corinthians 3:2</i>
18. Necking/Petting	<i>1 Corinthians 7:1</i>	⇒	Abstinence	<i>1 Thessalonians 4:4</i>
19. Over-eating	<i>1 Corinthians 9:27</i>	⇒	Self-control	<i>1 Corinthians 9:27</i>
20. Preferential Treatment	<i>James 2:1-6</i>	⇒	Fairness	<i>Luke 6:31</i>
21. Presumption on the Future	<i>Proverbs 27:1</i>	⇒	Patience	<i>Proverbs 27:1</i>
22. Rock Music	<i>Proverbs 23:7</i>	⇒	Edifying Music	<i>Ephesians 5:19</i>
23. Smoking	<i>1 Corinthians 6:19-20</i>	⇒	God's Temple	<i>1 Corinthians 3:16-17</i>
24. Speeding	<i>1 Peter 2:13-14</i>	⇒	Obedience	<i>1 Peter 2:13</i>
25. Stealing	<i>Ephesians 4:28</i>	⇒	Giving	<i>Luke 6:38</i>
26. Stumbling Block	<i>1 Corinthians 8:9-12</i>	⇒	Stepping Stone	<i>Romans 14:21</i>
27. Temporal Values	<i>Matthew 6:19-21</i>	⇒	Eternal Values	<i>2 Timothy 2:4</i>
28. Witchcraft/Astrology	<i>Deuteronomy 18:10-11</i>	⇒	One True God	<i>Micah 5:12-15</i>

"BUT THERE IS FORGIVENESS WITH THEE . . ." PSALM 130:4A

FIT FOR LIFE EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____ Birth Date: _____ Sex: M F
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Social Security #: _____ Home Phone: _____
 Emergency Contact Person: _____
 Emergency Phone—Daytime: _____ Evening: _____

MEDICAL INFORMATION

If you have health insurance, your carrier will be billed for medical charges in the case of illness or injury while your child is at the activity.

Do you have health insurance? Yes No Name of Ins. Company _____

Policy # _____ Group # _____ In whose name is the insurance? _____

Family Doctor: _____ City: _____ Phone: _____

Any preexisting or present medical conditions: _____

Name and dosage of any medications your child is currently taking: _____

Any Allergies? To Medications? _____

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> hay fever | <input type="checkbox"/> epilepsy/nervous disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> physical handicap |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heart condition | <input type="checkbox"/> diabetes | <input type="checkbox"/> frequent stomach upset |
| <input type="checkbox"/> insect stings | <input type="checkbox"/> asthma | |

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RELEASE AGREEMENT

I understand that in the event medical care is needed, every attempt will be made to contact immediately the persons listed as emergency contacts. In the event I cannot be reached in an emergency during the FIT FOR LIFE activities, I hereby give my permission to the physician or dentist selected by the activity leader to hospitalize, to secure medical treatment and/or order an injection, anesthesia, or surgery for my child as deemed necessary.

Parent/guardian signature _____ Date _____

Student signature (if 18 or older) _____ Date _____

PERMISSION SLIP MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

Emmanuel Baptist Church
Kings Mountain, NC
Pastor Charles Surrett, Youth Pastor Jim Ogle
704.739.9339

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

As a parent and/or guardian, I do herewith authorize treatment under the direction of any licensed physician of the following minor. I the even of a medical emergency which, in the opinion of the attending physician, man endanger his/her life, cause disfigurement, physical impairment, or undue discomfort if delayed. This authority is granted only after a reasonable effort has been made to reach me by phone at the number listed below.

The undersigned assumes the responsibility for any costs connected with such treatment and hereby releases Emmanuel Baptist Church from any liability thereof.

Type of Activity: _____

Date of Activity: _____

Times of Activity: _____

Name of Child: _____ Relationship: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Family Physician: _____ Phone: _____

List any specific medical allergies, chronic illness, or other conditions: _____

This release from is signed and completed of my free will with the sole purpose of authorizing medical treatment under emergency circumstances in my absence.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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Compiled by Maynard C. Mostrom, Jr., and the Ironwood Staff

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Guidepost for Teens. 39 Seminary Hill Road, Carmel, NY 10512-1999. Published six times a year. Cost: \$20 a year. (*Helpful yet not the resource tool that Youthworker and Group are.*)

Group. P.O. Box 481, Loveland, CO. 80539-0481. (760) 738-0086. Published six times a year. Cost: Approximately \$24 a year. (*Filled with resources yet less conservative than Youthworker.*)

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- Group Publishing. P.O. Box 469082, Escondido, CA 92046-9755. (*Located also in Loveland, CO. Excellent resource for tools.*)
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- Positive Action for Christ. P.O. Box 1948, 833 Falls Road, Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1948.
- Reaching the Heart of Your Teen. (Video and Book Series), Growing Families International, 3910 Royal Avenue, Suite B, Simi Valley, CA 93063. (800) 396-4434.
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BOOK REVIEW: *THE BRIDGER GENERATION*

RULES FOR INTERPRETING BOOK REVIEWS

It is our goal to have a variety of reviews submitted by various pastors and youth leaders from a wide range of books that all carry a central target for us. We want these books to be in some way aimed at helping us all better reach our own young people for the Lord Jesus Christ. They may be books dealing with methods, theology, principles, ideas, or just information. They may also be books written from the standpoint of fundamentalism, new-evangelicalism, or secularism. I would hope that we are mature enough in the Lord and the truth of His Word that we would be able to identify error and reject it, while at the same time gleaning some ideas and principles that will help us achieve our goals within the context of God's absolute truth found only in His Word. If you read a book that was helpful to you, write up a review, tell us why it was helpful, send it in, and you may see it in a future Youth Leader's Brain.

THE BRIDGER GENERATION

By Thom Rainer, Published by Broadman and Holman Publishers

In his preface, Rainer states two of his primary reasons for writing this book. The first revolves around the fact that today's generation, which he calls the "bridger generation," is the second largest generation in the history of America—only slightly smaller than the "boomer" generation, and that this "bridger" generation will be the least evangelized generation in our history. The second reason is that the time to reach this generation is now while they are young. The statistics show that the likelihood of a person receiving salvation after the age of twenty is very slight indeed. The book contains many statistics and studies to back up his assertions.

I personally found the book to be very valuable in gaining some fresh insight into the thinking patterns and life-style philosophy of today's young people. It has chapters on the family, violence, materialism, the media, fears of the "bridgers," the future, their brand of "faith," and the response of the church. While some of the applications and methodologies mentioned do not fit fundamentalism, I did not find any chapters or major principles to be of no value at all. I particularly found chapters nine and eleven to be very helpful.

Chapter 9—"The Faith(s) of the 'Bridgers'" gives a concise explanation of the major religious philosophies being taught in our society today. We are in direct competition for the minds of our young people with such philosophies as universalism, inclusivism, pluralism, and intolerance. We need to be able to identify these false philosophies when they subtly come and know the offsetting truth. These philosophies are so prevalent in our society that we cannot just ignore them and think they will go away.

Chapter 11—"The Church: A Real and Present Hope" contains an excellent list of the characteristics of a church that can reach today's "bridger" generation. The list in principle is good; read the applications of the list with a grain of salt. The twelve characteristics are

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Unconditional Love | 8. Parental Training |
| 2. Adult to Bridger Mentoring | 9. Godly Youth Leadership |
| 3. Intentional Evangelism | 10. Effective Bible Study |
| 4. High Expectations | 11. Exclusivity |
| 5. Cultural Sensitivity | 12. Involved Youth |
| 6. Biblical Preaching | |
| 7. Prayer Ministries | |

Overall, my opinion is that for the thinking leader who wants to evangelize and disciple today's generation, reading this book is a MUST.

BOOK REVIEW:

PURPOSE DRIVEN YOUTH MINISTRY

With over forty glowing endorsements from various leading specialists in youth work today, the book *Purpose Driven Youth Ministry* by Doug Fields may appear to many in the evangelical community as beyond the need for evaluation, especially if the assessment carries with it some very strong negative comments. How can a book be so popular and yet contain substantial problems?

While the evangelical community may want to put Doug Field's book beyond any serious criticism, the fundamentalist community may be so quick to point out the flaws of the book and its approach to ministry that it dismisses the entire project, without considering the possibility that Doug Field has given some very helpful information that can be gleaned and used to strengthen fundamentalist churches in general and fundamentalist youth groups in particular. It is the assessment of this fundamentalist youth pastor that Field's book is filled with both great strengths and great weaknesses and that it is a valuable resource for the evaluation of the future of youth work in fundamental churches.

What makes the book *Purpose Driven Youth Work* an important work for Fundamentalists to consider? First, the material of the book is based upon the marketing strategy used by one of the largest and fastest growing churches in America. Saddleback Valley Community Church, in southern California, is a "contemporary" Southern Baptist Church, which has experienced tremendous "growth" through a program designed by its pastor Rick Warren. Emphasizing the church growth philosophy of Donald McGavran and the innovative methodology of his targeting programs, Warren wrote the book *The Purpose Driven Church* (Zondervan, 1995) in part to vindicate his methods and programs by demonstrating the numerical and spiritual success of the church. As a new and "working" model of church growth, Warren's approach deserves the careful attention of Fundamentalists who are willing to Biblically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Saddleback Church.

In a two-part article entitled "Market Driven Ministry: Blessing or Curse?" (*Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal*, Vol. 1, Spring and Fall 1996), David Doran successfully critiqued Saddleback's marketing approach. I will simply summarize the primary concerns Doran and others have regarding this approach. Market-driven growth is man-centered, sociological in emphasis, and pragmatic in its approach and self-analysis, while Biblical growth is God-centered, theological in emphasis, and principled in its approach and self-analysis. Fundamentalists should possess discernment concerning the reasons why their churches are growing or not growing numerically as well as spiritually. If the churches of the book of Revelation could be deceived about their status before the Lord, so can contemporary churches be deceived about their faithfulness and fruitfulness. Biblical growth does not come about by conforming to the world and its sin, nor does it come by isolating from the world and its needs.

Second, the *Purpose Driven Youth Ministry* is important for Fundamentalists to consider because it presents an extensive and structured youth program within and yet extending beyond the basic organization of the Saddleback Church. Fields has proposed nine essential components to a healthy youth program.

1. The **P**ower of God works through passionate leaders with pure hearts. Youth ministry is based upon leaders of integrity who rely upon the Holy Spirit and not programs to change lives.
2. Discover the **P**urpose of why your ministry exists, and follow it up with communication and leadership. Youth ministry is not babysitting, nor is it entertainment. Rather, youth ministry is Biblically focused upon discovering the primary purposes of the church—evangelism, worship, fellowship, discipleship, and ministry—and maintaining a careful balance in the communication and practice of these purposes.

3. The **Potential audience** identifies which students are the primary targets for the purposes. Youth ministry needs to recognize the different commitment levels to Christ and His Church which existed in the Bible and in contemporary times. Fields, in following Warren's categorization, lists five different groups: the community (those not attending the church), the crowd (those who attend the church), the congregation (those committed to membership and a small group in the church), the committed (those who follow the church's programs of spiritual growth and accountability), and the core (those in the church who are spiritually mature and actively ministering).
4. The **Programs** decide what will reach your potential audience and fulfill God's purposes. Youth ministry should create primary and secondary programs that will effectively and efficiently communicate God's purposes to that group.
5. The **Process** displays the programs so that students can be moved toward spiritual maturity. Saddleback Church uses a baseball diamond as a visual of the process showing the path that each individual should take while allowing the use of a variety of programs to take each step.
6. The **Planned Values** define that which will strengthen the ministry and enhance the purposes. A healthy youth ministry will define its key values and use them in developing relationships.
7. The **Parents** team up with the family for a stronger youth ministry and church. Youth ministry must not grow in isolation from the family; rather it must want a total integration with the family. Youth ministry should be family-friendly.
8. The **Participating leaders** are found and developed into ministers who fulfill the purposes. A healthy youth ministry will train leadership in order to handle the problems of growth and develop a teamwork mentality.
9. Youth leaders need **Perseverance** to survive the responsibilities, discipline problems, and the adventure of change. Youth ministry must be balanced internally and externally with other responsibilities such as family. Discipline is a necessary part of ministry that should be done positively and consistently.

Doug Fields fills in a variety of details within the structure of the nine components as they apply specifically to his situation at Saddleback. The nine components are transcending principles for anyone in youth ministry to use, while the application of those principles finds variety in the numerous situations and people that each church will encounter.

Third, Fields' book deserves attention from Fundamentalists because it provides a thorough youth program for consideration and critique. The *Purpose Driven Youth Ministry* attempts to be comprehensive and committed to a particular "managed" program of purposes which seeks to take each teenager from where he is on the commitment level and lead him through the process of conversion to a message, concentration on maturity, and a growing commitment to ministry.

Having briefly looked at the structure of the book, it is important to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the Saddleback approach to ministry in general and to youth ministry in particular. What are the strengths of the book that Fundamentalists can learn from? First, Fields provides a working model for people to see. It is not simply a theory; the ideas presented are actually being used over a period of time with a variety of people. Second, Fields gives a clear explanation of his position. It is easy to follow and evaluate.

Third, Fields demonstrates the need for structure and organization, especially for the growing youth group. Fundamentalists are correct in saying that management should not be more important than ministry, yet sometimes Fundamentalists can provide sloppy and unclear management of programs which actually get in the way of presenting the truths of ministry that we hold so dear. Obviously, the cargo we carry (the Gospel)

is more important than the vehicle that we use to carry it (programs), but the cargo cannot get to where it should go if the vehicle is not what it should be. Most fundamentalist youth programs that lack growth are in this situation because they do not have good, structured programs to carry the message of truth. Fundamentalists should not worship management or neglect the use of good programs.

Fourth, Fields emphasizes the need for commitment and the development of leadership. Strong discipleship provides the commitment and the trained leadership for long-term growth and health in a youth group. The youth pastor cannot do everything by himself; he needs help to reach the number and variety of teenagers with whom the youth group comes into contact. Fifth, Fields emphasizes the need to get teenagers involved in ministry. Enabling teenagers to grow in truth and to give that truth out to others in service is the goal of youth work.

Notwithstanding the strengths of Doug Fields' book, there are some substantial weaknesses. First, as was stated before, the marketing approach to ministry is a dangerous ground that can easily lead to idolatry. Ministry should not be based on what people want; it should be based on what God wants. In Exodus 32, Aaron gave in to the "survey" of the people in giving them what they wanted in worship. The people were energetic, sacrificial, organized, and excited in their participation of the process of worship. Sadly, their product was an idol in the form of a golden calf. Man-centered worship follows the example of Aaron; God-centered worship follows the example of Moses who spent time with God and knew the revelation that God had provided.

Second, the Saddleback approach to ministry minimizes and breaks down the antithesis between God's people in the church and the people of the world. Several comments need to be made concerning this lack of separation.

1. While the five levels of "commitment" are sociologically correct (observation demonstrates that each group exists), the design of the levels (particularly the "crowd" level) seeks to make sinners comfortable in the camp of the righteous. While Christians should care about the lost, they should not want them to feel "comfortable" and "accepted" among the group of Christians known as the church. The church of the New Testament did not grow by minimizing its distinctness from the world but by emphasizing its difference from the world. How can those who are committed to self-righteousness be comfortable with those who are committed to the denial of self-righteousness and the glory of the righteousness of Christ?
2. There is a significant problem with contemporary evangelism that controls most churches. Reaching the lost involves either the creation of separate services (such as traditional and contemporary "seeker" services) or the preaching of simply evangelistic messages in the services. Both approaches try to perform most of their evangelism in the actual meeting of the church rather than following the New Testament in using the "church" time to train the Christians so that they can go out into their society and learn how to evangelize where they live.
3. There is a big difference in accommodating the lost by being friendly and accommodating the lost by bringing their rock music into the church. Not only will many of the "professions" of faith be false, but also this practice will bring the world into the church and hurt believers by destroying their respect for God and His Word, a respect which ought to be present in each church meeting.

Third, the Saddleback approach to ministry appears to displace the "doctrinal" statement for a more contemporary "purpose" statement. A great deal of discussion has arisen lately even within fundamental circles about the need for a "mission," "vision," and/or "purpose" statement in the church. Is such a statement necessary? Saddleback views the purpose statement as one of the major keys missing in modern church growth. Businesses in the world have used such statements with "success." Can, and should, churches use a "purpose" statement? If so, in what way?

1. Purpose statements are only helpful when they assist a church in taking a Biblical doctrinal statement and putting it into practice in the lives of the believers. The sad fact is that most churches today do not have a Biblical doctrinal statement and do not use it if it is Biblical. Theological beliefs have been subordinated to sociological behavior. That is why most youth groups in our society primarily entertain teenagers. The leadership does not know where to take them; therefore, they seek to create some sort of "spiritual" atmosphere that keeps teens from the world. To his credit, Fields has a purpose statement that guides his programs. Yet, what kind of content is being transmitted by this well-oiled machine? By using a purpose statement, many youth groups may simply leave their doctrinal statement behind and develop a social unity based on programs.
2. As youth pastor at Tri-City Baptist Church, I have created a purpose statement to act as a bridge to carry the content of the doctrinal statement into the area of practical ministry. Our purpose statement reads as follows: "Our youth group exists to glorify the Triune God by lovingly following the doctrines of the Bible through a family-centered commitment to the discipleship of the church so that we may exalt our Savior with gratitude, edify the saints with our gifts, and evangelize sinners with the Gospel."
3. Should our youth ministries be "purpose" driven? This depends on whose purpose we want to follow. If the purpose is God's eternal purpose as manifested by a Biblical theology, then the answer is "Yes." If the purpose is a market-driven "efficiency" to simply be more organized, then the answer is "No."

Both Warren and Fields would claim to follow the Bible in all the details of their program, while others can argue that there are worldly ideas imported under the Saddleback approach in order to reach more people. Fundamentalist youth groups should be driven by the eternal purpose of God as manifested in the doctrines of the Bible. Our purpose must have Biblical content, and it should have an organized communication of that content through well-structured programs that reflect the content of good theology. Doug Fields' book *Purpose Driven Youth Ministry* can be a helpful tool for fundamental youth groups if leadership is careful in discerning the differences in the Saddleback approach to ministry.

SPANISH MATERIALS SOURCES

WFBI Publications
6812 Lillian Highway
Pensacola, FL 32506
850-455-4417
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www.geocities.com/wfbi

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VidaPub.Sales@harpercollins.com
www.editorialvida.com

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Child Evangelism Fellowship
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This is an office in NC. If you call, they can send you a catalog or tell you where there is an office in your state.

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RIGHT BRAIN

FILOSOPHY CAN BE PHUN	3
ACTIVITY SEEDS	5
YOUTH LEADER’S TOOLBOX	11
BALANCE IN ACTIVITIES	15
GAMES FOR A LARGE GROUP	17
GAMES FOR A SMALL GROUP	41
UNIQUE PROPS	45
SKITS	49
STUNTS	57
TEAM BUILDERS	63
THEMES	73
WARM-UPS	79
RIGHT BRAIN RESOURCES	97
FUNDRAISING	99

FILOSOPHY CAN BE PHUN!

PARTICIPATION

Even someone who will refuse to participate in a service or invitation will unwittingly get involved with your group in a game. That participation can be the first step in a young person participating in a decision for Christ.

1. Entertainment vs. Participation—Entertainment makes you compete with the world, the attention span of your teen, and the success of your past events. Participation is a success by itself.
2. Keep it close—Creative scoring keeps teams in the hunt and increases participation. Graduate your score throughout your game, activity, or running competition.
3. Keep it fair—Competition can be a great tool that can easily turn into a tragedy. Eliminate distractions as a referee and keep things as fair as possible.
4. Keep it focused—Your youth group, especially your leaders, should know that competition is only a tool and not the goal. If competition gets carried too far, it could be a distraction itself.

TEACHING AS YOU GO

Competition has natural lessons built into it. It is a great way to find a teachable moment with a young person. A game time allows young people to see other teens and their youth leaders in real situations. From these situations, one can teach valuable lessons such as the following:

1. Honesty—in attitude and action, honoring the intent of the rulemaker or referee
2. Excellence—doing your best no matter what the outcome, win or lose
3. Grace—in winning and losing properly, maintaining a Christ-like attitude
4. Respect—for others and authority who might make a “bad” call
5. Stewardship of my temple—proper attitude towards individual physical abilities
6. Teamwork
7. Communication
8. Leadership
9. Adjustment, Evaluation, and Planning

(This list could go much longer.)

FUN

Keeping a game fun is a real art form. But if your goal is participation, it is helpful to develop this ability.

1. Start big—There is a difference between playing a game of Capture the Flag and being in the middle of a World War II covert operation. Paint the adventure for your youth and watch the fun continue with ease. Read *Adventure Games: Creative Outdoor Activities for Your Youth Group* by Hopper, Torrey, and Yonkers from Youth Specialties.
2. Keep it simple.
 - a. Simple in Explanation—Full participation will almost require a simple game. Your explanation and rules should be simple enough for your youth to catch on quickly.
 - b. Simple in Play—Full participation will be more effective with a game that is not only geared for the athletic, but also for the athletically challenged.
3. Keep it moving—Transitions can make or break the fun of a game. You know it is a good transition when nobody realizes it is taking place.
4. End early—*Leave them wanting more.* This is one of the most overlooked, yet most important principles of running a game. The right time to stop playing is before everyone has played it enough.

ACTIVITY SEEDS

Plant a few of these ideas in your head and watch them grow into full scale, planned-out, totally fun activities. Right now, this list is just a seed; but if you add the water of your imagination and the ground of a willing youth group, some of these seeds could blossom.

Alien Invasion—Find the aliens before they destroy the youth room. Your sponsors probably will not have to dress up much.

Big Barn Blow-Out—activities such as bobbing for apples and hayrides. At the end, sit on hay bails and watch an old movie projected off a white sheet.

Bigger and Better—Each group starts with a penny and goes from place to place asking to trade for something bigger or better than what they have. (Do not let them bring anything back that is alive.)

Bike Hike

Billboard Blizzard/Marquee Madness—Make clues that go along with businesses or signs (“Mexican Phone Company”=Taco Bell).

Bowling

Blue Gnu—Sponsors dress in one color and teens try to find them at different locations. (Examples are Blue Gnu—someone in all Blue, Red Rhino—someone in all red.) For a little more fun, add a couple people the teens may not know so that they have to talk with strangers.

Board Game Musical Tables—Split everyone into 2-4 teams. Have 4-10 board games going on, and have the teams rotate every 4 minutes.

Breakaways—Have your youth group organize a night of outreach activities for a sister youth group so that that youth group can invite and host their own visitors instead of having to help with the running of an activity.

Brown Bag Relay—Have teams race to eat whatever is in the brown lunch bag first.

Burger Bash—cookout

Camping Trip—overnight in the outdoors

Canoe Trip

Capture the Flag—A fun twist to this game is to have a Run for the Border theme.

Car Scavenger Hunt—Follow clues to find a car.

Chicken Olympics—barn games, races, egg carrying relay, egg toss

Christmas in July—Decorate a tree and do Christmas things in the summer.

Climbing Wall

Clue—Have seniors dress up like Clue characters, and have each one go to a different room of the church. (They can decorate the room however they would like to.) Pass out a couple of Clue cards to each of them (all but three). The rest of the teens may ask each senior one question when they enter the room and must go to another room before returning to the one they just left. If the senior has a card, he must show it—like the game CLUE!

Coliseum Chaos—Play Greek games. For added effect, decorate like a coliseum and wear togas over clothes.

Craft Night for Girls—can use the crafts for ministry visits

D.U.—Destination Unknown—a scavenger hunt with clues to reach the final destination

Fast Food Progressive Dinner—Order food ahead of time and go to different fast food restaurants for dinner (Pizza Hut, Taco Bell, Dairy Queen, McDonalds).

Fifth Quarter—after ball games

Food Fight Night—Messy games with food

Frisbee Games

Game Show Spoof—The Price is Right is an easy one to imitate. Family Feud is also good for a youth/family event.

Go-Carts—I ran this for the first activity for the new 7th graders, and a girl ran over a worker.

Gonzo Golf—Have each group design a hole of miniature golf in the building and then play a round. Give prizes for the most creative, best/worst score.

Hawaiian Happening—Hawaiian-style food and decorations

Horse Back Riding

Human Hunt—Find a construction worker, policeman, etc.

Ice Skating

Jello-Bowl

Kidnap Breakfast—snatch people out of bed and haul them off to breakfast. Take Polaroid pictures of them as you yank them out of bed.

Lemon Putt-Putt—Use lemons for golf balls and #10 cans for the holes. Lots of cardboard duct tape and 2 x 4's will create a championship course.

Lifesize Monopoly—game board in gym; lights out in rest of church; deeds hidden somewhere in the church; super soakers hiding out. You can also play this game as a family event—families in the church against each other.

Make a Float for City Parade—Promote your youth ministry or upcoming event.

Major Motion Picture—Divide your group into two teams and let both “studios” re-enact an old Little Rascals picture.

cals video. Videotape everything.

Mall Mania 1—From a list of 20 items, choose 12 for which you will find the lowest and highest prices. The difference between the cheapest and most expensive price is your score.

Mall Mania 2—Teens are given a list of stores, prices, and items which they must correctly match together.

Mall Masquerade—Sponsors or parents disguise themselves, and teens try to find them in the mall.

March Marshmallow Madness—Use marshmallows for every activity.

Messorama—messy games galore

Midnight Madness

Million Dollar Madness—Give teens \$1,000,000 (not real) and have them try to spend it in an hour at the mall. They can only write down one item per store and cannot give any away. Each item must be something that could be purchased and has a price on it.

Mini-Golf

Mock-mercials—Pull out the video camera and make your own commercial for an imaginary product, or bring in a few products and let the youth be creative.

Mr. and Miss Ugly Contest—a non-talent contest

Mud Bowl

Nerd-o-wimpics—sized-down Olympic events (tinfoil toss, straw javelin, nerd shuffle, etc.)

Nerf Night

Paintball—Rent your equipment, and let the youth build their own scenarios (i.e., crazed assassin, S.W.A.T., hostage situation, medieval knight and kings, traitor in the camp, A.W.O.L., king of the hill)

Pickle Party—pickles and a candy cane for everyone; pickle king and queen

Picnic Dinner—complete with fireworks

Picture Panic 1—Take pictures with your group doing different things—pyramid in front of McDonalds, in a shopping cart, etc. Use a Polaroid camera or give them a roll of film and take to a one-hour photo while they eat.

Picture Panic 2—Take pictures ahead of time of different locations, and mark with a pen an “X” on the spot where you will hide another picture. Each group must go to the spot with the “X” that their picture shows; and at that location, they will find the picture of the next location to which they are to go.

Pizza Pig-Out

Pizza Pizzaz—Make your own pizza. Give prizes for best designs. Let teens eat the pizza when done.

Planet Putt-Putt—a variation of Gonzo Golf. This time, have everyone dress up in all black and have black lights everywhere.

Progressive/Regressive Dinner

Pumpkin Olympics—Fall activity centered on pumpkins—pumpkin toss, pumpkin relays, carving, Hide and Seek, etc.

Pirate's Quest—Teens must go to different locations and find clues to lost treasure. This can be done around the church, at a farm, or around the city. Have sponsors dress like pirates.

Roller Skating

Signature Search—Teens try to get different people to sign their paper—fireman, 10-year-old, Wal-Mart employee, etc.

Sound Scavenger Hunt—Tape record different sounds in a certain amount of time.

S.N.A.C.—Sunday Night After Church—time of fellowship

Snow Skiing

Spud Olympics

Teddy Bear Football—Have fun tearing up old teddy bears.

Underground Church—all lights out except for emergency lights; true churches, false churches, and a jail

White Water Rafting

Notes:

Take pictures at your activities and trips. Put them up in your youth room or office. Teens love to look at themselves.

Have candy in your office. Use the opportunity to chat with teens as they come in to grab some.

Used with Permission

ACTIVITY PLANNING SHEET

Activity: _____ Date: _____ Team: _____

Activity Purpose: _____

MAIN DETAILS

Cost: _____

_____ Insurance Forms

_____ Permission Slips—*needed for every activity*

Speaker: _____

Music: _____

Songbooks: _____

Games: _____

Equipment: _____

Ice Breakers: _____

Transitional Games/Stunts: _____

Miscellaneous: _____

REFRESHMENTS

What: _____

Person: _____

Drinks: _____

Cost: _____

PUBLICATION

Posters: _____

Fliers: _____

Announcements: _____

Persons Resp: _____

Photographer: _____

TRANSPORTATION

How are we traveling?

Van: _____

Bus: _____

Are they reserved? _____

Location: _____

Directions: _____

Clean Up Team: _____

Set Up: _____

VISITORS

Whose job is it to focus on the visitors? _____

Visitor Registration: _____

Connecting visitors with our church? _____

THEME

What: _____

Has the speaker been notified?

How are we accomplishing our purpose? _____

Decision Cards

Person Responsible: _____

SAM'S TOOLBOX LIST

THE ESSENTIALS

Pens (at least 10)
 3x5 cards
 100 feet of rope
 4 bandanas
 2 squishy balls (nerf-like but heavier)
 2 frisbees
 8 quarters
 4 markers
 4 legal pads
 Bag of candy
 2 Uno decks
 Pictionary cards
 Spoons
 200 pennies
 Duct tape
 4 beach balls
 masking tape

THE EXTRAS

Foxtail
 Dollar bills
 4 cans of play dough
 Dutch Blitz cards
 Boggle game
 Balderdash cards
Guinness Book of World Records
 Bible trivia book
 New Testaments
 Dart guns

MY GAME LIST

Sardines
 King's Killer Court
 Everyman's Killer Court
 2-Base Baseball
 3-Ball Baseball
 Electricity
 Flying Dutchman
 Steal the Bacon
 (soccer style)
 Ring on a String
 Do You Love Your Neighbor
 Heads or Tails
 Who sir? Me sir?
 Animal Farm
 My Ship Has Arrived

Flag Mind Reading
 Bang You Are Dead
 Chain Charades
 Alphabet Challenge
 Um Uh Hesitate
 Chain Murder Mystery
 N Words
 Balderdash
 Mind Trap
 Taboo
 Gestures
 Sculptuary, Team Pictionary, Theme Pictionary
 Beach all volleyball
 Ultimate frisbee
 Do You Know Molly
 2-up, 2-down, 1-up 1-down
 Jenkems Up, Jenkems Down
 Cootie (Speed cootie)
 Team Boggle
 Dutch Blitz
 Spoons
 Bible Baseball
 Guess the Number
 Talk or Get Burned
 Jed's Quest Event
 Book of world records
 Namogories
 5 Letters and a Phrase
 Two Are Yarnin, One is Not
 What Are You Doing
 Blind man's football
 Have You Ever (I Have Never)
 Commonalities
 Guess the Word (reverse inquisition)
 Runaway Train (left left right)

SCOTT'S TOOLBOX LIST

Tracts	Getting to know you questions (Would you rather)
New Testament or Bible (Spare)	Mini puzzles: There are many hand-held puzzles that are fun to pull out and challenge a group with.
Stop Watch: You can time any action or event and make a game out of it.	Card Games: I do not allow any gambling-oriented cards on trips. If you take the cards out of trivia or box games, you can often play on the road. I pick these up on sales or at garage sales.
Beat the clock can be played any place and develops imagination and originality	Mind Trap I or II
Whistle	Clever Endeavor
Flashlight	Rook
3x5 cards	Phase 10
Pens	Uno
Glow-in-the-dark frisbee	Tri Bond—Target sells these box games in card game versions.
Small pump with needle	Mad Gab—You can play many at one time.
Markers - flat ones	Worst Case Scenario
Miniature Chess set	Outburst—Be sure to throw out topics you do not want done; sanctify the set.
Paper plates	Pass the Pigs
String kite, neon	Taboo
Duct tape	Catch Phrase
Rope	Balloon Twisting Books
Box cutter knife or pocket knife	Balloons: Twisty, Water
Shrink wrap	Fox tail: These can be made with a tennis ball in a tube sock.
Ping pong balls	Beach ball and or Balzac
Badminton balls	Mini Basketball set that attaches to a window
Juggling balls, juggling book	
Origami set (Some teens like to work with their hands.)	
Wiffle ball and bat	
Bandanas	

Each youth worker's tool box will be unique, based on the talents and preferences of the person and the facilities that he will be working with. I love to take van or bus trips and turn them into a great time, using the travel to build unity and to develop or deepen relationships. The bus is one of my favorite places to work with teens; vans are smaller but are also the main staple of a smaller growing youth group.

For my toolbox, I use a duffle bag or back pack. My toolbox is quite large in my office, but it shrinks or grows depending on what I am doing. I rotate what I bring and always try to have a "trick" up my sleeve. Teens look for me to have these, and I quickly find myself surrounded. I then move around and involve many teens throughout the trip. Some of these things I have included in case of a break down or delay. Turning delays into fun teaches a valuable lesson in contentment and in becoming an overcomer rather than a victim. This box is handy for all types of retreats and even back pack trips—it is really small then. This always leaves you an optional plan B.

On Wednesdays, we often play in a room with many windows and stained glass. Our teens are dressed nicely. Mind games, Mafia, Who Am I, Catch Phrase, charades, or Guesstures are all things we have used to bring some fun and unity to the group. We also play mini games like badminton with paper plate (stapled) hand rackets, mini baseball (with paper plate bats, ping pong balls, and cups as gloves), and beach ball volleyball. There are so many things you can do that you do not have to repeat for quite a while.

GAMES IN THE BOX

Old Faithful—Using a beach ball or volleyball, see how many times the group can keep the ball in the air without it hitting the ground. Allow three consecutive hits per person. No holding.

Frisbee Football

Shrink wrap games—Attach teens by legs or arm and play kick ball or wiffle ball. Shrink wrap hands to make it difficult to catch—guys, chosen number, out fielders, everybody.

Tag Games—there are many tag variations that are really fun and helpful for many situations.

Indoor Basketball—Use the mini set and make a person be the basketball post holding the net. If you set him on a chair, it limits the help he can be for his own team; and you do want him to help.

Charades with twisty balloons—Have a contest on the best balloon object. Have a lot of balloons if you are involving the whole group. Teens go through a gross in a hurry. Use string and duct tape to make team markers which are worn around their necks to identify team players.

Play kick ball with a Balzac or a baseball with a foxtail.

BALANCE IN ACTIVITIES

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

In striving to instill a desire to be a servant in the lives of the youth, it is important to make that show in the activities throughout the year. Set aside at least one major activity (maybe a few small group activities) for the youth to come to serve someone else.

We announce the activity in advance from the pulpit asking for people to allow us to serve them. Often people will call with odd jobs and various needs. We divide into groups of 4-8 and separate to help a greater number of people. Here are some of the tasks we have done.

One night in particular, we brought the youth together and divided them in teams to build western false front facades for our Vacation Bible School. We had 35 teens and many adults turn out, and it turned into one of our favorite activities. We then announced the best decorated facade. The teens enjoyed the excitement their work added to children's ministry. Whether you have a large organized activity or a small spur-of-the-moment group, serving is one of the most important character traits you can emphasize and instill.

Help move a family

Wash Cars (With permission, we have washed and fueled the pastor's car in the middle of the night.) Many people appreciated an announced car wash.

Yard work

Clean the church's nursery toys

Clean out the youth closet

Paint a room in the church

Lay carpet

Make decorations for Vacation Bible School

Wash the van or bus

Help with housework of those in need

Wash windows

Pass out flyers

Move and shovel rocks for landscaping

Change out lights in the auditorium

"MEAT CHEW"

In every youth group, there are a certain group of teens who want to dig deeper in God's Word and spend concentrated time in prayer. To encourage maturity in Christ and understanding in His Word, we established a Bible Study group which we call "Meat Chew," from Hebrews 5:13-14 which are our theme verses. We meet every other Tuesday night from 7:00-8:30 p.m. sharp. We do not prolong the time, as it is a school night. The location will vary through the year as we meet in homes, at the church, and even at parks. The first half of the night is spent in sharing prayer requests and praying. We record these requests in a prayer book. Each person in the group prays, even if only for a short time. The last half of the night is spent in Bible study. Past topics have included studies on Catholicism, Mormonism, Creation vs. Evolution, Leadership, and Developing a Spiritual Growth Notebook. Our groups vary from large to small; but whatever the size, it has been one of the most important things we have done.

ACTIVITIES FOR A CROWD

COMEDY CONTEST

Several years ago our staff put together youth rallies based loosely on “Comedy Sportz.” We changed several of the games and kept some things just the way they were. Since that time, these kinds of games have grown in popularity because of their spontaneous nature. Be warned, if you try to put together a comedy contest, you must be absolutely convinced that it will be funny and exciting. Any hesitation on the leader’s part will sabotage the event. As you read over the next few pages, you will not laugh a whole lot, but once you actually begin playing, you could be laughing harder than ever before in your life—no joke.

VARIOUS FORMATS

- **Two-Team Competition**—This usually lasts two hours with a 15-minute half time. Each team is made up of four people. Also needed is a referee and a scorekeeper. Part of the fun of this format is getting each team to try to woo the hearts of the audience. Each team must realize that if losing is what makes it funny, than lose.
- **Two-Team Event**—A referee and two teams of four playing against each other. In this event, the score does not matter; and the winner or loser does not matter. We are just having fun. This usually lasts about 1–1 1/2 hours.
- **Mixer**—Several of the events can stand alone. One may take 5-15 minutes to explain and do one event. Note: in the longer events, people (audience and team players) tend to loosen up and laugh more. My favorite mixer contests are “Um, Uh, Hesitate” and “Chain Charades.”

YOU’VE GOTTA HAVE THIS OR ELSE

1. You need a referee who will move the contest quickly and whose judgment you can trust. The referee decides what suggestions to use from the audience. There are plenty of suggestions that are not necessarily bad but that are not good either.
2. You will need two anchor players—one on each team. These two players should not be concerned with what others think of them. These are your class-clown types, good story tellers, people who are expressive!
3. You will also need sixty or more people in the audience. Without this size of group, the activity goes flat. We have done comedy contests with groups over 300. Whatever the size of your group, try to pack them into as small an area as possible. We usually use a stage area approximately 8-16 feet.
4. Finally, you will need a sound system. The referee needs to have something that can be heard over all the bedlam.

THESE THINGS WOULD BE NICE BUT NOT NECESSARY

1. It would be nice if you have seen this actually work. If you have never seen it, it will be hard to visualize what is going on.
2. Plenty of practice time for your team players would be helpful. Two or three practices that allow them to play the games will really help them when they are on stage for real.
3. Do the comedy contest at night. Things are always funnier when you are tired.
4. Keep a box of various props. Collect an assortment of hats, ties, large dresses, old suits, vests, and wigs. Also include a couple of playguns, plastic knives, old telephones, and a plastic whiffle bat. (You will see. It gets used more than any of the other props!)

PENALTIES

Referee Note—use these sparingly. I have used the brown bag several times, but you want to make sure you do not glorify what is bad.

1. **Groaner**—This occurs when one of the team players says something that causes the audience to give a collective groan in response. When this happens, the referee throws his red hanky and yells, “Groaner.” The offending party must step up and apologize for his deed. The audience may choose to reject or accept his apology. If rejected, his team loses a point.
2. **Waffling**—Throw this penalty when a team gets “Team Brain Block” or “Stand Around Syndrome.” When the referee yells, “Waffling,” that team has 10 seconds to make it funny or step off the stage.
3. **Brown Bag**—Get a couple of brown bags and cut out the eyes. When somebody says something rude, crude, off color, or socially unacceptable, yell, “Brown bag” and then give the brown bag to the offending party. They must wear it for the remainder of that particular event.

UM UH HESITATE

Suggestions from the audience	Two items normally used in everyday life (i.e. toothbrush, door, minivan, tic tacs)
Quick Explanation	Players are trying to continue a storyline as the microphone is placed in front of them.
Time	Until one player says “um,” “uh,” or hesitates
Points	Five points for last player standing, four points for the 2 nd to last player standing, three points for the 3 rd , two points for the 4 th , one point for the 5 th
Props	None
Volunteers.....	Two to four who like to talk

How to Play: Line up all the players and volunteers on the front of the stage. Each story begins with “Once upon a time.” A player is eliminated if he says “um” or “uh” or hesitates too long. A player can also be eliminated for stuttering or not sticking with the storyline. The referee places the microphone in front of the player for a few words or phrases, and then moves it over to someone else (rarely the person right next to the talker). Once a player is out, the line of people shortens. Each time someone gets out, the referee asks for two more items from the audience. The players must try to use both items in their story.

Referee Tips:

1. Always start with the same person. “Once upon a time . . .”
2. Have a few items in your head to begin with (submarine, elephant pen at the zoo). These will add a little spice to the story.
3. Move the microphone in the middle of the phrases as opposed to the end of phrases.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Suggestion from the audience.....	Activities, sports, hobbies, things you do everyday
Four ways to get “out”	1—Pause too long, 2—Say what you are doing, 3—Say something that has already been acted out, 4—Say something unrelated to the topic
Points	One point for each win
Props	None
Volunteers.....	None unless you want to try it at the end

How to Play: Each team member goes head to head against one from the other team; there are only two people on stage at a time. Y begins acting and Z asks, “What are you doing?” Y must answer with something related to the topic that has been given by the audience, but NOT what he is actually doing. Z must then do what Y said he was doing and then Y asks “What are you doing?” It keeps going until someone is out. (I know it sounds like an algebra problem but . . .)

Referee Tips:

1. Encourage the players to act out what they are doing, not just say what they are doing.
2. Many times you will get the normal activities like basketball and soccer; but if you insert some less traditional activities, it will help eliminate players (i.e. babysitting, WWF, International fly swatting competition).

CHAIN MURDER MYSTERY

- Suggestions from the audience..... 1. place (somewhere you would go on a date)
 2. fictional occupation (i.e. belly button lint recycler)
 3. weapon not usually used in a murder (i.e. Q-tip)
For example: at McDonalds, as an alien hit man, using a golf ball
- Time: Four minutes (total for all acting)
- Points:..... Five points if the 3rd person in the chain guesses correctly
 Three points if the 2nd person in the chain guesses correctly
 One point if the 1st person in the chain guesses correctly
- Props:..... None
- Volunteers: One member from the audience

How to play: Send two team members plus the audience volunteer to the sound-proof chamber (someplace he cannot see or hear). The remaining two players stay in the room while you gather the suggestions from the audience. Once you have all the suggestions, bring one player in from the sound-proof chamber. Begin the chain murder mystery. As soon as the two players have adequately acted out the place, occupation, and weapon, the person from the sound-proof chamber kills the actors with the weapon. As soon as the “murder” takes place, time stops. Bring in the volunteer and begin time again as the place, occupation, and weapon are acted out again. Each murder victim should remain sprawled out at the scene of the crime.

Referee Tips:

1. Help the players out by saying, “This is the place.” After the person acts that out say, “This is an occupation that does not exist.” Those little tips will help all the players.
2. Go four minutes, give or take 30 seconds.
3. Gibberish and sounds are crucial. Places can easily be figured out by just singing theme songs.

ALPHABET CHALLENGE

- Suggestions from the audience..... Letter from the alphabet and a situation that would involve two people
- Time As long as it takes to get through the alphabet
- Points..... One point for the winner
- Props..... None
- Volunteers After this one has been played a few times, volunteers work really well

How to play: A one-on-one challenge in which the players’ first letter of each statement must go in alphabetical sequence. The players receive the situation from the referee and the letter they must start with (For instance, situation: a pizza delivery boy and a customer who ordered pizza with spinach topping; letter: *D*)

- Player 1: Domino’s delivery service!
- Player 2: Every time I hear that yelled out I just can’t wait for my spinach pizza.
- Player 1: Forget spinach pizza; brussel sprout pizza is the best.
- Player 2: Gross! All I want is spinach pizza.
- Player 1: How about pepperoni with extra cheese?
- Player 2: I said “SPINACH.”

Player 1: Just calm down
And so on and so forth . . .

A player is out when he cannot continue the story using the right letter, when he uses the wrong letter in the alphabet sequence, or when cave man language begins to take over. The winner stays on stage for the next challenger.

Referee Tips:

1. Just warn the players about cave man language and let them try to get out of it.
2. Have a few situations ready in your mind. You do not always have to get them from a crowd.
3. This game gets better and better the more it is played.
4. The following are possible situations that you could use.
 - Houston and the astronaut
 - Pizza delivery and an upset customer
 - Jane breaking off a long-term relationship with John
 - Synchronized swimming coach and half of his swim team
 - Discussion between a dog owner and a cat owner
 - Policeman pulling over a motorist
 - Sea World security and a mischievous five-year-old boy
 - Your youth leader and his wife
 - Santa Claus and Johnny who has been bad
 - Teacher and student
 - Job trainer and thrift store applicant
 - Principal and student
 - Driving instructor and a great grandma who really cannot see
 - Twins separated at birth who just met in the mall
 - Einstein and Barney Fife

ACTIVITIES FOR A LARGE GROUP

INDOOR SCAVENGER HUNT

The age-old, favorite scavenger hunt is now brought to a personal, indoor level. The leader, with a prepared list of items that might be found on your person, calls each scavenger item out individually and waits for the first team to present the item. The first team to deliver the item directly to the leader gets the points for that round of scavenging. Vary your list of items to include both things that are easily available and more challenging items to find. Have as many or as few teams that you can work into your group. Award one point for each item. It should be announced before the game that each item should be brought up by itself, exactly how it was asked for. For instance, if the leader asks for a black shoelace, just the black shoelace should be presented—without the shoe attached!

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20+
Props	0
Cost	0
Type	Collect & deliver
Time	10-20 min.
Referee	1

Key: \$=props cost only,
 \$\$=low individual cost,
 \$\$\$=high individual cost

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Picture of just your mom | 17. Pocket knife |
| 2. 1960's coin | 18. Library card |
| 3. Red pen | 19. Dollar bill with serial # starting with E |
| 4. A single sock in hand | 20. Clothing tag |
| 5. Class Ring | 21. Fingernail polish |
| 6. Expired Coupon | 22. A comb other than the color black |
| 7. Pen with more than one ink | 23. Fingernail polish remover |
| 8. Pen with a church name printed on it | 24. Used tissue |
| 9. 3 x 5 card | 25. Monogrammed handkerchief |
| 10. Credit Card | 26. Toenail clipping |
| 11. School I.D. with picture | 27. A five-dollar bill with serial number containing at least three 7's |
| 12. Deodorant | 28. Family picture |
| 13. Three eyebrow hairs | 29. Shoelace other than the color white |
| 14. Red thread | 30. Quarter minted in Pennsylvania |
| 15. A map | |
| 16. Nike shoe in hand | |

The following is a list of possible personally scavenged items that you may want to include in your own indoor scavenger hunt:

Variations:

Designated Runners: Have each team choose one and only one runner to deliver the items to the leader.

Chair Sit: Give points to the team who has the first person carrying the item, sit in a chair placed at the front of the room. This shows an obvious winner on the "mad rush" items and cuts down on possible bodily injury to the leader.

Three Chair Sit: Have a number of chairs placed at the front of the room, one for each team represented. Designate each chair as a first through third, fourth, fifth place chair. Award points to each team based upon their chair position. Be careful to still inspect each item after teams have found their seats! If one team is disqualified, the next team moves into their point/seat position.

Balloon Scoring: Have one representative from each team equipped with a balloon to blow up. If that team wins a round, they are awarded one puff on the balloon instead of a point. Teams will be awarded puffs until one balloon is popped. A popped balloon is a winning team!

BREAKAWAY ACTIVITY

In larger groups, the small group atmosphere becomes a missing factor. Splitting down the group from time to time becomes needed. Divide into groups of four or five with a leader—this will depend on the size of vehicle each leader has—and have the groups decide what they would like to do. In our activity, we divided the guys from the girls and then divided the groups from there. This gave a chance for the girls to do some of the activities the guys wanted to avoid. The groups were divided and each group began to plan what they wanted to do with their leader two weeks before the activity, using Wednesday nights to discuss and decide. We pretty much allowed groups to pair up by the activity offered.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	30+
Props	Many
Cost	\$\$\$
Type	Variety
Time	Planning + 5 hours
Referee	1 per group

Activity Day:

- 9:00 Meet at the Church
- Welcome and gather visitor information
- 9:15 Youth Message
- 9:45-10:00 Breakaway
 - Group 1 (Boys) Mountain Biking in Wickenburg
 - Group 2 (Boys) Hiking in Seven Springs (which turned into a water-hole swim)
 - Group 3 (Girls) Mall walk and Imax (Bears)
 - Group 4 (Girls) Phoenix Zoo
 - Group 5 (Girls) Swim at leader’s home
 - Group 6 (Boys) Junk Food Feast and Darts (miscellaneous games)

This was effective because we had good leaders who were supplemented with parents. We talked about what we wanted to accomplish and what things we wanted to avoid. The advance planning and leadership training is crucial at this activity.

The books *GAMES* and *GAMES 2* are two excellent resources that will help youth activities with the ideas to make them interesting.

PICTURE SCAVENGER HUNT

We had a Picture Scavenger Hunt that the teens and parent drivers raved about. This is just an old activity made possible with new technology. We used the new Polaroid throw-away camera (\$15.95 for ten pictures; Wal-Mart gave us two free since we bought eight) giving each car of 5 people one camera and 90 minutes to return with ten pictures.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-80
Props	1
Cost	\$\$
Type	Collect & deliver
Time	2-3 hours
Referee	1 per group

Each team had a list of 20 different things they had to take a picture of, with at least two people of their team in each picture—things like in a phone booth (scarce in Arizona), with a fireman (bonus points for being on the truck in the picture), in an airplane, with a buffalo, in a swimming pool (only up to ankles), whole team up in a tree, in a fast food restaurant (extra points for each manager and for being behind the counter), with a road sign, with a stranger doing something strange, in a new Beetle, etc. We gave points on the difficulty of finding the object. Having limited time and more objects to shoot than pictures makes them decide what is worth the most points. With a warning not to be rude, we added points for strangers who were included in each picture. Many people helped the teens and really enjoyed them! We also included a word scramble of camera related words for the teens to do while on the road.

Tally the points by the pictures giving extra points for the most inventive picture and the most beautiful. Take a picture randomly from any late teams. We gave out candy prizes to the first, second, and third places.

Parents were used for drivers (we had ten) and each team had a great time with parents looking forward to helping again.

Message Idea: “Seeing the Picture of Our Life Turn Out Right” or “The Importance of Light in a Life” (Jesus is the light of the world.)

VARIATION: PICTURE THIS!

Pictures—1,000 points each

1. Live animals—*Bonus: 500 per animal in picture*
2. Take a picture by a Hummer—*Bonus: 2,000 in one*
3. A clown
4. A fountain
5. With a mannequin
6. On a tractor
7. At the North Pole—*Bonus: 4,000 with sign*
8. With a statue
9. With a person in uniform—*Bonus: 1,000 for each*
10. Best team picture (with team members in it)
11. With a group of strangers—*Bonus: 300 each person*
12. With a helicopter—*Bonus: With pilot 5,000*
13. With warning or danger sign—*Bonus: 2,000 for blinking or flashing lights*
14. Most inventive picture
15. With a parent not at the activity—*Bonus: 2,000 for mother and father*
16. With a unique, unusual, personal sign
17. In an elevator

Objectives—1,000 points each

1. Pass out respectfully a Gospel tract. (2)
2. Invite a person to church. (2)
3. Get autographs of people you meet—100 pts a piece—*Bonus: 1,000 for 10; 2,000 for 20*
4. Bring back an informative brochure
5. Bring back a free sticker
6. Bring back a complimentary piece of candy
7. Bring back a doggie bag from a restaurant—*Bonus: 1,000-point bonus if it has dog on it*

Find the Destination (Discover the phone number)

1. What two letters toward the end of the alphabet are a car (bug) maker? Use these letters and telephone pad to discover the first two numbers.
2. What is the square root of 36?
3. What important phone number adds up to 11? Take the last two digits for #'s 4 and 5.
4. How many sons did Noah have?
5. How many days according to Genesis 7 was Noah in the ark before the Flood came?

You should have the number of a church member who will tell you where to meet at 9:00 sharp.

The sum of the numbers is 35 if you want to check your answers.

CIRCLE, DOT, LINE!

This is an inside game for a group. Our suggestion is to have between 5 and 20 people on a team. You can have more on the team; but as the size of the group grows, the individual participation drops. Only the number of drawing boards and officials you have limits the number of teams. We suggest one official for every two teams. You will also need an “impartial” judge for the game.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-40
Props	1
Cost	\$
Type	Team Drawing
Time	30 minutes
Referee	1 referee & 1 judge

Supplies: For every team, you will need a drawing board. We recommend a dry erase board measuring 2 ½ feet by 4 feet. You can buy a sheet of this material at a lumberyard and cut several boards of various sizes from it. Each team will also need an appropriate writing instrument.

Game Master reads the following: Only two members of each team may be standing at any time. These two are the person drawing and the person “on deck.” No communication may occur between teammates. I will announce a person, place, or thing for each team to draw. For each turn at the board, a person may draw only one of the following: a circle or any portion of a circle, a straight line of any length, or a dot of any size. If a circle becomes a straight line or begins to curve the opposite way, the official will erase up to the point of infraction. The same will occur if a straight line begins to curve. A dot must be filled in completely. After the person drawing has done his part, he passes the marker to the person on deck and returns to his seat. The next person in line then moves up to the “on deck” position. I will give you about 1 minute to draw; and when I say, “Stop!” you should set your marker down. Then our “impartial judge” will determine the winner of each round. Are there any questions?

If there are no questions, begin with a practice round. The first and second persons in line should take the positions of “drawing” and “on deck.” Announce the object to be drawn is “A cat.” Say, “Ready? Begin!” And then allow about 45 seconds. When you say, “Stop,” they must set their markers down; and the person drawing should return to his seat. Allow the judge to make comments and announce his selection for that round. From this point on, keep score in a place where all can see. If you have a theme for your event, you could choose the person, place, or thing based on your theme. We have had fun with the following items:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Stagecoach | Car |
| Horse | Elephant |
| Cowboy | Construction Worker |
| Dog | Ostrich |
| Eiffel Tower | McDonald’s |
| Mount Rushmore | Golden Gate Bridge |

For your last drawing, choose one person that they all know, i.e., the pastor, the impartial judge, etc.

GENDER GAP

We have a lot of fun finding a board game that we enjoy and then tweaking it a bit to work for a larger group. Here is one example. You may want to buy the board game Gender Gap to give you a few more questions to use. We have included a few to get you started. Divide your group into two teams: guys on one side and gals on the other.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-60
Props	0
Cost	0
Type	Trivia
Time	1 hour
Referee	1

Game Master reads the following: I will ask the guys a traditionally female-oriented question, and then I will ask the gals a traditionally male-oriented question. After I ask the question, you will have 20 seconds to discuss the question among your team and then submit your final answer. A question that is correctly answered will score two points for your team. If the question is answered incorrectly, it will be passed to the other gender who may receive one point if they are able to correctly answer the question. If the question is answered incorrectly by that team, that question will be eliminated. In round two, we will use questions that you submit.

*Notes for round one: Alternate back and forth, asking one question of the men and then one of the women. Keep score on a visible space, or continually report the score.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE MEN

1. What is a French manicure?
2. How many sisters are there in the book *Little Women*?
3. In cooking, what is it to *blanche* food?
4. For what is a *chenille* used? (pronounced sha-kneel)
5. What are the four “c’s” in judging a diamond?
6. What is a *duvet*? (pronounced doo-vay)

ANSWERS

- Clear or pink polish with white tips
- Four
- Dip it in boiling water and set aside
- Fuzzy cord used for embroidery
- Color, cut, carat, clarity
- A comforter cover

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE WOMEN

1. Lag, hex, and carriage are types of...?
2. What is the length of the track at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway?
3. How many periods of play are there in regulation college basketball?
4. What does VSR stand for on a drill?
5. In sports, what is the hot corner?
6. What does AC/DC stand for?

ANSWERS

- Bolts
- 2½ miles
- Two twenty-minute halves
- Variable speed reversing
- Third base
- Alternating current/direct current

Game Master reads the following: Now it is time for round two! In this round, each team will come up with their own gender-oriented questions to ask the opposite team. The questions need to be hard enough so that the other team will not easily answer them, but easy enough so that two people chosen out of your team can answer them. Choose two representatives from your team to wait outside while the rest of the team comes up with questions to ask. If the other team cannot answer the question, it will go back to your two chosen representatives to answer. Be sure to include an answer on each question you submit. The “correct” answer will be your answer that is submitted, whether it is truly correct or not. Take four minutes to come up with three questions and their answers. Again, these questions should stump your opponents but be answered by your representatives.

*Notes for round two: Send two representatives from each team out of the room. Give each team a piece of paper and pencil. Give them about four minutes to write out their questions and answers; then collect the paper and bring in the representatives. Keep the representatives from talking with their team! You may want to put them up on stage with you.

A variation of this game is Generation Gap. It would be a fun challenge to pit teens against their parents. You would obviously need to spend a little advance time preparing your first round of questions.

WHO AM I?

This is an inside game for a group of about 12-20. The object of this game is to accumulate the biggest team and to be the last person identified. Arrange the group into a circle and give everyone a small piece of paper and a pencil. You will need a basket or a hat to collect the papers after they have been filled out. As the game master, you will not fill out a paper or participate in the guessing. Instead, you will announce a category, and everyone must secretly select a character or an item from that category. Each individual should then write that character or item on the paper. When you come around with the basket, they will deposit their paper. For example, if the category was Bible Characters, each person would secretly select a character to be. If the category was appliances, each person would select an item. After you collect all the papers, read them through aloud a couple of times. Decide before you begin how often you will re-read the papers. The game is more challenging if you do not re-read the papers.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-30
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Guessing
Time	30-45 min.
Referee	1

Now the person on your left begins the guessing. He chooses anyone on the circle and tries to match them with a character or item from those that were read. If he guesses correctly, the person who was identified must move to join that team. The team now guesses as a unit, not taking individual turns. The team continues to accumulate teammates and receive more guesses until they guess incorrectly. If they guess incorrectly, the turn passes to the person or team on their left. If someone guesses your identity, you and all those with you move to become part of their team. The game will finally get down to two teams, and the person who remains unidentified and on the largest team is the winner. For the next round, if you would like to participate in the game, you could make the winner of the previous round the new game master.

A few ideas for categories:

- Bible Characters
- Cartoon Characters
- Zoo Animals
- Missionaries
- Super Heroes
- Politicians (alive or dead)

A variation of this game is to have everyone fill out the paper with a little known fact about themselves. It is best if it is something that no one else knows! They should also write their own name on the paper for you. Then collect the papers and choose one that you think is hilarious or extraordinary. Ask the person whose paper you have selected and four others to come up to the front. Give them a chair to sit on facing the audience. Now you should read the little known fact, and all the people on the stage must pretend to be the author of that paper. The audience tries to figure out who is the real author by asking questions of the various people that you have chosen. The people on the stage try to answer the question in a way that will convince the audience that they are the true author. The winner is the one who receives the most audience votes. If you want to do several rounds of this and give scores for correct guesses, that would lengthen the game and make it more of an individual competition. The game can also stand alone as a long stunt or transition.

TUBE ROLL RELAY

Tie a stack of inner tubes together four or five high. Five designated rollers will be rolling the tubes with a person inside across the field. With half of your team on either end of your game field, your designated rollers will push the tubes back and forth picking up a new passenger each time. Your winning team is the first to have their two sides completely moved.

Equipment:

- Coned off boundaries
- Five or six inner tubes per team
- Three fifteen foot length of rope per inner tube stack to keep them tied together

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-60
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Relay
Time	15 min.
Referee	2

TUBE MOUND MADNESS

At the beginning of the game, three or four teams on three corners of the field are inside a designated scoring circle. The center of your field should be piled with 40-50 inner tubes. At the whistle, teams head toward the center of the field to retrieve as many inner tubes as they can bring back to their scoring circles. Once an inner tube is safely inside a scoring circle, it is safe. One or more opposing players may steal an inner tube at any time if it is still being carried on the field. At the end of the round, the tubes are counted and scored. Take them back to the center for round two.

Equipment:

- 40-50 inner tubes depending on the size of your group
- Four different colors of duct tape and a paint marker to mark your inner tubes
- Coned off scoring circles

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-200
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Steal the bacon
Time	20-40 min.
Referee	1

Scoring:

Award points at the end of each round, and total them at the end to find your overall winner.

Red tubes = 500 points each (Have 15-20 of these tubes total)

Blue tubes = 100 points each (10-12 tubes total)

Green tubes = 1500 points each (7-10 tubes total)

White tubes = 3000 points each (3-5 tubes total)

Having fewer high-point tubes than low-point tubes will increase strategy.

ASSASSINS

This is a game of war where every man starts out for himself. Your goal is to shoot others with a dart pistol without getting shot yourself and without anyone else witnessing the act of your shooting. If a person is shot, he gives up his dog tag, name tag, or identification to the person who shot him. The person who was shot is no longer an assassin, but a police officer and a potential witness of future crime. The field is quickly narrowed down as bold assassins collect tags from their victims. If an attempted murder is witnessed by anyone, police or assassin, the witness receives all the tags of the assassin who made the attempt. That witness is now an assassin, even if they had no tags before. The winner is the assassin who has all or the most tags when time expires.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	\$\$
Type	Elimination
Time	8 hours-weeks
Referee	2-3

Specific Rules:

1. A clean “kill” is a shot made to the torso or head. A shot in the arm or leg would not be a kill.
2. Anyone witnessing an attempted assassination, whether it was successful or not, will receive all the tags of that would-be assassin.
3. There is safety in numbers; assassins cannot assassinate in a public place.
4. This is a game of quiet strategy, intrigue, and plotting. Forcible gang hits where a person is shot while the mob turns their heads are not allowed.
5. To witness an assassination or an attempted assassination, one must be in a line of sight of the incident, the victim, or the shooter. A witness does not need to see the dart leave the gun or strike the victim. An assassination that takes place in a public setting will have witnesses who saw that an assassination took place. However, being around the corner from both an assassin and killer, hearing a shot and a scream, running quickly around the corner to see what happened does not constitute witnessing any crime.
6. A witness must claim their status as a witness within one minute of the incident. Simply having knowledge that a crime took place does not constitute being a witness.
7. All disputes should be settled by a committee of three or four impartial judges. These judges may also play in the game, having their disputes settled by the other judges.
8. Set boundaries of legal shooting time based upon your schedule. We have said in the past that all assassinations must stop between midnight and 5 a.m. and no killing can take place inside the main meeting room.

Equipment:

Dog tag or name tag for each participant.

Enough dart pistols for each participant to have one gun and two darts. We have found a good pistol through KIPP BROTHERS, www.kippbro.com, 1-800-428-1153, product #NC5171, box of 24 pistols (each with 2 darts) costs \$9.50.

BOMBS AWAY

Three teams, four teams, or two teams subdivided into four groups stationed in three or four corners of your game field are armed with water balloons, water balloon launchers, and towels. The object is both to land your bombs inside the opposing groups scoring circle and to catch whole the bombs shot towards your cor-

ner of the field. Catching balloons whole is best done with a partner and a towel. Each team should be armed with four water balloon launchers so that guys and girls from each team will be launching balloons at both of the opposing teams. At any given time, you could potentially be shooting four bombs at one enemy team while having as many as eight to twelve balloons being fired back from both teams. Bombs landing inside the scoring circle or hitting people who are standing inside the scoring circle count as positive points for whatever team launched that bomb. Caught, whole balloons must be brought to a safe hold and counted as positive points for your team. Those launching bombs must stay inside their scoring circle at all times while those catching the incoming bombs may move wherever they would like in their corner of the field. The game is over and scored within a time limit or when all balloons are fired.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-200
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Speed Score
Time	10 min.
Referee	4

Equipment:

- Marked and coned scoring circles for each team
- 100-300 water balloons per team
- 2-4 elastic tube water balloon launchers per team
- Team members partner up and bring one towel per pair

Scoring:

Scorers with flags raised to announce a hit counts for points. Colored flags denoting the team that launched and landed their bombs for points. Have a separate secure container for all caught balloons that remain whole. Those should be turned in, kept, and counted for points at the end of the game.

SCALP

This is basically a game of hide and go seek. A large field with good hiding places, a wooded area, or even a church and school, if necessary, work well. Also, the darker the area, the better; this provides cover for those who are hiding. One person is chosen to be “it,” the scalper. Also, a girl and a guy must be chosen to be a part of the scalper team. All of the other players are given a 12” piece of tape which is placed on their back. Duct tape works the best; masking tape is okay but it peels off clothing easily. They then have a couple of minutes to go hide. After a set time, the scalper begins to hunt. The object of the game is to “scalp” the tape off the backs of those hiding. Once a person’s tape has been scalped, they then become part of the scalper team. The last person scalped can be the scalper for the next game. Not every person may be found during the game).

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	15-100
Props	One
Cost	\$
Type	Hide & seek
Time	1 hour
Referee	3-4

Some Do’s and Don’t’s:

1. It is okay for a guy to tackle a guy or for a girl to tackle a girl in order to scalp the person of their tape—no tackling of the opposite gender.
2. Be aware that some players will give up their tape voluntarily once they are found. Others will tend to “put up a fight.” Some of your own rules can be established at this point.
3. After about 20-30 minutes, it is good to call everyone back and start a new game. Use your own discretion.
4. It is good to make a rule that a guy and a girl cannot hide together by themselves.
5. The leader can be the ultimate judge to determine if someone’s tape has been scalped legally.

NAME SHOOT OUT

This is a great game for a small or large group! Divide your group into two teams; or if your group is especially large, choose 10-15 players to represent each side. Teams stand on either side of a tarp or large blanket or something large enough to prevent the teams from seeing what the other team is doing. Each team

will at random choose one representative to step forward and duel with someone on the other side of the tarp. On the game master’s signal, the tarp is to be dropped to reveal who is on either side of the tarp. The first person to say the other person’s name successfully has shot out that competitor. Teams will be whittled down until there is just one team remaining.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-40
Props	1
Cost	\$
Type	Elimination
Time	15 min.
Referee	1

Possible Rules of Play:

1. Teams may send up any representative at any time as long as one person does not go up in consecutive turns. The only exception to this is if one team has only three players left.
OR Anyone can go up at any time, no matter what.
2. The first person to say the other person’s name is the winner, even if they have to rattle off a series of incorrect names or senseless blather to finally get to the right name.
OR Any incorrect utterance is counted as accidentally shooting yourself out.
3. Make sure to have two helpers holding each end of your tarp and dropping it all the way to the floor on your signal. Be sure to have them hold it high enough and wide enough apart so that teams see as little of each other as possible.
4. It is legal and good strategy to hide while up at the tarp by lying or squatting so that your opponent has to find you before seeing that you are in fact up at the tarp.

Equipment:

1. One large tarp
2. Two helpers on the tarp

KING’S KILLER COURT

Divide the group into two teams. Put one team on one side of a volleyball court and the other team on the other side. The teams must remain on their designated sides throughout the game. Have each team choose one player to blindfold. The blindfolded person is designated “the king,” and the rest of the players are the bodyguards of their king and the assassins of the other king. The objective is to hit the other team’s king with one of the balls. If anybody is hit by a ball that has not yet hit the ground, they are considered “killed” and must exit the court. If the king is “killed,” the entire team loses. Many times a player must sacrifice his life in order to save the king.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-200
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Dodge Ball
Time	30-45 min.
Referee	1

Variations and Helpful Hints:

1. Do not let one team hoard all the balls. Designate yourself as a NATO policeman; any assassin holding a ball more than three seconds should be jailed.
2. Use a clean plastic trashcan instead of a blindfold for the king. This allows the king to see the ground without seeing the balls flying toward him.
3. Require the king to move on occasion.
4. Require the king to step forward every 30 seconds that the game continues.
5. Use small balls such as you would use in a pool.
6. Use a rope to divide the court in half.
7. Set up a queen as well as the king.
8. Let the bodyguards that have been killed gather the thrown balls for their assassins.

Equipment:

1. One to five nerf-type balls
2. Two blindfolds
3. Court about the size of a volleyball court

ENEMY MINE

This is a variation of Capture the Flag. The items to be captured are gold nuggets; we used gold-painted rocks. Each team has a condemned mineshaft, which consists of a gold-filled trash barrel inside a 20-foot circle of cones. The team cannot enter its own mineshaft. Each team has a ring of seven cones called the jail, which is guarded by jailers and a storehouse, a five-gallon bucket, in which they store enemy gold they have raided from the enemy mine. Teams start out on opposite sides of the field. They have three objectives:

1. Capture (tag) miners who cross the middle line, entering enemy territory. Escort them to jail.
2. Raid the enemy mine of its gold by getting to the enemy mine and back without being tagged. Raided gold is safe when placed in a team's storehouse, the five-gallon bucket.
3. Blow up the enemy mine by having five live bombs, whole water balloons, placed inside.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	40-300
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Capture the Flag
Time	1 hour
Referee	3

There are 15-20 bombers on a team per round. If a bomber is tagged in enemy territory, he should quickly diffuse his bomb and be escorted to jail. If a bomber drops or loses his bomb, he is still in the game as either a raider or a guard. Any miner in his own territory is considered a guard. Any miner in enemy territory is considered a raider. If a bomber successfully plants his bomb in the enemy mine, he is now a raider and may attempt to return a gold nugget to his own storehouse.

Raiders may only raid one piece of gold at a time. If a raider is tagged while holding a piece of gold, he is escorted to jail and the gold he had is returned to the mineshaft from which it came; it is not returned to either storehouse.

Jail breaks may occur if a raider successfully tags someone in jail without getting tagged himself. The freed prisoners do not have a free walk back to their own side and may be tagged quickly and sent back to jail. Only those prisoners directly touched by the rescuer may attempt to run for freedom. Freed prisoners may not circulate tags to free the entire jail at once. Only those directly touched by the rescuer may attempt to run for freedom. Freed prisoners must make their way back to their own side before attempting a raid on the enemy mine or before attempting to rescue other prisoners. A round ends when time is up or when either mineshaft is blown.

Points are awarded as follows:

1. 1,000 points for each piece of enemy gold brought to the storehouse
2. 500 points awarded for each prisoner in jail when the round ends
3. 10,000 points awarded for successfully blowing up the enemy mine (five live balloons)

Equipment:

1. Two trash barrels filled with 30 pieces of gold each, placed on opposite sides of the field
2. Cones to encircle the mineshafts
3. Cones to separate the field in half
4. Two five-gallon buckets for storehouses
5. Two sets of seven #10 cans to make a jail on each side of the field
6. Two bull horns for safety inspectors (officials) to stand at each mineshaft
7. Colored arm bands for each player to wear plainly on his wrist; each team has its own color

CAPTURE THE FLAG

DUCT TAPE DIVERSION STYLE #1

Object: The object of the game is to capture the flags of the other teams and as many of the team marker tags as you can. Each of these will be worth points, and the team with the most points wins with one excep-

tion—the game is automatically won if one team captures both the flags of another team.

Game Pieces: Two flags for each team, team markers (colored markers worn on strings around each player’s necks; each team should have one specific color for its players), ammunition balls (100).

Play: Each team will place their flags with a flag judge in an accessible area, around which they will set up defenses. This is considered their flag area. A team may not move their flags from the chosen spot during the game unless, they are recapturing them from a team who is trying to take them. Once the flag is back in the original owner’s possession, it will go back to its exact previous spot. A team member can only recapture his flag by hitting the person with the flag with a ball, otherwise known as ammo. If a third team hits the person carrying the flag, they must continue the attempt to bring the flag back to their flag area, securing its capture. When a flag is brought to another team’s flag area, it is captured for good. The flag may be handed off before the carrier is hit with ammo. If the first team captures the person carrying their flag, the first team gets a free walk back to their flag area with the flag. Each individual may have only one flag in his hand at a time.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	40-300
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Capture the Flag
Time	1-3 hours
Referee	3

Ammo: Each team will have a chance to earn ammunition (plastic, duct-taped balls) in a prior game. A person can be captured anywhere on the playing field; there are no dedicated sides. A person is only captured when he is hit with an ammo ball; there is no other way to be captured. When a person is captured he or she must give his ammo and marker tags (all the markers the person has captured to this point) to the capturer, who then takes this person to jail. The capturer person gets a free exchange and walk to the jail. Do not throw down your ammo when you are hit; play fairly. Marker tags stay with a person until the game is complete.

Jail: Prisoners will be taken to a central area (there will be three) where they will be kept by the capturing team. Team members may tag other teammates to break them out of the jail, but prison guards may capture the people attempting to break others out and those who are breaking out. The one who was not in jail is the only one who may tag his teammate for the jailbreak. There will be periodic and general jail breaks announced by a siren. All in jail may go free at this time.

Time: The game will last approximately 45 minutes, unless on team obtains both of another team’s flags before the 45 minutes is up. This would be an automatic win!

Points:
 Marker tags=500
 Flags=5,000

CAPTURE THE AMMO

Round #1 Guys
 Round #2 Gals

Teams will number off their players tallest to shortest and will stand behind their team line. When their number is called, they will run in and pick up as much ammo as they can without being tagged by another person. When a person tags another, all the ammo in both players’ possession is given to the other. When a team captures at least one ammo ball, they will be awarded one bonus ball for success. If a team member tags another team member with ammo, they are awarded two bonus balls, plus one for a successful round.

Ammo may be taken and secured by carrying it back across your line (no hitting or kicking across). The player may go back in if the round is not over.

Each time a number is called, there is a time limit of 10 seconds.

Identify the various values of the ammo ahead of time.

Object: Capture as much ammo as you can. The amount of ammo you capture will affect how aggressive you can play Capture the Flag, as ammo is needed to capture another player.

SWAT TAG

Here is a good game to let your frustrations out on your teens. A group of about twenty to twenty-five would be ideal for a good game of Swat Tag. Any more than that should probably have two games going at the same time. Some might prefer to play this with a guy’s circle and a girl’s circle. Set up a circle of chairs so that everybody but one player has a place to sit down. Place an upside down trashcan or a small desk, anything with a small tabletop, in the center of your circle of chairs. The one without a chair to sit in is “IT” first. This person should be holding a striking instrument, either a plush bat, a foam noodle, or (a personal favorite) roll of newspaper tightly wound with masking tape. His striking instrument should be narrow enough to grip comfortably and should be about a foot and a half long.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-20 per circle
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	“It”
Time	30-45 min.
Referee	1

With everything in place, the person in the center roams around the inside of the circle looking for his first victim. When he finds someone he believes he can conquer, “IT” will quickly strike the unsuspecting sitter on the leg and quickly run to the center of the circle. “IT” is trying to place the striking instrument on the center trashcan and get back to the unsuspecting victim’s chair where he will be safely sitting down. The goal of the person who was just struck on the leg is to leave his seat, follow “IT” to where the striking instrument will be placed in the center of the circle, pick up the striking instrument that was just used, and try to return the blow before “IT” safely sits down in his chair. If the person who was sitting cannot pick up the striking instrument fast enough to strike back at “IT,” than the person who was sitting is the new “IT” while the former “IT” is now safe in the chair.

Because some who are “IT” are not fast enough to get away from their pursuant, they stay “IT.” If, in an attempt to quickly place the striking instrument on the trashcan, the striking instrument rolls off and falls to the floor, “IT” is then penalized by staying “IT” and by having to endure a free swat by the person he just abused.

There should be a firm rule of no “swat-backs” right after a new “IT” has been established. There should be at least two other attempts at swatting others before any retaliation swat occurs.

If you have someone who cannot seem to shake the title of “IT” after five attempts, that person may call for help. This allows anyone after an initial swat, including the one swatted, to leave his seat and make a dash for the striking instrument. After it has been placed on the can, anyone may take his attempted swats out on anybody else who might have moved to pick it up as well. If this freelance swatter is not able to hit anyone new, he becomes the new “IT.” With enough people up and out of their seats on a call for help, it can be a fun thing to watch others scramble back to any open seat. Some may want to get up on a call for help just to occupy a different seat and watch the confusion build.

SAME GAME: A HOMONYM GAME

Object: Find the one word that replaces the two key words. You may or may not choose to reveal the key words.

Play: Divide into teams of any size and give points for correct answers. Play four rounds.

1. Blurt it out! Give five riddles—*1,000 points for correct answer*
2. Write them out! Give five different riddles and have each team come up and write out the answers. This levels the field for the slower thinkers—*2,000 points*
3. Invent your own! Have the teams come up with two of their own—*3,000 for correct riddles*. At this point, the game really becomes a lot of fun.
4. Guess the other teams riddles. *1,000 points for correct guess*. 1,000 points to the inventing team for any correctly written riddle that takes the other teams more than 15 seconds to guess.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-40
Props	0
Cost	0
Type	Trivia
Time	30-45 min.
Referee	1

Illustration: Can you view the water? Answer: See/Sea “Can you see the sea?”

Riddles:

- This was the place where the blind man received his vision. (Site/Sight)
- What an interesting sight to see the deer eat bread. (Doe/Dough)
- The cost was too high to enter the carnival. (Fare/Fair)
- The man with great strength gave a little money to God. (Might/Mite)
- Ronald said a greeting as he threw the stone a great distance into the air. (Hi/High)
- My dad’s sister taught a great class on strong, hard working tiny creatures. (Aunt/Ant)
- The Psalmist explains as the deer longs after water so his inner core longs after God. (Hart/Heart)
- Last week when I took a flight I had a stomach virus. (Flew/Flu)
- Did you see all of the white follicles on that rabbit? (Hair/Hare)
- The first person who finished the race triumphed. (One/Won)
- The little bored student could visualize himself in a boat on the water. (See/Sea)
- The yellow ball shone off the hair of the father’s boy. (Sun/Son)
- The golfer had to yell a warning when he hit three plus one balls into the crowd. (Fore/Four)
- The teen went to look with fear at a crowd made up of his age group. (Peer/Peer)
- The man who did not guide his truck well hit a cow in the meadow. (Steer/Steer)
- The dog consumed the family turkey, which was sitting on the table in the evening. (Ate/Eight)
- The toddler had a fixed look of glee as he noticed the encasement of steps. (Stare/Stair)

This idea was seen on Zoom, a children’s show; however, all of the riddles and the idea of doing the game in four rounds are original.

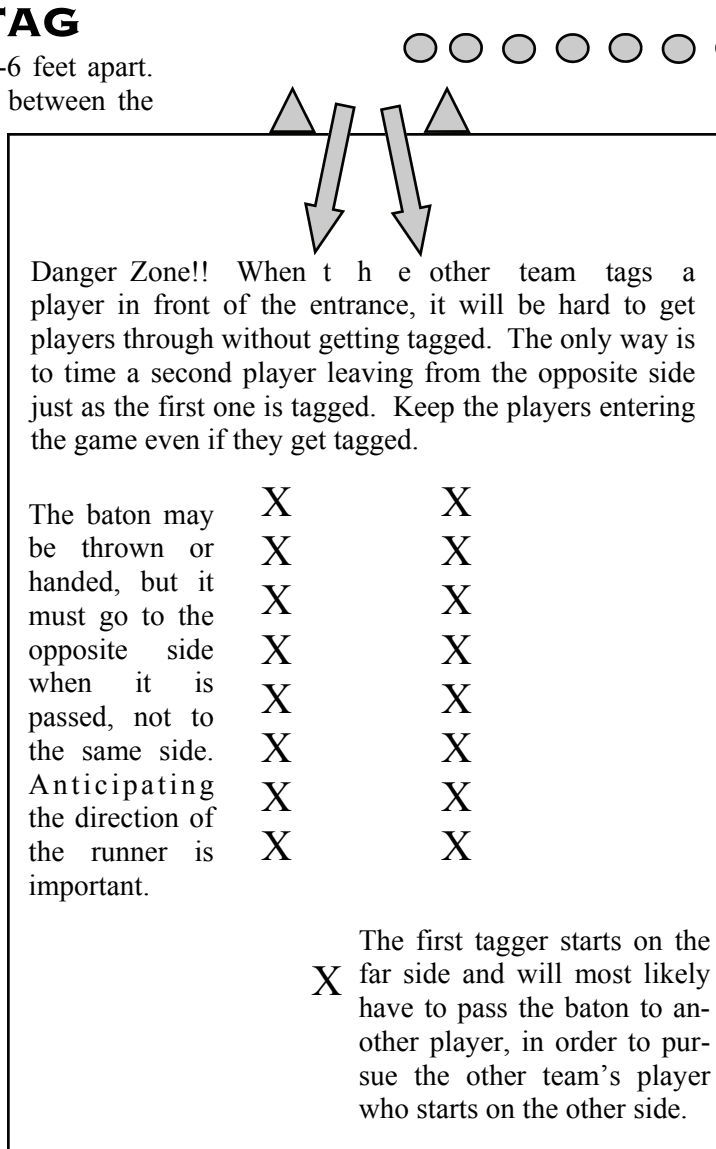
Here are some different homonyms you might use:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| light/lite | lean/lien | sea/see |
| hart/heart | hare/hair | flew/flu |
| knows/nose | ate/eight | new/knew |
| break/brake | loot/lute | dock/doc |
| by/bye | fir/fur | bite/byte |
| one/won | pier/peer | hi/high |
| steer/steer | stair/stare | knot/not |
| so/sew | aunt/ant | bare/bear |
| pear/pair | fore/four | knight/night |
| lode/load | sun/son | wait/weight |
| write/right | shoo/shoe | mail/male |
| hear/here | there/their | date/date |

BATON TAG

Cones should be 4-6 feet apart. Players must enter between the cones.

Out of bounds should be marked with cones. The width of the field should be 3-4 feet from the last row of chairs.



BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	16-300
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Tag
Time	30-45 min.
Referee	1

- Team A must be lined up single file.
- Previously tagged players must get in the back of the line.

Chairs should be in the center of the field and should be touching back to back. There should be 3-4 feet in between each set of back to back chairs.

NOTE: This diagram is illustrated for a group of 32, but feel free to adjust for a larger or smaller group. The larger the group, the more fun it will be.

This game works well with 50 + players and will accommodate as few as 16.

Equipment:

- Chairs for half the players of the game.
- A baton of newspaper, a rolled towel, or a shirt that has been taped at one end

Play: Place the chairs back to back keeping 3-4 feet between each set of chairs making a line which acts like a center line. This will divide the playing square. The playing square should be just wider than the chair by 3-4 feet on each side of the chairs and about 20 yards on each side of the middle line. One team will sit in the chairs with one player standing on the far side of the playing field with a baton. The other team will be lined up in single file line just outside the playing field with an entrance of two cones about 6 feet apart. At the start of the game, a player will enter at this point; and after he is tagged, the next one will instantly enter the field. The object of the team who is in the chairs is to tag as many players from the other team as they can. The other team is trying to spend as much time avoiding being tagged as possible in order to keep their tag number low. Each round will go for 3 minutes. The team in the chairs starts with their

player holding the baton on the far side of the field; and each time the person needs to cross the center line to tag the other team’s player, the person with the baton must pass it to a teammate on the other side and sit in the vacated chair. The runner may run through the chairs as many times as he wants, making the chasing team pass the baton to the other side each time the one who passed the baton sits in the vacated chair. The passer must sit immediately in the other person’s chair (changing sides) before the baton is passed again. If there are players out of their chairs from a previous pass, the baton is passed again; and a point is deducted from the end score. One point is given for each person tagged. The round goes for 3 minutes, and each team player goes into the game as many times as needed. Often the team being chased will have members play twice and even three times. The length of the rounds can be made a little longer. After the time is up, those in the chairs change with those in the line. Play the game for a few rounds.

SOUNDS OF DUMB

Here is your DUMB list of DUMB sounds you must record. The more DUMB sounds you can get before the DUMB time is up, the better. Do not feel DUMB if you do not get all of them, because you will feel DUMB if you return late!

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Scavenger
Time	2 hours
Referee	1 per car

Some DUMB rules to remember:

1. Record only those DUMB sounds listed. Please do not invent any of your own, even though the DUMB temptation may be great.
2. To save listening time later tonight, turn the DUMB recorder on only for recording the DUMB sound. Then turn it off as soon as you are done.
3. All teams report to the Barnett’s house no later than 9:00 p.m. (Any late teams will have points deducted starting at 9:05 p.m.) If you record all DUMB sounds before 9:00 p.m., report to the Barnett’s house when you finish.
4. Before recording each DUMB sound, one member of your team must say, “This is the DUMB sound of _____.”
5. Please read the DUMB instructions with each sound so that you do not look DUMB.

DUMB collection of DUMB sounds to be recorded with all haste and DUMBness.

1. A truck air horn—10 points
2. A car starting—5 points
3. Popcorn popping—5 points
4. A cow mooing—15 points
5. A 60-second interview with an *unknown* person as to why bananas are yellow—25 points
6. A siren—15 points
7. Your group singing one verse of “Give me Oil in My Lamp”—10 points
8. Five rings of a telephone—5 points
9. A good old BURP (one member of your group)—5 points
10. A dog barking—15 points
11. An *unknown* person saying “Unique New York” 5 times quickly—20 points
12. Running water—5 points
13. Thirty seconds of your group laughing—10 points
14. An *adult* church member singing the ingredients on a Pepsi can—25 points (Barnett’s house excluded)
15. Ten seconds of a cash register running—15 points
16. Fast-food restaurant *employees* singing their theme song—20 points

NOTE: All sounds must be the real thing!

THE WEAKEST KNIGHT

During a retreat, we took historic information on the theme (Middle Ages) which totaled about 25 3x5 cards full of information. The next few days, we would use transition times to convey the information a little at a time. At the end of the retreat, we played “The Weakest Knight.” From each team, we took two members who could be interchanged after each round. During a round of 3 minutes, we asked questions; and the group added points by having consecutive right answers and locking the money for the end of the round. (We followed the idea of the Weakest Link.) At the end of each round, one or two would be voted off depending on time. The person who answered the most questions could not be voted off during that round. The points obtained in the round were given to each team participating. Teams could substitute players at the end of each round. We played with each team having two players in the game.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Trivia
Time	1 hour
Referee	1

PALAMEO—ULTIMATE FOOD FIGHT

This one is messy. It is a 50-minute, all-out food fight. Find a wide open area that does not need a lot of cleaning afterwards. There are 5 stages of this food fight which last 10 minutes each. Each stage introduces a new food item. They get grosser as the fight goes on. Adapt any rules if you want, but I have found that one individual playing against another individual works best. There can be any number of participants. The more participants there are, the messier the activity. The stages of food we used are 1- Rotten fruit 2- Eggs 3- Oatmeal 4- Cooked spaghetti noodles 5- Dry dog food hosed down and put into “kiddy pools”. Here are some helpful hints to this activity.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-200
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Chaos!
Time	1 hour
Referee	1

1. Prepare early. (Not all items can be purchased the day before. The fruit will have to be given time to rot.)
2. Prepare parents. (The kids do get messy.)
3. Prepare to throw away any and all clothes that are worn.
4. Let the cooked oatmeal and spaghetti cool before using. (Lawsuits are not fun.)
5. Do not allow the eggs to be thrown.

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN . . .

SCAVENGER HUNT

This activity is a fun activity that can be adapted anyway you want. Here is what we did. The teens were split into groups of four or five. Each group was given a clue to find me. I left 5 minutes before everyone else and headed toward the place where the clue directed them. I would drop off the next clue for them. The chase was on. The goal was to try to catch me before I made it back to the final destination. Here was the catch—the drivers could not speed, and I had to go 5 mph under the speed limit. If they caught up to me, they had to physically tag me. It ended in a city park with me trying to outrun two different teams. It was great.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Tag/ Scavenger
Time	2 hours
Referee	1 per car

Tips and Tricks:

1. Get parents to drive. (This may be an activity they are skeptical of if they are not involved.)
2. Play fairly.
3. Be safe at all times.
4. Use with smaller youth groups (up to 40).

MALL INVASION

This is another scavenger hunt your teens will love. Have 4 church members dress up in disguises and walk around in a mall. Split your teens into small groups and send them to find those church members. They will have no idea who they are looking for, so be creative. If a group thinks they have identified a church member, they must ask them a funny question that requires a funny answer. It is hilarious when they ask the wrong person this question. The question we asked was, “Do chickens have lips?” The response our teens were looking for was, “No, but I sure do.” This question was asked to the wrong people quite often and the answers were so funny. If a group finds a church member, they must acquire a signature from that person. The team with the most signatures wins. Give the groups 30 minutes to search the mall and return to a designated area.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-60
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Hide & seek
Time	30 minutes
Referee	5

Tips and Tricks:

1. Get church members that really want to do this right. (Shy people do not work well.)
2. Call the mall security and management to ask permission to be there.
3. Do not give the groups too much time in the mall. (Shopping sprees are not the purpose.)
4. Keep a youth leader with each group to ensure that the group does not encounter problems.
5. No one is allowed to enter any store.
6. Split groups according to what purpose you are working for (unity, dividing cliques, etc.).
7. Get a big mall if possible and be sure to play during a busy time.
8. Saturday afternoons are best for us.
9. Do not let the church members stay in one place too long.

Ideas of disguises:

1. Mall employee (cleaning, store employee)
2. Person in wheel chair looking like a war veteran
3. Rent a pregnant body suit and dress as an expectant mother
4. Someone working on a computer disguised as a student

KRISTOPHER’S CAPTURE THE FLAG

Supplies: 10 bean bags; 18 cones; 2 frisbees; 2 athletic-type balls (kick ball, soccer ball, volleyball, etc.); 12 small objects (badges, CDs) for Generals, Colonels, and other players to carry; flags

Object: To get the most points by capturing the other team’s point objects.

Players: Each team will consist of a General and two Colonels, and the rest of the players will be privates. The team is not required to disclose to the opposing team who the officers are.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-80
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Capture the Flag
Time	1 hour
Referee	3

Point Value System:

1. Bean bags on top of cones are worth 5 points each.
2. Frisbee inside base is worth 15 points.
3. Each team will have one general who will wear a badge worth 10 points. Generals **cannot** pass their badge to anyone else, and may **not** set them down.
4. Each team will have two colonels who will wear badges worth 3 points. Colonels **cannot** pass their badges to anyone else, and may **not** set them down.
5. Each team will have 3 objects (CD’s, badges, pieces of paper) that may be transferred among any players by handing or throwing, but **must always be in the possession of a player**.

6. Each team has one kick ball that is worth 20 points. It can be placed anywhere on the playing field except in bushes, trees, or water.
7. No points are awarded for capturing players themselves.

No player, offensive or defensive, may carry more than two objects at a time.

How Points are Obtained: Each team must retrieve the enemy’s objects safely into their own base in order to accumulate points. When attempting to capture an object or badge, a player may throw it (or kick it) to a teammate who must catch it for it to count. If the player fails to catch it, it must be immediately returned to the person or place from which it was taken.

Capturing a Player:

1. A player is captured when his flag is pulled.
2. If a player is hit by a ball, he must stand still and count to 20 (by 1's). If his flag is not pulled at the end of this time, he may continue playing.
3. If a player’s flag is pulled while counting, he is captured.
4. A player that is counting cannot move, pull flags, call out, motion to teammates, or participate actively in the game in any way. The player must “freeze.”
5. A captured player must immediately be escorted to the jail by at least one of the opposing players.
6. Captured players must have their flags returned to them while they are being escorted to the jail.
7. A player escorting a captured player may not carry any of the enemies’ point objects at the same time, except for CD’s being carried by the captured player.

Jailbreaks: If a free player is able to enter the enemy jail without having his flag pulled, everyone in the jail is free. Players are not allowed to take their badges or point objects with them when they break out of jail. Once a badge or point object is captured, it is permanently captured.

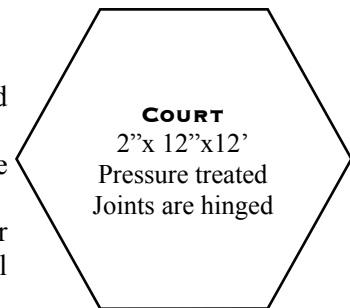
PYGMY PIT FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE GAU GAU PIT

Court Dimensions: Build a hexagon of hinged wood boards. The 2” x 12” boards should be hinged on the inside angle so that your pit will be 12” high all the way around. Your hinges can be staggered to include permanent hinges and door hinges where the pin can be pulled. Staggering your hinges so that every other hinge is a sturdy, permanent hinge will allow two boards that are folded together to be transported together for easier travel. If all the hinges have pins that can be pulled, each board can be transported on its own. Be sure to identify which ends of the board butt together for the next time you set up your pit. Use heavy-duty hinges that can hold large hex bolts. Pre-drill and countersink the planks to prevent the wood from splitting and the bolts from sticking out.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	Up to 30
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Dodge Ball
Time	20 min. to 1 1/2 hours
Referee	0

Rules

- Put as many people in the hexagon court as will fit; use one 5" playground ball.
- Anyone in the hexagon may hit the ball (open hands only). Ball may not be grasped, caught, or carried.
- Player cannot hit the ball more than once UNLESS the ball hits another player(s) or the wall of the court first. Player can bounce ball off the wall all day as long as the ball hits the wall before he/she touches it again.
- THE BALL IS NEVER DEAD INSIDE THE COURT. If there is ANY contact with the ball from the knees and below (whether from another player or from self), the player must leave the court until the next game. Player who gets hit ABOVE the knees is still in the game. Player is out if he/she accidentally kicks or steps on the ball.



- Player is OUT if he/she accidentally or otherwise steps out of the court for ANY reason. Also, if player touches the outside of the court with his/her hands, he/she is OUT of the game.
- Player is out if he/she hits the ball and the ball lands outside the court without first hitting another player, the wall, or ground within the court. This is called a “homerun.”
- When the game gets down to only 3 people left in the court, everyone who has been eliminated can play from outside the boundaries. Each person has the same rules for hitting the ball. If he hits one of the remaining players, he re-enters the game, trading places with the newly eliminated player. The eliminated player can join the other eliminated players outside the court.
- The last person left inside the circle is the winner.

VARIATION

Game can be played as a team game between cabins or pickup teams; the winner is the team who first eliminates all the members of the opposing team.

ACTIVITIES FOR A SMALL GROUP

MAFIA

This game is easy to setup and tear down and is never the same twice. Have everyone sit in a large circle. One person, usually the youth leader, is the narrator. The objective is to kill off the mafia. There are two members of the mafia, one super cop, and the rest of the players are the townspeople. At the beginning of the game, the narrator has everyone bow his head. The narrator taps on the heads of two people in the circle twice. These two constitute the mafia. The narrator taps on the head of one person once. This person is now the super cop. While all heads are bowed, have the super cop look up to the narrator. The narrator will then point out the two mafia members. The super cop will then bow his head again. While everyone still has his eyes closed, have the two mafia members look up. They will be able to see each other and then will quietly choose their first victim. After they have pointed their victim out to the narrator, they close their eyes. At this point, allow everyone to look up. Tell a story about how the mafia has come to our little town. Make up all kinds of stuff about the car that the victim was driving and how it "looked" like an accident, but upon further inspection, there seems to be foul play. At some point, let everyone know that the first victim of the mafia is Herbert (one of the townspeople). Herbert must now push his chair back and watch quietly. At this point, the townspeople must try to figure out who the mafia members are and vote to eliminate them. The townspeople can talk, joke, surmise, and basically do whatever they want to do until the narrator calls for the vote. The narrator will choose two of the people whom everyone seems to suspect and the townspeople vote as to which should be eliminated. After the townspeople have eliminated someone, everyone bows his head and closes his eyes as once again the mafia chooses their next victim. When everybody opens his eyes again, the narrator continues the story of the mafia in our little town. Again the objective is to kill off both mafia members, but the narrator never says when the first mafia member is dead or whether or not the super cop is dead. The super cop cannot just blurt out that he knows who the mafia is. He must try to influence the conversation so that the mafia members are suspects. Remember the mafia will kill off the super cop if they suspect who it may be. Once both mafia members are dead or the only ones left, the game is over.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Cheating in this game makes it no fun. Encourage your young people to play by the rules and not to cheat, even though it may be easy to do so.
2. The better the narrator does at telling the "story," the more fun the game is.
3. The narrator can even throw off the townspeople by suspecting motive (i.e., "Notice how the last two kills have been girls . . . hmmm . . . I suspect that the dreaded He-man Woman Hater Mafia has moved into town.")
4. After your group has played a couple of times, the strategy will really develop.
5. The super cop can be optional if you are playing with a small group or a younger group.

ELECTRICITY

The objective of this game is to stay out of the center. Have everyone sit in a circle and hold hands. One person stands in the center. One of the people on the circle says, "I'm sending a message to Johnny." That person must then send the message by squeezing a hand to his left or to his right. Once your hand is squeezed you continue the message until Johnny yells, "Got it!" Johnny then sends a message to somebody else in the circle. The person in the center is trying to observe the message being sent. If he sees it, he will yell out. The person caught sending it or continuing it will now be in the center.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Keep the message going quickly.
2. If the person in the center has missed the passing message several times in a row, allow him to pick someone else for the center.

3. If the same person is caught several times, then you choose somebody else for the center.
4. Have everyone line up according to birthdays to mix up who is holding hands with whom.

UP AND DOWN THE RIVER

Up to six players can play, but three to four is best. Use ROOK cards. The object is to decide before your turn how many hands (tricks) you will win. Players get 10 points for guessing the right number of their winning hands (tricks) and one point for winning a hand. One player records the “guess” of each player. You can get ten points for guessing zero and getting zero hands. The winner is not necessarily the one who wins the most hands, but the one who guesses right.

Players are dealt one card the first round (two the second round, three the third round, etc.). Someone records each player’s guess—one or zero. Play the cards starting with the person to the left of the dealer. Record points for the players who won or were right in their guess. The color which the first player played must be followed by the other players. If a player does not have that color, he may play any color. One color will be trump (the one turned over on the deck after the cards are dealt), and the lowest trump can beat the highest of any other color. The highest card wins, except when trump card is against a normal card. The highest trump will be the winner.

The person with the most points after the game is over wins. A normal game begins with one card in round one to ten cards in round ten and then back to one. For a shorter game, you can play from one to ten, or one to five and then back down.

SPOONS

For this game you need ROOK, Phase 10, or Skip Bo cards. You also need one spoon less than the number of players. The game works best with four to six people. The object is to collect four cards of a kind and grab a spoon.

Deal out four cards to each person. The dealer takes the deck of cards and looks at them one by one. He can either use the card and discard one from his hand or pass on the original card. This continues from person to person, each one looking at the card and then passing it face down, using or discarding it, until someone has four of the same number. When the person has four of one kind, he grabs a spoon signaling to the others to grab one also. The one without a spoon gets a point. The winner is the one without any points. There will always be one spoon less than there are players. Play five or six hands to find a winner. If playing with a larger group, the game can be played with the person left without a spoon being eliminated. Each round will have one less player and one less spoon, culminating with a face off between the two remaining players.

KILLER UNO

Play regular UNO with the following additions to the rules. If playing with all these rules is confusing, choose a couple of them to spice up your game.

1. If someone plays a card that is identical to one that any player has in his hand, he can immediately play his card (out of turn) if he beats the person whose turn it would be normally. Play then continues from the person that played the card.
2. All cards can be played out of turn as above, including the Skip and Reverse. Reverses can get to be confusing, but fun, if many are played in rapid succession. Sometimes a time-out needs to be called just to figure out whose turn it is and which way the play is going, clockwise or counter clockwise.
3. If someone plays a ZERO, each player must surrender his cards to the person on his left. This can be bad when someone was down to one card and then suddenly finds himself with a whole fistful!
4. All of the special cards can be “collective.” (For example, if the player before you plays a Draw

Two, you can also play a Draw Two. The person after you must draw four cards or play a Draw Two of his own.)

5. If someone plays a SEVEN, he can choose to trade cards with any other player.

UNIQUE PROPS

POTATO CANON

What you need:

- Bag of Potatoes
- Aerosol Hairspray (Aquanet works great)
- One foot of 4 inch ABS pipe (the black pipe)
- Four feet of 2 inch ABS pipe
- One 2-4 inch reducer
- One 4 inch male threaded adapter
- One 4 inch threaded cap
- One can of ABS glue
- One spin-flint sparker (This is usually found in the camping section at Wal-Mart. It may be called a lantern starter.)
- One broom handle
- One mature individual to make sure the gun is not used the wrong way

Tools you may need:

- Drill and drill bits
- Grinder

Assembling the gun:

Follow the diagram to put the pieces together. The only tricky part is putting the sparker in. You may have to grind a flat spot in order to insure that the sparker seats correctly.

Shooting the gun:

This gun is not a toy and should not be treated like one. Start by putting a potato in the barrel and stuffing it down to within 6 inches of the firing chamber. Spray approximately three seconds of hairspray in the firing chamber. Secure the cap to the back of the firing chamber. Point the gun in a safe direction. Spin the sparker. The potato will go several hundred yards.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Put the sparker in the middle of the 4-inch explosion chamber.
2. Do not drench the sparker with hairspray.
3. Wait 24 hours to let the glue set before taking your first shot.
4. Grind the end of the barrel so that when you put a potato in the barrel the end of the barrel is sharp enough to cut off the excess potato.
5. Make sure your potatoes are big enough to provide an airtight seal.
6. Never point your potato canon at people or structures.
7. Make sure the area behind the canon is clear.
8. Using a wad of moist newspaper helps give you an airtight seal. The newspaper does make a mess.

WATER BALLOON LAUNCHER

What you need:

- 12 feet of surgical tubing
- 1 half gallon plastic funnel
- Drill with a 3/8 drill bit

What to Do:

Cut the surgical tubing in half so that you end up with two six-foot pieces. Drill four holes in the plastic funnel. The holes should be two to three inches apart. Feed the surgical tubing through the holes from the inside of the funnel. This will enable your knots to be on the outside of the funnel. Next, tie off both lengths of surgical tubing.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Use water balloons the size of an apple.
2. Keep your launcher in a dark place when you are not using it. The sunlight is its worst enemy.
3. Get your surgical tubing from either a medical supply store or a feed store that stocks veterinarian supplies.
4. Water balloon launchers can launch other things as well. Think of the possibilities . . . beanie babies, teddy bears, tennis balls, golf balls, Twinkies, eggs, the list goes on and on.

CHEMICAL BOMB

We used this in an activity called Sandbear Exterminators. The objective was to knock a bunch of stuffed teddy bears off their little perches. Each contestant was able to place the "bomb" strategically so that they would knock as many bears over as possible.

What you need:

Two-liter plastic bottles
Muriatic acid (found in the pool section of your local hardware store)
Tinfoil

What to do:

Place approximately half a cup of muriatic acid in the two-liter plastic bottle. Tear off a 12 inch piece of tinfoil and crumple it up so that it will fit in the bottle. Place the tinfoil in the bottle, screw the lid on tight, place the bottle on the ground, and get out of the way. Stand back 20 yards or so and watch the chemical reaction. The bottle will grow until suddenly . . . WABOOOM!

Tips and Tricks:

1. Do not breathe the fumes right after the explosion.
2. Seven-Up or Sprite bottles grow bigger than all others.
3. Do not tell your youth what the muriatic acid really is.
4. Prepare all your bottles ahead of time so that all you need to do is drop in the tinfoil.
5. Using smaller plastic bottles decreases the amount of time you have to get out of the way.
6. Be careful.

MAMMOTH SPARKLERS

I first saw this done on a lake with several sparklers going at once. We were singing and sharing testimonies as the sparklers would whirl (kind of our version of a campfire). Now we do it as our miniature 4th of July celebration.

What you need:

Metal clamp (like a giant clothespin)
Four to five feet of copper wire
Lighter
Two packs of FINE steel wool

What to do:

Take the copper wire and connect it to the metal clamp. Take a piece of the steel wool and put it in the metal clamp. Light a corner of the steel wool. Spin it around above your head creating a swirling arc of sparks over 50 feet wide.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Trust me . . . steel wool does burn.
2. Use this on a lake and not near the shore.
3. As you twirl the clamp, change the pattern of spinning (i.e. spinning about your head, spinning in front of you, spinning fast, spinning slow).
4. Wear a hat.
5. Be careful . . . it is fire!

KITTY LITTER CAKE

Here is a fun recipe! It sounds gross, but kids love it.

Ingredients:

- 1 spice or German Chocolate cake mix
- 1 white cake mix
- 1 package white sandwich cookies
- 1 large package vanilla instant pudding mix
- green food coloring
- 12 small Tootsie Rolls
- 1 new kitty litter box
- 1 new kitty litter box plastic liner
- 1 new pooper scooper

Directions:

1. Prepare cake mixes and bake according to directions (any size pans).
2. Prepare pudding mix and chill until ready to assemble.
3. Crumble white sandwich cookies in small batches in blender. (Because they tend to stick, scrape often.)
4. Set aside all but about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup.
5. To the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cookie crumbs, add a few drops of green food coloring.
6. Mix using a fork or shake in a jar.
7. When cakes are cooled to room temperature, crumble into a large bowl.
8. Toss with half the remaining white cookie crumbs and the chilled pudding. You probably will not need all of the pudding; mix it with the cake and feel it. You do not want it soggy, just moist; gently combine.
9. Line new, clean kitty litter box.
10. Put mixture into litter box.
11. Put three unwrapped Tootsie rolls in a microwave-safe dish and heat until soft and pliable.
12. Shape ends so they are no longer blunt, curving slightly.
13. Repeat with three more Tootsie rolls and bury in mixture.
14. Sprinkle the other half of cookie crumbs over the top.
15. Scatter the green cookie crumbs lightly over the top. This is supposed to look like the chlorophyll in kitty litter.
16. Heat the remaining Tootsie Rolls, three at a time in the microwave until almost melted. Scrape them on top of the cake; sprinkle with cookie crumbs.
17. This is my addition only: spread five of the remaining Tootsie Rolls over the top; take one and heat until pliable and then hang it over the side of the kitty litter box, sprinkling it lightly with cookie crumbs.
18. Place the box on a newspaper and sprinkle a few of the cookie crumbs around.
19. Serve with a new pooper scooper.
20. Have fun!

ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Let's say a guy named Roger is attracted to a woman named Elaine. He asks her out on a date; she accepts; they have a pretty good time. A few nights later he asks her out to dinner, and again they enjoy themselves. They continue to see each other regularly, and after a while neither one of them is seeing anybody else.

And then, one evening when they are driving home, a thought occurs to Elaine, and, without really thinking, she says it aloud: "Do you realize that, as of tonight, we've been seeing each other for exactly six months?"

And then there is silence in the car. To Elaine, it seems like a very loud silence. She thinks to herself: I wonder if it bothers him that I said that. Maybe he's been feeling confined by our relationship; maybe he thinks I'm trying to push him into some kind of obligation that he doesn't want, or isn't sure of.

And Roger is thinking: Wow. Six months.

And Elaine is thinking: But, hey, I'm not so sure I want this kind of relationship, either. Sometimes I wish I had a little more space, so I'd have time to think about whether I really want us to keep going the way we are, moving steadily toward... I mean, where are we going? Are we just going to keep seeing each other at this level of intimacy? Are we heading toward marriage? Toward children? Toward a lifetime together? Am I ready for that level of commitment? Do I really even know this person?

And Roger is thinking: ... so that means it was ... let's see ... February when we started going out, which was right after I had the car at the dealer's, which means ... lemme check the odometer ... Whoa! I am way overdue for an oil change here.

And Elaine is thinking: He's upset. I can see it on his face. Maybe I'm reading this completely wrong. Maybe he wants more from our relationship, more intimacy, more commitment; maybe he has sensed—even before I sensed it—that I was feeling some reservations. Yes, I bet that's it. That's why he's so reluctant to say anything about his own feelings. He's afraid of being rejected.

And Roger is thinking: And I'm gonna have them look at the transmission again. I don't care what those morons say, it's still not shifting right. And they better not try to blame it on the cold weather this time. What cold weather? It's 87 degrees out, and this thing is shifting like a stupid garbage truck, and I paid those incompetent thieves \$600!

And Elaine is thinking: He's angry. And I don't blame him. I'd be angry, too. I feel so guilty, putting him through this, but I can't help the way I feel. I'm just not sure.

And Roger is thinking: They'll probably say it's only a 90-day warranty. That's exactly what they're gonna say, the idiots.

And Elaine is thinking: Maybe I'm just too idealistic, waiting for a knight to come riding up on his white horse, when I'm sitting right next to a perfectly good person, a person I enjoy being with, a person I truly do care about, a person who seems to truly care about me. A person who is in pain because of my self-centered, schoolgirl romantic fantasy.

And Roger is thinking: Warranty? They want a warranty? I'll give them a warranty. I'll take their warranty and ...

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN, *CONTINUED*

“Roger,” Elaine says aloud.

“What?” says Roger, startled.

“Please don’t torture yourself like this,” she says, her eyes beginning to brim with tears. “Maybe I should never have. . . . Oh my, I feel so . . .” (She breaks down, sobbing.)

“What?” says Roger.

“I’m such a fool,” Elaine sobs. “I mean, I know there’s no knight. I really know that. It’s silly. There’s no knight, and there’s no horse.”

“There’s no horse?” says Roger.

“You think I’m a fool, don’t you?” Elaine says.

“No!” says Roger, glad to finally know the correct answer.

“It’s just that . . . It’s that I . . . I need some time,” Elaine says.

(There is a 15-second pause while Roger, thinking as fast as he can, tries to come up with a safe response. Finally he comes up with one that he thinks might work.)

“Yes,” he says.

(Elaine, deeply moved, touches his hand.)

“Oh, Roger, do you really feel that way?” she says.

“What way?” says Roger.

“That way about time,” says Elaine.

“Oh,” says Roger. “Yes.”

(Elaine turns to face him and gazes deeply into his eyes, causing him to become very nervous about what she might say next, especially if it involves a horse. At last she speaks.)

“Thank you, Roger,” she says.

“Thank you,” says Roger.

Then he takes her home, and she lies on her bed, a conflicted, tortured soul, and weeps until dawn, whereas when Roger gets back to his place, he opens a bag of Doritos, turns on the TV, and immediately becomes deeply involved in a rerun of a tennis match between two Czechoslovakians he never heard of. A tiny voice in the far recesses of his mind tells him that something major was going on back there in the car, but he is pretty sure there is no way he would ever understand what, and so he figures it’s better if he doesn’t think about it. (This is also Roger’s policy regarding world hunger.)

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN, *CONTINUED*

The next day Elaine will call her closest friend, or perhaps two of them, and they will talk about this situation for six straight hours. In painstaking detail, they will analyze everything she said and everything he said, going over it time and time again, exploring every word, expression, and gesture for nuances of meaning, considering every possible ramification. They will continue to discuss this subject, off and on, for weeks, maybe months, never reaching any definite conclusions, but never getting bored with it, either.

Meanwhile, Roger, while playing racquetball one day with a mutual friend of his and Elaine's, will pause just before serving, frown, and say:

“Norm, did Elaine ever own a horse?”

PHONETIC PUNCTUATION FOR TWO

Good evening. My name is Professor Fillmore Fuddyduddy, and this is my most capable assistant, Bartholomew.

Nope my name's Bart, just call me Bart, everyone calls me Bart, plain ol' Bart.

This evening's lecture will be on the comprehensibility of augmented verbal language as it coincides with the manual written version developed in five microprocesses of the western hemisphere and so forth In the due course of recent history, English grammarians have come to the morphological cognizance as to the articulated expression of language being more readily apprehended than the written version.

Let me put you at ease, I'm here to translate. What Doc is trying to say is that when we communicate it's easier to understand when we write stuff down.

The presence of tiny lexicographical notations commonly referred to as punctuation marks, afford the reader the advantage of augmented comprehensibility.

Look at them. They didn't understand a word you said. They be looking like deer in headlights. What he's saying is, when we read it's easy, 'cause we got them there punctimication marks.

On the other hand, the absence of these tiny lexicographical notations causes the reader to flounder about in the exacerbating flow of ignorance and miscommunication.

Doc, c'mon! What he means is, if we didn't have them there punctimication marks, we'd be all discombobulated.

I, being the fine grammarian and humanitarian that I am, have devised this system by which we can eliminate this utter confusion.

Doc's gotta plan.

It is called phonetic punctuation.

It is called phonetic punctimicat... oh, go ahead.

PHONETIC PUNCTUATION FOR TWO, CONTINUED

This system comprises audible utterances which coincide with the proper placement of marks of punctuation in the English language.

Weez got a sound for everything.

My assistant will now demonstrate the proper punctuation marks. The comma (**woop**), the period (**puitt**), the semicolon (**woop, puitt**), the colon (**puitt, puitt**) the exclamation point (**puitt, pssh**), the question mark (**nneeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee, puitt**), the quotation marks (**tlick, tlock**), and finally the dash (**Waaaaah!**).

Now I will narrate a simple love story while my assistant inserts the proper phonetic punctuation marks.

Weez gonna have some fun!

Through the open window there suddenly came light. (**period**) Beautiful Eleanor sat dreaming of one thing. (**period**) Ah! (**exclamation point**) It was love! (**exclamation point**) It had been 3 years since she and Sir Henry had met. (**Period**) He had held her in his arms, (**comma**) stroked her beautiful hair, (**comma**) held her hand, (**comma**) and kissed her. (**period**)

Eleanor exclaimed, “(**comma, quotation mark**) Henry! (**exclamation point**) Is this the first time you’ve ever been in love? (**question mark, quotation mark**)”

Henry replied, “(**comma, quotation mark**) Yes! (**Exclamation point**) But it won’t be the last time - (**dash**)”

Suddenly, (**comma**) there was the sound of approaching footsteps as Eleanor’s father entered the room. (**period**) He grabbed Henry by the back of the neck, (**comma**) dragged him across the floor, (**comma**) showed him the door, (**comma**) opened the door, (**comma**) and threw him out. (**period**) Henry sailed through the air, (**comma**) and landed. (**period**) The last sound they heard was the sound of Henry’s departing horse.... (**period, period, period, period**)

The end. (**period**)

Thank you. (**period**)

That’s all. (**period**)

Stop it! (**exclamation point**)

Why are you doing this? (**question mark**)

CRIME IN PROGRESS

Participants:	Piano player	Equipment:	Piano
	Narrator		Trench coat and hat
	Characters (2)		Pantyhose
	Robber		Oversized Wallet
	Victim		

Notes: Having a piano player really makes this skit. Use music to emphasize every spoken word, when characters move in reverse, when they go into Asian pose, etc. Dragnet-type music helps the beginning.

- Narrator: An ordinary day . . . a typical scene in a dining room, or wherever you are . . . What you are about to see is true. Names have been changed to protect the ignorant.
- Characters: (Make a normal speed pass bumping shoulders as you go.) Say, “excuse me” and, “that’s alright.”
- Narrator: Stop. (Characters Freeze) What you have just witnessed is a crime in progress. What appears to be a mere passing by is actually much more. Now, thanks to the technology of our 318-894-9154-SCC, we can back this scene up and see what really happened in slow motion.
- Characters: (Back up in reverse motion to original spots. Proceed in slow motion with slow music in background. This time, as you bump in slow motion, robber obviously takes wallet from victim’s downstage hip pocket.) Robber says in slow motion, “Excuse me.” Victim responds in slow speech, “That’s alright.”
- Narrator: Stop. (Characters freeze in the funniest pose possible.) What has shown itself to be a petty theft is actually much, much more. Now, thanks to the advanced technology of our 318-894-9154-9154-SCC, we can back this scene up and see what really happened in super-slow motion.
- Characters: (Back up in reverse to original spots. Proceed in slow motion. Before you bump into each other, robber should hit victim with a slow, wide punch. Slow knee to the stomach should be followed by reaching for the wallet.) Robber says, “Excuse me.” Still holding his gut, the victim responds in his slow motion voice, “That’s alright.”
- Narrator: Stop. (Characters freeze in the funniest pose possible.) What has proven to be a violent crime actually conceals much more. Now, thanks to the technology of the 318-894-9154-SCC, we can back this scene up once again to see what really happened in super-duper-mega-robo-slow motion.
- Characters: (Back up in reverse to original spots. Proceed in slow motion, robber puts the panty hose over his face and challenges the victim to a fight by posing like a karate guy and giving a karate slow-motion yell. The two circle each other, pose, and threaten with gestures. Victim blocks a few punches and the two slip naturally into patty-cake as the music changes. Motions pick up speed to normal until robber realizes what is going on. While victim is still playing patty cake with the air and smiling out to the audience, robber picks his pocket and gives a shove suddenly back into slow motion.) Robber states slowly as they go, “Excuse me,” and victim says, “That’s alright.”

CRIME IN PROGRESS, CONTINUE

Narrator: Stop. (Freeze as funny as you can, with pantyhose still on the robber's face) What you have seen is true, happening everyday in dining rooms (or wherever you are) just like this one around the world. But, thanks to our technology—and with your help—we can take a bite out of crime.

WINTER WONDERLAND ARIZONA STYLE

Palm trees wave, are you listenin'?
In the pool, water's glistenin',
A beautiful sight, we're happy tonight
Livin' in a Phoenix wonderland.

Gone away is the blizzard,
Here to stay is the lizard,
A warm sunny day, we like it that way,
Livin' in a Phoenix wonderland.

In the desert we will have a picnic,
Cactus, sand, and rattlesnakes and sun.
Christmas dinner is an old tradition,
It's pinto beans and tacos by the ton.

Later on we'll perspire,
Temperatures rise even higher,
A warm sunny day, we like it that way,
Livin' in a Phoenix wonderland.

MY CAREER

Hi! My first job was working in an orange juice factory, but I got canned...couldn't concentrate.
Then I worked in the woods as a lumberjack, but I just couldn't hack it, so they gave me the ax.
After that I tried to be a tailor, but I just wasn't suited for it—mainly because it was a sew-sew job.
Next I tried working in a muffler factory, but that was too exhausting.
Then I tried to be a chef. I figured it would add a little spice to my life but I just didn't have the thyme.
I attempted to be a deli worker, but any way I sliced it, I couldn't cut the mustard.
My best job was being a musician, but eventually I found I wasn't noteworthy enough.
I studied a long time to become a doctor, but I didn't have any patience.
Next was a job in a shoe factory. I tried, but I just didn't fit in.
I became a professional fisherman, but discovered that I couldn't live on my net income.
I managed to get a good job working for a pool maintenance company, but the work was just too draining.
So then I got a job in a workout center, but they said I wasn't fit for the job.
I finally got a job as a historian—until I realized there was no future in it.
My last job was working at Starbucks, but I had to quit because it was always the same old grind.
SO I RETIRED... AND FOUND I AM PERFECT FOR THE JOB!

I HATE LIVER

Friends, now you know that we're not hateful men and hatred for inanimate objects is to be distinguished from hatred for people. And hatred for inanimate objects is what we're discussing here tonight. More specifically we're talking about food. Now friends, I myself have come to terms with cottage cheese. Spinach and I signed a truce some years back, but there is still one food that I cannot abide. It is disruptive to the physical system, and it is detrimental to the human psyche. In French its "schwa," in German its "Laver," but that can't change the fact that it is still called liver and friends,

I hate liver; liver makes me quiver.
 Liver makes me curl right up and die, makes me cry.
 Give you hives, gives you scurvy,
 Turns your stomach topsy-turvey.
 Liver just simply is not my bag, makes me gag.

There's more. Now friends, if we could take a look at the word for just one more second. Do you realize that the word *liver* has 5 letters? That's right. That's the same number of letters as in the word *Death*, *Drugs*, *Hippy*, *Lybia*, and if you add just one more letter, the word *Russia*! Think about it.

Is it any wonder that the word is used as a degrading appellation denoting that the individual thusly described has attributes that are degrading, dehumanizing, and all together regurgitating. That's right. I'm talkig about "lily liver," "liver lips," "yellow liver," "liver lover." Well, how would you like to be called a "lily-liver, liver-lips, yellow-liver, liver-lover"?

I hate liver; liver makes me quiver.
 Liver makes me curl right up and die, makes me cry.
 Give you hives, gives you scurvy,
 Turns your stomach topsy-turvey.
 Liver just simply is not my bag, makes me gag.

Liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liver.

Liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liv
 Liv, liv, liv, liver.

STUNTS

BABY BOTTLE COKE DRINKING CONTEST

Call for four people to participate in a coke drinking contest. When you get the four up front, tell them that this is not a regular coke drinking contest; for this one, they will need someone to feed the coke to them. (If you have adult sponsors, have them feed it to the young person) When they come on stage tell them the coke is in a bottle, then pull out the baby bottles and show them to the crowd. You can have the adult sit on a chair and have the young person sit in his lap and feed it to them like you would a baby. (Also, you can have the person drinking the coke sit on the chair and the one feeding it behind the person in the chair.) They cannot squeeze the bottle; only suck on it. First one done is the winner. You might want to prepare the bottle by enlarging the hole in the nipple.

CANDLE SHOOT OUT

You will need four volunteers. Two of them sit on chairs that are back to back (so that the audience will be able to see everything). The ones sitting down are handed a paper plate that they need to hold on their head. On top of the plate, you put a small candle. You then hand the other two a squirt gun and have them stand in front of their partner about 6-10 feet away. You tell them that when you say go, they are to squirt out the lighted candle. You then light the candles and step back.

THERE'S A B'AR

Get about three or four people to line up in front of the group shoulder to shoulder with the leader at the beginning of the line. The leader says, "There's a b'ar!" and the kid next to him would say, "Whar?" and the leader would say, "Over thar" and point to a spot off to his left with his right hand (so that he crosses his body with his arm). The kid is to do the same thing and hold that position. He then passes it down to the next person in line until everyone is in that position. The leader then starts again and points to his right with his left arm. Then the leader squats and points with his foot across his body. By this time, all the participants should be a bit off balance. The final time, the leader, in response to the question "Whar," points with his shoulder so that while doing this he pushes the guy next to him into the rest so that the domino effect puts everyone on the floor.

COWBOY, LASSO, STEER

This is a take off of the old paper, rock, scissors game. You replace the objects with things that fit your theme. You need to do these standing up. For cowboy, make the motion of drawing two guns from your hip. The lasso is left hand on your hip and right hand up in the air like you are throwing a rope. Steer is holding your hands on your head like you have horns. Have the entire group stand up, back to back, and pick a partner. When you count to three, they should all jump up in the air and turn around while doing one of the three motions. Cowboy beats lasso, lasso beats steer, and steer beats cowboy. You may want them to repeat that with you a couple of times before you begin so that they all know. With a bigger group, you may want to tell them that if they lost or tied, they need to sit down. Then have another round. Once your group gets small enough, have everyone come up on stage. You then can redo any ties until you have just two people left. It is always fun if there is one girl and one boy left. On the last two people, do it so they have to win two out of three.

Theme Idea: Mountain Man

Mountain Man—stand with both hands holding a rifle

Trap—hold a foot as if it got caught in a trap

Bear—both hands over the head growling

FROZEN T-SHIRT CONTEST

Before your contest begins, thoroughly wet several large t-shirts and then fold them identically. Leave the neckline towards the front and fold the arms to the back. Then fold the bottom of the shirt under into thirds leaving the arms inside the folds. Wring out most of the water by taking the folded wet shirt and giving it a firm twist. (We found the most common mistake is to leave the shirts too wet, making the stunt take too long and thus lose its impact.) Then place them onto cookie sheets and into the freezer. You can stack the shirts if you place something between them that will not absorb water. Remove the shirts just before you are ready to do the stunt. (If you must leave the shirts outside the freezer for a time before the stunt, you may want to experiment with various amounts of water in the shirts.)

Choose as many contestants/volunteers as you have prepared frozen t-shirts. Do not reveal the shirts until you have your volunteers! Hand them the frozen squares and tell them to wait until you give the signal. At the signal, they will race to put on the t-shirts. The first person with the shirt all the way on is the winner! Let the crowd enjoy the moment when they discover the nature of the stunt, and encourage the crowd to cheer for the contestants by choosing volunteers that represent them. (We like between two and four contestants). Warning: when choosing volunteers, choose a girl with a cropped, tight, or white shirt on! If you choose girls, you may want to be ready with a lady who will help them get the frozen/wet shirts off modestly.

An idea for the winner's prize is a t-shirt, especially if you have prepared a special one for your group or event. You should experiment with this one before you use it to make sure you have the shirts frozen to perfection!

STOP THE WATCH!

A book by this title is available from Klutz publishers and is filled with fun ideas. In addition to there being a section for solo events and one for partner events, there is also a list of record times to try to beat. And each book comes with a free stopwatch! Some of the stunts that we enjoy are explained below.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY... Choose several pairs of volunteers. Send all but one pair out of the room into a "sound proof" area. Explain to the remaining pair that their assignment is to sing the song "Happy Birthday" alternating words. The partners who can sing the song the fastest will be the winners. For example, partner 1 sings "Happy," partner 2 sings "birthday," partner 1 follows with "to," and partner 2 sings "you." This routine continues as they race to finish the song. After they complete the song and you call out their time, bring in the next pair and repeat the procedure. The compound words add a fun complication to the race.

13TH WORD... Choose several volunteers and send all but one out of the room into a "sound proof" area. Explain to the remaining volunteer that their assignment is to tell you the 13th word of John 3:16. When they come up with the correct word, stop the watch and call out their time. Repeat the procedure with the remaining volunteers one by one. You can pick any verse, mission statement, song, etc., and choose any word from it. It is more fun if you choose a word that follows a couple of two-syllable or compound words, as this adds to the confusion in the hurry to reach the 13th word.

STOP IT YOURSELF... Choose several pairs of volunteers. Send all but one pair out of the room into the "sound proof" area. Explain to the remaining pair that their task is for partner 1 to start the watch and pass it to partner 2 who then stops the watch. Call out the time and then call for the next pair. Repeat the procedure for each pair. The fastest time wins. You could add a twist to this simple task. For instance, partner 1 starts the watch and then must pass it behind his/her back,

and partner 2 must receive it from behind his/her back and then stop the watch.

SPEED SPELLING... Choose several pairs of volunteers. Send all but one of the pairs out to the “sound proof” area. Explain the task. Spell a five-letter word, alternating letters. No communication! Ready? Go! Start the watch and partner 1 says “C”, partner 2 says “O”, partner 1 says “U”, partner 2 says “N”, partner 1 says “T”. Stop the watch! Bring in the next pair. Repeat the process. This is a very difficult task! You may want to shorten or lengthen the letter count, or you may want to just say any word longer than four letters.

CHILD’S PLAY

Find two preschool puzzle cubes. You may need to buy them if you want two identical puzzles; otherwise you may borrow one from a friend and time the event so that you can compare the contestants accurately. The competition of two people going simultaneously is more fun for the audience. Choose two volunteers without showing them the puzzles. Or you may ask for the most intelligent guy and the most intelligent girl and let the audience nominate their champion. Bring them up front and then reveal the puzzles. Spread the pieces out on the table; and at the signal, have them begin putting the pieces into the proper holes of the cube. This is tougher than you might think so be prepared to stop them at 45 seconds (or whatever time you choose) and then count the pieces that have been successfully inserted into the cubes to determine the winner. Have the volunteers work at a table or on a surface so that the audience can see their faces. It is not necessary for the audience to be able to identify the pieces, as long as they can see the frantic movements of the volunteers.

UP, UP, AND AWAY!

This is most fun outside or in a room with a very high ceiling. Obtain a couple of aerosol cans of whipped cream and a few towels and damp washcloths. Maybe a couple of plastic gloves would be nice too. Next, find some enthusiastic volunteers. Do not tell them the stunt, but you can hint towards it: “I need a couple of volunteers who have the biggest mouths!” Let the audience help nominate some volunteers. Get them up front with you and then explain the stunt. Spray a small ball of whipped cream onto your fingertips, somewhere between ping-pong ball size and racquetball size, depending on how messy you want to get. Wear gloves for the sake of sanitation. Next, give the “ball” a toss into the air and have the first volunteer try to catch it in his mouth. You should put a towel across his chest to catch some of the missed cream. Give each of the volunteers the same size ball and the same height of toss. Your winner can be chosen in several ways. If you cannot decide which person caught the most in their mouths, you could choose (or allow the audience to choose) the person with the most cream on his face!

TIED UP IN SPOONS

Obtain 2 long pieces of strong string and a couple of spoons. Next, tie and tape each spoon to the end of a piece of string. Choose two teams of volunteers. We always choose boys—about 7-10 on a team. The objective is to pass the spoon up the sleeve of the first one in line, then down his other sleeve. Then pass the spoon to the next person who does the same, and on down the line. The first team to have the string running through the sleeves of everyone on that team is the winner. The first person in line must not lose the end of the string! Try to keep things interesting by keeping the teams even. (Do not allow tank tops; if there is a person with long sleeves on one team, put one on other team too.) You will need the string to be long enough to reach from one end of the line to the other with some left over.

LIFESAVER STICKERS

You will need a roll of lifesavers for each pair of volunteers. For cleanup afterwards, have a damp washcloth and a towel on hand for each pair. After you obtain your volunteers—we like having 4 pairs—have one partner sit in a chair facing the audience and the other partner stand beside him. The goal is to lick and stick as many lifesavers as you can to your partner’s face in the time allowed. At the signal, the partner

standing can open his roll. The partner sitting cannot assist with hands in any way. You will want the people with the lifesavers stuck to their faces to have to look at the audience for the final judgment as to how many really stuck. (They might figure out that if they look at the ceiling the lifesavers can just lay on their faces without really sticking there.) Allow a sufficient amount of time to get them really sticky. About 45 seconds is recommended.

A tamer variation of this stunt is to put Vaseline on the noses of the people sitting and then see how many cotton balls you can stick to their noses in the time allowed.

MINER, PICK AXE, MULE

Here is yet another version of the old rock, scissors, paper elimination game. Different themes yield different trios.

Theme Idea: Gold Rush

Miner—Stand as if both hands are holding a shovel.

Pick Axe—Stand with one arm extended and the other arm tucked underneath itself as if you were a giant pick axe.

Mule—Place hands to the top of your head like they are mule ears.

Theme Idea: Stagecoach

Driver—Hands up like reining a horse team

Stagecoach—Hands up in form of a wheel

Bandit—One hand pointing a gun, the other hand covering your face

SHERIFF (SIMON) SAYS

The old classic has made a huge comeback. This brief activity is a great stunt in which the entire audience is able to participate. With the right group leader clipping along at a good pace, we have seen a group of 200 filtered down to a handful in under 2 minutes. This activity is most effective with a leader who has practiced out loud and knows where he is headed. Do not get started without a few anchor points in your routine that are sure to knock out half your group at a time. Here are a few specifics to be sure to remember:

Establish control early by stating, “Sheriff says, ‘No talking.’” Then quickly make talkers sit down.

Do not be afraid to be bold in calling someone out, if you saw him get out; he knows it is true.

Encourage those that are out to become your judges. They typically assume that role anyway.

The following are effective ways to quickly get people out:

After quickly explaining rules, say, “You know how this event works. Don’t do anything unless the Sheriff says. Okay? Are you ready? Everybody stand to your feet and we will begin.”

This gets a healthy number out every time; if it gets too many out, do not be afraid to say that was practice and add everybody back in.

Say, “Sheriff says touch your elbows” while you reach to touch your shoulders. There is something confusing about hearing “elbow” and seeing “shoulders” that gets a lot of people.

Look directly at somebody, and in a non-threatening way say, “Tell me your name real quick.” Kind of mean, but it works often and is funny.

“Sheriff says, look up here.” This makes it harder on those who play by only listening instead of being fooled by what you do.

Say, “Simon says touch your head.” The beauty of the name change gets some every time. “Oh, I’m not Simon, and Sheriff didn’t say.”

Say, “It looks like there are enough of us left to begin round two. Everyone left standing come up on stage and we will see who wins.” Move yourself to stand out in the seated crowd and wait for people to situate themselves on stage. Some will hang back. Before everyone real-

izes what happened, call all those that moved from the crowd out and say, “Sheriff says everyone who is left, go up on stage.”

Say, “Could you center yourselves on stage please so we can all get a good look at you?”

Tell the seated audience, “You are my judges; any flinching you see will be called out.”

When there are two left, pump up the crowd; get them to cheer for one or the other. Say, “There are just two left challenging each other head to head. Let’s have you two turn face to face, and we will begin this final round.”

PAPER DESIGN

With two to six teams of five to ten participants each, supply each team with newspaper and a roll of masking tape. Explain that in seven minutes, you will all judge the best creative design of some type of character, historical figure, cartoon, etc.—i.e. the Statue of Liberty, the Easter bunny, Superman—using the supplies on hand. At the word *go* you will decide one person from your own team to be decorated and transformed into the character of your choice. When time is up, your character will give a brief introduction of himself and explain some of the detailed nuances of his outfit we might not recognize. The winner will be based upon audience applause or by your pre-chosen board of impartial judges.

PAPER TEAR STRENGTH CONTEST

This is a great stunt that teases the biggest, strongest guy in your group. Choose him and a lightweight girl from your group to come up on stage. Set the contest up as a test of strength and speed. Get the crowd cheering for their superior gender! Write *Guys* on a sheet of paper and hand it to the girl explaining that she will attempt to just tear the guys up in this race. Do the same with a piece of paper marked with *Girls* and hand it to your strong guy. Explain they will have five seconds to rip their papers as many times as they can in eight seconds. The one with the most pieces wins. Go! With the right set up, you will have the girl ripping away while the guy struggles to rip it even once. The following is an address of a company that manufactures pads of paper that you would use for this stunt:

The Dock Haley Wonder-Pad
 Dock Haley Gospel Magic Co.
www.gospelmagic.com

Every other piece of paper is actually a thin sheet of vinyl siding that cannot be ripped. Do not cut or bite the paper, and your strong boy will struggle the entire time. The real paper is almost imperceptibly marked so you can tell which piece to mark “Guys” and hand to your girl.

DIGIT DUEL

According to old west legend, before cowboys used firearms, they used digits for their old-fashioned, middle-of-the-street, gun duels. For this fun game, have two individuals face off with their digits behind their backs. At the command, “Go,” both should quickly bring their digits forward. With four hands, and a different number of fingers being held up on each hand, the first to announce the correct number of digits on all four hands is the winner. Try it with the winner being the best of three. Try it with three people throwing up digits all at the same time. Try it as a large group elimination tournament.

TEAM BUILDERS

Team builders, adventure games, initiatives—called by many names, these activities provide a wonderful environment for learning. Team building activities can be used in many ways. In this section, we will discuss the philosophy of team builders, give a few suggestions of how team builders could work for a youth leader, lay out a few pitfalls to avoid, and provide some challenges that one can use anywhere, with minimal props.

JED’S QUEST: A TEAM BUILDING CHALLENGE

The purpose of Ironwood’s Jed’s Quest is to build unity in the group and to establish a way of thinking that applies spiritual truth to everyday situations. In the process, groups also learn to work together and to communicate in order to complete a difficult task; personality traits are brought to light, leaders emerge, quiet individuals’ ideas are valued, and each member is included. Some groups learn foundational principles and others “fine tune” their relationships. All will realize anew the need for skills in communication, encouragement, planning, and cooperation. Individuals must think through problems and formulate suggestions to overcome an obstacle.

Where did the name “Jed’s Quest” come from? Jedediah Smith was one of the most important men in the exploration days of the Old West. He packed in more achievements between his twenty-third and his thirty-third birthdays than most men do in a lifetime. He was the first man to travel the length and width of the Great Basin, the first to reach California overland from the American frontier, the first to cross the Sierra Nevadas, and the first to reach Oregon by a journey up the California coast. He saw more of the West than any man of his time and was familiar with the territory from the Missouri River to the Pacific, from Mexico to Canada. He survived disasters and massacres. His courage, character, and passion make him an authentic American hero. But it goes deeper than that; he was known as a modest and unassuming man in an age of braggadocios men. His testimony stands through the grueling test of time. His Christianity is mentioned in secular history books. He had a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that pervaded every accomplishment. This balanced life is what we want to communicate through “Jed’s Quest.” A self-sacrificing endurance, courage under fire, character in an era of indulgence, and the intelligence and leadership qualities that inspire men to follow no matter what the cost—this is the spirit of Jed’s Quest.

Aside from the satisfying and well-sought-after feeling of meeting a challenge, at Jed’s Quest we take time after each challenge to discuss the process. Even more important than reviewing the process is the time for discussion of spiritual analogies: “What spiritual, or unseen, truths can we learn from this crazy little event?” As well as all the social, physical, and mental advantages being gained by the participants, using Jed’s Quest is important to the adult leaders. It reveals attitudes and qualities of those in their group. The single most significant factor of Jed’s Quest is that it provides a perfect setting for a multitude of spiritual, teachable moments for the participants.

THE NEED: WHY IS TEAM BUILDING IMPORTANT?

We are the body of Christ. A self-sacrificing love is the foundation of the health of our “body” (John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13). This is not a quality that comes without a daily “dying to self.” Romans 12:1-2 are familiar verses to us: “. . . present your bodies a living sacrifice.” Do not stop reading there! The rest of the chapter deals with the how to. Consider verse five: “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” Being a living sacrifice involves serving people—giving up my rights in order to promote the body we are members of. First Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 also deal with the importance of caring for and building up each member of the body. Our society, our schools, our churches, and our families will crumble if teamwork is not practiced. But our sinful nature cries out, “Me first!” Recent tragedies and violence involving young people give us an urgent reminder. Teamwork is a way of thinking that requires overcoming our sinful nature.

THE SETUP: HOW DO I BEGIN?

Preparation

1. The challenge, or simulation, should include a bit of a story-line. Some creativity in the explanation will add to the group's fun and level of participation. Most of the challenges involve a few props. Keep a box or duffle bag with a few supplies, such as blindfolds, lightweight ropes of various lengths, tennis balls, and hula hoops. You can keep adding to it as you try new events.
2. The facilitator should think through the challenge from beginning to end and make sure to allow enough time for both the success of the group and the wrap-up/application time. Trying the challenge out on a test group of friends may be helpful, but do not let anyone who will participate later be part of the test group. Spend a little time thinking of the needs of your group and some potential applications for the challenge. Pray for wisdom. Keep a note pad and pen handy as you supervise the challenge; jot down comments that you hear and reactions you notice. Keep a few "pats on the back" in your notes too. The hardest task for the facilitator is silence. Set up the challenge with your story-line, answer a couple of clarification questions, and then sit back and watch the group.
3. The group will need to be prepared. If you only have a short time available to you, your first team-building challenge should be a very simple one. Allow them an easy success with a minimal struggle. Emphasize one aspect of teamwork at a time. Communication is a good lesson to begin with. Communication blocks, effective communication, destructive communication, non-verbal communication—all make up part of a big life lesson! As your group learns some of the foundational principles of teamwork, you can increase the difficulty of the challenge. A review of some of the lessons learned in the past will give the group a head start on the challenge of the day.

THE PROCESS: WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

The challenge should be physically safe. If there is a potential of physical risk, teach the group to "spot" each other and to value each other's well-being. There will be a few risks in each challenge. These risks involve the participants allowing themselves to become vulnerable physically, emotionally, and socially. Address this vulnerability briefly before a challenge that you believe will cause them stress. Have them commit to each other verbally. This could be done as a part of a "time-out," if you need to step into the process because the group is headed down a destructive path and you are short on time. Think of a few ground rules for edification. These could be established by your group as part of one of the team challenges.

The facilitator has a difficult assignment. It is a delicate balance to allow the group to struggle and yet to ensure a successful outcome. The facilitator should not fear struggle and wrong behavior as a part of the process. The teachable moments that such emotions allow are invaluable. The balance is to keep the emotions from going over the edge where the damage done cannot be recovered from in the time you have available. The facilitator needs to patiently allow the participants to make mistakes, try various strategies, and learn to communicate.

Some things to avoid: 1) adults or non-participants on the sidelines talking or laughing, 2) sideline observers offering suggestions, 3) a challenge that is inappropriate for your group (i.e. for guys and girls together, for a wide age range, or for a physically challenged person). There is extreme value in the group overcoming a perceived handicap. Do not hurry the process. It is more valuable to do one challenge well and take advantage of the teachable moments than to hurry through three or four challenges.

ENTRY LEVEL CHALLENGES

Begin with a challenge from this group to “warm them up.” Stay at this level for most junior high groups. Basic communication and cooperation skills are learned without having to struggle with complex planning or leadership issues.

KNOTS

The Story: We’ve been taken hostage by a band of mischievous desert pygmies. They don’t want to hurt us, only to keep us tangled up until they can escape with our valuables. They arrange us in a circle shoulder to shoulder and instruct us to grab the hands of two different people. No one can hold the hand of the person next to him, and no one can hold both hands of one person. “No problem,” we think as they disappear from sight, “we’ll just let go—oh no!” We discover that they have smeared some kind of super glue to our hands and we cannot undo our grip! We must untangle this terrible mess and then we can take off after them!

Props or Limitations: No props are needed. This activity is most effective for a group of seven to ten people of the same gender. For larger groups or mixed genders, do several smaller knots. If one group finishes very quickly, set them up for a second knot.

Rules: Each participant holds two hands belonging to two different people and not belonging to the person next to him. The group must work together to untangle the knot. The result will be one big circle. Be sure to tell them to be gentle with each other and not to allow anyone to be hurt. They may adjust a grip if someone is in pain, but they should not lose contact. Sometimes a knot will result in two small circles instead of one large one; and on rare occasions, a knot that cannot be undone is left in the circle. Tell the group they have succeeded in accomplishing something very rare!

Follow-up: Ask the group some questions. “What happened?” “What made the challenge difficult?” “What did you do in order to succeed?” Other questions can come from your observations and notes. For example, “I watched one time while James was trying to do what two different people were telling him to do at the same time. What were you thinking, James?” “Remember, Frieda, when your wrist got twisted and it hurt? What were you thinking then?” This time of discussion allows them to laugh, verbalize some of their feelings, and share in the victory. After they have had a chance to do this, move the discussion to the spiritual application stage by asking a question such as, “Every time we do one of these challenges, I want you come up with some spiritual object lessons that we can learn about real life from the crazy little challenge that we have just done. Can anyone think of an object lesson from this challenge?”

Spiritual Applications: Do not be afraid to just wait a minute for them to think. Silence is not a bad thing if they are thinking. An example may help them think.

1. The team cannot succeed without everyone participating. If we hurt someone in the process, it slows the team down while we wait for them to recover or maybe even coax them into continuing. Our youth group is that way too. If we do not take care of each other, we will not accomplish our purpose of winning souls and edifying the body.
2. Success requires us to sometimes stoop down and sometimes step over. Our lives are like that; we sometimes serve others, and sometimes other people serve us. We need to be quick to see which is appropriate.
3. When we started, the knot looked terrible; you might not have believed that it was even possible to untangle it! But we succeeded by taking it one step at a time. Sometimes life’s problems are like that. They can often look impossible or hopeless, but we just take them one step at a time, doing the next thing; and pretty soon we come out victorious.

SILENT SORTING

The Story: We are a group on a mission to recover our stolen valuables from the dreaded desert pygmies. As we approach a large gateway, we recognize a trap. The pygmies have cleverly rigged the gate to only allow a group arranged in chronological order to pass through. We suspect that they have hearing devices hidden somewhere in the area. In order to continue on our mission, we must arrange ourselves in order from youngest to oldest, by birth date. We must do so without making a sound.

Props or Limitations: No props are needed. This activity works for a group of any size.

Rules: Arrange the group in order by birthday—year, month, day. This must be done silently. You can eliminate other established forms of communication as they are introduced—for example, no sign language if a large portion of your group knows it, no paper and pencils for writing, no pointing to a calendar. When the group believes they have finished, you can break the silence and go down the row having the participants say aloud their birth date. If you discover someone out of order, you can allow them to make adjustments.

Variations: A variation would be to have them do this in alphabetical order by middle names.

Follow-up: Ask the group some questions. The same questions work to begin most discussions. See the follow-up for Knots. Some more specific examples: “I watched one time while John was using the number of fingers to show his birthday and people were ignoring him. John, what were you thinking?” “Remember, Floretta, when several people grabbed you and pulled you out of line? How did that make you feel?” Remember, this time of discussion allows them to laugh, verbalize some of their feelings, and share in the victory. It is a very valuable lesson to learn to verbalize your frustration with people who have offended you. Take time to teach them how to do so in a way that builds the body. After you have pointed out some of the various strategies used for communication, move the discussion to the spiritual application stage by asking a question like, “Every time we do one of these challenges, I want you come up with some spiritual object lessons that we can learn about real life from the crazy little challenge that we have just done. Can anyone think of an object lesson from this challenge?”

Spiritual Applications: Remember, give them a moment of silence to think. Here are some possible directions these applications can go. Take the time to be specific with your group.

1. Communication requires understanding. Just because I am talking does not mean I am communicating. When I am trying to explain the Gospel to someone, the words that I use may not make sense to them. I should try to find words that they understand, or at least take the time to help them understand the words.
2. Just like there were several people with ideas of how to communicate, I need to be willing to listen to others' ideas of how to organize a project. There can be several strategies going on at once. This has some advantages and some disadvantages. Encourage them to think of specific examples.
3. If someone in the group just stayed silent and did not try to communicate, the efforts of the whole group would fail. That is just like our youth group; if one person does not communicate, we cannot succeed at building up every member and presenting him faultless before the Lord.

SPELLING BEE

The Story: Our adventure has taken us far from home, and we may have a chance to communicate with our friends back home by advanced satellite telemetry. We need to form words and letters with our bodies. These letters should be large enough to be identified. At this point, consider the age and size of your group. For younger kids, assign them letters to make and divide them into small groups to make words. Move from one word to the next to create a phrase. For older kids, you can allow them some creativity to decide what message to send and how to send it.

Props or limitations: No props are needed. This is a very good challenge to use for younger participants.

You can give them enough structure to enable them to succeed and yet be creative in their implementation. If you have a spot above the group where you can be in order to read their message, it would be fun to take a photo of it.

Rules: If you have a very large group, break them into smaller groups before you begin to save some time.

Variations: A variation would be to have them do this without speaking or while blindfolded.

Follow-up: Ask the group the basic questions listed in the previous challenges. Continue with questions from your observations and notes. For example: “I enjoyed watching Jerry really put himself into the letter ‘G.’ What made that so much fun for you, Jerry?” “Frances, you were trying to build that letter, and had a good idea; but the group started building the letter without you. Was that frustrating for you?” Remember to bring out any conflict that occurred and to deal with this conflict in a Biblical way. Move to the spiritual application from this discussion.

Spiritual Applications: This activity can illustrate many principles.

1. Cooperation—There are many destructive behaviors that might occur. The group can sometimes succeed without the help of each individual. It is more fun, less frustrating, and usually quicker if everyone is involved. Our youth group is like that when it comes to fundraisers, service projects, special activities, etc.
2. Others-first thinking—Sometimes there is a spot on the letter that everyone wants. But we cannot succeed if we are all the dot above the *i*. The body of Christ is like that. We can take turns being in the spotlight. The Bible says that we should think about others before ourselves and that we should enjoy it when others are happy.
3. Maturity—This activity gets easier with practice. The first letter we did took more time as we established our strategy. But by the end, we were racing from one letter to the next! The Christian life is like that. When we start _____ (fill in the blank: being kind, being honest, obeying mom, etc.), it is really hard. But with practice, the basics become easier. We begin putting the basics to work in more complicated issues.

LEVEL TWO CHALLENGES

These challenges are not difficult but the group does have to be able to spend some time in planning. Planning will be a difficult step for 7th and 8th graders or a group without basic communication skills.

SIGHTLESS TOURING

The Story: We need to pass through a small, very paranoid foreign country. The desert pygmies have gone around the country, and we need to make up some time if we hope to catch them. The country is long but very narrow, and we just want to pass straight through. The leader of the country is usually quite unreasonable, but we have managed to persuade him to allow us to pass through his country with some very strange stipulations. We have been given two guides, but neither one speaks our language or cares to learn it. We are required to wear blindfolds as we travel. (They must have some secrets to hide!) The guides have been told that we have a deadly disease that they will contract if we touch them; they will not stay with us if we attempt to touch them! If we hurry, we may reach the other side quickly enough to catch the pygmies!

Props or Limitations: You will need one blindfold for each “tourist.” You need an area with a few obstacles to go over, under, and around. The group size adds quite a bit to the difficulty. The larger the group, the less individual responsibility the members feel. Some group-destroying humor will usually take place. The lessons are powerful; do not avoid them if you believe you have time for the process. Position silent observers along the route, especially at positions where spotting may be necessary. Consider allowing some

minor bumps or stumbles as part of the process, but prevent serious harm.

Rules: Hand out the blindfolds. Ask the group to put on their blindfolds and plan some strategy. You can give them a great deal of help by simply asking them to come up with a strategy for keeping the group together and communicating what they learn to the others. This step is not necessary but will greatly reduce the time necessary for the challenge. While this is going on, choose one or two group members to be the foreign tour guides. Tell them that they have to get the group from where they are, through the route you describe, and to a designated end point. They cannot speak any known language. Give them as much or as little help as you like. If time is short, give them suggestions about using different sounds, the pitch of their voices, or making up a nonsense word for a direction. They have a difficult task so choose a member with imagination, or a person who considers himself a leader and whom you want to stretch.

Follow-up: Ask the same type of questions as in the previous section. “What happened?” “What made the challenge difficult?” “What did you do in order to succeed?” Continue with questions from your observations and notes. For example: “Jeff, you were the leader. What frustrated you the most?” “Is humor helpful or hurtful?” Because humor is a tool that is often used incorrectly, spend a little time on this topic. “Flora, I watched you bump your head on that branch. What happened to your involvement after that?” This discussion may flow right into the spiritual application section. Try to deal with all the wrong behaviors that you witnessed, especially if you can get the kids to confront each other. Facilitate this process so that it is done the right way, with love and respect. This is a great opportunity to teach Biblical confrontation.

Spiritual Applications: This challenge usually lends itself well to lessons on maturity, the special gifts of the body, and communication. You can direct the applications in a specific direction by making an observation and asking a question.

1. Maturity—The tail end of the group usually ends up not having to be part of the struggle to communicate. They benefit from the work of the front of the line. Because they have not been part of the process, they often begin doing their own thing to the detriment of the group. This is the same problem we face today in youth group, families, and society. What does the Word of God have to say about this? Maturity can be defined as “doing the right thing at the right time with the right attitude.” Gratefulness and a sense of others’ first are part of knowing what is the right thing or right time.
2. Spiritual gifts of the body—Do you see how different people served the group in different ways? The gifts of discernment, exhortation, mercy, etc., can be seen in how we worked together to accomplish this task. How can these gifts be used in our homes and in our youth group?
3. Communication—This happens on many levels in Sightless Touring: guide to group leader, group leader to followers, followers among themselves, followers to group leader, and group leader to guide. Some communication will not even be conscious effort. Think of the things that break down effective communication and things that enable effective communication. Can you think of some Biblical principles that apply?

TRANSPORT TROUBLES

The Story: I have a very valuable but very toxic substance for you to transport. It is a vaccine for a rare strain of virus that has broken out in an extremely remote, dangerous territory. The vaccine is so valuable that the government does not trust anyone to carry it himself. It is so dangerous that no one can touch it directly. The solution to these restrictions is somewhat awkward, but we do not have time to argue. Dying people need this vaccine! You need to carry the vaccine in this open container, on this specially designed platform, across this wide and dangerous territory. No one may let go of the platform at any time!

Props or Limitations: Divide your group into small groups of three to eight. Give each group a bandana. You will need a plastic cup filled with water up to ¼ inch from the top, or a cup filled with uncooked beans if you don’t want water spilled in your room. The narrower and taller your cup the more difficult the challenge.

Rules: Give each group a bandana. Have them hold onto its edges with both hands. The bandana should remain flat throughout the challenge. When the bandana is stretched tight, place the cup on it. Have the group follow you through a series of obstacles. They should, of course, not spill. If they spill, they must start over. When they reach the end of your route, have them place the bandana with the cup on the floor. Following are some suggestions for obstacles: through a narrow doorway, over a couch, up some stairs, or under a table. Begin with easy obstacles such as going around a chair and over a box. This allows them to establish their teamwork strategy. You can have all groups begin at once, or have them observe the groups one at a time and learn from the mistakes of others.

Follow-up: Ask the same type of follow-up questions as in the previous section. Continue with questions from your observations and notes. For example: “What advantage did the last group have over the first group?”

Spiritual Applications: This is a fairly simple task, but has some fun lessons about balance, compensating for people going through tough situations, problem solving on the go, and the value of communicating your needs.

1. Did you have any trouble balancing the cup when you were standing still? Some groups do. The application could be about temptation coming when we are not expecting it. What made moving and balancing difficult? How is that like life?
2. What could the cup full of vaccine be a symbol of? It makes a nice picture of the Gospel. What could the obstacles be? What things cause us to not get the Gospel to the people who are dying without it?
3. What spiritual truths are illustrated by the way we have to watch what each person is doing so that we can warn them about things in their path or compensate for them as they go over the couch?
4. Communication is not just something that is nice when it happens. If George does not tell us when he is needing help, he stumbles, the water spills, and we have to start over. Lives may be lost because of our delay! What kinds of things do we need to communicate as a body of believers so that the Gospel is not hindered?

LEVEL THREE CHALLENGES

These challenges have proven very difficult even for a group that works well together and that has experienced success with other team challenge. If you want to attempt one, be prepared to step in for a “time out” and guide them through an adjustment process. Do not give them solutions; just point out some problems and ask specific individuals for their input on solutions. Then step out and have them continue the process.

DIRECTIONS IN THE DARK

The Story: On a dark, moonless night we are called upon to send a message via satellite to our military headquarters. The only symbol they will recognize is a perfect square. Any other symbol will cause confusion, possibly disaster! The satellite will be able to see the rope only if we all maintain contact with it. Highly secret technology at work!

Props or Limitations: You will need one blindfold for each participant. You need a very large open area and a long rope. I use a 150 foot rappelling rope; the challenge would be easier with a shorter rope.

Rules: Hand out the blindfolds, and ask the group to put on their blindfolds. After they have their blindfolds on, place a section of rope in each person’s hand. The difficulty can be increased by handing the rope out to the group in a very random fashion. Leave the rope with two ends not secured together. Leave a large portion of the rope in a pile on the ground and hand an end to one person. No one may let go of the rope at

any time.

Follow-up: Ask the same type of follow-up questions as in the previous section. Continue with questions from your observations and notes. I would not have believed the difficulty of this challenge unless I had observed it myself. The distances involved and the concept of constructing a square with equal sides make it a hard one for most groups. I think this event has caused the most leadership crisis of any I have tried. Maybe having to shout over a distance and not being able to see what is going on caused this to happen. Be sure to address specific issues and allow Biblical confrontation to occur.

Spiritual Applications: The lessons about communication, preferring others, and qualities of leadership can be applied in response to specific issues that arise with your group.

RESOURCES

EduSim

Web—www.edusim.net
EduSim, 1103 Ninth Street NW, Austin, MN 55912

Project Adventure

Phone—(800) 796-9917, Web—www.pa.org
Project Adventure, Inc., P.O. Box 100, Hamilton, MA 09636

Books, equipment, and how-to's. The books are relatively inexpensive and have a wide variety of information in them. You may not be able to use all the information, i.e. ropes course obstacles. Karl Rohnke is a popular author and creator for them. He seems to be founder of the team building movement.

- *Cowtails and Cobras II* by Karl Rohnke, published by Project Adventure (ISBN 0-8403-5434-7)
- *Silver Bullets* by Karl Rohnke, published by Project Adventure (ISBN 0-8403-5682-X)
- *Quicksilver* by Karl Rohnke and Steve Butler, published by Project Adventure (ISBN 0-7872-1610-0)
- *The Bottomless Bag* by Karl Rohnke, published by Kendall/Hunt (ISBN 0-8403-6633-7)
- *The Bottomless Baggie* by Karl Rohnke, published by Kendall/Hunt (ISBN 0-8403-6813-5)
- *The Bottomless Bag Again* by Karl Rohnke, published by Kendall/Hunt (ISBN 0-8403-8757-1)
- *Fun Stuff* by Karl Rohnke, published by Kendall/Hunt (ISBN 0-7872-1633-X)

Learning Unlimited Corporation (L.U.C.)

Phone—(918) 622-3292
5155 East 51st, Suite 108, Tulsa, OK 74135

These books are very suitable for indoor activities for groups of various sizes.

- *Executive Marbles* by Sam Sikes, published by Learning Unlimited Corp. (ISBN 0-9646-5412-1)
- *Feeding the Zircon Gorilla* by Sam Sikes, published by L.U.C. (ISBN 0-9646-5410-5)

Affordable Portables by Chris Cavert, published by Wood n' Barnes (ISBN 1-8854-7340-0)

Into the Classroom by Mitchell Sakofs and Outward Bound, published by Kendall/Hunt (ISBN 0-7872-1972-X)

Playful Activities for Powerful Presentations by Bruce Williamson, published by Whole Person Associates, Inc. (ISBN 0-9385-8677-7)

ACTIVITIES WITH A THEME

WORLD RECORD NIGHT

If you have a Guinness book of world records, you may begin this night by reading some of the more interesting records (i.e. longest kiss, most valuable car, etc.). Next, tell the group we are going to create our own record book. From the book, choose 8-12 items and see who will hold the record. Some items are known now (who has the most kids). Other items may not be known but can be easily found out (who has the biggest head), and some items may require a little contest to find out who will hold the record (who can drink a 12-ounce soda the fastest). If you are doing this with the entire church body, it may be helpful to divide into 2 categories (under 12 or 12 and over). Pick the records your group would most enjoy. Make sure you publish your records in the next church newsletter or bulletin.

VOLLEYBALL VARIATIONS

There are many different ways you can make volleyball an exciting activity even for those who are not very good at it. We find having an activity with just one focus can be very fun. Often we practice these games on a Wednesday night in a short game time to test for an evangelistic activity. Youth Specialties has a book called *GAMES* with a section of volleyball games with many of the ideas coming from these pages. We have taken the basic idea (four bounces, one handed) and just applied it to our situation.

ADAPTATION OF CRAZY VOLLEYBALL: Play Volleyball with four hits per side and a bounce on the ground considered a hit. (It cannot hit the ground two times in a row.) This makes it so anyone can have a chance of doing well with the added one bounce.

CHALLENGE VOLLEYBALL: From an idea from “prisoner volleyball,” we began to allow the team who is serving to call a name of a person on the other team who would be out if the serving team won a point. Upon winning the point on a serve, the person called is out. The team continues to call names and knock out players until the serve is lost. The other team upon gaining the serve may call back the “lost” players or knock out some of the other teams. This brings great intensity to a game, and a team may get down to one player and come back to win. We still play to 15. The players picked on are the athletic players, and the less athletic can become the heroes.

To play a quick game, do not allow knocked out players to be called back in.

Revenge Feature: To speed the game along and give it a twist, you can call for revenge. If a team calls out a player and does not win the point, the player called may choose the server or any player (your choice) to be knocked.

HUMAN NET VOLLEYBALL: When there are too many players for just two teams, add a third and have them play as the net. Take out the net and give a team a 3-foot area to stay within. The net can block and interfere, but it only gains a point when it catches the ball. You can play three short games; and in the end, tally the score to come up with the winning team.

BIG BALL VOLLEYBALL: Instead of playing traditional volleyball, it is fun to play with an oversized ball (not necessarily as big as an earth ball). A three-foot red rubber ball can be purchased at Toys-R-Us for a very reasonable price. The game can be played just like regular volleyball, except for the serve. The serve is accomplished by two people holding the ball while a third runs up to the ball and hits it over the net. This is typically done only three or four feet from the net.

BIG BALL VOLLEYBALL, CONTINUED

Some Dos and Don'ts:

1. The ball cannot be caught and then thrown back over the net; it must be hit over the net
2. Several people can hit the ball at one time.
3. Some variations are as follows:
 - Play like regular volleyball—three hits, out of bounds, etc.
 - Have no out-of-bounds and count points only when the ball hits the ground
 - Play rally volleyball—each serve counts as a point no matter which side served the ball
 - Count a point for the serving team each time the balls goes over the net, until the ball hits the ground. Then have the other team serve—results in a high scoring game

MUD FEST!

To kick off a week of teen emphasis, we used mud as the center of our activities. We took an unused water retention and made it into a volleyball court size field with a mud pit in the center. Our mud pit was a big circle about 9 feet in diameter. Dig one as big as you wish. We made it about 2 feet deep as we hit hard clay. We filled it with water and brought back in some of the dirt to make it very soupy and sticky.

We played these games:

1. Hula ball—This we played through and around the pit.
2. Tug 'O War—Start with four teams and end with two.
3. Mine Field—Put tennis balls and marble and almost anything in the pit and have teams find them in timed segments. You may do this gals with gals, guys with guys.
4. Tube Tug
5. American Eagle—Because this game is hard to play in teams, it did not go well. You may wish to start with this one before teams are made.

Tips and Hints:

1. You may wish to serve Mississippi Mud pies or chocolate sundaes.
2. We preached first so we did not have to re-enter the buildings. We taught on the cleansing power of Christ.
3. Prepare for the amounts of mud they may track around the church. You may wish to do this off property. Prepare the parents so they are ready for the muddy teens coming home.
4. Our teens all loved this activity, and a parent was the first one to make the entry into the pit.

EGG RACES

Have teens in teams make a homemade raft for their egg to float down a stream or river.

Teens can use things they find in the forest or things they have in their cabins. This was done in three heats:

Egg speed. The fastest egg wins.

Egg drop. Boats must drop (from bridge or just tossed into the creek) and then race down the river.

Egg Bombardment: other teams can throw sticks stones or logs at the egg boats. Any surviving egg gets points.

The teams are out of the races when their eggs are broken. You may choose to give them two eggs to compete with. Points were awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.

DUCT TAPE THEME NIGHT

We had teens come ducted out with their duct tape clothing or inventions and rewarded them for their effort.

Prizes:

Duct tape cup: Get a plastic kids cup from a restaurant or any cheap cup. Cut the bottom off about an inch up, and cut the brim of the cup. Take it from there with the duct tape. We cut strips and then taped over them making a cup that collapsed and held water or juice. It did have a tape flavor to it.

Duct tape measuring tape. Taken from the idea of a sewing tape measure but improving it with color and handwritten numbers.

Duct tape brief cases

Duct tape juggling balls (three colors) over golf balls.

Mega Candy bar: made of three or four candy bars duct taped together.

Lollipop duct taped bouquets.

We made team flags which were sure to be seen for Capture the Flag. We gave each team 8 foot pvc pipe (.87), a sheet of card board (ours was 4x8 but any size will work), and colored duct tape rolls. Each team made their flag size and decoration. They turned out great, although some were a little heavy for running when being captured. This brought good team participation.

101 THEME IDEAS

(MAYBE MORE. . . MAYBE LESS)

MAJOR

- Medieval Times – knights of the round table, dinner without silverware
- Safari – Big game hunts, khaki and pith helmets
- Ugly Pageant – No talent contest and ugly desserts
- Sherwood Forest – archery and Robin Hood, Friar Tuck
- Space – Lots of tinfoil, alien look-alike contest
- Generic Night – Black and white blah
- Western – Hoedown, BBQ, roping
- Back to Kindergarten – Class bullies, spelling bee, and Duck, Duck, Goose
- Murder Mystery – Sherlock Holmes to Encyclopedia Brown
- Cartoons – Acme and Popey; an impression of your favorite cartoon character
- Pirates – Eye patches, stuffed parrots, and walking the plank
- Nerd – Polyester, Band-Aids on glasses, Morphil is your hero
- 50's – Hoop skirts, greased hair
- B.C. – Bible times, prehistoric, who is brightest caveman
- Outdoors – Hunting, fishing, camping
- Chef-R-Us – Most creative food, best cookie, gross looking food, egg proficiency
- Board Games – Life-size monopoly
- Submarine – transform your bus
- Mad Scientist – Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde relived
- Trains – Race to the golden spike
- Farming – Old MacDonald
- Nursery Rhymes – Dress up as your favorite nursery rhyme character, Humpty Dumpty contest
- Sports you have never hear of – footgolf, full contact splunking
- Lumberjack – suspenders, flannel, and Lincoln logs
- Olympic Games – Who's the fastest, farthest. . .
- Owimpics – Javelin with a straw, shot-put with a spit wad
- Military – life size risk
- Cyber Space
- Summer Camp – Campfire, renewed decisions
- Law Enforcement – prison, undercover, catch the bad guy
- Fireman – definitely about water
- Bigger and Better – Start with a penny and try to make it bigger or better
- Antarctica – Abominable snowman, block ice sledding
- Around the World – foreign food, travel agent décor
- Time Machine – Visit all kinds of time (past, present, and future)
- Kung Foo – Chopsticks, no touchy karate, white bathrobes
- Black and White TV – combine Mr. Ed, Howdy Doodie, I Love Lucy, and Andy Griffith
- World War III – Divide the world and conquer
- World's Best Commercials – Make up your own, imitate your favorites, mockmercial
- Babies – Romper room meet playschool, learn to walk and talk, pacifier name tags
- Circus – Clowns, dunk tank
- Zoo – Wild animal park, Shamu Contests
- Dogs vs. Cats – Dogs and cats drool or maybe vice-versa
- Construction – Building, pounding, collecting your supplies
- School Daze – Report cards, teachers, pop quizzes
- Demolition Derby – Hot wheel smashing

- Egypt – Pharaoh, hieroglyphics
- Cops and Robbers – Keystone cop; catch the bad guy
- Stranded on a Desert Island – with Gilligan and the Skipper
- Into the Future – Imagine, depict, and predict, put together a time capsule
- Fairy Tale Night – 3 pigs, Goldilocks
- Game Show Night – Re-enact Family Feud, Jeopardy, etc.
- Hawaii – Tropical theme, luau
- Farm – Revenge of the cows
- Robots – Build your own
- Hillbilly – Hatfield vs. McCoys, everybody is a redneck
- Creeping Things – Chocolate covered ants, insects
- Mazes – Which direction should you go, mazes on paper, in a field, around town
- Mind Game – Use Mind Trap, Clever Endeavor
- Non-Art Art Contest – Make your art, figure out the deeper meaning
- The Unknown – Unknown destination, food, activities, come and find out
- 101 Things to do with a Hot Wheel – Race them, collect them, steal them, pick your favorite
- Search for Hidden Treasure – Treasure hunt, treasure map
- Gladiators – Individual competitions of strength and endurance
- Non-birthday Birthday Party – Celebrate everyone who does not have a birthday, have cake, give out presents
- Patriotic – flags, parade, Uncle Sam hats
- Political – Republicans vs. Democrats

LITTLE KNOWN THEMES WE HAVE NEVER TRIED

- Duct Tape
- Water and Fire
- Puzzles
- Ginger Bread House
- Tooth Fairy Revealed
- Bleach and Other Things Toxic
- Classical Composers
- Horticulture
- Conglomerates
- Life as a Termite
- A Day without Time
- All Things Helium
- Newspaper Reporter
- Alphabet Soup
- AM/PM vs. 7 Eleven – Turbins vs. Skateboarders
- Sword Drill
- Soda Jerks
- Fashion Show – Thrift store
- Multi Tools – Leathermans, Swiss knives
- A-Team
- Household Pets You Never Heard of – Tape worm
- Food Fight
- Hospital Night – x-rays, ER, crutches
- Tiddly Winks and Tic-Tac-Toe

- After Party – After Christmas, after hours, after life, etc.
- Origami – The folding of paper
- Antiques

SERIOUS

- Focus on Missions – Who are our missionaries, missionary stories
- The Flood – Re-enact the ark
- Bible Trivia – Do you know your Bible?
- How Big is God?
- *Fox's Book of Martyrs*
- Trust – In what, in who, and why
- Drama – Act out parables and Bible stories
- Secret Prayer Meetings – Underground church
- Debate the Issues – Take a position and defend it Biblically
- Fruits of the Spirit
- Spiritual Gifts – What are they? How can I use them?
- Tools for God – Tools found in the Word of God
- Ambassadors for God

WARM-UPS

GETTING TO KNOW YOU QUESTIONS

People like to talk, especially about their opinions. As a youth pastor, I am always wanting to get to know my youth better. For the past several years, we have been doing “Getting to Know You” questions before the class begins. Because my class is small (5-10), I have everyone answer (no exceptions). As you listen to their answers, you will learn more about what is going on in their lives.

I have also used these questions with adults as a way to just loosen up the group. Obviously some of the questions are more serious than others and as you read them over, some may seem redundant; but just ask one question at a time. Before you know it, people will look forward to the next “Getting to Know You” question. My favorite questions are # 1, 11, 21, 32, 33, 54, 71, 80, 81, 86, and 101.

1. You are to die in 48 hours. Your present circumstances and abilities will not change. What will you do?
2. What are the best 10 years of life?
3. My tombstone will say . . .
4. Of all the material possessions you own, what gives you the most pleasure? (*I was amazed how many people indicated something to do with music.*)
5. If you had to be a type of clothing, what garment would you be?
6. One thing that really ticks me off about Christians is . . .
7. I wish my parents would . . .
8. _____ is my hero because he/she _____.
9. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
10. Assuming your “spouse to be” is a Christian, what are the two most important traits of your “spouse to be”?
11. Share the two best qualities about yourself that would make you a good catch for your spouse.
12. The worst thing about dating is . . .
13. I have never been so embarrassed as the time I . . .
14. My greatest achievement in life so far is . . .
15. My favorite game/activity growing up was _____. Why?
16. Describe the perfect person to date.
17. My movie star hero is _____ because _____.
18. What will your retirement be like?
19. What is the first major thing you will buy once you are on your own?
20. If the United States went to war, would you join or be drafted? What would you like to do?
21. What will be the most important room in your future mansion?
22. How do you brush your teeth? Why do you do it that way?
23. If you were on your deathbed today, looking back—what would be the happiest day of your life?
24. When were you the most scared?
25. If you had to be an animal, what would you be? Why?
26. How many kids do you want? What do you want them to do when they grow up?
27. If you had a choice, in what year or era would you like to have been born?
28. If you moved tomorrow, what would you miss the most (besides friends)?
29. My 7th grade nightmare was/is . . .
30. The most tragic day of my life so far has been . . .
31. Using your imagination, what would you like to do, see, or be in Heaven?
32. If the entire world died of a vicious virus and you were the only one left, what would you do? (*The next question goes with this one.*)
33. If you had the power to bring one person back to life, who would it be?
34. If you could be a home appliance, what would you be? Why?

35. Your great aunt dies and leaves you \$10,000 that must be spent in six months. What would you do with the money?
36. As a parent, I am going to make sure that I . . .
37. If you could take the place of one living person, who would it be?
38. If you could live the life of one dead person, who would it be?
39. According to your plans and dreams, what do you anticipate to be the crowning achievement of your life?
40. One hundred years from now, what invention or product will make the biggest difference in day-to-day life?
41. Where do you plan to go on your honeymoon?
42. If you could be one age for the rest of your life, what age would you be?
43. My closest friend would say we were close friends because I . . .
44. With two adjectives, describe your parents.
45. With two adjectives, describe your friends.
46. What event in this lifetime got you in the most trouble?
47. Your auntie decides to pay all the expenses of your life for five years. What five years do you choose? What do you do with the money?
48. If you could ask God one question and receive an answer, what would you ask?
49. (*Asked at the end of the year*) What has been the best day of 2001 (or whatever year we are in)?
50. If you were going to be a TV character, who would you be?
51. You inherit a lifetime retainer. What does that person do for you?
52. If you could own a chain of restaurants, which one would it be? What would you do in the business?
53. You become dictator, not President, of the United States. What is the first law you enact?
54. You have one week to do anything. All your money must be spent the first day of the week. You can spend any amount of money on the first day but keep nothing after the week is over. What would you do that week?
55. You find a bottle of elixir in an old mine. The label says "The Best." You read the directions and realize that whatever you are thinking about when you drink it, you will become the "best in the world." What would you think about as you drink "The Best"?
56. Would you rather live to be 83 and be healthy and poor or be filthy rich and die at 39?
57. If you could go back in time and witness one event, which event would it be?
58. You will become a cosmonaut for three years. You will live in a space 8' x 8'. What will you take with you?
59. What is a bad habit or bad choice that 18 to 20-year-olds have or make?
60. What is the worst job you could have? Why?
61. What has to happen this summer for you to look back and say, "This was a good summer"?
62. What is the best day of the year?
63. What day has been the worst day of your life?
64. If you could change the outcome of one historical event, what would you change? How would it be different?
65. Your parents find a treasure chest worth one and a half million dollars. What do you recommend they do with it?
66. What are you looking forward to the most or least when you go to college?
67. If you were able to get a gold medal in one Olympic sport, which one would you choose?
68. What was the most exciting 30 seconds of your life?
69. What household job do you like the least/most?
70. If you had to choose someone outside your family to be your brother or sister, who would it be?
71. What is the symbolism of your own personal flag? (*This one is fun. I think you could even make it into an activity.*)
72. What do you know that nobody else in this room knows ?
73. If you knew you were going to die, what would you eat for your last meal?

74. If you knew you were going to die and you could only write two letters, to whom would you write?
75. What would you do differently if you knew when you were going to die?
76. If you could add another part to your body, what part would you add?
77. I am glad I am me because . . .
78. If you could have one thing that someone else has or had, what would it be?
79. If you had to write a personal ad, what would it say?
80. Why should we feel sorry for you?
81. What have you done to qualify as being a good nerd?
82. What is the worst breakdown in a vehicle that you have been involved with?
83. What has been your favorite vacation?
84. If you had \$86,400 deposited in your bank account every day and whatever you did not spend would be deleted, what would you do? (*Afterwards, tell them that everyone has 86,400 seconds that God gives them every day they live. What are they doing with those seconds?*)
85. What will be your hobby when you turn 65?
86. I wish I could always . . . and never . . .
87. What will you wait to do until after you are 40?
88. If you lived in the 1800's, what would be your occupation?
89. What decade in the 1900's would you want to live in?
90. If you had to marry somebody you do not know well, who would it be?
91. If you had to give up a food, what food would be hardest to give up?
92. If you could prevent one thing from happening in your lifetime, what would it be?
93. If you had to compare yourself to a sandwich, what kind of sandwich would you be? Why?
94. If you were a fruit or vegetable, which one would you be. Why?
95. What adjective would your parents use to describe you?
96. If you could be one of the super-heroes, what super-power would you have?
97. What is the most dangerous thing you have done on purpose?
98. If you could have the world's largest collection of something, what would it be?
99. I will give you \$100 that must be spent today on something you do not already own (clothes, music, etc . . .). What would you buy?
100. I love _____ (does not have to be a person).
101. How are you today? (Have them talk for 30 seconds.)
102. What is the meanest thing a friend has done to you?
103. What do you remember about kindergarten?
104. If you had to be a car, what model would you be? Why?
105. If you could not live in North America, in what country would you live? Why?
106. If you could ask a person just one question, what one question would you ask? (No, you cannot ask for more questions.)
107. You join the *S.S. Minnow* for a three-hour tour and find yourself shipwrecked on an island. Of course, the Skipper and Gilligan were your guides. What other four people would you want with you on the island?
108. Imagine this: You have been guilty of slamming things (people, doors, etc.). A judge sentences you to be a door for a year. What door would you choose to be?
109. What is the worst and best part of being male or female?
110. What is the gutsiest thing you have ever done?
111. If you could have for a pet an animal not normally a "pet," what animal would be your pet?
112. What is the best thing you did on a fourth of July?
113. If you were going to be a tie, what would you look like? Who would you be on?
114. If you ruled the world for 24 hours, what would you do?
115. You visit the Middle East and get kidnapped. What would you do (to escape, survive, stay sane, etc.)?
116. What is one quality you want to teach your future teen (son/daughter)?
117. How will your will be different than anybody else's will?

118. If you could ask one yes or no question (and get the answer) about your upcoming death, what would you ask?
119. If you could have one thing that someone else you know has, what would you take and from whom?
120. My favorite or worst part of the first day of school is . . .
121. If you had to stay home for three days straight—no school, no TV, no responsibility—but you felt fine, what would you do?
122. If you were given Air Force One for two weeks, what would you do?
123. What is your favorite Christmas movie?
124. What is your favorite book?
125. What is one character trait you would like to inherit from your parents or grandparents?
126. What is the most original cat or dog name you have ever heard?
127. What is a goal you want to accomplish in the next year?
128. If you could have a certain class taught in high school that is not taught now, what would it be?
129. If you were a battery on the Wal-Mart shelf, who would you want to buy you? For what?
130. What is on your Christmas list?
131. Who would you want to talk to on your deathbed?
132. We are in the Medieval Times. You are King/Queen _____. How would you run your kingdom?
133. When were you most encouraged?
134. If you could have everyone of your friends experience one hour of your life, what one hour would you have them experience?
135. What is your Woobie (security blanket)?
136. If there was a book written about you, what would it be entitled?
137. What was the best thing that happened to you in the past two months?
138. What do you look forward to the most about leaving home?
139. What redneck tendency do you most exhibit?
140. What is the dumbest thing one of your pets has done?
141. What do you get in trouble for the most often?
142. What do you like most about summer?
143. Who was your favorite elementary teacher? What grade? Why?
144. Besides your parents, for better or for worse, who has had the greatest influence on your life?
145. Who was your worst elementary teacher? Why?
146. If you lived in cave man times, what item from today would you want with you?
147. If you had to be a dog, what kind of dog would you be?
148. How would this world be different if you were not living?
149. You are given a two-month summer vacation, where would you go? What would you do?
150. If you were a house, where would you be located? What style would you be?
151. What is the nicest thing that someone who is not a family member has done for you?
152. What was your last worst experience?
153. If you could be a cookie, what kind would you be? Why?
154. If you had to choose a Pooh character that was like you, who would it be and why?
155. If you could choose seven words to say before you died, what seven words would you choose?
156. If you had a free plane ticket to anywhere, where would you go and why would you go there?
157. If you could only spend \$10 on Christmas gifts what would you buy and for whom?
158. If you had to choose one of your teen years to live over, which year (choose only one) would you choose? (*This one obviously works well with those that have already lived most of their teen years.*)
159. Why do you have your particular middle name? Or is there any meaning behind your first name?
160. What is the most important on/off switch in your house/life?
161. What is the greatest gift that another human being has given you?
162. If you could be best friends with anyone in the world, who would you choose?
163. If you had the opportunity to be automatically trained and prepared completely, what occupation would you want?

164. What quality of Christ do you admire the most and why?
165. What is the perfect breed of dog and why?
166. If you could go back to any period of time in history and tell one person a piece of information about the future, who would you tell? What would you tell? Why?
167. What breed of dog best describes your dad? Why?
168. What breed of dog best describes you mom? Why?
169. If you could remove one insect from the world, which insect would have to go?
170. If you could make one decision as President, what would it be?
171. What is your favorite letter of the alphabet? Why?
172. What would you like to be doing with your life at 30, 60?
173. If you left the United States for a foreign mission field, what do you think you would miss the most?
174. You have been marooned on a deserted island for five years. One day you notice a watertight trunk has washed ashore. What do you hope is in the trunk?
175. If you could be a part of an automobile, what part would you be and why would you like to be that part? (*Example: The steering wheel because it gives guidance and direction to the rest.*)
176. If you could bring to life any fictional character from any book, whom would you choose?
177. "If I had a dollar for every time I _____, I'd be a rich person." How would you fill in the blank?
178. What New Year's resolution from a previous year have you kept?
179. If you had to watch people for eight hours, where would be an interesting place to do your observing?
180. If you were an inventor, what area of life would you like to make easier? What type of invention would you invent?
181. If you could take back any action, what would it be?
182. If you had a personalized license plate, what would it be? Why?
183. What is your favorite bumper sticker?
184. If you could ask everyone in your church or youth group one question, what would that question be?
185. What is the top item on your, "I would like to do this before I die" list? (*learn to fly, write a book, travel to ___*)
186. If you could take over as leader of an existing country, what country would it be? Why?
187. If you could be a type of chair, what type would you be and why?
188. If you worked at Wal-mart, what would you want to do?
189. If you could go into the future and live one day of your life and then come back, what day would you pick?
190. If you could choose between having gills (like a fish) or wings (like a bird), which would you choose? Why?

HIGHER OR LOWER

Any effective meeting needs to have good transitions. Many times we are transitioning from exciting, loud games to a quiet, reflective devotional. If you attempt to make that transition in less than a minute, you will get discouraged very quickly. Sometimes you transition the other way. You go from an invitation to the next game at the youth rally. Common transition times are at the beginning of the meeting and at the end of the meeting. The most universal transition is a time of refreshment or snacks. It is important to recognize that there are a great number of available transitions that one could use, including stunts and icebreakers.

This little transition is a great tool. It can be serious or ridiculous. It can be theme related. Nobody needs to know the exact answer. It involves the entire crowd, and half the crowd is always right. Have everybody choose a partner. Then read a question that can be quantified (i.e., How many miles of nerves do you have in your body?). Among the pairs, have one half choose a number (i.e. ahhh how 'bout 15 miles); then the other half of the pair says the true answer is either higher or lower (i.e. Nooo Wayy . . . the answer's gotta be lower). Once every pair has chosen higher or lower, you may then share the right answer. Be prepared for half the group to be excited and half the group to groan. Excellent sources for higher or lower are the *Guinness Book of World Records*, *Uncle John's Bathroom Reader*, Bible trivia, or even trivia about your own group. Once you have explained Higher or Lower, it is a fun thing to do quickly and easily at any of your meetings.

Variation: Use the entire group and set it up as a tournament of single elimination. If you have 64 young people, it will only take eight questions to get down to the Grand Champion of Higher or Lower. If you have a small group, play best two out of three instead of single elimination.

By the way, there are 45 miles of nerves running through your body.

ICEBREAKERS

WHO ARE YOU LIKE?

Choose a person in the audience who becomes the standard by which everyone scores himself. Choose a person who will be honest and whose opinion will matter to others. The youth pastor's wife, pastor, teen president, etc., all make good choices. Tell the audience that we are going to find out who is the most like the person we have chosen. (For clarity, we will call this person Herbert.) As I ask a question, Herbert must have the answer in his head before I ask the crowd. Many times it is fun to let everyone know that low score wins instead of high score. Ten questions is all you really need to have fun with this, so a list of thirty questions means you can actually use the same format three times.

- Would you rather drink Coke or Pepsi?
- Would you rather have the power to fly or the power to be invisible?
- Would you rather be embarrassed in front of a group of strangers or a group of friends?
- Would you rather eat at McDonalds or Denny's?
- Would you rather have blisters on your lips or paper cuts on your fingers?
- Would you rather be 4' short or 7' tall?
- Would you rather own a cabin in the woods or a cabin on the beach?
- Would you rather have your parents or Adam and Eve as parents?
- Would you rather die unexpectedly or slowly surrounded by family?
- Would you rather be blind or deaf?
- Would you rather be filthy rich or wildly famous?
- Would you rather watch TV or read a book?
- Would you rather eat Mexican or Chinese food?
- Would you rather be bald or have one solid eyebrow?
- Would you rather be freezing cold or burning hot?
- Would you rather have a maid or chauffeur?
- Would you rather be yelled at by a friend or stranger?
- Would you rather ask your mom or dad for \$10?
- Would you rather be 15 for the rest of your life or never be a teenager?
- Would you rather drive a VW bug or a Harley Davidson across the United States?
- Would you rather have 10 okay friends or one best friend?
- Would you rather live in the United States or outside the United States ?
- Would you rather have nine brothers and sisters or zero brothers and sisters?
- Would you rather lose all your teeth or all your hair?

After five questions, there will be very few people that have perfect scores—either zero or five. You can use a few more questions to narrow it down to just one winner.

TABLE ICEBREAKERS

Place the following pages on your tables at a banquet or get together. Do not give out the answers until you need to transition from the meal to more important things.

WORLD RECORD CHALLENGE

This is a challenge between two people. Have them both guess the record. At the end, give the actual record. Whichever couple was closest gets the points. Out of the two, the couple with the most points wins. If you want to continue “the challenge,” pair each of the couples together that won by reading them a record and having them write down the answer. The couples with the wrong answer are eliminated. Continue the eliminating until you have one couple left. This may also work as a one-on-one competition (teens or adults – just white out the couple A and couple 1 on the master).

SCORE	CONTESTANT A BEST GUESS	RECORD	CONTESTANT 1 BEST GUESS	SCORE
	ft. in.	Longest Snake <i>Worth 1 point</i>	ft. in.	
	lbs. oz.	Largest Gold Nugget <i>Worth 5 points</i>	lbs. oz.	
	ft. in.	Longest Documented Hair <i>Worth 5 points</i>	ft. in.	
	People per hour	Fastest Barber <i>Worth 5 points</i>	People per hour	
	ft.	Longest Zipper <i>Worth 5 points</i>	ft.	
	yrs. old	Youngest Billionaire <i>Worth 5 points</i>	yrs. old	
	Combined Total ft. in.	Tallest Married Couple <i>Worth 10 points</i>	Combined Total ft. in.	
	Combined Total yrs.	Oldest Newlyweds <i>Worth 10 points</i>	Combined Total yrs.	
	yrs. mo.	Youngest University Student <i>Worth 10 points</i>	yrs. mo.	
	lbs. oz.	Heaviest Baby Born to Healthy Mother <i>Worth 20 points</i>	lbs. oz.	
	TOTAL		TOTAL	

EXTRA RECORDS

Most people kissed in 8 hours—8001
 Largest collection of valid credit cards—1,350
 Tallest tower made from Legos—65 feet 2 inches
 Lightest car (2.5 cc engine goes 15mph)—21 lbs.
 Tallest snowman (1992 record)—76 feet 2 inches
 Oldest watch—1504 A.D.

SCORE	CONTESTANT A BEST GUESS	RECORD	CONTESTANT 1 BEST GUESS	SCORE
	32 ft., 9.5 in.	Longest Snake <i>Worth 1 point</i>	ft. in.	
	220 lbs., 0 oz. <i>From Australia</i>	Largest Gold Nugget <i>Worth 5 points</i>	lbs. oz.	
	12 ft., 8 in. <i>Still Growing!</i>	Longest Documented Hair <i>Worth 5 points</i>	ft. in.	
	1994 people per hour <i>All men, drew blood four times</i>	Fastest Barber <i>Worth 5 points</i>	People per hour	
	9,353.5 ft. 2,565,900 teeth	Longest Zipper <i>Worth 5 points</i>	ft.	
	31 yrs. old <i>Bill Gates—started Microsoft at 20</i>	Youngest Billionaire <i>Worth 5 points</i>	yrs. old	
	Combined Total 14 ft., 8 in. <i>She-7'5.5"/He-7'2.5"</i>	Tallest Married Couple <i>Worth 10 points</i>	Combined Total ft. in.	
	Combined Total 187 yrs. <i>She-84/He-103</i>	Oldest Newlyweds <i>Worth 10 points</i>	Combined Total yrs.	
	7 yrs., 7 mo. <i>Major in mathematics</i>	Youngest University Student <i>Worth 10 points</i>	yrs. mo.	
	22 lbs., 8 oz.	Heaviest Baby born to healthy mother <i>Worth 20 points</i>	lbs. oz.	
	TOTAL		TOTAL	

SO YA' THOT YA' KNOWED IT ALL!

This is just a collection of fun facts. This also can be done verbally.

1. The average parrot lives to be how old?
 - a. 40 years
 - b. 80 years
 - c. 120 years
 - d. 160 years
2. How much mail does the average person receive in a year?
 - a. 150 pieces
 - b. 300 pieces
 - c. 450 pieces
 - d. 600 pieces
3. A sneeze zooms out of your mouth at over...?
 - a. 300 mph
 - b. 600 mph
 - c. 800 mph
 - d. 1,000 mph
4. (True or False) Your fingernails grow twice as fast as your toenails.
5. Approximately how many flowers does it take to make one pound of honey?
 - a. 1,000,000
 - b. 1,700,000
 - c. 2,000,000
 - d. 3,200,000
6. With one pencil you can draw a line as long as...?
 - a. 3 miles
 - b. 10 miles
 - c. 13 miles
 - d. 35 miles
7. What animal has the largest eyes?
 - a. Giant squid
 - b. Octopus
 - c. Blue whale
 - d. Charman
8. The first shopping center was built in?
 - a. 1832
 - b. 1896
 - c. 1907
 - d. 1928
9. The biggest recorded bubble blown with bubble gum was?
 - a. 12 inches
 - b. 18 inches
 - c. 22 inches
 - d. 33 inches
10. In 1985, the largest watermelon grown weighed?
 - a. 260 lbs.
 - b. 310 lbs.
 - c. 405 lbs.
 - d. 2 tons
11. The TV dinner was introduced in?
 - a. 1954
 - b. 1961
 - c. 1964
 - d. 1972
12. What percentage of the American male population weighs over 200 pounds?
 - a. 11%
 - b. 17%
 - c. 26%
 - d. 32%
13. Ants can live up to?
 - a. 2 years
 - b. 4 years
 - c. 8 years
 - d. 16 years
14. How much saliva does the average person produce every day?
 - a. 1 cup
 - b. 1 pint
 - c. 2 quarts
 - d. 1 gallon
15. How many times does the average person laugh each day?
 - a. 5 times
 - b. 10 times
 - c. 15 times
 - d. 25 times

Bonus: What is the only animal with 4 knees?

Answers: 1-c, 2-d, 3-b, 4-false (four times as fast), 5-c, 6-d, 7-a (size of pie tins), 8-b (in Baltimore), 9-c, 10-a (from Arkansas), 11-a, 12-b, 13-d, 14-c, 15-c, Bonus-elephant

RIDDLE MANIA

This is another good all-purpose sheet. The familiar phrase puzzles are always a hit. Sometimes I give one or two answers as an example of how they work.

The beginning of eternity, the end of time and space, the beginning of every end, and the end of every place.

I never was, am always to be, none ever saw me, nor ever will, and yet I am the confidence of all who live and breathe on this terrestrial ball.

Runs over fields and woods all day, under the bed at night sits not alone, with long tongue hanging out, a-waiting for a bone.

At night they come without being fetched, and by day they are lost without being stolen.

What gets wet when drying?

There was a green house. Inside the green house there was a white house. Inside the white house there was a red house. Inside the red house there were lots of black babies.

CHIMP ROUY	KNOWITNO	NINE CUMULUS	HE ART
ECIV	F SALVE Y	S S S S B B B B A A A A R R R R G G G G	FAR WALK FAR WALK
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Riddle Mania Answers: 1-letter e, 2-tomorrow, 3-shoes, 4-stars, 5-towel, 6-watermelon; Familiar Phrases: Row One—a monkey on your back, no two ways about it, on cloud nine, brokenhearted; Row Two—vice versa, there's a fly in the ointment, up for grabs, too far to walk; Row Three—back up against a wall, stick around, put a sock in it, two eggs over easy; Row Four—life is full of irony, see eye to eye, without a second glance, big let down

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Approximate number of brain cells | A. 3 |
| 2. Average inches a human hair grows in a year | B. 6 |
| 3. Heartbeats in one year | C. 7 1/2 |
| 4. Hours of sleep per night the average adult gets | D. 8 |
| 5. Muscles in a normal adult | E. 206 |
| 6. Number of bones in an adult | F. 350 |
| 7. Number of bones in a newborn | G. 656 |
| 8. Number of hairs if you are a redhead | H. 90,000 |
| 9. Number of hairs in a normal head of hair | I. 100,000 |
| 10. Quarts of blood running through the average person | J. 36,000,000 |
| 11. Weight of your brain in pounds | K. 14,000,000,000 |

True or False?

- Men are 10 times more likely to be color-blind than women.
- If you are a man, your eyes are slightly bigger than the average woman's.
- As an infant grows, the body part that grows the least is the eye.
- If your sense of smell is not working, you cannot taste an onion.

Answers
 Matching: 1-K, 2-D, 3-J,
 4-C, 5-G, 6-E, 7-F, 8-H, 9
 -I, 10-B, 11-A
 True/False: All are true!

GUESS THE FAMILIAR PHRASE

L~~E~~AST

C
O
M
EARTH

KNICKERS

111111 another
another
another
another
another

R.I.P.CORD

O_ER_T_O_

WASH WILM **IN** GTON
GTON

OUT
R E

YOU JUST ME

Answers: Last but not least, A kick in the pants, Deadline, Come down to earth, Six of one and half-a-dozen of another, Painless operation, In two places at the same time, Out of the way, Just between you and me

MINGLE BINGO

Instructions:

1. Complete five in a row – up, down, or diagonally.
2. A space is complete if you successfully do as instructed in that space **and** get the other persons involved to sign that space.
3. Use different people for each space.
4. For your first five squares, find couples that you did not previously know.

Find someone who knows a foreign language and have him or her write a word below in that language. (Act impressed!)	Find someone with the same middle name as yours.	Find someone with a great smile and find out what kind of toothpaste he uses.	Find someone whose birthday is within a month of today's date. Sing "Happy Birthday" to him.	Find someone who has attended four or more schools.
Find someone whose family owns more than two dogs.	Find someone who has vacationed in the same spot overseas that you have.	Find someone who has had pancakes for dinner in the last month.	Find someone who has a living great-grandparent.	Find someone who has been to an outdoor wedding.
Find someone who drove more than an hour to get here.	Find someone who has lived in the same house for ten years or more.	Find someone who is less than one month apart in age from you.	Find someone who is a first-time guest here today.	Find someone whose family owns a vehicle that still runs and is more than 30 years old.
Find someone who has lost his or her wallet or purse some time in the last year.	Find someone who cooks at least two meals a week.	Find someone who was born in the same month as you.	Find someone with a burned-out light bulb in his house right now.	Find someone who was born more than 200 miles away from where you were born.
Find someone who still has Christmas lights or decorations up.	Find someone who can tell you a very funny joke. Laugh out loud uncontrollably!	Find someone who has parents who were born more than two thousand miles apart from each other.	Find someone who has been on a blind date.	Find someone who has the same number of brothers and sisters as you.

Do As I Do

Verbal puzzles work great as time wasters, transitions, or puzzles of youth group tradition. Standing in line at an amusement park for three hours seems to fly by with a handful of these at your disposal. Most of them ask for a participant to repeat a relatively simple task that, to your observers, seems quite simple to duplicate. Usually the task carries with it some subtle verbal or nonverbal cue that is the key to true duplication. As much fun as these games can be for youth leaders to inflict upon their teens, try not to present any more than two of these initiative problems at any one meeting. One could easily drag one of these puzzlers out over the course of an entire Sunday School quarter. Instruct the teens who quickly pick up on the answers to these riddles not to freely share the answer. A few of your group who are part of your “Elite Knowledge Union” can greatly aid in the distraction of most of the teens finding the answer.

BANG, WHO'D I SHOOT?

This is a classic stumper to bring out of the bag on occasion. Start by making a classic gun gesture with your hand and pointing it at someone close by. Say, “Bang,” and wait for a couple of seconds before asking, “Who did I shoot?” Usually the response will be that you shot the person you were aiming at, but most of the time it is not. Many times, the randomness of whom you shot causes most theories to be born and dashed in the time it takes to say, “Bang, Bang.” Vary the method by pointing, looking away, twitching a thumb, and saying “Bang” a number of different times.

The key to this wonderful puzzler is that the first person to talk at all after you say, “Bang,” is the one who has been shot. Therefore saying “Bang” and then waiting for a bit is both distracting and suspenseful all at the same time, because when you then say, “Who'd I shoot,” you have just killed yourself.

BUGS IN MY CUP

Hold up a cup; any cup will do, empty or full. Ask your crowd out loud, “How many bugs do I have in this cup?” The answer, of course, is nine. You will have puzzled looks cross many faces, so ask again, “How many bugs are in this cup?” Some will shyly answer nine again; but, of course, the answer this time is seven. For the one who has guessed seven correctly, look him straight in his knowing eyes and ask, “How many do I have?” Of course the answer is now five. “How many?” Now perhaps you will have an ovation of correct answers shouted back at you, “Two!”

The key to joining this Elite Knowledge Union lies in the number of words that are in your questions. Be sure to have your words counted out ahead of time so you will not be noticed with that squint-eyed, looking-slightly-up, with one-eyebrow-raised look on your face that screams to your group, “He’s counting something!” The amount of objects actually in the cup, the number of times you shake it, the number of times you touch it—all are distraction techniques you could try.

GOT THE BEAT?

Using your fingers and a table top, establish a simple beat movement of ten to twelve beats. Perform the sequence of beats a couple of times in front of the group. After you have demonstrated your beat pattern a few times, announce to your group, “I have the beat.” Give them the chance to perform a duplicate beat pattern knowing that if it is simple enough, you should get a few quick volunteers.

Now as in most of these elements, the key to being part of the Elite Knowledge Union has little to do with the obvious task at hand. Be sure that each time you “have the beat,” you are completing your sequence of beats with a brief pause, a challenging look, and then the key to success: folding your hands in some subtle yet purposeful manner. Folding or clasping the hands together is really the only key; the beats are only a

means of distraction. After a few failed attempts at duplication, make the key to success a little more obvious and distinct. It will surprise you how zoned in on the beat your audience is, even while you are trying to give away the key.

HANDS DOWN OR CHINESE WRITING

Scatter three or four pens, pencils, or spoons around a table and explain that you are going to teach the symbol for Chinese numbers. Scatter them in a pattern—any random pattern—and ask, “What number is this?” You will have some guesses, but very few will know why they guessed a number that they did. The key to this puzzler is paying attention to the number of fingers left either on top of the table or exposed on the floor by the leader. It is incredible how distracting four spoons on the center of a table can be to the obvious three or four fingers left peeking out from a devious fist of deception. If there are no fingers on the table, the number is zero, no matter what the symbol you have arranged looks like. An open hand resting naturally is a good deceiving five. Use two hands to create numbers higher than five. Have your group arrange the silverware for you, and you tell them what the number is. Great fun!

HIEROGLYPHICS?

In this series of symbols, what would be drawn next in line?



Answer: Looking at these symbols as a mirrored image, it is plain to see the next symbol in line would look like two “9’s” drawn back to back.

IS THIS A PEN?

Hold a pen in one hand and state for your group: “This is a pen, this is a pen, this is a pen,” adjusting the direction and elevation of the pen every time you say it. Finish your series of statements with the question, “Is this a pen?” The answer will be, “NO.” Next time, start over. “OK, this is a pen, this is a pen. Is this a pen?” The answer is, “Yes,” but do you know why? Try again. “OK, this is a pen, this is a pen, this is a pen. Is this a pen?” The answer is again, “Yes,” and seeing it printed out, you might guess why very quickly. But with just hearing and watching, the physical gyrations become a huge distraction from the key.

The enrollment into this Elite Knowledge Union is based on whether your series of “This is a pen” statements begins with an “OK” or not. This can be an extremely deceiving puzzler, especially if you do a series of “no” answers early in the exchange.

JOHNNY WHOOPS

Hold out your hand in front of you so that your fingers are pointed straight up in the air and spread out. With your opposite pointer finger, point at your extended pinky and say out loud, “Johnny.” Now move your pointer finger off your pinky and point at the adjacent ring finger. As you touch it, say, again, “Johnny.” Moving across your row of fingers continue to say “Johnny” at each finger. When you are moving from pointing at your index finger to pointing at your thumb, slide your pointer down the side of your finger and back up the slope of your thumb while saying, “Whoops.” Simulate a mini ski jump with your pointer finger flying slightly into the air and coming to rest directly on top of your thumb and stating, “Johnny.” Reverse directions with another whoops down the side of your thumb slope and continue the “Johnny” hops all the way back to the pinky where you started.

Now that you have that simple action down to perfection, start each Johnny Whoops rendition with a small clearing of the throat. This subtle cough is the key to being a part of the Elite Knowledge Union. All of the rest of the Johnny and Whooping are merely elements of distraction.

LOGICAL SEQUENCE

What is the pattern that makes these numbers arranged in this order, a logical sequence?

8 5 4 9 1 7 6 3 2 0

Answer: These numbers are zero through nine placed in alphabetical order.

MOLLY LIKES . . .

Here is a verbal puzzler that has the potential of lasting for days. Introduce to your group an imaginary friend named Molly. Molly is quite opinionated about certain things and has some unique preferences. For instance, Molly likes *apples* but not *pears*. She really enjoys *swimming* but hates *water*. She likes to wear *boots*, but she does not like *leather*. Strangely enough, she really loves *puppies* but does not like *dogs*. Now ask your group, “Does Molly like *horses*?” No, of course not. “Well, how does she feel about *saddles*?” She likes them, despite how she feels about *leather*. Even stranger yet, Molly hates *emotion*, while she enjoys *feelings*.

What is Molly’s key? The answer to being part of this Elite Knowledge Union is that Molly likes any word that has a double letter in it and dislikes any word that does not have a double letter. Meaning, Molly likes *letters* but hates *words*.

MY SHIP HAS COME IN

This one works best when a few others in the room already know its key. I would start off by saying, “My ship has come in; it is carrying mangos and apricots. Has your ship come in?” They may respond that it has. Ask, “What is it carrying?” Depending on their answer, they may or may not be able to have their ship come in. If they have suitable cargo, respond, “Your ship has come in!” If they are not carrying suitable cargo state, “I’m sorry. Your ship cannot come in.”

The key to this puzzler is based on the first letters of the first and last name of the person who is attempting to have his ship come in. My name, being Michael Ames, can carry any cargo starting with an *M* and an *A*. But the cargo of a John Smith cannot carry *mangos* and *apricots* like I can. John’s ship can come in if he chooses to carry something like *Jell-O* and *silverware*. The statement of “Yes, your ship can come in,” only adds to the feeling of this being some sort of an Elite Knowledge Union.

NEXT IN LINE?

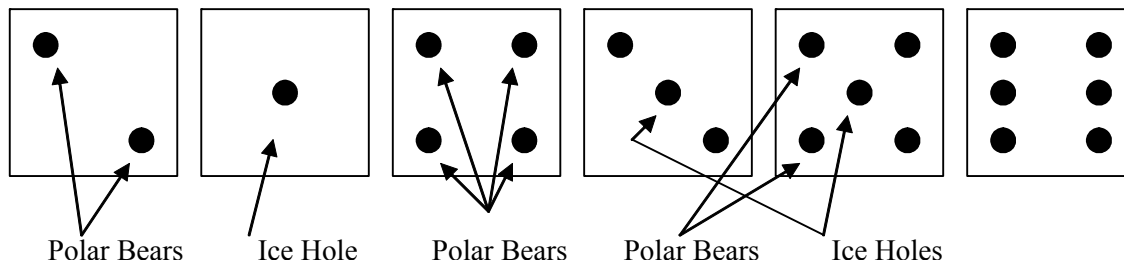
Cerebral problems are best when the answer is staring you right in the face the whole time. The best ones elicit a response of, “Oh, Duh!!” The following is a good sequence that does that very thing.

Look at this list of letters and tell me what letter is next in line. O T T F F S S . . .

Answer: The next letter is E for eight, because the above letters are the first letters of numbers one through seven.

POLAR BEARS AROUND THE ICE HOLES

A pair of dice and a winter tale is needed for this little teaser. For, after rolling the dice, as you look down on life from your lofty perch, you can see polar bears in the arctic hunting for food. Sometimes they have found for themselves an ice hole to fish in, and sometimes they are just out in a snow bank. As dice are rolled, ask your participants from time to time what they see. When you roll a five and a three, they should see something like “a group of good hunting polar bears—six polar bears and two ice holes.”



SCISSORS

While holding a pair of scissors with two hands, say, “I am handing these scissors to you opened.” Hand them to one in your group with them opened. Now, taking them back, close the scissors and say, “I am handing them to you closed,” while they are, in fact, still opened. It quickly becomes apparent that it is no matter if the scissors are physically open or closed. The key is based upon another element.

To join the ranks of the Elite Knowledge Union, one must observe the feet or legs of the passer. To cross your feet or close your legs determines how you would comment on the passed scissors. While passing the scissors with your legs crossed, the scissors will always be “closed.”

RIGHT BRAIN RESOURCES

The following is a list of a few companies that I have found that supply some difficult-to-locate items.

abc distributing, inc.—Inexpensive gifts/prizes
P.O. Box 619098
North Miami, FL 33261-9098
Phone – (305) 944-6200
Fax – (305) 944-3291
www.abcdistributing.com

Adventure Bags—Promotional bags, business bags, school bags, sports bags, travel bags, recreation bags
64144 Hume Lake Road #203
Hume, CA 93628
Phone – (559) 335-1991
Contact: Kevin or Kelli Cookingham

Alamo Flags—Flags
Pier 39
San Francisco, CA
Phone – (415) 982-3524

Dinn Bros.—Trophies
P.O. Box 111
Holyoke, MA 01041-0111
Phone – (800) 628-9657
Fax – (800) 876-7497
sales@dinntrophy.com
www.dinntrophy.com

Flag Time—Flags
Phone – (800) 542-FLAG

Group Publishing Incorporated—materials for younger kids as well as teens; ideas for activities, parent involvement, skits, and retreats
P.O. Box 481
Loveland, CO 80539

Kipp Brothers—Prizes
240 South Meridian Street
P.O. Box 157
Indianapolis, IN 46206
Phone – (800) 428-1153
Fax – (800) 832-5477
www.kippbro.com

Lifeway—Curriculum (Character Quest—2 volumes)
127 Ninth Avenue North
Nashville, TN 37234-0182
Phone – (800) 458-2772
www.lifeway.com

One Way Street—Puppets
P.O. Box 5077
Englewood, CO 80155-5077
Phone – (800) 569-4537
www.onewaystreet.com

Oriental Trading Company, Inc.—Cheap prizes
P.O. Box 2308
Omaha, NE 68103-2308
Phone – (800) 228-2269
www.oriental.com

Puppet Productions—Puppets, books, videos, etc.
P.O. Box 1066
Desoto, TX 75123-1066
Phone – (800) 854-2151
Fax – (214) 709-8849

Sacramento Flag Works—Flags
3001 D Street
Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone – (800) 535-3524

Spirit Direct—Spirit items
8309 North Highway
Orrick, MO 64077
Phone – (800) 575-0459
Fax – (800) 210-0231

Spiritual Emphasis Week Book—Armed Forces Week

Sports and Graphics—Silk screened and embroidered shirts, shorts, sweatsuits, hats, bags, bandanas, and the like

501 Airport Blvd.
South San Francisco, CA 94080
Phone – (650) 588-3216
Fax – (650) 873-3505
Contact: Arturo Gonzales

Trophy Depot—Trophies
1110 Jericho Turnpike
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
Phone – (800) 286-7096
Fax – (516) 488-0700
www.trophydepot.com

U.S. Toy Company, Inc.—Prizes
13201 Arrington Road
Grandview, MO 64030-2886
Phone – (800) 255-6124
www.ustoy.com

Western Advertising Associates—Dog tags
206 – A South Loop 336 West
Conroe, TX 77304
Phone – (409) 441-7770
Fax – (409) 756-7991

The Wilds—books (S.O.A.P. series) with a wide variety of skits, activities, games, and resources
P.O. Box 509
Taylors, SC 29687
Phone—(864) 268-4760
Fax—(864) 292-0743

Youthgroup.cc—Coffee mugs, dog tags, carabineers, water bottles, T-shirts, woven neck lanyards, embroidered hats (all with your logo on the items)
www.youthgroup.cc
Phone – (800) 368-0701
Fax – (936) 295-8667

Youth Specialities—idea, game, skit, illustration, and art books; promotional ideas; teaching materials
P.O. Box 4406
Spartanburg, SC 29305
Phone – (800) 776-8008
www.youthspecialties.com

FUNDRAISING: GROUP EFFORTS

AUCTION

“White elephants” or “bigger & better” items from a youth activity

BAKE SALES

Your imagination is the limit! Here are a few ideas:

- Set up at a grocery store.
- Have an auction after church.
- Set all the goodies out and sell different size boxes. The box owners then get to fill their boxes with the goodies of their choice
- Take orders and then have an all-night baking party; serve breakfast to the kids and deliver the goods the next morning.

BANQUETS

Get the food donated and charge per meal. Try this before a school event, such as an open house.

BAR-B-QUE

Set up in a shopping center parking lot. Do not try to give choices on the menu. Possibilities include ribs/sl原因/drink, chicken/sl原因/rolls/drink, tri-tip sandwich/beans/salad. Advertise with posters around the area.

BEVERAGE CONTAINER REFUND DRIVE

Use a team approach; competition is a great motivator!

CAR WASH

There are many variations on this theme:

- Fee per car at location
- Tickets sold before event
- Sponsors pledge per car washed
- Door-to-door

CHRISTMAS DAY-CARE/CRAFT DAY

Provide a day of child-free shopping for Mom and a time of homemade presents for kids. Sell tickets to parents (\$5 for first child, \$4 for second, \$3 for third, rest free). Have the teens assist the children in making and wrapping ornaments or other gifts for Mom and Dad.

CORSAGE SALE

Call all the dads in church and take orders, make the corsages, and hand out on Mother’s Day Sunday. Carnations work well.

COUNTRY FAIR

Set up booths (dunk tank, throw balls, crafts for sale, etc.).

DOG WASH

Go door-to-door, or set up in a parking lot and charge five cents a pound.

GARAGE SALES

Have teams compete for best or most donated items.

GIFT WRAP

Set up in a mall or department store at Christmas time.

HOT LUNCH SERVICE

Hot dog, handful of chips, and fruit punch—\$1.50; ice cream—\$.50. Set up at school once a week, and have kids man the booth.

PLAY NIGHT

Put together a comedy night (with skits, stunts, film) and charge admission. A dinner or snacks may precede the play.

SOUP SUNDAY

Make a huge batch of soup and sell after church (cup, bowl, or pint). Have someone taste it during announcements and tell the rest how great it is.

SPOOK INSURANCE

Sell policies for Halloween prankster protection (coverage for dwelling, auto, property). The claims must be in by a deadline and damage is excluded—only covers what the kids can clean up.

SUNDAE SUNDAY

Sell a bowl of ice cream for \$0.75 and let them top it with assorted toppings of their choice.

WINDSHIELD WASH

Set up in a shopping center parking lot and volunteer to wash windows for \$0.50.

FUNDRAISING: INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS

CLUB 52

Ask anyone who gives an offering to add one dollar a week to their giving total. If each giver will give a dollar every week for one year, each person will have given \$52. Most will give more which only doubles your efforts. If everyone gets involved, the money really adds up.

HOUSE NUMBERS

- Make and sell 5" wooden numbers for houses; adult in church could cut; kids could finish and paint/stain.
- Paint the number on the curb (stencils).

MAILBOX FLAGS

Go door-to-door and paint mailbox flags red for \$0.50.

MARATHONS

See church involvement.

RENT-A-KID

Make kids available for baby-sitting, mowing, and odd jobs by the day/hour/weekend/month.

SALES

Items are endless; here are a few!

- Baked goods
- Candy
- Chocolate
- Firewood—cut and delivered
- Fruit baskets—delivered with a card
- Light bulbs
- Posters, calendars, stationery
- Name parchments
- Nuts—picked at orchard and sold
- Stuffed animals

SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Collect weekly in youth group, and keep good records.

STAMP BOOKS

Sell stamps for \$0.25 or \$1 to fit in a stamp book; a full book is redeemable for a week at camp. Stamps can be earned by memorization, visitors, etc.

WINDOW WASH

Go door-to-door washing outside windows for \$0.20 each. Take orders for service.

FUNDRAISING: CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

ADVERTISE

- Can sometimes get written up as a community service for hiring out to do house and yard work under the supervision of the youth pastor
- Good community publicity
- Able to reach new homes with a witness

AWARDS

A camp scholarship is awarded to those who fulfill a set of requirements (attendance, memorization, Bible reading, etc.).

BUDGET ALLOTMENT

Set aside part of the youth budget for camp.

BUY-A-MILE

Draw a map and figure a cost per mile. As the money is raised, fill in the route to camp with red.

CLIP-A-TICKET

Make up tickets with camp fees divided into bit-size pieces (i.e., a yummy, nutritious meal for eight hungry campers—\$__, a day full of Christian love—\$__, a ride to camp and back—\$__). Sell these to adults in church/Sunday school.

GOOD DEEDS AUCTION

The youth submit a good deed that they would be willing to do. They should submit at least one and could submit several. Examples of possible good deeds are listed below.

- I will mow your lawn.
- I will wash and wax your car.
- I will wash all your windows on your house.
- I will baby sit your kids for a night.
- I will spring clean your kitchen.
- I will work at your house on Saturday from dawn till dusk.

After a potluck at church, have somebody auction off the good deeds. Keep several things in mind while doing the auction.

- Let everyone know where the proceeds are going for the auction.
- Do not let anyone know who the good deeds are from.
- Set minimum dollar amounts for each item, but always start the bidding at \$1.00. This will get people involved in the “bidding up” process.
- The auctioneer needs to be enthusiastic about whatever he is selling.
- Have fun with it, and you are guaranteed to raise funds.

LOOSE CHANGE CONTAINER

Set a narrow-mouthed jar in the lobby for pocket change.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

This may possibly be held at the church or community center. Sell tickets and have the kids cook the meal. You can often get free products from stores in town to put on the breakfast.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Some folks might want to send a kid to camp; this is a good motivator for follow-up, too!

SLAVE SALE/AUCTION

“Sell” the kids to church members to do work for them on a certain day.

SPONSORED MARATHONS

The possibilities are endless; here are a few!

- Bible read-a-thon or verse-a-thon (memorize verses)
- Bike-a-thon
- Bowl-a-thon
- Canvass-a-thon (for bus visitation or youth event)
- Fat-a-thon (per pound lost by the preacher)!
- Jog-a-thon
- Rocker-a-thon (per hour in a rocking chair—provide entertainment, etc.)
- Walk-a-thon
- Work-a-thon (at the church or in a neighborhood)

SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFERINGS

WORK

Have a set rate (\$5/hour) for work at the church to put on the account toward camp. Adults raise the money.

READY-MADE FUNDRAISERS

ADOPT-A-DAY

“Adopt-a-Day” is designed to get the entire church involved in sending young people to camp. Many times those who could profit the most from a week of camp are the ones who cannot afford to go to camp. Maybe you are trying to get the “fringe” kids signed up; or maybe you are just trying to make camp less expensive for everyone. “Adopt-a-Day” is a quick, easy way to accomplish those goals. The “Adopt-a-Day” certificate should be used as a bulletin insert, possibly copied on parchment-type paper. Make sure each adult receives one of these inserts. During the announcement time, explain the “Adopt-a-Day” program.

1. Camp is a valuable tool.
2. “Adopt-a-Day” gives those who do not have children (singles, newly married, or senior citizens) a chance to help send a young person to camp.
3. They have the option of adopting one day (price of camp divided by 6) or any number of days.
4. Make sure each young person who has a day adopted writes a thank-you note and a small journal of one of their days at camp. (This journal and note should be given to the person who adopted the day.)
5. Remind everyone that by adopting a day they have a part in the eternal rewards stored up in Heaven.
6. If they are interested in adopting a day, have them fill out the “Adopt-a-Day” form and put it in the offering plate with their cash or check attached or give it to the Registration Coordinator.
7. Keep this money in a designated church account.

NOTES:

1. “Adopt-a-Day” is valuable because the money is not designated for a certain individual; you can distribute days evenly or adopt every day for a needy child.
2. “Adopt-a-Day” is also valuable because it is easy and fast.

GIFT CERTIFICATES

Gift certificates can be used by parents, grandparents, friends, etc. to help a young person go to camp. Whether for Christmas or a birthday, a gift certificate is a great way to help your youth. The church may even want to use it as a reward or promotional tool during VBS, Sunday school, etc. (i.e. \$10 Gift Certificate for the teen who brings the most visitors in June).

1. Choose one person who will handle all gift certificates.
2. Copy the gift certificate master on bright paper.
3. Each time a person buys a gift certificate, a record should be kept using the receipt form. (This way, if the certificates are lost, you will have a record of them.)
4. Money collected from gift certificates should be kept in a designated church account.
5. At the time of camp, the child may redeem his certificates.

NOTES:

1. Any amount may be chosen for the gift certificates.
2. They may be used as a year-round fund raiser.
3. Folks without kids may want to give a \$5 certificate to all the kids going to camp. (Every little bit helps!)

FREE CAR WASH

Different than most car washes, this one is FREE! You will have plenty of cars to wash and make more money than you would have thought possible for a car wash. How is that possible? Each person washing cars is sponsored per car they wash.

1. Each participant receives a sponsor sheet.
2. He then solicits church members, relatives, and friends to sponsor him per car the group washes (i.e. \$0.10 per car).
3. Find a good spot and advertise for your FREE car wash!
4. Record each car's license plate number to prove how many cars you washed.
5. Remember to set out a donation bucket in case folks want to donate. (You will find that most people will put in an average of \$2.00 per car.)
6. Multiply the number of cars by the amount sponsored per car and collect from each sponsor (i.e. \$0.10 per car x 83 cars = \$8.30).

NOTES:

1. The amount of money made by each participant depends on how hard he works to get sponsors.
2. Use the money from the donation bucket to pay for car wash expenses, and put the excess in a camp scholarship fund.
3. Give sponsors an estimate of the number of cars you will wash, and possibly even set a maximum number they would pay for. (i.e. "We estimate that we will wash 75 cars but 100 would be the maximum you would sponsor.")

MORE FUNDRAISING TIPS

Make sure camp is promoted with enthusiasm! The people need to know that their money is going to be well spent. Here are a few ways to accomplish this:

Testimonies—of past campers or parents of campers

Picture Day—photos from camp

Promotion Table—with brochures, etc. and manned by youth

Frequent Announcements—on your progress of raising funds

Prayer Lists—with campers and the camp name on them

Begin early! Sales are effective during the Christmas season.

Do not let the kids keep the money. Have lots of accountability and accurate records. A savings account system or camp stamp book works well for this.

A note on sales. Give them some coaching on how to sell. Have some written information about what the money goes toward, with your name and church address included. Give each young person an envelope marked “fund-raising collection.” Do not let the sales drag out; set a three-week time limit.

Contact the Ironwood office to see if there are any scholarship programs currently available for needy families!

We hope this collection of ideas will be helpful to you. The only limit is your imagination and enthusiasm. Let us know if you have any new ideas to add. Do not hesitate to call if you need further help or ideas!

Youth Leaders Brain

INDEX

*Hyphenated numbers are in the Left Brain,
non-hyphenated numbers are in the Right Brain.*

3 Key Principles for Discipling Youth	1-25
10 Things You Should Have Known Before You Became a Youth Leader	5-23
60 Theses on Issues of Youth Work and Contemporary Music	7-15
77 Habits of an Unsuccessful Youth Leader.....	5-3
101 Theme Ideas (Maybe More . . . Maybe Less)	76

A

Absolutes in Youth Work	1-9
<i>Activities</i>	
Activity Planning Sheet.....	9
Activity Seeds.....	5
Balance in Activities.....	15
Creative Activities	6-10
For a Large Group	17
How to Plan Effective Activities	6-7
Alphabet Challenge	19
Annotated Bibliography	8-1
Answering the Questions of Youth.....	3-1
Apprenticeship in our Homes	7-9
Aspirations of Greatness.....	7-13
Assassins.....	27

B

Baby Bottle Coke Drinking Contest	57
Balance in Activities.....	15
Bang, Who'd I Shoot?	92
Basics of Children's Ministry, The.....	3-23
Baton Tag	34
Bibliography, Youth Worker	8-9
Bombs Away	28
Book Review: <i>Purpose Driven Youth Ministry</i>	8-21
Book Review: <i>The Bridger Generation</i>	8-19
Breakaway Activity	22
Bugs in My Cup.....	92
Build a Youth Group, How to.....	6-1
Building Blocks of a Biblical Youth Philosophy.....	1-3
Building Bridges to Teens	4-7

C

Calendar, Philosophy of a	1-23
Candle Shoot Out.....	57
Capture the Flag.....	31
Catch Me if You Can.....	36
Chain Murder Mystery	19
Characteristics of Youth: Personalities.....	3-11
Characteristics of Youth: Physical, Mental, Social, Emotional, and Spiritual	3-2
Chemical Bomb	46

Children's Ministry, The Basics of	3-23
Child's Play	59
Circle, Dot, Line!	23
Concentric Circle Principle, The.....	1-27
Counselor, Qualifications of a Good	4-5
<i>Comedy Contest</i>	
Alphabet Challenge.....	19
Chain Murder Mystery	19
Um Uh Hesitate.....	18
What Are You Doing?	18
Committees in Your Youth Group, How to Set Up.....	6-27
<i>Convictions</i>	
Developing Convictions.....	6-13
How to Teach Convictions to Your Teens	6-11
Cowboy, Lasso, Steer.....	57
Creative Activities.....	6-10
Crime in Progress	53

D

Dealing With the Parents of Youth	2-1
Demoralize and De-motivate People, How to	6-5
Develop a Simple Filing System for Youth Ministry, How to	6-25
Developing Leadership in Your Group	3-31
Developing Messages for Teenagers.....	7-1
Digit Duel.....	61
Directions in the Dark	70
<i>Discipling</i>	
Discipling Youth for Ministry	3-7
Idea Share: Discipleship and Curriculum.....	5-25
Three Key Principles for Youth Today	1-25
The Concentric Circle Principle.....	1-27
Discussion, How to Lead (Not Follow) a Good	6-15
Doctrinal Statement.....	1-7
Duct Tape Theme Night.....	75

E

Egg Races	74
Electricity	41
Emergency Contact Form, Sample.....	8-7
Enemy Mine	30
Enlisting and Training the Volunteer Help You Need	4-1

F

Filosophy Can Be Fun!.....	3
Five A's in a Youth Activity	1-15
<i>Forms</i>	
Activity Planning Sheet.....	9
Permission Slip/Medical Release Form	8-8
Sample Emergency Contact Form.....	8-7
Theme Planning Worksheet	6-21

Frozen T-Shirt Contest	58
<i>Fundraising</i>	
Group Efforts.....	99
Individual Efforts	101
Church Involvement.....	102
Ready-Made Fundraisers.....	104
More Tips	106
Future of Youth Work in the West in the 21st Century, The	4-9
G	
Gender Gap.....	24
Getting To Know You Questions	79
Giving In or Growing Up: Doing Biblical Youth Work in an Unbiblical World	1-17
Got the Beat?	92
<i>Group Games, Crowd and Large Group</i>	
Assassins	27
Baton Tag	34
Bombs Away	28
Breakaway Activity.....	22
Capture the Flag	31
Catch Me if You Can.....	36
Circle, Dot, Line!.....	23
Comedy Contest	17
Enemy Mine	30
Gender Gap.....	24
Indoor Scavenger Hunt.....	21
King's Killer Court.....	29
Kristopher's Capture the Flag.....	37
Mall Invasion.....	37
Name Shoot Out	29
Palameo—The Ultimate Food Fight.....	36
Picture Scavenger Hunt	22
Pygmy Pit	38
Same Game.....	33
Scalp	28
Sounds of Dumb	35
Swat Tag.....	32
Tube Mound Madness	26
Tube Roll Relay.....	26
Weakest Knight, The.....	36
Who Am I?	25
<i>Group Games, Small Group</i>	
Electricity	41
Killer Uno.....	42
Mafia	41
Spoons	42
Up and Down the River.....	42
H	
Hands Down or Chinese Writing.....	93
Have You Met the Couple . . .	2-11
Hieroglyphics	93
Higher or Lower	84
Homes, Apprenticeship in Our	7-9
<i>How To</i>	
Build a Youth Group	6-1
Creative Activities	6-10

<i>How To, continued</i>	
Demoralize and De-motivate People.....	6-5
Develop a Simple Filing System for Youth Ministry.....	6-25
Developing Convictions.....	6-13
Do a Community Survey.....	6-45
Lead (Not Follow) a Good Discussion.....	6-15
Plan a Missions Trip.....	6-17
Plan Effective Activities.....	6-7
Run an Effective Junior Church Program	6-43
Run an Optional Wednesday Night Program ...	6-33
Run a Scripture Scholarship Program	6-35
Run a Successful Vacation Bible School	6-23
Set Up a Memory Program.....	6-37
Set Up Committees in Your Youth Group	6-27
Teach Convictions to Your Teens	6-11
Use Puppets.....	6-47
Work with a Theme.....	6-19
I	
Idea Share: Discipleship and Curriculum	5-25
I Hate Liver	55
Indoor Scavenger Hunt.....	21
Instilling in Teenage Girls a Passion for God.....	3-17
Involving Parents.....	2-9
Is This a Pen?	93
J	
Junior Church Program, How to Run an Effective...	6-43
Johnny Whoops	93
K	
Killer Uno.....	42
King's Killer Court.....	29
Kitty Litter Cake.....	47
Knots	65
Kristopher's Capture the Flag	37
L	
Leadership in Your Group, Developing	3-31
Lead (Not Follow) a Good Discussion, How to	6-15
Lifesaver Stickers.....	59
Logical Sequence	94
M	
Mafia	41
Mall Invasion.....	37
Mammoth Sparklers	46
<i>Mentoring</i>	
Mentoring Our Young Ladies	3-21
Mentoring Young Men in Your Youth Group ..	3-15
Message of Faithful Witness, The	7-11
Messages for Teenagers, Developing	7-1
Milestones in Youth Ministry.....	5-24
Miner, Pick Axe, Mule.....	60
Mingle Bingo	91
<i>Ministry</i>	
Discipling Youth for Ministry.....	3-7
A Shield About You: Minimizing Ministry Risks.....	4-13

Missions Trip, How to Plan a	6-17
Modesty, Teaching Biblical	7-21
Molly Likes	94
Mud Fest!.....	74
My Career.....	54
My Ship Has Come In	94
Myths of Youth Work.....	1-21

N

Name Shoot Out	29
Next in Line?	94

O

On Board for the Long Haul.....	4-21
One-liners from Past Experience.....	5-1
On the Difference Between Men and Women.....	49

P

Palameo—The Ultimate Food Fight.....	36
Paper Design.....	61
Paper Tear Strength Contest.....	61

Parents

Dealing With the Parents of Youth.....	2-1
Involving Parents.....	2-9
Parents: The Other Side of the Ministry.....	2-3
Parents: The Youth Leader’s Real Customers.....	2-5

Permission Slip/Medical Release Form.....	8-8
---	-----

Philosophy

Building Blocks of a Biblical Youth Philos.	1-3
Philosophy Can Be Phun!.....	3
Philosophy of Activities.....	1-15
Philosophy of a Calendar.....	1-23

Phonetic Punctuation for Two	51
------------------------------------	----

Picture Scavenger Hunt	22
------------------------------	----

Picture This!	23
---------------------	----

Plan a Missions Trip.....	6-17
---------------------------	------

Plan Effective Activities, How to	6-7
---	-----

Polar Bears Around the Ice Holes.....	95
---------------------------------------	----

Policy and Procedure

Policies and Procedures.....	5-7
Policies and Procedures: Travel & Services.....	5-19

Potato Canon	45
--------------------	----

Puppets, How to Use	6-47
---------------------------	------

Purpose

Sample Purpose Statement, A	1-14
Success Through Purpose.....	1-13

Put On-Put Off	8-5
----------------------	-----

Puzzle Illustration	7-25
---------------------------	------

Pygmy Pit	38
-----------------	----

Q

Qualifications of a Good Counselor	4-5
--	-----

Questions

Answering the Questions of Youth	3-1
Getting To Know You Questions	79
Youth Worker and His Questions, A.....	3-25

R

Riddle Mania	89
--------------------	----

Right Brain Resources	97
-----------------------------	----

Run an Optional Wednesday Night Program	6-33
---	------

Run a Scripture Scholarship Program	6-35
---	------

Run a Successful Vacation Bible School, How to....	6-23
--	------

S

Same Game	33
-----------------	----

Sam’s Toolbox List	11
--------------------------	----

Scalp.....	28
------------	----

Scissors.....	95
---------------	----

Scott’s Toolbox List.....	13
---------------------------	----

Scripture Scholarship Program, How to Run a.....	6-35
--	------

Set Up a Memory Program, How to.....	6-37
--------------------------------------	------

Set Up Committees in Your Youth Group, How to..	6-27
---	------

Sheriff (Simon) Says	60
----------------------------	----

Shield About You, A:

Minimizing Ministry Risks	4-13
---------------------------------	------

Sightless Touring.....	68
------------------------	----

Silent Sorting.....	66
---------------------	----

Skits

Crime in Progress	53
-------------------------	----

I Hate Liver	55
--------------------	----

My Career	54
-----------------	----

On the Difference Between Men and Women	49
--	----

Phonetic Punctuation for Two.....	51
-----------------------------------	----

Winter Wonderland Arizona Style.....	54
--------------------------------------	----

Sounds of Dumb.....	35
---------------------	----

So Ya Thot Ya Knowed It All!.....	88
-----------------------------------	----

Spanish Materials Sources.....	8-25
--------------------------------	------

Spelling Bee	67
--------------------	----

Spiritual Ladder: Steps to Spiritual Growth, The	3-5
--	-----

Spoons.....	42
-------------	----

Stunts

Baby Bottle Coke Drinking Contest.....	57
--	----

Candle Shoot Out	57
------------------------	----

Child’s Play.....	59
-------------------	----

Cowboy, Lasso, Steer.....	57
---------------------------	----

Digit Duel.....	61
-----------------	----

Frozen T-Shirt Contest.....	58
-----------------------------	----

Lifesaver Stickers.....	59
-------------------------	----

Miner, Pick Axe, Mule.....	60
----------------------------	----

Paper Design	61
--------------------	----

Paper Tear Strength Contest.....	61
----------------------------------	----

Sheriff (Simon) Says.....	60
---------------------------	----

Stop the Watch!.....	58
----------------------	----

There’s a B’ar.....	57
---------------------	----

Tied Up in Spoons.....	59
------------------------	----

Up, Up, and Away!	59
-------------------------	----

Stop the Watch!.....	58
----------------------	----

Success Through Purpose.....	1-13
------------------------------	------

Swat Tag.....	32
---------------	----

T

Teach Convictions to Your Teens, How to	6-11
---	------

Teaching Biblical Modesty	7-21
---------------------------------	------

Team Builders

Jed’s Quest: A Team Building Challenge	63
--	----

Entry Level Challenges

Knots	65
-------------	----

Silent Sorting	66
----------------------	----

Spelling Bee.....	67
-------------------	----

Team Builders, continued

Level Two Challenges
Sightless Touring..... 68
Transport Troubles..... 69
Level Three Challenges: Directions in the Dark . 70
Resources 71
Team or Rival: The Youth Leader's Relationship with
the Pastor 4-17

Theme

101 Theme Ideas (Maybe More . . . Maybe Less) 76
Duct Tape Theme Night..... 75
Egg Races..... 74
How to Work with a Theme 6-19
Mud Fest! 74
Theme Planning Worksheet 6-21
Volleyball Variations..... 73
World Record Night 73
There's a B'ar 57
Tied Up in Spoons..... 59
TNT: Tips and Tricks for Youth Ministry 5-13

Toolbox List

Sam's Toolbox List 11
Scott's Toolbox List 13
Transport Troubles 69
Tube Mound Madness 26
Tube Roll Relay..... 26

U

Um Uh Hesitate 18

Unique Props

Chemical Bomb..... 46
Kitty Litter Cake..... 47
Mammoth Sparklers 46
Potato Canon 45
Water Balloon Launcher..... 45
Up and Down the River 42
Up, Up, and Away!..... 59

V

Vacation Bible School, How to Run a Successful ... 6-23
Volleyball Variations..... 73
Volunteer Help You Need, Enlisting and
Training the 4-1

W

Warm-ups

Bang, Who'd I Shoot? 92
Bugs in My Cup 92
Getting To Know You Questions 79
Got the Beat? 92
Hands Down or Chinese Writing..... 93
Have You Met the Couple 2-11
Hieroglyphics 93
Higher or Lower 84
Is This a Pen? 93
Johnny Whoops 93
Logical Sequence 94
Mingle Bingo..... 91
Molly Likes 94
My Ship Has Come In..... 94

Warmups, continued

Next in Line?..... 94
Polar Bears Around the Ice Holes 95
Riddle Mania..... 89
Scissors..... 95
So Ya Thot Ya Knewed It All! 88
Who Are You Like? 85
World Record Challenge..... 86
Water Balloon Launcher 45
Weakest Knight, The..... 36
What and Why of Tomorrow, The 1-5
What Are You Doing?..... 18
What Is It About the Camp Program That Is Biblically
Effective? 1-29
What Should I Do?..... 1-1
Who Am I?..... 25
Who Are You Like? 85
Winter Wonderland Arizona Style 54
Witness, The Message of Faithful 7-11
Work with a Theme, How to 6-19
Working with Kids 3-13
World Record Challenge..... 86

Y

Youth

Answering the Questions of Youth 3-1
Building Bridges to Teens..... 4-7
Characteristics of Youth..... 3-2
Characteristics of Youth: Personalities 3-11
Discipling Youth for Ministry..... 3-7
Instilling in Teenage Girls a Passion for God ... 3-17
Mentoring Our Young Ladies 3-21
Mentoring Young Men in Your Youth Group .. 3-15
Working with Kids..... 3-13

Youth Leader, see Youth Worker

Youth Work

Absolutes in Youth Work..... 1-9
Milestones in Youth Ministry 5-24
Myths of Youth Work 1-21
The Future of Youth Work in the West in the 21st
Century..... 4-9
TNT: Tips and Tricks for Youth Ministry..... 5-13

Youth Worker

10 Things You Should Have Known Before You
Became a Youth Leader 5-23
60 Theses on Issues of Youth Work and
Contemporary Music..... 7-15
77 Habits of an Unsuccessful Youth Leader 5-3
A Youth Worker and His Questions..... 3-25
On Board for the Long Haul 4-21
Team or Rival: The Youth Leader's Relationship
with the Pastor..... 4-17
Youth Worker Bibliography..... 8-9

A PHILOSOPHY OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Browse the isles of your local Christian bookstore in the children's section and you will find many types of children's books. You will find children's Bible stories, children's devotionals, children's Bibles, books on children's games, children's crafts, and children's songs. You may also find a handful of books on doing children's ministry. In these you will find some very good information on "how to" do aspects of your children's program. You will find titles like *Children's Ministry That Works*, *How to Have a Puppet Ministry*, *How to Have a Successful Children's Worship Service*, and my personal favorite—*How Do I Get These Kids to Listen?* with a picture of a frustrated teacher on the cover pulling out her hair. (This is actually a fantastic book by Ed Dunlop.)

What is almost always missed in the search for "what works," "how do I survive," and "how to do the latest fad in children's programs" is the why. Why do you have an elementary Sunday School? Why do you have a children's church, a children's choir, or a Vacation Bible School? Why do you have a kid's club program like AWANA or Patch the Pirate Club? In each of these programs, why do you use the curriculum you do? Why does each program meet at the time it does? Why do you staff each program the way you do? Why do you discipline the way you do? Why do you have the rules you do? Why do you run the promotions you do? Why do you have the activities you do? Where do you draw the line between attractive outreach strategies and worldly methods and practices? Why do you avoid certain types of media? Why do you have a children's ministry at all?

The way you answer these "why" questions is essentially your philosophy of children's ministry. And while churches, and even youth groups, are catching on to the importance of defining a philosophy of ministry, the children's programs at those churches are rarely considered in this process. Sadly, our children's ministries are often reduced to glorified babysitting services because of this. If you delve deeply enough, pragmatism plays a large part in many of the decisions made in children's ministry. Sunday School becomes "that thing you do with the kids" when the adults are in their Bible fellowship classes. Children's church becomes "that thing you do with the kids" while parents are in the worship service. This became painfully obvious to me when our church began a Wednesday evening visitation program. The idea was brought up to create a children's program so the kids would have something to do while parents were visiting. The primary purpose for this program was pragmatic. We would never have admitted that, and we would have dressed it up with spiritual significance to give it reasons for existence. But with pragmatism at its core, a ministry like this, without a clear, passionate, distinct vision, would tend to be ineffective, and even counterproductive. Instead, our pastor suggested that we move another well-established program to this night. By doing this, we met the practical goal, but there was no doubt in the minds of our staff and parents the crucial purpose that this program served. To avoid this pragmatic trap, churches must clearly define a philosophy of ministry for their children's programs.

The purpose for this discussion is not to convince you to have a philosophy of ministry. Whether you aware of it or not, you already have one. You make decisions all the time related in some way to the questions above. You may even have a very strong opinion about some of them. The question is, "Have you clearly articulated your philosophy in writing?" Have you effectively communicated this philosophy to those who serve in your children's programs? Whether you are a senior pastor, youth pastor, or children's director/pastor/coordinator, it is crucial that you sit down and clearly define why your children's ministry exists, what it intends to accomplish, and how it intends to accomplish this.

WHY DO YOU NEED A CLEARLY ARTICULATED PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY?

There are two main reasons a leader needs to state his philosophy of ministry.

- 1. It is the standard by which you evaluated every aspect of your children's ministry.**

This is the filter that you run every decision, new idea, activity, or program through. Since it describes

why your ministry exists, what you intend to accomplish, and how you intend to accomplish it, anything that does not meet these goals, or does not live up to the standard should be discarded. It is important to determine these goals in advance, so when the time of crisis or decision comes, you already know what the standard is. In Daniel 1:8 "*Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself . . .*"; he made up his mind ahead of time what he believed God wanted him to do so when the crisis came in verses 10 and 11, Daniel's decision was already made. The great danger in not having your philosophy clearly defined in advance, is that you instinctively gravitate toward tradition (this is the way we have always done it), pragmatism (this really works well), or instinct and intuition (this just feels right). By clearly articulating your philosophy for the children's ministry, you make up your mind ahead of time what you believe God's vision is for your churches children's program.

2. **It is a motivational, communication tool to effectively lead your children's ministry staff.**

"The 21st century leader doesn't lead by the authority of his position, but by an ability to clearly articulate a vision and core values of his organization."—Dr. Aubrey Malphurs, faculty member, Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas.

A philosophy of ministry is an effective tool for communicating the vision God has given you to your staff. It unifies different aspects of the ministry so everyone is on the same page. It empowers your staff to lead and make decisions on their own based on the clear principles outlined. It focuses ministries to accomplish specific goals.

WHAT IS A PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY AND WHAT SHOULD IT LOOK LIKE?

A philosophy of ministry should be a clear, specific, expression of the purpose of your ministry that accurately states the following:

1. Why does the ministry exist?
2. What does it intend to accomplish?
3. How does it intend to accomplish it?

There are many terms that have been used to describe statements that express the why, what and how—vision, mission, purpose, goals, core values, philosophy, guiding principles, strategic planning, etc. The terminology and structure are not as significant as clearly articulating the three statements above.

One of the most widely used methods of communicating a philosophy of ministry is the Vision-Mission-Core Values structure.

- A vision statement describes why you exist. It is a statement of what you want to become. It is the ideal, ultimate, realistic, achievable goal for your ministry. It gives distinction and individuality to your ministry. It is outcome focused.
- A mission statement describes what you intend to do. What are you trying to achieve? What is your purpose? What will you do to reach the picture described in your vision statement?
- Core values describe how you will accomplish your mission. These are the boundaries that constrain your efforts. They describe the manner in which you attempt to achieve your goals.

Example: Tri-City Baptist Church

Vision: To glorify God by building a New Testament Church in order to assist its members and other fundamental churches in the West and around the world in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Mission: Exalt the Triune God through lifestyle worship; Edify believers through correct doctrine, discipleship, fellowship, and unity; Evangelize unbelievers through prayer and the proclamation of the Gospel.

Core Values

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Integrity First | 8. Christ-Centered Outreach |
| 2. Selfless Service | 9. Disciplined Stewardship |
| 3. Passionate Preaching | 10. Building Biblical Families |
| 4. Contending with Compassion | 11. Biblical Revelation Before Human Reason |
| 5. Biblical Purity | 12. Mentoring Servants into Christ-likeness |
| 6. Primacy of the Local Church | 13. Unity According to Spiritual Principles |
| 7. Excellence in Everything | 14. Exalting God through Submission |

HOW DO YOU CREATE A PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY?

1. **Get a vision for your ministry.**

This is more than merely having a goal setting, brainstorming session. As a Christian, you have the person of the Holy Spirit indwelling you! God has promised that if you sincerely seek wisdom, He will give it to you (James 1:5). Get away to a place where you will be undisturbed. Confess sin, meditate on Scripture, and plead with God to give you wisdom and direction in your ministry. Allow God to guide you through Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Don't put God in a box. Ask God to show you a ministry that is bigger than yourself. Ask God to give you such a great a burden for the people to whom you minister that it will not be quenched.

2. **Submit to the God-given authorities in your life.**

God will never lead you, no matter how strongly you feel it, to do something that is unscriptural. God will never lead you to do something that runs contrary to the authority of your pastor. Diligently search the Scriptures. Sit down with those who are in spiritual authority over you and discuss this philosophy of ministry. Get advice from your pastor. Be willing to humble yourself and submit if there are differences of opinion.

3. **Step up and take responsibility for your ministry.**

If you believe that God has called you, He has done so for a reason. Do not try to copy or imitate others, God has called you. Sometimes fear and a lack of faith may keep you from taking a stand for God's clear leading in your ministry. If you have submitted to Scripture and to your pastor, don't back down because of what others might think. God's blessing always follows obedience. This does not mean that you should not take the advice of others. In fact, it is a good idea to look at how other ministries have articulated their philosophy of ministry. It may give occasion for the Holy Spirit to burden you about something you have not thought of before. But in the end you must step up and allow God to work through you.

WHAT ARE SOME CHILDREN-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS?

There are many core values that you could have for your children's programs, but I wanted to share with you the two core values that revolutionized my ministry. I hope this will help you consider some of the unique issues related to children's ministry.

Tri-City Baptist Church Children's Ministry Vision/Mission Statement

We exist to make disciples of children by reaching them for Christ and aiding their parents in developing productive citizens of the Kingdom of God, prepared for a lifetime of service.

Core Value 1: Saved children are every bit a part of the body of Christ, with all the privileges and responsibilities that accompany it.

Luke 18:15-17 ¹⁵And they brought unto Him also infants, that He would touch them: but when His disciples saw it, they rebuked them. ¹⁶But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁷Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Notice the attitudes of the adults:

- Parents—They wanted their children to be touched by Jesus.
- Disciples—They saw the children as a distraction to Christ's ministry.
- Jesus—He welcomed the children, proclaimed their part in the kingdom, and used them as an example to teach a spiritual truth.
- Saved children are part of the Kingdom of God.
- Saved children are part of the same body of Christ as adults.
- Saved children have the same Holy Spirit as adults.
- Saved children are gifted by the Holy Spirit.
- Saved children have the same responsibility to pray, worship, serve, and minister as adults do.
- We are to welcome children not view them as distractions.
- We need to integrate and accommodate children, not separate and isolate them.

The culture in the United States views children as an inconvenience, an irritation and a distraction. Unfortunately, programs such as Sunday School, children's church, and day care, though needed, have caused more to separate children from adults. As a result, adults have become accustomed to learning, playing, working, praying, and worshipping with children out of sight and hearing. However, Jesus told us to welcome children and not hinder them. Do we forget that to welcome someone is to gladly receive them? We revert to referring to children as problems in the church. Our role is to give them security and freedom to be whom God created them to be. We only set ourselves up for frustration if we expect them to be anything else. We must get to know the children. Talk to them just like you would to anyone else. Listen to them and hear their hearts. Experience and learn from their sensitivity and openness to the Lord. Be willing to see the world through their faith-filled eyes. We must take responsibility for their growth and well being. Avoid looking at them as their children but our children. We must embrace them as part of our extended family. (*Cell Church* Fall '96)

1. Children must feel as though they are part of the body of Christ. They must experience church life with the corporate body.

- They need to see people get saved.

- They need to see people get baptized.
 - They need to see God work in the lives of other Christians.
 - They need to hear from their senior pastor.
 - They need to hear the choir and other special music.
 - They need to participate in the Lord's Supper if they are saved.
2. Families need to worship together.
- Children need to see mom and dad be convicted by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word.
 - Children need to see mom and dad praise the Lord.
 - Parents need to apply the preaching to the lives of their children.
3. Children need to worship.
- Children need to sing songs that they know and understand.
 - Children need to hear preaching on their level that speaks to their needs.
 - Children need to be challenged to respond to the preaching of the Word.
 - Children need to actively participate in the service. They need to feel that the service is for them, not just for mom and dad.
4. Adults need to worship.
- Children require attention.
 - Parents need the opportunity to focus on God rather than taking care of and disciplining their children.
 - Children can be a distraction.

Core Value 2: Our children's programs must be unified, yet distinct in fulfilling their aspect of ministry.

Each ministry has its own distinct purpose. It fulfills a unique roll in accomplishing our vision. By defining this, our staff clearly knows why the ministry exists. We do not have Sunday School teachers that are treating their classes like mini-church services and preaching to the kids. And our children's church is not another Sunday School session. By clearly defining this, we also avoid duplication of ministry. When I started as the children's pastor of our church, children and parents were exasperated with Bible memory. How could this be? Isn't Bible memory a good thing? Yes, but every program was doing it and promoting it as an integral part of their program. Children would learn verses in Sunday School, and would on occasion have a memory verse promotion. They would learn verses in children's church, and many verses in AWANA. Those that were in the Christian day school would learn verses for class. Verses would be memorized in children's choir, VBS, and small groups. Kids were forced to pick and chose for which program they would learn the verses. This led them to feel guilty or slighted in the programs that they did not participate. Teachers and staff members struggled to increase participation levels, and parents who actually tried to help their children learn verses in every program were worn out. By defining the primary distinc-

tives for each ministry, we were able to solve this problem. Every program in the church does not need to try to accomplish every aspect of ministry. This frees up each ministry to focus all its energy on what it does best.

We wanted our programs to be distinct, but not disjointed. We needed a way to unify our efforts and work together. We did this by introducing a monthly theme to our entire children's ministry. Every ministry takes part in that theme each month. This has gone a long way toward unifying every aspect of our children's ministry. We feel like one team working together toward a common goal rather than many programs all going in their own direction.

COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

Once you have clearly articulated and documented your philosophy of ministry, your job is far from done. You must constantly keep it before your staff. When ideas come up for new programs or activities, refer back to your philosophy. Does this new idea help us meet our vision and mission? Is this method within our core values? After a big promotion or activity, evaluate what happened based on the philosophy. Did this part of the activity help reach our mission? What can we do better next time bring this in line with our values?

Finally, no man made system is perfect. Be willing to adapt and change as God leads. This process takes a lot of time and effort. But if you will invest the time to go through this process, it will transform your ministry.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY STRUCTURE FOR TRI-CITY BAPTIST CHURCH

	Sunday School	Children's Church	AWANA/VBS	Children's Choir	Children's Small Group
Primary Distinctives	Doctrinal Education	Worship Preaching	Evangelism Bible Memory	Ministry/Service	Accountability Application
Secondary Distinctives	Assimilation			Music Development	Assimilation
Materials Used	RBP	In house based on monthly theme	AWANA Material	Patch Club Pee Wee Club	In house based on Sunday's message
How the program meets the primary objectives	Children are systematically taken through all the major doctrines, events, and characters of the Bible. These are taught through story and activity with the focus of real life application.	Children are given the opportunity to worship on their level. They worship through song, testimony, and activity. The central focus is worship through a message (this can be in different formats) from "God's Man" proclaiming the truth from the whole council of the Word of God.	Children memorize primarily Gospel verses. First this serves to bring a child to a saving knowledge of Christ, but also it begins to teach a child the verses and concepts of sharing Christ with others. Game times, Olympic events, and other activities serve to attract unsaved visitors.	Children are taught to use their talents to serve Christ. Primarily this is through music and drama. Children also develop their music and drama skills and are taught excellence in service (giving God their best).	Children are encouraged to talk about how they applied the Sunday message to their everyday life through discussion, role-playing skits, and games. Children will learn to intercede for one another. Children will be encouraged to have daily devotions.
How the program meets the unifying theme	Weekly devotions on the theme	Story/puppets/drama all based on the theme Message on the theme Weekly devotions on the theme	Council Time message on the theme. Weekly devotions on the theme	Prepared song is on the theme Activities and games that re-enforce the theme Weekly devotions on the theme	Word time based on theme Weekly Devotions on the theme
Primary Age Groups	4-5 yr. Olds 1 st Grade B & G 2 nd -3 rd Grade B 2 nd -3 rd Grade G	Primary Church	Cubbies Sparks	Half-Note Choir	Primary Group 4 yrs - 2 nd Grade.
Junior Age Groups	4 th -5 th Grade B 4 th -5 th Grade G 6 th Grade B & G	Junior Church	Pals Chums Pioneers Guards	Echo Choir	Junior Groups 3 rd - 6 th Grade Boys 3 rd - 6 th Grade Girls

1-7

A BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH MINISTRY

“Someone needs to do something about those teenagers in our church.”

“We need more activities to ‘keep them busy’.”

“What about fun activities? Everyone knows that teens need something fun to do.”

“It’s our job to keep them off the street you know.”

Sorting through the maze of information and advice from others regarding the right direction for the youth ministry of your church can be frustrating and at times disillusioning. No wonder the average life span of a full-time youth pastor is 18 months. A good youth worker wants to reach the teens’ hearts, encourage the parents, please the deacons and the pastor, and deal respectfully with the other people in the church who have an “expert” opinion on youth ministry. How do you accomplish all this?

Where do you begin? What about God? What would He want to see accomplished in our teens’ lives?

On the outset one must understand that the youth pastor is expected to be . . .

- An activities coordinator
- A coach
- An entertainer
- A godly example
- An inspirational leader
- A kid at heart
- A mature adult
- An open-minded person
- An answerer of every question
- A spiritual example
- An umpire
- A wise man
- A young, vibrant person
- A bus driver
- A discipler
- A father (with near perfect kids)
- A husband
- A junk food junkie
- A leader
- A nice guy, always
- A pastor
- A referee
- A teacher
- A veteran youth worker
- An example
- Always zealous

But what does God want me to be? What does He want me to accomplish in the lives of teenagers?

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man,” Luke 2:52. The Bible does not go into great detail about Jesus’ life on this earth as a teenager, but we do know that as a teenager He grew. It seems impossible that the child of God, who was perfect in every way, had room to grow; but that

is exactly what is stated in Luke 2:52. While Christ was a teenager, He grew in four specific areas. He grew in

1. Wisdom—Mentally
2. Stature—Physically
3. Favor with God—Spiritually
4. Favor with man—Socially

A biblical philosophy of youth ministry must have at its heart these four areas of growth in the lives of its youth. The word *increased* in Luke 2:52 actually means to strike forward, to advance, to cut away as in cutting a path to advance from one point to another. Jesus “advanced” in these areas of life. If one were to compare the phrase “and the child grew” in Luke 2:40 to the phrase “Jesus increased” in Luke 2:52, one would see that the growth expressed in Luke 2:40 was natural growth (literally “enlarged”) and that the growth expressed in Luke 2:52 was developmental growth (something that had to be worked at). The Bible does not teach “faith by works” but it does teach “faith that works.” Jesus grew as a teenager, and it was an active discipline in which He fought battles to grow. If our teenagers are to grow, we must design a ministry philosophy that will be conducive to that kind of active, disciplined, spiritual growth.

A biblical philosophy of youth ministry should include growth in these four areas: mental, physical, spiritual, and social—Luke 2:52.

OBJECTIVE ONE: SPIRITUAL GROWTH

To encourage spiritual growth at different levels of the teenagers' spiritual life.

Five Spiritual Goals For Every Teenager

- I. Salvation—To see each teenager accept Christ as his personal Savior, Romans 6:23. Evangelism is a vital part of an effective youth ministry. Through the teaching and preaching of the Word of God in Sunday School, youth meetings, church services, and outreach events, our first goal is to see each teenager come to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ. A regular teen visitation program and special outreach events will aid in establishing contacts with new teens and opportunities to witness.
- II. Surrender—To see each teenager come to a decision of total surrender and dedication of his/her life to God. *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service,” Romans 12:1.* There are three elements each teenager must grasp regarding their surrender to God.
 - A. The Decision—Exactly what decision is God asking each of His children to make? The word *present* literally means “to yield.” God is asking us to yield something completely to His control. Romans 6:13, 16, 19 gives a warning not to *“yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God”* The decision to yield will cause the Christian teenager to become a slave, weapon, or instrument of righteousness, instead of a weapon of unrighteousness unto sin.
 - B. The Degree—What is God requiring us to yield and to what extent are we to do so? *“I beseech [literally beg] you . . . that ye present [yield] your bodies”* God is asking us to present our “bodies” to Him. The word *body* is referring to the “entire instrument of life.” God is asking the Christian to yield the complete man, the entire living vessel to Him. God does not want a partial yielding but a yielding of our complete body to Him. The Christian who has gotten on his knees and

asked the Lord to take control of his mind, ears, eyes, tongue, heart, hands, legs, and feet and who has totally yielded these to Him has placed himself in a position of surrender.

- C. The Dedication—The dedication of our life as a “living sacrifice.” Our entire life in a standing with God as a living sacrifice to be used of Him. As in the words of the hymn “I Surrender All”

All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give,
I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live.
I surrender all, I surrender all, all to thee my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

- III. Separation—To see each teenager separate himself from the world and unto God. *“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord . . .,” 2 Corinthians 6:17. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith,” 1 John 5:2-4. “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; [does not continue in sin] but he that is begotten of God keepeth [guards] himself . . .” 1 John 5:18.*

The Christian teenager must embrace the biblical teaching that he is to be separated from the world and unto God to be effective in his testimony for Him.

- IV. Student of the Word—To see each teenager develop a hunger for the word of God and become a student of it. *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen.” 2 Peter 3:18.*

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.” Psalm 119:9. Psalm 119 gives eight attitudes with which we are to approach the Word of God.

- A. With my whole heart—Psalm 119:2, 10, 34, 58, 69
- B. Diligently—Psalm 119:4
- C. With Obedience—Psalm 119:8, 33, 34, 44, 57, 60, 87, 100, 101, 106, 112, 134, 145
- D. Meditation—Psalm 119:15, 16, 23, 27, 48, 78, 93, 97, 109, 148, 153, 176
- E. Prayer—Psalm 119:18, 73, 125, 169
- F. Teachable Spirit—Psalm 119:26, 33, 64, 68, 135
- G. With Reverence—Psalm 119:38, 72, 113, 119, 127, 159, 161, 163, 167
- H. With Belief and Trust in God’s Word—Psalm 119:66, 74, 81, 114, 128, 147, 151

By approaching the Word of God in the right spirit, His Word will prove itself to be a source of life and strength to produce consistent spiritual growth in the life of the believer.

- V. Soul Conscious—To see developed in the life of each teenager a desire to lead others to Christ; to become equipped and effective in the discipline of sharing their faith. *“Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers unto His harvest,” Matthew 9:37-38.* Through teaching and training in the specifics of how to lead a soul to Christ and through Christian service involvement, each teenager can develop a heart for the unsaved world around him. Regular teen outreach activities and an annual mission trip will aid in the development of a burden for the lost.

OBJECTIVE TWO: PHYSICAL GROWTH

To provide an atmosphere that produces proper attitudes of physical growth

Three Goals for Physical Growth

- I. Exercise—To provide activities that give the teenager adequate outlets for exercise
 - A. Competitive Activities—Some youth activities will be friendly but very competitive. These activities will serve to teach the teenager to strive together in a team setting for a common cause.
 - B. Non-Competitive Activities—To provide lower levels of exercise and competition that focuses on more than pure physical ability
- II. Safety—To teach teenagers to make decisions regarding personal safety; to provide a controlled activity with adequate adult supervision at all times to guarantee the safety of each young person.
- III. 100% Effort—To challenge to give their very best for the glory of God—1 Corinthians 10:31

OBJECTIVE THREE: MENTAL GROWTH

To encourage mental development by challenging the teenager to participate in new skills

Two Goals for Mental Development

- I. Leadership—To provide opportunities for leadership development within the youth group environment
 - A. Youth Group Officers
 - B. Youth Sunday School Class Officers
 - C. Care Force Leaders
 - D. Mission Team Leaders
- II. Bible Knowledge—To provide outlets to stretch mentally through memorizing Bible verses and reading quality Christian books

OBJECTIVE FOUR: SOCIAL GROWTH

To encourage teenagers to learn the principles of biblical relationships

Emphasis will be placed on

- I. Relationship with God
- II. Relationship with Parents
- III. Relationship with Friends
- IV. Relationships with the Opposite Sex
- V. Relationships with those in Authority

Five Goals for Social Growth

- I. Sacrifice for a Common Cause—To learn through involvement the principle of sacrificing for a common cause
- II. Obedience to Authority—To learn to respond with honor and obedience to the authority God has placed over each young person; to establish rules that will be enforced lovingly, consistently, and without partiality
- III. Responsibility—To learn to “carry the load”; the principles of responsibility regarding cleaning up after oneself, respecting persons and property as it belongs to God
- IV. Friendship—To learn how to make friends by being friendly and reaching out to others; to provide opportunities for friendship by having large and small group sessions, and “free time” during activities for socialization
- V. Character—To learn what qualities are to be honored in a person by recognizing from time to time those who exemplify those qualities the Lord would have us develop in our lives

MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE IN THE YOUTH GROUP

One of the major causes of discouragement in the ministry to youth is the element of teenagers out of control. If you have ever jumped on a school bus filled with teenagers going to school and noticed the atmosphere to be pretty quiet, do not be fooled. That same group of teenagers can get on the same type of bus for a youth activity at church and within a few seconds be “climbing the walls.” (And have your youth workers looking for the nearest exit.)

Is it an unwritten rule that since this is a youth activity, the teenagers should be able to “let loose” and the adults in charge are to just supervise the chaos? Many church youth groups operate with this philosophy. Obviously, youth activities are much different than school activities, and the very goal of the youth pastor is to create a sense of excitement for the event at hand. There is a line that can be crossed in a teenager’s conduct that creates an atmosphere that is not in any way pleasing to God.

How does a youth pastor begin toward the goal of maintaining a sense of youth group discipline?

1. Have a clear youth ministry philosophy.
2. Communicate your philosophy and goals to your pastor, parents, youth staff, and teenagers.
3. Have a written set of guidelines for the youth group.
4. Communicate these guidelines to your pastor, parents, youth staff, and teenagers.
5. Have a plan for discipline.
6. Have specific consequences for offenders.

Following is an example of youth group guidelines.

YOUTH GROUP GUIDELINES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Here at Colonial Hills Baptist Church our goal for our youth ministry is to glorify God and make a difference in our youth.

I. MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN APPEARANCE.

Young Men—Please dress appropriately on activities and exemplify Christ in your appearance. Please stay away from shorts and tank tops for church activities since this would not be appropriate. On certain summer activities, knee length shorts are allowed. Dress code will be announced for the specific activity.

Young Women—Please dress appropriately on activities and exemplify Christ in your appearance, since our goal is to make a difference in our testimony. Loose-fitting slacks, culottes, and skirts are appropriate for youth functions. All fashions should be loose-fitting and to the knee.

All Young People—Be careful not to wear any clothing that has an advertisement for alcohol, worldly rock groups, or any other advertisement that would be harmful toward our goal of making a difference for Christ.

II. MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ATTITUDE.

Always display the highest respect for authority, whether it is the youth pastor, youth workers, or any other authority in a place we might be visiting. Never question the authority, but be quick to obey and encourage this attitude among others. Never talk or interrupt while someone is speaking or giving instructions on any youth activity or youth meeting. Always display a positive attitude—**MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

III. MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ACQUAINTANCES AND FRIENDS.

Youth functions are a great place to develop life-long friends. Treat those friendships with honor and respect. Always be friendly to visitors and pull them into the group. Never throw the rules at visitors or new teens; they will come around in time. Be careful to maintain an unquestionable testimony in your dating relationships by not sitting in the last five seats of the bus or the back row in youth meetings and church. Never argue with other teens and accept responsibility for your own visitors' actions.

IV. MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON ACTIVITIES.

When our youth group is on an activity and we use any facility, always leave it better than we found it. If we are in a fast food restaurant, before you leave, pick up all of your trash and then go the extra mile to pick up what someone else might have left. People ought to be glad to see us come because rather than abuse facilities, we actually leave them in better shape.

YOUTH GROUP DISCIPLINE

DEVELOPING CONSEQUENCES FOR OFFENDERS

What if a teenager breaks a rule or becomes a discipline problem?

When a teenager is involved in misconduct, follow these steps:

Four Steps of Disciplining Misconduct

1. Correct the problem generally, if possible.
Example: Billy is talking during the lesson; you say, "I need you guys on my right to pay attention; I feel the Lord has something in this passage for you today."
2. Correct the problem specifically.
Example: Billy keeps talking. You say, "Billy, you need to stop talking and listen to what the Word of God has for you today."
3. Have him sit with an adult. He will be supervised for the remainder of the activity.
4. Have him dismissed from the activity. Parents should be called to come pick up Billy. Follow up with a discussion with Billy and his parents regarding proper conduct at youth functions.

What to do with Repeat Offenders

1. First Step—Suspend them from all youth functions for one month.
 2. *Second Step—Suspend them from all youth functions for two months if they continue to show disrespect and rebellious behavior.
 3. *Third Step—Suspend them for three months from all youth functions.
- * A meeting with parents, teenager and youth pastor will be required. A behavior contract will be written and signed by parents, teenager, and youth pastor. If this written contract is broken, the teenager is no longer allowed to participate in the church group. What is the teenager's alternative? He can sit in his parent's Sunday school class and attend their class activities. It is ultimately the parents' responsibility to get control of their child's life and lead him to a place of total submission to the Lord.

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE MINISTRY TO YOUTH GOALS

1. Spiritual Leadership
 - a. Develop a spiritual leadership program for your teenagers, especially the guys.
 - b. Personally disciple teens in your group.
 - c. Create opportunities of service for these young people.
2. Outreach
 - a. A teen visitation program that meets a minimum of one time each month
 - b. An extension ministry which provides opportunities for service
 - c. Youth outreach events
 - d. Summer youth mission trip
3. Discipleship—Meet with every teenager in the group at least once each year for personal discipleship (more often if you have a smaller group).
4. Spiritual Growth—Have an organized program for Bible study, prayers groups, prayer partners, and accountability partners.
5. Activities—Have activities each month that promote mental, physical, spiritual, and social development.
6. Youth Staff—Develop a ministry of training and involving adults in the nuts and bolts of your youth ministry.
7. Parent Ministry—Have a parent meeting once every three months and keep them informed, involved, and instructed.
8. Resources—Make resources available for parents and youth staff to have access to on the topics of parenting teens, youth work, discipleship, and spiritual growth.

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A BIBLICAL YOUTH PROGRAM

Introduction: “Youth is the morning of life, and if the Sun of Righteousness does not chase away the moral fog before noon, the whole life may remain overcast and gloomy” (unknown). The future leadership of our churches depends upon what we do today. Young people who will be leaders tomorrow must be prepared and trained today.

- I. Purpose—With no purpose you cannot develop principles
 - A. Soul Winning—Winning young people to Christ
 - B. Spiritual Growth—Providing opportunities of schooling
 - C. Service Training—Serving the Lord so it becomes natural
 - D. Social Outlet—Getting together and knowing other people

- II. Principles
 - A. Foundation Principle—What you build your program on
 1. Extension of the pulpit ministry
 2. Preaching is most important
 - B. Fun Principle—Natural dynamic
 1. Fast action
 2. Social contact
 3. Good food
 4. Group activities
 - C. Fundamental Spiritual Principle
 1. Salvation and assurance
 2. Separation from sin and the world
 3. Principle of daily combat
 4. Service for now and the future
 5. Preparation for Bible college

- III. Steps For Starting a Youth Program
 - A. Meet with interested families to get ideas.
 - B. Determine a staff.
 1. Assignments
 2. Job description
 3. Establish standards
 - C. Plan three to six months of weekly activities.
 - D. Start with a big activity.
 - E. Develop a core of faithful teens.
 - F. It takes two to three years to build a consistent core.
 - G. Junior high teens are building blocks for the future.
 - H. Use high school teens.
 - I. Be faithful.

PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH WORK

Author Unknown

Philosophy:

1. Purpose
 - a. Ephesians 4:11-13—maturity
 - b. 1 Peter 2:21; Romans 8:29—Christ-likeness
 - c. Philippians 3:13—“...*this one thing I do...*”
2. Pulpit
 - a. 1 Timothy 3:15—studying
 - b. 2 Timothy 4:2—preaching
3. Parent
 - a. Deuteronomy 5:30; 6:5—God teaches leader (Moses)
 - b. Deuteronomy 6:6-25—leader teaches parent
 - c. Deuteronomy 6:6-9—parent teaches children
 1. By word
 2. By example
4. Program
 - a. Luke 2:52
 - b. 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15; Psalm 1:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:16—What works with God will work with any age.
 - c. Service—Provide an outlet or they will become Dead Sea Teens; give them projects among many other ways to serve.
 - d. Social—Activities provided in a good program will help teens build the right friendships and have proper social contacts, but socials should be only a fringe benefit of a program.

Practicality:

1. Personal traits for the youth leader
 - a. Be genuine and concerned—1 Timothy 4:12.
 - b. Focus on their needs—one way of doing this is by questionnaires.
 - c. Be consistent.
 - d. Communicate to each teen as an individual.
 - e. Discipline.
 - f. Disciple.
 - g. Replacement principle—Luke 11:24-28.
 - h. Be yourself and not one of the gang.

- i. Reach the reachable and teach the teachable.
 - j. Spend time with them.
 - k. Teach “Why do you do what you do?”
 - l. You get what you honor.
2. Problems (dealing with)
- a. The outward problem is just a fruit of the real, inward problem.
 - b. In dealing with problems, get to the root of it. There are four basic roots:
 1. Bitterness
 2. Wrong value system
 3. Self-concepts
 4. Moral problems or immorality
3. Perseverance
- a. Do not quit in spite of problems, pressures, and negativism.
 - b. The power of God provides, so focus on the eternal reward.
 - c. God’s work is the greatest work in the world.

MORE PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH WORK

Author Unknown

1. Youth work should seek to develop teenagers in four main areas of life, based on the life of Jesus Christ as a young man (Luke 2:52). These areas are mental, social, physical, and spiritual.
2. The youth work should have the proper balance (Proverbs 11:1) to equip the teens to be well-rounded, with the program geared to center on the Word of God, and the person of Christ (Psalm 119:105). The work must not be centered on a personality or around the program.
3. Five basic areas are to be emphasized during the spiritual training in the youth work. The goals are to produce mature Christian youth who are
 - a. Saved—Romans 6:23
 - b. Separated from the world, and unto God—2 Corinthians 6:17
 - c. Consecrated—Philippians 3:10
 - d. Hungry for God's Word and wisdom—2 Peter 3:18
 - e. Burdened for the lost souls around them—Matthew 9:37-38

Each phase of the program must be leading up to one of these five goals for the teenagers.

4. Three basic plans are to be used:
 - a. Evangelism—Daniel 12:3
 - b. Character development—1 Timothy 4:7
 - c. Bible knowledge—2 Timothy 3:16-17

Since spiritual activities do much to build spiritual young people, the emphasis of the program should be to make Bible studies, soul winning, Sunday School, etc. an exciting part of the young person's life. The group should not be geared to only the "let's have fun" philosophy so prevalent today. Activities and recreation will play a vital link in the teen's development, but only as they fit into the three basic plans. All activities should have a specific purpose behind them, rather than just keeping the teens "busy" or "off the streets" (1 Thessalonians 5:22; Ecclesiastes 9:10).

5. Parents play a vital role in the youth work—Regular meetings should be scheduled, as seen fit by the pastor, to keep the parents up to date as to what is happening with the young people and to explain the program to them. A youth work must have successful parental backing to be a success (Deuteronomy 5-6). The youth pastor must take the attitude of having a servant's heart, and be a help to the parents in raising their children, not a hindrance.
6. Loyalty to the local church (Matthew 16:18) and to the pastor (Hebrews 13:17) must be held by the youth pastor and taught to the youth group—Unity of the group is a secret to strength (Romans 12:5), while strife and rebellion cannot be tolerated (1 Samuel 15:23). Good teaching will be an important necessity to reach the young people with God's life-changing principles and truths (Ephesians 4:11). The teens should be taught excellence in every phase of their lives, from the music they listen to, to the clothing they wear (1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 5:10).
7. Quality should be primary over quantity—Every effort should be made to reach every teenager possible, but the needs of each individual must be of utmost importance. Personal work and a strong follow-up program (Romans 15:14) will be necessary to see lasting results. The youth pastor must be available to his teenagers 24 hours a day if needed (1 Peter 3:15). His office must be made open to each person for counsel, when needed (Proverbs 24:6; 15:22).

8. Youth work should complement the other ministries of the church (1 Corinthians 3:9)—Agreement of purpose with each staff member is of utmost importance, as we seek to please the Lord and raise up a people to the “praise of His glory” (1 Corinthians 12:25).

PRINCIPLES FOR A SUCCESSFUL YOUTH PROGRAM

Author Unknown

- I. Principle Number 1—The spiritual dynamic is characterized by the following:
 - A. Separation—2 Corinthians 3:1-2; 6:14-18; Matthew 7:6; 1 Corinthians 3:9-17; 6:19-20; 1 John 2:15-17
 - B. Discipline—The young person must learn to follow before he can lead; Hebrews 12:5-11; 13:7, 13, 17; 1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Timothy 4:18; Colossians 2:6; Revelation 3:19—Discipline in love.
 - C. Soul Winning—Matthew 4:19; 9:38; 11:29-30; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Corinthians 2:5, 11, 16, 26; 3:1; 5:11, 26; Jeremiah 20:9; John 15:11; Mark 8:38

- II. Principle Number 2—The natural dynamic is conditioned by evangelism.

Luke 5:27-32; 14:23; 19:1-10

 - A. Young people want to feel needed.
 - B. Young people must be provided with activities which become a means of evangelizing.

- III. Principle Number 3—The youth pastor chooses and trains his own leaders
Matthew 4:19; 1 Thessalonians 2

- IV. Principle Number 4—The life-situation concept is used as the basis of training.

Luke 10:1-20

 - A. Stand where the youth pastor stands
 - B. Trained to be a soul winner—youth reaching youth today
 - C. Witnessing is not optional.
 - D. Laws of natural subordination
 - E. Train from the Word of God

- V. Principle Number 5—A youth program depends upon authority.

Romans 13:1-5; Hebrews 13:7, 17; Revelation 3:19

 - A. Disciplined young people
 - B. Challenging authority—meet each one

- VI. Principle Number 6—No cooperation with interdenominational youth activities
Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 5:25; 1 Timothy 3:15; Nehemiah 13

- A. Wrong premise—the local church has failed, is failing, or will fail
- B. Undermines the local church
- C. Non-separatistic activities
- D. Ecumenical

VII. Principle Number 7—The youth pastor holds his position in trust to the senior pastor.

- A. Must be loyal
- B. Everything through channels

VIII. Principle Number 8—The principle of combat

2 Timothy 2:1-4, 22; 4:1-8; Romans 13:12-14; 2 Corinthians 10:34; Ephesians 6:10-18

IX. Principle Number 9—There should be no conflict between the home and the church.

Genesis 26:25, 35; Matthew 19:29; Luke 14:25; Ephesians 5:23-32; 6:1-4; Exodus 20:12

- A. If parents are surrendered to the will of God and the Word of God
- B. Children are surrendered to the will of God and the Word of God
- C. Authority of the school—state basis
- D. Authority of the church—spiritual bass

X. Principle Number 10—The principle of democratic leadership

1 Thessalonians 2; Matthew 9:36; 11:28-30

- A. Goal: welfare of the group—Rights of the individual are to be subordinate to the rights of the group.
- B. Arrive at decisions by seeking the consensus of opinion of the group.
- C. Initiates decisions by example.
- D. Motives are altruistic.
- E. Bear the marks of humility.

PARENT MEETINGS

A youth leader's job is not a competition with parents; it is a partnership for developing teens into mature Christians who glorify God by being like Christ Jesus. Parent meetings are a time to inform, enlist, encourage, teach, and emphasize the parents' role in youth ministry.

I. Examining the reasons for having regular parent meetings

- A. To emphasize the parents role in a youth ministry
- B. To inform parents of necessary information
 - 1. The youth ministry purpose statement
 - 2. The results of past events
 - 3. Present trends of youth culture
 - a. Inform parents of important books to read.
 - b. Hand out helpful articles and information.
 - 4. Pertinent information
 - a. Leadership opportunities
 - b. Leadership expectations
 - c. Policies and procedures
 - 5. The calendar of coming events
 - a. Communicate important dates months in advance. Early notice of activities allows families to plan for family events.
 - b. Communicate the “whys” of certain activities.
 - c. Communicate the “how’s” of activities.
- C. To encourage the battle weary
 - 1. Communicate specific instances about steps of growth in their teens' lives.
 - 2. Plan to have a teen give a testimony of what God is doing in his life.
- D. To enlist participation
 - 1. Have the parents fill out important parent information. *See page 2-4.*
 - 2. Ask for available resources the parents have that they would be willing to use for teen activities—house, van, boat, maybe even a cabin.
 - 3. Encourage parents to volunteer for certain activities to attend and participate in throughout the year. You may choose to set a number goal on how often you would like them to participate.

4. Ask for ideas for ministering to their teens.
 5. Ask for areas where they feel they need help.
- E. To teach parents in family and teen-oriented issues
1. Be informative, identifying problems and solutions.
 2. Teach the youth philosophy of the church.
 3. Include current events and proper biblical perspectives on issues that may be overwhelming or confusing.

II. Introductory steps for creating effective parent meetings

- A. Choose a time and set the date.
1. A time and day that meets the needs of your church and your parents—Ask them for the time best for them.
 2. A time that is frequent enough to make a difference but not too often to detract from other need-ful time demands
 3. A day where the greatest number of the parents may attend
- B. Announce and explain the importance of the meeting.
1. Specifically seek the parents to attend.
 2. Explain why meetings are needed.
- C. Gather and organize information for parents.
1. Gather pertinent articles from many sources.
 2. Read sound books pertaining to teen issues.
- D. Prayerfully choose your focus.
1. Seek your pastor's insight for topics.
 2. Seek parental ideas and needs for topics.
- E. Make a clear layout of the meeting plan.
- F. Evaluate the meeting.
- G. Plan and announce the next meeting.

Parent meetings may seem to be a bit intimidating to a youth leader; all the more reason they are needed. These meetings bring together youth leaders and parents. Each church is a family of believers which will have distinct needs. Learn from each meeting and build upon the last one. Eventually through the practice of alert gathering and one-on-one talks with parents, you will have an abundant list of appropriate meeting topics.

TOPIC IDEAS FOR PARENT MEETINGS

Casting a Vision of God in Your Child's Life

Communicating with Your Teen

Evaluating What You and Your Children Watch for Entertainment

God's Mandate for Parents from Deuteronomy 5-6

Helping Your Child to Be a Good Friend

How Parents Provoke Their Children to Wrath

How to Have Family Devotions

The Importance of Bible Memory

The Importance of Influencing Your Child's Friends

Important Limitations and Boundaries in the Life of a Teen

Necessary Steps in the Life of a Believer

Participating in Your Teen's Youth Group

Praying for Your Children

Reaching the Heart of Your Child

The Reason for Youth Activities

Serving or Being Served? The Importance of Developing a Servant's Heart

Sibling Rivalry: Is It Just a Phase?

Teaching Character

Teaching the Purpose Statement of Youth Ministry

Teaching Your Child How to Discern What Is Good Music

Teaching Your Children to Pray

Teens and Dating

Training Responsibility in the Life of your Child

When Teens Manipulate: Properly Handling Teen Manipulation

Where Have Proper Manners Gone? The Role Manners Play in Life

Who Does Your Child Worship?

Why Send Your Teen to Camp

Volunteer/Youth Ministry
Parent Information

Student Name(s) _____	Grade(s) _____
Mother's name _____	Father's name _____
Address _____	Address _____
Street _____	Street _____
City / State / Zip _____	City / State / Zip _____
Home phone _____	Home phone _____
Work phone _____	Work phone _____
Best time to reach you _____	Best time to reach you _____
Fax _____	Fax _____
E-mail _____	E-mail _____

Available Resources for Youth Activities

- | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Van, Suburban | <input type="checkbox"/> Jet Ski | <input type="checkbox"/> Boat | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming Pool | <input type="checkbox"/> Tent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Cabin | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

Next to the checked items, please indicate how many people you can accommodate

Helps

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous Administration (filing, copying, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drive a Follow Car (to bring latecomers, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Art/Decorations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Calls | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Information Desk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video | <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer Graphic Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crowd Control | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide Scholarships | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Leadership

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Group Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Mentor | <input type="checkbox"/> Activities Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Tracking | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Activity Leader/Helper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Refreshment Coordinator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Resource Librarian | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer Team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Topic Speaker— <i>please list topic(s)</i> : _____ | | |
| Talents: <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal <input type="checkbox"/> Instrumental <input type="checkbox"/> Drama <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS IN PRINCIPLE FORM *AS THEY RELATE TO THE FAMILY*

Exodus 20:1-17—God’s First Written Words to Man

1. Put God first in the family—the position He desires and deserves.
2. No object in the home is to be more important than God. An idol can be in the image of “anything” on the earth. Your priorities in life reveal your God.
3. Do not use the name of God in an empty or useless way—slang (minced oaths) or repetitious prayers. Verbal disrespect reveals heart disrespect.
4. Honor the Lord in a special way at least one day per week, keeping in remembrance what He has done. What better place to do that than in faithful attendance in your local church. Remembering what God has done, in general and specifically for us, is at the core of thanksgiving, praise, and worship.
5. Honor parents is the first command with promise. Respect is the foundation for all future relationships and is best learned at home, and early.
6. Resolve relationship problems now before they lead to murder (the ultimate relationship problem).
7. God’s standard is always faithfulness. Faithfulness is basic to all relationships (husband and wife, parent and child, sibling to sibling) and includes our relationship with God. The husband/wife faithfulness is sacred in God’s eyes.
8. Property rights must be respected in the family. Children can violate this by failure to take proper care of the family’s property and thus deprive the family of part of God’s bounty to them. Everything has value.
9. Truthfulness in communication, integrity of lifestyle, and honesty in our dealings with others is not only the “best policy,” it is the right policy. Deceitfulness in any form undermines family unity.
10. Contentment is necessary. I please myself through covetousness, and I please my God through contentment.

TNT FOR TEENS

EPHESIANS 6:4



Training

Paideia—The whole training and education of children as it relates to the cultivation of the mind and morals using commands, teaching, reproofs, and punishment. Showing how and a good example are essential.

“BRING UP”

To nourish up to maturity, not just physically, but in all areas of life.

ADMONITION

Teaching

Training primarily, but not exclusively, by word. It includes exhortation, encouragement, teaching, remonstrance, reproof, or blame as required. It is an appeal to reason, but it may involve correction by deed if necessary.

THE NEEDS OF THESE YOUNG ADULTS

1. To have their doubts settled and to believe in absolute truth
2. To have a feeling of movement toward independence
3. To be understood in the growing importance of friendships
4. To practice reasoning and abstract thinking skills
5. To expand their interests and horizons
6. To give and receive respect
7. To practice sacrificial, “others-first” type of loving service
8. To make wise life decisions and learn to solve problems
9. To develop personal, Bible-based standards and convictions
10. To learn to react to people and circumstances properly
11. To learn and practice biblical relationship skills
12. To accept and fulfill responsibility and accountability

PARENTS OF THESE YOUNG ADULTS NEED TO . . .

1. Spend more time with them (work on finding some “common ground”).
2. Show unconditional love.
3. Loosen control with fulfilled responsibilities (establish “blazes” on this trail).

4. Love your spouse and be a biblical role example.
5. Know, teach, and reason the “why” of rules and beliefs.
6. Set and be consistent with reasonable boundaries and expectations.
7. Be good examples of what you teach, believe, and value.
8. Be faithful in prayer for your children.
9. Be unshockable, listening, question-asking advisors.
10. Establish some guidance in the area of dating and courtship.
11. Help them develop a biblical and eternal “world view.”
12. Be sure you don’t provoke your children to wrath.
 - Too tight in control (reverse of creation order)
 - Inappropriate punishment
 - Unfavorable criticism, especially in front of others (viewed as being disloyal)
 - Refusal to discuss and reason through a question or disagreement
 - Constant nagging and being too pushy
 - Failure to properly model what is expected of them
 - Attempt to isolate them from all outside influences

PROVOKE NOT YOUR CHILDREN TO WRATH

EPHESIANS 6:4; COLOSSIANS 3:21

1. Anger is sinful—Ecclesiastes 7:9; Matthew 5:22; Romans 12:19.
2. Anger is considered by God to be a work of the flesh—Galatians 2:20.
3. Anger is a characteristic of fools—Proverbs 12:16; 14:29.
4. Anger runs with the following:
 - a. Pride—Proverbs 21:24
 - b. Cruelty—Genesis 49:7; Proverbs 27:3-4
 - c. Bitterness, clamor, evil-speaking—Ephesians 4:31
 - d. Blasphemy—Colossians 3:8
 - e. Strife and contention—Proverbs 21:19; 29:22
5. Anger may be averted by the following:
 - a. The way we speak—Proverbs 15:1
 - b. Wisdom—Proverbs 29:8
6. Anger should be considered in the choice of friends—Proverbs 22:24.
7. Anger destroys _____—Proverbs 18:19.
8. Anger has _____ at its root.
9. The _____ of anger are (as illustrated in Numbers 20:1-13)
 - a. Fear
 - b. Frustration
 - c. Hurt/loss
10. Anger may be _____ by the following:
 - a. Demands
 - b. Distortion
 - c. Displeasure
 - d. Destruction

- e. Repression
- f. Suppression
- g. Expression
- h. Confession

WHAT PROVOKES

A survey taken among “middle year” teens yielded the following list of “ways parents provoke their children to wrath.”

1. Are not consistent with rules, discipline, etc.
2. Don't let “us do what we want”
3. Are hypocritical; have a double standard
4. Have a closed mind; no opportunity to really discuss things
5. Don't let us grow up—no independence
6. Don't believe in us; don't trust us
7. Don't respect us—respect is only a one-way street
8. Won't let us give our side of the story
9. Nag us
10. Aren't satisfied—what I've done is never good enough
11. Keep bringing up the past
12. Ignore us when we are talking
13. Play favorites
14. Embarrass us by their husband/wife relationship
15. Don't spend time with us; won't listen
16. Use our dependence on them like a club
17. Want us to serve them, but they don't want to serve us
18. Don't respect our privacy
19. Want us to be “super students”
20. Make fun of us or discipline us in public

SETTING BOUNDARIES: DEVELOPING STANDARDS AND CONVICTIONS

Standards do not make you spiritual. Now before you get nervous, let me explain myself. As a youth pastor, I have ministered to teenagers who have the most conservative of standards in every area, yet struggle with a stale relationship with God. I have worked with teenagers who have not yet developed strong personal standards, (this is especially true of new converts) yet have a relationship with the Lord that is vibrant. This tells me something; standards do not make you spiritual, but standards do make you effective. I believe strongly in biblical standards and practice those standards in my own life. The standards I hold to in my own life are for the benefit of having a more effective testimony for my Lord. They are also boundaries, safeguards to help me steer away from sin and temptation. The literal standard, in itself, does not produce spirituality in my heart. My spirituality is developed through a relationship with Christ, not through the rituals of standards.

Balance is the goal. Have you ever had your teenager quote 1 Samuel 6:7, “. . . *for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.*” It is true that the Lord looks at our heart, but we cannot dismiss the fact that the verse confirms another truth: man looks at our outward appearance. My pastor Dr. Bob Taylor has said of standards, “You may not dress in a way that everyone would automatically know you are a Christian, but you should dress in a way that people should not be surprised when they find out you are.” Teenagers have a built-in desire to blend in. Many Christian teenagers like the idea of being able to stroll through the mall without looking different from their unsaved counterparts. As a Christian parent of a teenager, you have a responsibility to help them set boundaries in their life for the purpose of having an effective testimony and living a lifestyle conducive to spiritual growth.

AREAS OF LIFE THAT REQUIRE STANDARDS

1. Dress/Appearance

Style of clothing: Do my clothes identify me with any worldly movement or group or advertise anything that is inconsistent with the heart of God?

Modesty of Clothing: Do my clothes draw attention to my body in a way that would lead others into the temptation of lust? Is my dress modest when I am involved in normal activities? Example: A dress that appears to be long enough may be very short when a girl is sitting or bending. The cut of the neckline may seem fine while standing, but is it modest when bending? As Christians, we interact with people from all walks of life. We also spend much of our time with other believers. It would be impossible to know the battles others are facing in their lives with lust or thought life. Am I (as a young man or young lady) dressing in a way that may cause another to lust, fantasize, or stumble?

2. Entertainment

Reading Materials: Magazines and books should be of the quality that would not cause a Christian to stumble. Does this material promote things that are wholesome, or does it promote a lifestyle that is not pleasing to God?

Television/Videos: The media industry is very powerful and has tremendous influence on teenagers. Are you allowing images to be viewed that would be a stumbling block to your teenager’s spiritual growth?

Music: God created music for His glory. We should allow God-honoring music to be a strong presence in our life. Multitudes of teenagers have shared with me that their downfall began with involvement in the world’s music. The beat and rhythm that appeals to the flesh and promotes sensual desires is com-

pletely inconsistent with the Holy Spirit's working in our heart. Conservative, God-honoring music should be prevalent in the life and home of a Christian teenager.

3. Relationships

There is a difference between separation and isolation. As Christians, we are to be separated from the world. We are also to be reaching the lost. Your teenager may or may not have contact with a lot of unsaved teens, but they most likely have contact with teens that know the Lord but are not living for Him. The key to handling these relationships is to understand the principle of 2 Corinthians 6:14: "*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*" The verse is addressing God's heart regarding the matter of believers joining together in an intimate relationship with unbelievers. It can be applied to a dating relationship (God is completely against a child of His dating an unbeliever), but it applies to any partnership. A believer should not enter into a business partnership with an unbeliever. A Christian teenager should not choose a best friend who is an unbeliever. Friendship with unbelievers is scriptural and should be fostered for the purpose of sharing the gospel, but a believing teenager should not develop his/her dearest, best friends among the unsaved world.

4. Priorities

It is an easy exercise to list items in order of priority, but the true test is not knowing what is important. Rather, the true test is saying no to the least important. How many times has a teenager left his spiritual commitments behind while he pursued another interest? There are four activities I have noticed that steal the attention of teenagers and cause them to deteriorate spiritually if not kept in check. Keep in mind that none of these activities or interests are evil in themselves but can become a sidetrack if not kept in their place of priority.

A job: Work is a quality to be developed in a teen's life; but when decisions are being made about a job opportunity, shouldn't the schedule agreed to include provisions for Sunday and Wednesday church attendance? To allow your teenager to accept a job that keeps him out of church is a huge mistake.

A car: A vehicle, as well as a job, can be used as a tool for growth, increased ministry opportunities, and an opportunity for learning responsibility. It is necessary, however, to evaluate priorities to see if the car your teenager is driving is draining him financially and distracting him spiritually. If so . . . sell it.

A girlfriend/boyfriend: There are many different views in our Christian culture on the subject of dating. One thing is for sure, before your son or daughter dates, he or she should have a list of biblical standards, agreed upon by the parents, and embraced in the heart. Many teenagers have isolated themselves from all sense of ministry after becoming too caught up in a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend. A healthy relationship should make your teen a better Christian, son or daughter, student, and friend.

A sport: Some of the greatest lessons of life can be learned in the sports arena. It can be a tremendous character-building activity. It can also be the god of our life. A parent who goes nuts following a missed field goal, a strike out, or a fumble on the field but shows no concern over missed devotions, unfaithful church attendance, or a lack of heart for the Lord is paving the road for heartbreak. Teenagers have a keen sense of the things that really count in the minds of Mom and Dad. What does it say to our teenagers if we allow them to compromise spiritually to have more opportunities?

QUESTIONS REGARDING MY TEENAGER'S STANDARDS

1. When considering my teenager's appearance, does my teenager look like a Christian? _____
Is my teenager's clothing modest beyond any question of being a temptation to others? _____
2. Does my teenager practice good standards in the area of entertainment? _____
Are there any magazines or books that could be counterproductive to spiritual growth? _____
Are there any videos or T.V. programs that should be abandoned? _____
Does my teenager have any music or have access to music that is hindering his/her spiritual growth?

3. Is my teenager presently involved in any relationship that is hindering his/her effectiveness for ministry?

4. Are there any misplaced priorities that are distracting my teenager from growing spiritually? _____
Is my teenager allowed to miss church because of work? _____
Is my teenager allowed to miss church because of sports? _____

**IT IS AN EASY EXERCISE TO LIST ITEMS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY,
BUT THE TRUE TEST IS NOT KNOWING WHAT IS IMPORTANT.
RATHER, THE TRUE TEST IS SAYING NO TO THE LEAST IMPORTANT.**

PITFALLS THAT HINDER AN EFFECTIVE PARENT MINISTRY

1. Credibility of the Youth Pastor

How does a youth leader establish credibility?

- A credible youth leader exemplifies spiritual maturity.
- A credible youth leader is consistently on time (starts and ends all activities on time).
- A credible youth leader learns to be appropriate in areas of dress, behavior, humor, finances, etc.
- A credible youth leader is supportive of his pastor.
- A credible youth leader handles money wisely.

2. Scheduling Conflicts

One of the greatest battles of establishing a parent ministry is finding an appropriate time to meet.

- Sunday night after church during a teen SNAC Attack.
- Monday evening at 7:00 PM
- Sunday school hour: Have your parent meeting during the Sunday school hour while other youth leaders teach the teen classes.
- Other times?

3. Apathy Among the Parents

There will always be a select group of parents who will not participate in the parent ministry. Do not be surprised if this group is the parents of your most apathetic teenagers. Many times, first-time parents of teens will be the most eager to get all the help they can get. There is a trend that parents who have reared one or two teenagers will become apathetic about being as involved with the third teenager.

Other contributors of apathy:

- Work pressures
- Personal spiritual battles
- Discouragement and/or depression

4. Unsupportive Pastor

The support or lack of support of the senior pastor will be a real key in the effectiveness of your ministry to parents.

How to gain your pastor's support:

- Be sure to be loyal.
- Always operate as an extension of his ministry.
- Be sure to communicate your philosophy and goals clearly to him. (Put it in writing.)
- Be patient and give God time to work in his heart

5. Lack of Vision and Purpose

Remember—it is not a parent meeting; it is a parent ministry!

- Establish a purpose and ask God for a vision to establish goals to meet the needs of your church families.
- Give your parent ministry a name.
- Schedule all parent meetings one year in advance.
- Plan your topics of study six months in advance.

6. Poor Communication and Promotion

You never want parents to be able to say, "I didn't know anything about that parent meeting."

- Establish a plan for promotion.
- Have all parent meetings printed on your church events calendar.
- Include parent meetings in your church newsletter.
- Write a letter or send a postcard reminding parents to attend the upcoming meeting.
- Place signs at the church entrance on the day of the parent meeting.
- Have adult Sunday school teachers announce parent meetings in their classes.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

Author Unknown

In 1 Kings 17:17-24, we read an interesting portion of Scripture concerning the prophet Elijah and the widow of Zarephath. Elijah had just performed two miracles: the cruse of oil never running dry and the barrel of meal not used up. Almost immediately after these great demonstrations of God's blessing and power, the widow's son died, even though he was miraculously fed in the preceding days. Today, many parents think that if they just keep their teenagers in church, or in a Christian school, then surely that will guarantee spiritual life. While these are worthwhile objectives, there still needs to be specific godliness exhibited in the home as well as the church.

In verse 17, the widow seems to blame the prophet for what has transpired, which is a tragic mistake made by many parents today. If a young person is away from God, many times the parents blame the church, the church blames the school, and the school blames the home. Here we have a never-ending circle, when in essence God tells parents, "*Train up a child in the way he should go . . .*" The local church and Christian school should try to complement the godly teaching of a Christian home, not usurp or undermine it. Elijah took the widow's son into his own room, the very place he lived day and night, and God used him as the instrument to restore the boy's life. God has always used His preachers and prophets to give "spiritual life" and direction to those who hear God's Word. Parents who understand this principle will pray for the pastoral staff and be loyal and faithful to the local church.

One of the most important factors in a teenager's development is the parental backing of the church and youth program. A critical attitude in this area can cause the young person to also be critical, and consequently destroy his respect for God-given authority. Elijah asked the widow to "*give me thy son,*" and when his life was restored, she said in verse 24, "*by this I know that thou art a man of God . . .*" With all the negative influences in our sin-sick society, which will try to entice your teenagers to go the way of the world, thank the Lord for all the positive things your can offer your child. Be thankful for the Christian school movement to counter the humanism of the public schools. Thank God for a good church where your teens can hear the Word preached faithfully. In conclusion, thank God for the "youth group," where Christian friendships can develop and the youth pastor can teach practical Bible truth to help them cope with everyday problems. By God's grace, may our youth ministry complement your desire to see your kids turn out right; with prayer, your teenagers of today will be the Christian leaders of tomorrow.

WHOSE KIDS ARE THESE?

In dealing with the parents of teens, the discussion frequently gets around to statements such as “I didn't know my kids would be like this,” or “They get this behavior from my spouse's side of the family,” and on occasion, “I just don't know my kid anymore.” While preparing for a Sunday school lesson recently, I came away with a new understanding that, while not directly comforting, is nonetheless helpful in assessing our teens.

Psalm 127:3 teaches us, “*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is His reward.*” In the hands of a sovereign God, we readily accept the ideas that “an heritage” is an heirloom or inheritance and that “the fruit” is the offspring or reward. However, we shudder at the reality that the “reward” is literally the payment of contract, our salary, or compensation. Simply put, a sovereign God gives each set of parents the children they have earned or deserve. How do those of us in leadership then help parents incorporate this biblical information into their dealings with their children? By incorporating the truth that God formed each of us, including our children, from the womb by His divine knowledge and plan, we must then grasp the reality that He also knew the challenges we would face as parents.

In dealing with my own children, I take great consolation in knowing that these are actually the children my wife deserves. (Mine would be far worse.) I also have discovered that many of the things that they struggle with and against are the same things I had to deal with as a teen. While they may have to deal with new avenues of attack, the temptations themselves are very much the same.

In applying that to the “if you ever do that again, I may have to kill you” scenario that we all have faced, or at least observed others face, we must now come to a balance. If God is indeed sovereign, we must allow Him the freedom to teach and chastise our children as He sees fit. Within His plan, I must make sure that I address the situation with my teen in a proper manner. My wife subtly reminds me of this by asking, “Is this the battle field you want to die on?” whenever I want to “kill” my own children. God cannot be kept in a box until some convenient time to sprinkle on a problem, nor can my children be kept in a box away from God because He might send them to the far corners of the earth without my permission. If these are the children I have earned, then I need to accept the fact that God knew what He was doing when He put His divine plan in motion.

In my protecting my children in order to return them in proper working order to the God of creation and my Lord and Savior, I need to remember what I have learned through God's direction and intervention in my own life. In committing these lessons to my children so that they might some day become “faithful men,” I cannot and should not glamorize the sins of my past. However, I cannot pretend to have been perfect; my children already know better. Therefore, I must be honest in sharing my life's lessons, and also when measuring out punishment for the sins of their youth. Whose children are these? They are mine by the direct, willful, and deliberate hand of God. By His grace, I will protect and teach them, that I might one day see them become vessels fit for the Master's use. He gave me what I deserve, and He did so as an inheritance in my life. Since these are my payment at His hand, I will rejoice and be exceeding glad in spite of the occasional challenges to my life, my sanity, and my sanctification.

WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS OF TEENS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP, COMMUNICATION, AND RESOURCEFULNESS

RELATIONSHIP

Understanding the Journey of a Mom

- Carrying baby during pregnancy
- Birthing a completely dependent babe
- Leaving infant at the nursery or with a babysitter (even with grandparents)
- Mothering in an unsafe world
- Leaving child in hands of a teacher
- Realizing that child is becoming a young man or woman
- Putting your life in the hands of that child after the ride to the DMV

Considering the Journey of a Youth Leader

- You are recruited to work with youth because of your youth and energy.
- You take on the job because you will be working with youth (not old folks) and you have lots of energy.
- You then learn that a major part of working with youth is working with parents (mothers) who expect you to have not only a lot of energy but also a lot of wisdom.
- You must have not only the best interest of the group in mind, but also the best interest of each youth as well.

Understanding Motherhood

- Protective—natural instinct to shelter and watch over (hover)
- Relationship (People) Oriented—rather than goal-oriented
Paul's working with church of Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 2)
- Subjective Thinker—may be more “delusional” about child; what “could happen” rather than reality
- Hormonal Influences—not only the teens; also the mothers

Understanding Youth Leaders

- You are a leader.
- Leaders are expected to have answers.
- You don't have all the answers.
- You can learn the answers (James 1:5; 2 Peter 3:18).

Questions That a Mother Asks . . . or You Want Them to Ask

- Do you love my child? Are you for him/her?
- Do you care about our family? Not just your youth group. Will you listen and learn about our family by asking questions and not just “telling”?
- Will you teach my child to honor me? Can I trust you with the things that matter most?
- Do you have any “off the wall” ideas or opinions that I'll have to deal with later?
- Do you love my child's future? Do you realize that what he believes and does now affects his future?
- If I fail as a parent, will you be there for me or line up against me? Are you for me?
- Can I talk with you about things that really matter? Will you take the time to care about me and my family before you confront us about our failings?
- Are you a consistent example? How do I know that?
- Do you care enough to pray for me and my family?

COMMUNICATION

Christ’s Example of Preparing His Disciples

John 14:25-31—Before His Death

25	These things have I spoken unto you, being <i>yet</i> present with you.	Preparing before it happened
26	But the Comforter, <i>which is</i> the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.	Organization, sponsors and chaperones; preparing for unknowns
27	Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.	Important to Him that His disciples have peace
28	Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come <i>again</i> unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.	Repeat plan for event; explain why/purpose
29	And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.	Follow-up of what you say helps trust
30	Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.	Lets them know what to expect—including dangers and precautions taken
31	But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.	Again . . . gives the “Why” Also said “GO” and did not stop or vegetate because of danger or difficulty

Did his careful preparation allay their fears completely? NO

**After his death and resurrection,
He spake with them graciously
about their unreasonable unbelief—their fears.**

COMMUNICATION

Christ’s Example of Preparing His Disciples

Luke 24:36-53—Before His Ascension

36-38	And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace <i>be</i> unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?	Words were not enough to calm their fears; they did not know for sure that He was the Christ—even with the testimony of Peter and the angels.
39-40	Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them <i>his</i> hands and <i>his</i> feet.	The Scriptures had foretold his resurrection; He had himself repeatedly told them; and, they still doubt. He then <u>demonstrated</u> a reason to believe.
41-43	And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And he took <i>it</i> , and did eat before them.	Another demonstration to help them believe
44	And he said unto them, These <i>are</i> the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and <i>in</i> the prophets, and <i>in</i> the psalms, concerning me.	Reviewed the “why”
45-48	Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.	Reviewed the details and the purpose
49	And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you	Still concerned about their peace
50-53	And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.	Because they believed Him, fears were alleviated. They worshiped with joy and peace in their hearts.

Remember the “frame” of a mother and communicate accordingly.

Psalm 103:13-14—Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

RESOURCEFULNESS

Be a Resource Person—you can't do it all

- **Initiate classes for parents.**
 1. ***Dangerous Parenting Detours Class***—Mothers often need help with the tight to loose concept, dependence to independence, etc. An issue that repeatedly comes up is the problem that parents of teens have in not shifting from child mode to transition to adulthood mode. They tend to want to exert the same control they did in childhood and become alarmed when a compliant child suddenly expresses his or her growing desire for autonomy. The parent needs to understand better the concept of preparing teens to make decisions on their own and getting them ready for adulthood rather than attempting to micromanage the teen's life. It's as though the parent imagines the teen is a child she must control until the day of his 18th birthday when he will magically transform into a responsible adult overnight. In her dreams maybe, but not in real life. Discussions take time which many moms have little of, so barking orders is preferable. Problem is, it doesn't work and only makes teens react in not so pleasant ways.
 2. **Big four issues** that almost all teenagers use to express their individuality and rattle their parents' cages—music, clothing (modesty and appropriateness), hair, and jargon.
 3. **Understanding fear and anxiety**—a biblical look at how to handle fear and anxiety. Distinguish between “anxiety” and legitimate concern. “What if she gets pregnant?” “What if he doesn't get a scholarship?” “What if we've failed as parents?” “What if God blames us for what she's doing?” “What if . . .” This out-of-control feeling either paralyzes a parent or drives them to grab for anything that might help them exert control. Concern focuses on the present moment of “what is.”
 4. ***Precept Upon Precept Bible study for mothers*** (by Debi Pryde).
 5. **Resource in teaching their children discernment**—Substance abuse (drugs, alcohol, prescription drugs), peer pressures, homosexuality, occult, premarital sex, abortion.
- **Retreats for parents.**
- **Couples' Focus—Raising Children Ages 13-Adulthood** (at Ironwood).
- **Teach teens to communicate with their mothers.**
- **Teach mothers to communicate with their teens.**
- **Learn to work with difficult people . . . and don't be one.** (*See Tator Family on pages 28-29.*)
- **Books.**
 - Dangerous Parenting Detours* by Walt Brock
 - Precept Upon Precept* by Debi Pryde
 - Teaching Responsibility* by Walt Brock
 - Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Ted Tripp
 - The Age of Opportunity* by David Tripp
- **Counseling**—Be prepared yourself to counsel a rebelling teen or find someone who can counsel the teen or the entire family of a rebelling teen.
- **Encourage parents not to give up on their teens.**
 1. Keep praying.
 2. Be involved.
 3. Keep them communicating.
 4. Keep on loving them.
 5. Renew your mercies every day.
 6. Be humble and growing as a Christian.
 7. Resolve to never, ever give up on them.

PICTURE OF A TRUSTWORTHY MINISTRY

1 Thessalonians 2

1	For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:	Share the good things God is doing
2	But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.	Bold; not quitting
3	For our exhortation <i>was</i> not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:	Integrity evident
4	But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.	Why do we do this ministry? Serving God
5	For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God <i>is</i> witness:	Again, integrity evident; Words and money
6	Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor <i>yet</i> of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.	People matter; not fame
7	But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:	Gracious and caring as a nursing mother; “cherish”—make warm
8	So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.	Sacrificing service; expressed their care
9	For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.	Hard-working service; above reproach
10	Ye <i>are</i> witnesses, and God <i>also</i> , how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:	Good example
11	As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father <i>doth</i> his children,	Served individually according to need
12	That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.	For God’s glory; aim of ministry with others
13	For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received <i>it</i> not <i>as</i> the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.	Thankful to God for results; based on their receiving Word of God as their authority
19-20	For what <i>is</i> our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? <i>Are</i> not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.	Their Reward— Both Now and in Glory

THE TATOR FAMILY MATCHING GAME

Match the member of the “Tator Family” with the Bible verse. Add more verses to the list.

Ecclesiastes 7:21-22	Ecclesiastes 10:20	Proverbs 18:13	Galatians 6:3
Joshua 24:15	1 Kings 18:21	Ephesians 4:14-15	Matthew 23:4
3 John 9-10	Acts 13:8-11	Romans 16:17-18	Leviticus 19:6
Matthew 23:5	Proverbs 6:16-19	Isaiah 65:5	Proverbs 15:28
Proverbs 18:21	Luke 18:11	Proverbs 10:19	Romans 2:1
Proverbs 17:19	Ephesians 4:29	James 1:26	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

- _____ **Agi Tator:** Whenever things get dull, Agi is always there to stir things up. She is often a nuisance, but many times keeps everyone on their toes by disturbing the comfortable status quo.
- _____ **Cogi Tator:** Cogi is a thinker. She is different from her brother Medi because Cogi thinks deeply about matters that will affect the way she acts. She weighs everything carefully before acting and attempts to make sure she has considered all the alternatives.
- _____ **Common Tator:** Common always has advice or criticism on any subject. Always talking and always very authoritative sounding, he often sounds like he knows what he is talking out, but usually doesn't.
- _____ **Devis Tator:** Devis is a revolutionary. He believes in confrontation, radical changes. It is his philosophy that the only way to change something is to destroy it and start all over. Devis is weak on alternatives or ideas for rebuilding and considers that someone else's job.
- _____ **Dick Tator:** Dick doesn't consult anyone. He makes all his decisions by himself and sees others only as a means to accomplish his will. Dick will usually gets high marks for getting things done, but low marks for working with others.
- _____ **Emmy Tator:** Emmy is a follower and can easily become a hero worshiper. Heavily influenced by those around her, Emmy's future is determined by the kinds of people she patterns her life after.
- _____ **Facili Tator:** Facili is warm and personable. She is almost selfless. She works hard at enabling others to become better. She is a good listener and asks the kinds of questions that allow people to speak about things that matter to them. But Facili can sometimes be a nuisance, because she sees every gathering as an opportunity to use her gifts and sometimes she just needs to let her abilities remain dormant.
- _____ **Hesi Tator:** It is very difficult for Hesi to make decisions. She always needs just a little bit more information before making a decision. If and when Hesi does make a decision, however, it has usually been thought through carefully.
- _____ **Irri Tator:** Irri is a twin of Agi with a mean streak in her. She likes to stir things up just for the sake of causing confusion and disarray. She is abrasive and even when she takes the correct position on a subject, still winds up alienating those around her.

Medi Tator: Medi thinks deeply and finds satisfaction in the act itself. His thinking never really leads to any constructive action, however. It is the act of pondering that matters to Medi and not the content.

Roe Tator: Roe is a systems man. He believes that everyone should have their turn regardless of qualification. He is task oriented and is only involved as long as the task is his responsibility. He believes in changes for change's sake and doesn't like to remain in one spot too long.

Speck Tator: He likes to watch everyone else rather than get involved in anything personally. He is always on the outside looking in. He is usually an expert at evaluating and helps those who are not participating by cheering them on. But because Speck has the advantage of watching from the stands, he can also make unrealistic assessments from a distance and be quite fickle with his support.

Vegi Tator: Some call Vegi lazy because she sits around doing nothing. She doesn't take any risks and tends to take what's given without giving anything in return. But at least Vegi is predictable and somewhat stable.

Descriptions of The Tator Family—Greg Bowlin, Humor.com, 1995

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH: UNDERSTANDING JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS

How would you finish the sentence? Working with junior highers is like . . .

(Here are a few answers I received when I asked.)

- Playing a game of “Who’s Who” every ten minutes
- A Chinese fire-drill
- Going to the zoo, a wild but enjoyable time
- Well, it depends on the time of day
- Like riding a teeter totter, up one minute down the next

Every youth leader engages the tasks of youth work with the goal of being successful by making a difference in the life of a teen. This goal, no matter how it is defined, cannot be achieved without having a workable understanding of those to whom you are ministering. Understanding the characteristics of youth and their surrounding influences will greatly aid in a leader’s ability to effectively impact today’s teens for God by giving direction, insight, and knowledge for discernment. At the same time leaders will gain confidence, and teens will seem less like an enigma.

“Youth ministry happens as long as a Christian adult is able to use his or her contact with a student to draw that student into a maturing relationship with God through Jesus Christ.” Green

I. Characteristics of the Transitional Time of Being Junior High Age

A. A time of change

1. In their physical makeup
2. In their thinking and reasoning
3. In their emotions
4. In their roles: the putting aside childish actions and habits and developing adult responsibilities—1 Corinthians 13:11.

B. A time of uncertainty and insecurity

1. There is uncertainty about themselves.
2. There is uncertainty about the world around them.
 - a. It exciting and alluring.
 - b. It is dangerous and frightening.
3. There is uncertainty about their family.
4. There is uncertainty about their future.

- C. A time of questioning
 - 1. What should I believe?
 - 2. Who is right? There are so many opinions.
- D. A time of expectation
 - 1. They want to be a part of something important.
 - 2. They want to “have their turn.”
- E. A time of adventure
- F. A time with few permanent demands and responsibilities
- G. A time of vulnerability
- H. A time of impulsivity
 - 1. Their actions may be reactionary.
 - 2. Their actions may lack prior thought and logic.
 - 3. They may seem unpredictable.
- I. A time of decision
 - 1. They will be considering what they will do.
 - 2. They will decide who is right.
 - 3. They will decide how they will do things differently.
 - 4. They will decide who they will be like.

II. The Characteristics of Their Influencing World

- A. This is an age where discipline is discouraged if not outlawed.
- B. Truth is relative as opposed to unchangeable.
- C. Morality is self-defined and relative.
- D. Violence is prevalent—“These children have stared at photos of stolen children every time they drank milk” (Rainer).
- E. Although violent crimes decreased 17% overall from 1990-1996, juvenile violent crime increased 11% in the same time period.
- F. This is the first generation with predominately working mothers.
- G. Divorce affects one in every two families—“In 1995 10.5 million children were involved in a divorce” (Bennett).

- H. The family structure of America has been affected by divorce, cohabitation, and definition. Much of the recent decrease in the divorce rate has come from the fact that fewer people are getting married.
- I. An information age—Being informed seems to be the answer to all the problems. “We must educate to solve our problems” is the cry.
- J. Intense proliferation of all things supernatural—This interest has no restrictions; from the Ten Commandments to mysticism, “goodness” is based on the personal experience and evaluation.
- K. Question everything is the prevailing attitude.
- L. Gender roles are confused if not altogether lost.
- M. Acceptance and accommodation of personal rights is a prevailing theme.

A balance must be struck on the way we interpret information about teenagers and their surrounding world. In *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, Ted Tripp states, “Two mistakes are made in interacting with the shaping influences of life. The first is seeing shaping influences deterministically. It is the error of assuming that the child is a hapless victim of the circumstances in which he was raised. The second mistake is denial. It is a mistake of saying a child is unaffected by his early childhood experience.”

Teenagers are not inanimate objects, they are individuals who react and respond to their surrounding uniquely. Young teens must be taught to see the world from God's perspective. How they view God will have the most dramatic effect on their lives.

III. A Caricature of an Average Junior Higher

- A. High tech—Many teens have a computer, CD player, telephone, PDA, and their own television. When dealing with the computer, teens often have a greater understanding than their parents.
- B. Isolated from necessary relationships
- C. Demonstrate independence
- D. Untaught in proper etiquette and social graces
- E. Media driven
- F. Lacking moral absolutes—In a 1995 pole, 78% stated that they believed that there was no such thing as absolute truth; two people could define truth in conflicting ways and both could still be correct (*Bridger Generation*).
- G. Skeptical of authority
- H. Have disposable income
- I. Busy and “stressed”
- J. Seek to be amused
- K. Acts in the name of boredom
- L. Sexually tuned in and pressured
- M. Interested in the supernatural

- N. Creative and imaginative
- O. Often consumed with imaginary realities
- P. Will tend to be reactionary, looking to send a statement
- Q. Sure in personal opinion
- R. Given to hero worship
- S. Accepting of limitations with relationship
- T. Tends to respond to a challenge
- U. Usually works to the level of expectation

IV. Practical Lessons for Youth Leaders

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord,” Isaiah 55:8. Working with youth gives unique insight into God’s dealing with us. Different perspectives, different motivations, different goals, and irrational actions based on emotions—God’s dealing with us is where we must go for insight. Here are some examples which can easily be seen in the way God deals with His leaders.

A. Consider your approach.

1. Approach patiently.
 - a. Be stable and confident in God’s plan for their life—Remember that a junior high student is going through so many changes that he is very insecure. Therefore, be loving, patient and confident, in what God can accomplish in his/her life.
 - b. Be forgiving and thick-skinned—Carefree, unthinking criticisms can sting and may be abundant from a teen. They must always know you like them.
2. Approach positively—To approach a teen critically is to know what it’s like to be quickly tuned out. It is incredible to watch some adults with no prior contact begin with a harsh criticism or rebuke in the life of a teen. Adults with good graces would never think of approaching another adult this way. We must remember the preciousness of others when approaching a junior high teen. The same rules of courtesy and graciousness must apply. Relationship gives one the privilege to confront and critique (where necessary and appropriate) with effectiveness. Look for opportunities to encourage and enlist rather than merely demand. Leaders must build a relationship of trust before confrontation will be valued.
3. Approach biblically—Give them solutions, truth (God’s Word), and not just opinion. Confront that false teaching with truth. Challenge false, popular world views with properly applied Scripture. A calm, careful, and confident presentation of Scripture will be effective.
 - a. Use books of the Bible that deal directly with issues they face daily. Particularly, Ecclesiastes and Proverbs will have clear, practical application.
 - b. Teach them to deal with their problems with biblical solutions. Walk them through the thinking process.
 - c. Teach them how to go to the Bible themselves for their answers.

4. Approach personally—Many teens are making wrong choices because of lack of teaching and personal relationships.
 5. Approach the families—Youth leaders cannot replace all the functions God intends for the family to have. Spend time encouraging, equipping, and challenging the parents of the teens rather than trying to replace or circumvent them. Instead of trying to implement another program in the church, address the needs of the teen to the family and help them address the issue.
 6. Approach individually—Each teen is an individual and will not reflect a general pole of the nation's teens. Be careful not to come in assuming the action, motive, or reaction of a teen.
 7. Approach them with an open ear—Listen rather than presume. Take the time to hear them out. Give them your full attention and ask relevant questions. Be on the look out for the moments they desire to speak. A teen will not talk just because you ask him a question or because he has a counseling session with you. Key counseling opportunities often catch a person off guard and come unannounced.
- B. Consider the issues one needs to address in the lives of the teens.
1. Address their concept of God.
 - a. Everyone has a concept of God, but many are distorted from the truth.
 1. Resulting from false teaching
 2. Resulting from tragic events
 3. Resulting from sin
 - b. One's concept of God will set his life's direction.
 1. It can justify disobedience.
 2. It can demand righteousness even at high cost.
 3. It can bring confidence and peace in dangerous circumstances.
 2. Address their fears—Fears will range from the perceived to the real. Many of the fears teens feel are merely perceived. Perceived fears should be handled with biblical counsel and instruction. Fears not addressed may bring decisions that have huge consequences. Do not downplay seemingly unbelievable stories; check the facts. Be careful not to overreact before you check out a statement—Proverbs 11:14; 24:6; Psalm 119:24.
 3. Address their strengths—Insecurity about a weakness in one area often blinds a person to strengths in another. Highlight and talk about their strengths, putting into perspective their talents and God's plan. Cast a vision for what God could do with them with the gifts they clearly have. Draw their thinking from their inadequacies to God's unlimited ability and grace—Psalm 84:11.
 4. Address their thinking—When spending time listening to teens, one will hear statements which are not true or well thought out, even parroted words quickly spoken which contradict Scripture. Carefully bring up their statement asking them questions about its validity. Encourage them to listen to their own statements and to carefully examine whose thoughts they are accepting as truth. The phrases “Do you really believe that?” or “How did you come up with that?” spoken kindly allows them to rethink without embarrassment—Psalm 15:2.

5. Address their needs—Leaders have the opportunity of long-term knowledge of the youth. Learn about them, discover their strengths and weakness, and begin to address the individual needs. Do not ignore character flaws in the name of love or patience. Confront them individually and help them overcome character weaknesses and sinful habits. Together draw up a plan of action and hold them accountable.
 6. Address their goals and direction—Provide opportunities and situations for teens to consider the future and their personal goals. Some teens have not thought about the future and others have fantastic plans with no process of accomplishing them. Leaders must not sell teens short; they must also challenge them to think through the process ahead. Remind them that their futures should be considered in the light of God's design on their life. "What do you think God might have for you in life?"
- C. Emphasize truth.
1. Give concrete definition of truth.
 - a. Absolute truth—How many people are in this room?
 - b. Relative truth—What is the best color?
 2. Give understandable applications.
 3. Allow for discussion.
 - a. Discussion allows teens to think things through as they talk.
 - b. Discussion should be directed to recognize truth—It should not be a justification of action based on a popular view.
 - c. Discussion allows leaders to gain insight on the teens themselves.

Conclusion: It is crucial that youth leaders have a hopeful, enthusiastic view of what God can do in the life of a teenager. One must not look at the "average teen" and make the assumption that this is what everyone is doing or this is how everyone will turn out. These characteristics are general and many are determined by the actions of lives without God. When God enters a life, all law of averages must be thrown out!

MEETINGS AND SERVICE PROJECTS

DUM-DUM SEGMENT

We were looking for something on Wednesday nights to get the teens to come on time for church. Our church starts at 6:45 p.m., and most were not showing up until 7 p.m. or later. We had very few that drive on their own, so it was parents who were not arriving to church until late. Our thought was if we could get our kids excited about being early to church, they would convince their parents of the need to be on time to church. Here is a little way we found that has worked for us.

The idea was to make our youth want to be on time. We discovered that the way to go about it was to convince them that they were missing something truly exciting during that first 15 minutes. The name of this segment comes from walking through Sam's Club buying candy. I walked past a bag of 350 Dum-Dum suckers and thought that would be a perfect name for our new segment. The thought was a creative title with a theme that when the kids cried, "Oh, that's so dumb," must mean that it was a success. This is great because you can never go wrong—if it is dumb, we have been successful! We begin our night with a door prize to the first person who enters the room. This little trick has encouraged some to come as much as 20 minutes early. Since some were coming as much as 20 minutes late, that was a great step. The prize is a little bouncy ball, goofy glasses, or candy. We then go through several different mini games to keep things moving. Here are things that have been fun for us (and where I found them):

1. Playing songs with nose flutes—Ironwood Youth Leaders' Retreat
2. Singing our opening jingle together—"Jingle Bells"
3. "Getting to Know You" questions—Warm Ups, *The Original Brain*
4. Would you rather, "Who are you like"—Icebreakers, *The Original Brain*
5. Trivial Pursuit questions
6. Bible Balderdash trivia
7. Bang, Who'd I shoot?—Do As I Do, *The Original Brain*
8. Name That Tune: "Who 'Nose' That Song?" (play with nose flute)
9. Pictionary
10. "One time" stories—Ironwood
11. Make homemade commercials as skits (It's fun to video tape these.)
12. Indoor human scavenger hunt—Activities for a Large Group, *The Original Brain*
13. Next in line?—Do As I Do, *The Original Brain*
14. Simple Counting—Jed's Quest, *The Original Brain*
15. Touch the Block—Jed's Quest, *The Original Brain*
16. "My Career"—Skits, *The Original Brain*
17. "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" Bible Edition

SERVICE DAY

One Saturday morning per month, we give an opportunity for our youth to serve other ministries in the church. We rotate each month between the boys and the girls in order to get them involved in various service projects. Our service has included cleaning and restructuring storage areas, cleaning restrooms, cleaning the gym, overhauling our nurseries, making phone calls to visitors, writing letters, and washing and detailing our buses. These projects provide excellent opportunities for our youth to recognize the needs of others and pitch in to help where they can be of assistance.

S.W.A.T.

We meet once per month on Wednesday after school (3:30-5:30) for soul-winning. SWAT stands for Soul-Winning Active Teens or Students With A Testimony. These Wednesdays are devoted to passing out tracts door to door in our church neighborhood. We divide teens into three or four groups (depending on the number) and send them out of the van in teams (SWAT team mentality) to blanket the neighborhood with tracts. The objective is to get as many tracts in as many homes as possible. We finish with dinner at a fast food restaurant or back at the church. This also allows for those that come to be early to church. We have seen a great number of people visit our church through this ministry.

TEEN VISITATION

Once per month on Saturday morning, we meet for visitation of those teens that have attended our ministry once or twice, but have never become a part of our program. We have chosen to take all that attend visitation to every house we visit. It is great to see the look on the face of a young person when 15 to 20 teens his age appear on his doorstep inviting him to church. Each one talks to the individual telling him of upcoming events and expressing interest in his coming to our church and becoming a part of our youth ministry. This is a wonderful opportunity to

1. Allow our teens to see the need to reach out to others.
2. Allow our teens to see the impact one small visit can make on another person's life.
3. Allow our teens to DO the work of the ministry.

* *They are able to take what they are learning from God's Word and apply the principle in their everyday walk with Christ.*

YOUTH NIGHT CAMP SERVICE

Each summer after we attend camp, we give an opportunity for our teens that went to testify of what the Lord did in their lives during the week. This has always been the highlight of the summer and the week of camp because we hear of how God has worked personally in each heart. We schedule our camp night for the second Sunday after we return home from camp. This gives us a wonderful opportunity to practice for one week the songs that we learned at camp. We then are able to have a mini concert to share with the church family five or six of the songs we were able to learn while at camp. This group normally includes those that are not always talented in music; but because God has worked in their lives, many are willing to "Make a joyful noise to the Lord." During that week, I put out a challenge to the teens to prepare a testimony of some decision they have made. It is a great blessing to see how many respond that want to share what God has done for them. Many times we are guilty of hand picking the "good kids" to stand in front of the church and share, but it is important that we allow those in whose hearts God has worked to testify of His goodness. This program takes a majority of the evening service, and we close with a challenge to our parents and church family to pray for these teens and encourage them in the decisions they have made.

YOUTH AFTERGLOW/SINGSPIRATION

One Sunday night per month, we take opportunity to gather for a time of fellowship as a youth group. At the close of the service, we travel on the bus to a family's home in the church. We have opportunity to be in a different home each month. This gives families and parents in our church opportunity to get to know the youth group more, and also for the youth to get to know and appreciate church families in a greater way. At these homes, we have a snack and a time of fellowship, focusing on singing and testifying to the Lord. We take our Ironwood songbooks and, in between songs, allow the teens to praise the Lord by giving a testimony for His goodness in the past month. This is always one of the highlights of the month for the teens and host family. In an effort to make this night more user friendly to our host families, we charge each of our teens \$1 for the cost of food. We present this to the family when we arrive at their home in order to reimburse them for the money spent preparing the snack for us. In preparation for each Sunday evening, we speak with the host family and give them an option of about 4 different meals that they can provide for us that are relatively inexpensive, and that the charge of \$1/person will cover. Many more families have the potential to get involved this way that might not be able to financially afford the opportunity to host otherwise.

I'LL BE TAKING YOU HOME LAST

The youth pastor looked over his shoulder from the driver's seat of the church van and said, "I'll be taking you home last." These words might sound a little scary to most teenagers, but this youth pastor used these unique opportunities to spend that extra few minutes with a teenager to offer a little encouragement. Oh, there were various topics discussed during the "last leg" of the trip home from a youth activity. Sometimes it was an opportunity for the youth pastor to find out if a teen was having devotions, doing well in school, or getting along with parents. Sometimes the discussion turned to God's will for the future, what Christian college is like or how to find a job that will not compete with church attendance. That teenager was often me, and I will forever be grateful for a youth pastor that had time to talk. It is good to remember most teenagers spell love TIME.

Remember . . . your teenagers may forget your Sunday school lesson, but they will always remember the talk you had with them one on one.

During the past few months, I have had the opportunity to meet many youth leaders at our Youth Imperative conferences. It is amazing how similar our lives are, whether we are ministering in the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, or West Coast! Of course, the people are unique culturally, the cost of living may be significantly different, and the contrast in climate is noticeable; but the way we minister and the challenges of ministry are the same. I am finding that youth leaders all across our country have many things in common...

- All of us seem to have a few godly teens that have a heart for God.
- All of us seem to have a few "fringe" teens that are very uncommitted to the Lord.
- All of us seem to have teens that are neither cold nor hot.
- All of us face the challenge to find more time with our own family.
- All of us wish we spent more time personally with God.
- All of us face financial pressures.
- All of us experience times when we are very misunderstood.
- All of us are used to going on with very little thanks; it's just part of the territory.
- All of us are very proud to be called youth workers and realize that most of our fruit will be seen five to ten years from now.

So next time it's late on a Saturday night and you are dropping off the last kid, remember there are about 600 other youth leaders who are just like you. They care enough to do what it takes to impact a teenager's life for eternity!

NEEDS AND NOTIONS OF JUNIORS

If we approach the Bible with a stained-glass voice and emotional tremors that make the book seem “religious,” in the most frightening sense of that word, chances are our children will escape at the first opportunity. Our prayers, too, must reflect that we are speaking with Someone who is real, not that we are making a speech,” (Gladys Hunt, author of *Honey for a Child's Heart*).

All children want to be loved, to be accepted, to have friends, to confide in someone, to be treated like a VIP, to have fun. All children need the security of a loving and consistent authority, to hear the good news of God's salvation presented clearly for their understanding and to see how they fit into God's eternal plan beginning today. A simple rule for young children's attention spans is one minute for every year of their age.

Juniors today are facing issues that used to wait until high school or junior high. There is talk of dating, fashion, and music. They often know about drugs, gangs, and sex although not usually tempted by them. We cannot afford to be naïve to the world's push on them. Male role models are especially important for children this age. Boys are beginning to define what masculinity means and may display resistance to female guidance.

As we look at the short account in Scripture about the youth of Jesus, we see the parts of life that we must address with children. Luke 2:52 says, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.”

- Increased in wisdom—children must grow in their ability to apply knowledge. It is understood that knowledge must increase. It is declared that the ability to apply that knowledge must increase. We must provide programs that teaches truth in many areas and make application.
- Increased in stature—children must grow physically. There will be growth, we must provide programs that allow children to try new things physically and teach them that their bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost.
- Increased in favor with God—children must know who God is and what He wants in order to be able to grow in favor with God. We must provide programs that teach children how to please God.
- Increased in favor with man—children need to understand how to grow in favor with other people. We must provide programs that teach social skills and responsibility to community.

Juniors, 4th-6th grade, have unique characteristics, and our programs need to be age-specific.

CHARACTERISTICS OF JUNIORS

Physically: Zechariah 8:3-5—In the new Jerusalem, children will play in the streets.

- Growing slowly, but generally active, strong, and healthy
- Love the outdoors
- Need ten hours of sleep
- May reach puberty (girls)
- Enjoy the challenge of difficult and competitive activities
- Enjoy learning new skills
- 3rd-4th graders—good large and small muscle coordination. Girls are still ahead of boys. Can work diligently for longer periods of time but are impatient with delays or their own imperfect abilities.
- 5th-6th graders—have mastered most basic physical skills, are active curious and seek a variety of new experiences. Rapid growth can cause some eleven-year-olds to tire easily.

Mentally: 1 Corinthians 13:11, “When I was a child I spoke, thought and reasoned as a child”; Ephesians 4:14—children can be gullible; Proverbs 22:15, “foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child.”

- Are in the “golden age of memorization”
- Like facts more than ideas for discussion

- Enjoy reading, writing and collecting
- Are very curious, want to know “why?”
- Developing the ability to reason and come to conclusions, not abstract in thinking
- Need to develop good study habits
- Enjoy true-to-life stories
- 3rd-4th graders—Children are beginning to realize there may be valid opinions besides their own. They are becoming able to evaluate alternatives, and are less likely than before to fasten onto one viewpoint as the only one possible. They are beginning to think in terms of “the whole” and to think more conceptually and with a high level of creativity. Many have become self-conscious about their creative efforts as their understanding has grown to exceed their abilities in some areas. They are interested in historical information and other cultures.
- 5th-6th graders—very verbal! Making ethical decisions becomes a challenging task. They are able to express ideas and feelings in a creative way. By age eleven, children have begun to reason abstractly and begin to think of themselves as adults, at the same time questioning adult concepts. Hero worship is especially strong. They are beginning to relate biblical truth to themselves without help and are able to establish Bible reading habits.

Socially: 1 Corinthians 14:20—Children have a certain innocence in relationships.

- Are indifferent or antagonistic to the opposite sex while also becoming aware of them on a new level (Girls are “silly, stupid” while boys are “show offs, pests”)
- Are hero-worshippers
- Enjoy being part of the “gang” (Boys display a loyalty to the group while girls have a hard time getting along in groups—best friends one moment and fighting the next.)
- Often feel inferior and insecure (don’t need “self confidence” but acceptance)
- Are becoming more independent
- Have a healthy respect for and loyalty toward consistent authority
- Demand fairness and justice
- Enjoy teamwork
- Boys especially dislike public displays of affection although they need affection
- 3rd-4th graders—The desire for status within the peer group becomes more intense. Most children remain shy with strangers and exhibit strong preferences for being with a few close friends. Some children still lack essential social skills needed to make and retain friendships. They need challenge to cooperate and to be objective about self.
- 5th-6th graders—Friendships and activities with their peers flourish. Children draw together and away from adults in the desire for independence. They want to be a part of a same-sex group and usually do not want to stand alone in competition. Girls are obsessed with talking about boys but shy and giggly in the presence of them.

Emotionally: Proverbs 20:11—Children are known by their choices.

- Enjoy slapstick humor
- Dislike outward displays of affection
- Developing controls on their emotions, wide mood swings
- Developing a personal system of values
- 3rd-4th graders—This is the age of teasing, nick names, criticism, and increased verbal skills to vent anger. At age eight they have developed a sense of fair play and a value system of right and wrong. At age nine they are searching for identity beyond membership in the family unit.
- 5th-6th graders: usually cooperative, easy-going, content, friendly, and agreeable. Most adults enjoy working with this age group. Even though both girls and boys begin to think about their future as adults, their interests tend to differ significantly. Be aware of behavioral changes that result from the eleven-year-old’s emotional growth. Children are experiencing unsteady emotions and often shift from one mood to another. They need help in dealing with emotional reactions and in judging right from wrong, not based on feelings.

Spiritually: Romans 9:11—can choose between good and evil; Psalm 34:11—need to learn to fear the Lord.

- Are able to recognize sin as sin
- Are genuine in their decision to trust Christ as Savior (Statistics suggest more people accept Christ during this period than any other age group.)
- Are willing to apply Bible standards of conduct to their lives
- Dislike emotional displays and appeals
- Are concerned for the lost
- Can begin daily quiet time
- 3rd-4th graders—They are open to sensing the need for God's continuous help and guidance. Children can recognize the need for a personal Savior. They need careful guidance without pressure to make a real decision for salvation. They are drawn to becoming a member of God's family and are able to understand personal sin.
- 5th-6th graders—They have deep feelings of love for God. They are able to share good news of Jesus with a friend, capable of involvement in evangelism and service projects, and willing to seek guidance from God to make everyday and long-range decisions. There will be wide gaps in understanding between un-churched and churching children.

We must work persistently because childhood spans a number of years, we must work patiently because development is slow, and we must work holistically because children need to learn how to make application. Children represent a wide range of spiritual conditions. Children's ministry requires thoughtful, creative, and focused preparation.

IRONWOOD'S PROGRAM FOR JUNIOR CAMP

As we have explored the root problems of juniors, self-centered living is a key. We have determined to set as the focus of our program for juniors others-centered living. This must not exclude the Gospel presented clearly to juniors. The focal point being others-centered living, application will be made in the areas of family, church (body of Christ as well as local body), community (local as well as national), world, and God. The application will incorporate increasing knowledge, wisdom, physical skills, ability to please God and man. These applications will be designed with the characteristics of juniors in mind. An emphasis on missions will be an outgrowth of others-centered living. As we make God the center of our lives we will seek to bring Him glory. This is done in our homes, churches, communities and in the world.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Books

- *Classroom Discipline Made Easy* by Barbara Bolton (Standard Publishing Company, 1997)
- *The Five Love Languages of Children* by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell (Moody Press, 1997)
- *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Children's Ministry 2nd edition* by Robert Choun and Michael Lawson (Baker Books, 1998)
- *Preparing for Adolescence* by Dr. James Dobson (Regal Books, 1989)
- *Follow Me as I Follow Christ* by Cheryl Dunlop (Moody Press, 2000)
- *How do I get These Kids to Listen?* by Ed Dunlop (Sword of the Lord, 1997)
- *Sunday School Smart Pages* by Wes and Sheryl Haystead (Gospel Light, 1992)
- *How to Develop Your Child's Temperament*, Beverly LaHaye (Harvest House Publishers, 1977)
- *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Tedd Tripp (Shepherd Press)

Magazine—*Children's Ministry Magazine* (Group Publishers)

Websites

- www.sonlifeafrica.com
- www.pioneerclubs.com
- schoolreform.smartlibrary.info
- www.acm.org (Children of the Information Age: a Reversal of Roles)
- muextension.missouri.edu (Children: How They Grow)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: To teach children to be others-centered in their homes.

Objectives: Gifts will be made in craft activities, cabin groups will eat meals family style with teaching in table manners, manners will be taught each day in a wide variety of areas, cabin cleanup will teach individual responsibility in the process.

Goal: To teach children to be others-centered in their churches.

Objectives: Lessons will be taught to help children discover ways they can serve in their church, a music lesson will be taught with the goal of a special music when they get home from camp, each child will receive an instrument.

Goal: To teach children to be others-centered in their communities.

Objectives: Cabin groups will take turns helping in the setup and clearing of the tables for meals, cabin groups will take one morning to clear another cabin, a flag raising will take place each day with a Christian who was an American patriot featured by a story.

Goal: To teach children to be others-centered in their world.

Objectives: Cabin groups will receive letters from missionary kids and return letters, children will receive letters and photos from children from another country who have been affected by a missionary, a missionary or future missionary will be our speaker for the week and they will spend time throughout the day with the children in various ways.

Goal: To teach children to live God-centered lives.

Objectives: As each of the objectives are implemented, emphasis will be placed on how the action or attitude brings glory to God, memory verses will be repeated many times throughout the day, each day will have a biblical theme that is repeated and integrated into each part of the day.

Goal: To encourage curiosity and a love for adventure in children.

Objectives: Children will play adventure games by cabin groups, children will go on a trail ride, children will experience a wide variety of unique activities, a missionary story will be told which includes adventure and new things to touch and see, a missionary will teach about the culture of another country.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY IDEA SHARE 2003

BOOKS

(If you have more information on any of these books, please e-mail it to bethhunter@ironwood.org. Thanks!)

- *Children's Ministry That Works*
- *Object Lessons for Old Testament*
- *Point Maker*
- *99 Fun Ideas for Teaching Memory Verses*
- *Chalkboard Games*
- *Extra Special Bible Adventures for Children's Ministry*
- *More Children's Church Time*
- *Teaching the Word of Truth* by Donald Grey Barnhouse

CURRICULUM

- Regular Baptist Press
1300 North Meacham Road
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4806
Home Office: 847.843.1600
Toll Free: 888.588.1600
www.rbpstore.org
- CEF (for VBS material)
P.O. Box 348
Warrenton, MO 63383
Phone: 636.456.4321
www.cefonline.com/vbs
- Standard Publishing
8121 Hamilton Ave,
Cincinnati, OH 45231
Phone: 513.931.4050
Toll-Free: 1-800-543-1353
www.standardpub.com
- Write your own with participation of teens.

DISCIPLINE

- Seating strategy—girls side/boys side, boy/girl arrangement
- Stickers for award
- Quiet seat prize—tickets to everyone, tickets taken away for bad behavior, tickets returned if earned back by good behavior
- Behavior award game at the end
- Move seating
- Verbal warning, move seat, move out of class to adult, must stay out a week
- Workers discipline—don't discipline from the front
- Preparation
- Visit in homes—establish relationships, purpose of visit is to build relationships not for discipline follow-up, find out what they like to do
- A seat pal—stuffed animal to sit with quiet kids

MUSIC

- CEF has visuals
- Teach a hymn each month—make own visual
- Bob Jones University Press (www.bjup.com)
- Patch the Pirate (www.majestymusic.com)
- Dottie Rambo (not comprehensively endorsed)
- Salvation songs for kids (series of four)
- Variety—camp songs, VBS songs, high school songs, church songs

- Accompaniment strategies—CD, cassette, keyboard
- Differentiate between types of songs, i.e., worship songs bow heads and close eyes sing to God like prayer
- New words to “Father Abraham”
Everything I have belongs to God, I will give to Jesus everything
Eyes and ears and mouth and hands and feet they all belong to him...right arm! Etc.
- New words to “I May Never March in the Infantry”
I may never swim in the deepest sea
Ride on a seahorsey
Have a shark follow me
I may never dive in a submarine
But I'm in the Lord's army (bloop, bloop)

I may never zoom into outer space
Win in a rocket race
Shoot lasers anyplace
Walk on the moon in space
But I'm in the Lord's army

(Write a new verse for various themes.)

I may never in Africa abide
Be a safari guide
Ride on a rhino ride
Shoot a lion in the hide
But I'm in the Lord's army (Tarzan yell)

GAMES

- Bible baseball
- Overhead projector games for ages six to twelve (Standard Publishing)
- Mouse on a Mission (Ed Dunlop)
- Books of the Bible—lamine binding, have kids get in order
- Catch phrase—with bean bag, timer, make list for subject 3x5 cards at front of room
- PowerPoint games with projectors—Bible Concentration (free on internet), puzzle results with match-internet games with interactive questions, Bible baseball, search for children's Bible games shareware/freeware/purchase
- Mad gab variation Bible Mad Gab (purchased at Bible bookstore) put on overhead, PowerPoint, or white board

PRIZE WEB SITES

- Supercoolstuff.com
- Rebeccaswholesale.com

STRATEGIES

- Puppets—puppet productions series (corny) write own
- Object lessons
- Lesson plans (five to seven-minute segments)

TYPES OF MINISTRIES

- Small groups for children
- VBS
- Sunday School
- Children's clubs

TEENAGE ACTIVITY OPINION POLL

Do you attend a: Christian school? public school? home school?

What grade are you in? _____ Sex: Male Female

I live at home with: both parents one parent my grandparents other: _____

How long have you been a born-again Christian: I am not saved yet. Less than 6 months

6 months - 1 year 1 - 2 years 3-5 years 5 years or more

Both of my parents are saved Only my father is saved. Only my mother is saved.

Please give your honest opinion on whether or not a Christian should participate in the following activities:

- **Alright**—It is perfectly OK for a Christian to participate in this activity; you definitely feel that there is nothing wrong with it. **Please circle "A."**
- **Questionable**—There is a question in your mind as to whether or not a Christian should do such things; you haven't made up your mind yet one way or the other. **Please circle "Q."**
- **Wrong**—A Christian should definitely not do this. **Please circle "W."**

After each question please mark the frequency of your involvement by circling N—never, O—occasionally, F—frequently.

Following the "N O F" please mark whether you are presently involved with this activity by circling C—currently involved in or NC—not currently involved in.

- | | |
|---|--|
| A Q W 1. Reading fiction novels..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 22. Kiss on dateN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 2. Reading romance novels..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 23. Making outN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 3. Reading comic books N O F ... C NC | A Q W 24. Anything sexually except intercourse.N O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 4. Reading pornographic literature N O F ... C NC | A Q W 25. Homosexual activityN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 5. Watching television..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 26. SmokingN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 6. Watching R-rated videos/DVDs N O F ... C NC | A Q W 27. Using marijuana.....N O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 7. Watching PG-13 videos/DVDs..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 28. Drink alcohol/beerN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 8. Going to movies in a theater..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 29. DancingN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 9. Boys and girls swimming together..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 30. Use obscene languageN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 10. Boys having long hair..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 31. Use slangN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 11. Girls wearing pants..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 32. Wear blue jeans to churchN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 12. Girls wearing shorts in public..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 33. Gamble for moneyN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 13. Listen to hymns and gospel music N O F ... C NC | A Q W 34. Cross dressing.....N O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 14. Listen to CCM N O F ... C NC | A Q W 35. Marry unsaved man or womanN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 15. Listen to country/western N O F ... C NC | A Q W 36. Girls using make-up.....N O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 16. Listen to pop music N O F ... C NC | A Q W 37. Sexual relations before marriageN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 17. Listen to classical music N O F ... C NC | A Q W 38. Working for money on SundayN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 18. Go on dates N O F ... C NC | A Q W 39. Kill someone in warN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 19. Go on dates without a chaperone..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 40. Lose temperN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 20. Date non-Christians..... N O F ... C NC | A Q W 41. Copy someone's homeworkN O F ... C NC |
| A Q W 21. Hold hands on date..... N O F ... C NC | |

How much time do you spend watching television? None Less than 20 hrs/wk 21-40 hrs/wk 40+ hrs/wk

How much do you watch the music/video channel on television per day? None 1-2 hrs 2-4 hrs Over 4 hrs

After graduation I plan to get a job right away go to Christian college go to a state college join the military

Please mark the following questions with a “y” for YES or an “n” for NO.

Have you ever . . .

- _____ gone on a mission trip with your church?
- _____ been exposed to pornography on the internet?
- _____ lead someone to the Lord?
- _____ felt confused and doubtful about spiritual things?
- _____ dedicated your life to God?
- _____ been sexually abused?
- _____ walked away from offensive entertainment?
- _____ put others first when you really didn't want to?

Do you . . .

- _____ have your own television in your bedroom?
- _____ have your own phone in your bedroom?
- _____ have your own computer in your bedroom?
- _____ have an internet filter on your computer?

Number in order with #1 being the strongest temptation and #6 being the least of the temptations.

- _____ Friends pulling me the wrong way
- _____ Sexual temptations
- _____ Visual temptations leading to impure thoughts
- _____ Bad attitudes (such as anger, bitterness, disrespect, etc.)
- _____ Stubbornness and rebellion
- _____ Substance abuse; can't break the habit

Number in order, with # 1 being the most valued and # 4 being the least valued.

Whose opinion do you value the most?

- _____ Friends and peer group
- _____ Parents and family
- _____ My own experiences and ideas
- _____ Church and youth group leaders

Who is the easiest to talk to about serious things?

- _____ Friends and peer group
- _____ Parents and family
- _____ My own experiences and ideas
- _____ Church and youth group leaders

How much time do you spend talking with your dad each week (alone)? _____ hrs

How much time do you spend talking with your mom each week (alone)? _____ hrs

How often do you attend church?

- Only occasionally
- Sunday morning service only
- Youth meetings only
- 2 or more times per week

Do you receive a weekly allowance? Yes No

If “Yes”, what amount do you receive a week?

- Less than \$20
- Between \$20-\$40
- More than \$40
- More than \$80

Do you have a paying job? Yes No

If “Yes”, what is the average number of hours worked/ week? _____/wk

What is your average pay? _____/hr

Please mark the following questions with a “y” for YES or an “n” for NO.

_____ Do you feel like you have a purpose in life?

If “no”...

_____ Do you feel you need a purpose in life?

If “yes”...

- _____ Does that purpose revolve around making money?
- _____ Does that purpose revolve around serving others?
- _____ Does that purpose revolve around spiritual things and eternal values?

TEENAGE ACTIVITY OPINION POLL RESULTS

The following data is gathered from surveys completed during the 2003 summer teen camps at Ironwood. Not all of the 738 teens (374 males, 364 females) surveyed answered all of the questions; some appear confused and answered incorrectly or answered something not pertaining to them (e.g. the last few questions). Approximately thirty surveys were thrown out due to insufficient information.

GRADE							725 responses
7th Grade	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	Graduated	
11%	20%	22%	18%	13%	11%	4%	

SCHOOLING					737 responses
Christian	Home	Public	Private	Other	
31%	21%	47%	0%	1%	

LIVE WITH				727 responses
Both Parents	One Parent	Grandparent	Other	
73%	20%	3%	3%	

SAVED FOR HOW LONG						731 responses
5 years +	3-5 years	1-2 years	6mth - 1yr	Less than 6 mth	Not Saved	
59%	17%	10%	4%	7%	3%	

PARENTS SAVED					738 responses
Both Saved	Mother Only	Father Only	Blank	Neither Saved	
70%	12%	4%	13%	0%	

Please give your honest opinion on whether or not a Christian should participate in the following activities:

- **Alright**—It is perfectly OK for a Christian to participate in this activity; you definitely feel that there is nothing wrong with it. **Please circle “A.”**
- **Questionable**—There is a question in your mind as to whether or not a Christian should do such things; you haven’t made up your mind yet one way or the other. **Please circle “Q.”**
- **Wrong**—A Christian should definitely not do this. **Please circle “W.”**

(Some surveys were either filled out incorrectly or the data was entered incorrectly.)

Activity	Alright	Wrong	Questionable	No Answer
1. Reading fiction novels	46%	5%	46%	4%
2. Reading romance novels	43%	14%	41%	3%
3. Reading comic books	65%	3%	30%	3%

Activity	Alright	Wrong	Questionable	No Answer
4. Reading pornographic literature	2%	90%	5%	2%
5. Watching television	69%	0%	29%	2%
6. Watching R-rated videos/DVDs	17%	32%	50%	2%
7. Watching PG-13 videos/DVDs	42%	6%	50%	2%
8. Going to movies in a theater	69%	7%	23%	2%
9. Boys and girls swimming together	62%	6%	31%	1%
10. Boys having long hair	42%	45%	9%	4%
11. Girls wearing pants	89%	1%	7%	3%
12. Girls wearing shorts in public	68%	4%	25%	3%
13. Listening to hymns and Gospel music	94%	1%	3%	1%
14. Listening to CCM	59%	12%	25%	4%
15. Listening to country/western	49%	17%	32%	2%
16. Listening to pop music	29%	30%	40%	2%
17. Listening to classical music	80%	5%	13%	2%
18. Going on dates	66%	5%	28%	1%
19. Going on dates without a chaperone	43%	17%	38%	2%
20. Dating non-Christians	16%	50%	33%	2%
21. Holding hands on date	56%	12%	30%	2%
22. Kiss on date	33%	25%	39%	2%
23. Making out	16%	50%	31%	2%
24. Anything sexually except intercourse	6%	78%	14%	3%
25. Homosexual activity	2%	93%	3%	2%
26. Smoking	2%	88%	8%	2%
27. Using marijuana	1%	92%	4%	2%
28. Drink alcohol/beer	3%	83%	12%	2%
29. Dancing	46%	11%	40%	2%
30. Using obscene language	4%	80%	14%	2%
31. Using slang	35%	18%	45%	2%
32. Wearing blue jeans to church	49%	12%	36%	2%
33. Gambling for money	6%	70%	22%	2%
34. Cross dressing	4%	84%	10%	2%
35. Marrying unsaved man or woman	12%	59%	28%	2%
36. Girls using make-up	80%	2%	15%	3%
37. Sexual relations before marriage	6%	86%	6%	2%
38. Working for money on Sunday	23%	24%	51%	2%
39. Killing someone in war	59%	7%	31%	2%
40. Losing temper	12%	51%	35%	2%
41. Copying someone's homework	5%	79%	14%	2%

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND WATCHING TELEVISION?				719 responses
None	< 20 hrs/wk	21-40 hrs	40+ hrs	
6%	62%	22%	10%	

HOW MUCH DO YOU WATCH THE MUSIC/VIDEO CHANNEL ON TELEVISION PER DAY?				729 responses
None	1-2 hrs	2-4 hrs	4+ hrs	
59%	26%	8%	6%	

AFTER GRADUATION I PLAN TO . . .						704 responses
Get a job right away	Christian college	State college	Join the military	No Answer	Other	
11%	44%	29%	8%	8%	1%	

HAVE YOU EVER . . .	Yes	No	No Answer
Gone on a mission trip with your church?	27%	72%	2%
Been exposed to pornography on the internet?	40%	59%	2%
Lead someone to the Lord?	57%	42%	1%
Felt confused and doubtful about spiritual things?	82%	17%	1%
Dedicated your life to God?	82%	16%	2%
Been sexually abused?	8%	90%	2%
Walked away from offensive entertainment?	70%	25%	4%
Put others first when you really didn't want to?	88%	10%	2%

DO YOU . . .	Yes	No	No Answer
Have your own television in your bedroom?	49%	49%	1%
Have your own phone in your bedroom?	25%	73%	1%
Have your own computer in your bedroom?	30%	63%	7%
Have an internet filter on your computer?	42%	52%	6%

STRONGEST TEMPTATION (1) TO LEAST TEMPTATION (6)	Males	Females
Friends pulling me the wrong way	4	3
Sexual temptations	5	5
Visual temptations leading to impure thoughts	1	4
Bad attitudes (such as anger, bitterness, disrespect, etc.)	2	1
Stubbornness and rebellion	3	2
Substance abuse; can't break the habit	6	6

On a scale of one to four (1=most, 4=least) . . .

WHOSE OPINION DO YOU VALUE THE MOST?	WHO IS THE EASIEST TO TALK TO ABOUT SERIOUS THINGS?
1—Parents and family	1—Friends and peer group
2—Church and youth group leaders	2—Parents and family
3—Friends and peer group	3—Church and youth group leaders
4—My own experiences and ideas	4—My own experiences and ideas

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND TALKING WITH YOUR DAD EACH WEEK (ALONE)?

0-1 hours		1-2 hours		2-3 hours		4-5 hours		6-7 hours		8-10 hours		10+ hours	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
31%	38%	15%	19%	10%	10%	15%	13%	5%	7%	7%	6%	18%	6%

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND TALKING WITH YOUR MOM EACH WEEK (ALONE)?

0-1 hours		1-2 hours		2-3 hours		4-5 hours		6-7 hours		8-10 hours		10+ hours	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
18%	14%	13%	9%	8%	9%	16%	18%	8%	11%	9%	7%	28%	33%

HOW OFTEN DO YOU ATTEND CHURCH? 731 responses

Occasionally	Sunday morning only	Youth meetings only	2+ times per week
10%	15%	4%	72%

DO YOU RECEIVE A WEEKLY ALLOWANCE? 726 responses

No	Less than \$20	\$20-\$40	\$40+	\$80+
67%	20%	10%	1%	3%

DO YOU HAVE A PAYING JOB? 738 responses

Average hours worked per week						Average pay per hour					
No job	0-4	5-10	10-18	20-25	25+	\$0-5	\$5-8	\$8-10	\$10-15	\$15-20	\$20+
48%	27%	7%	3%	6%	9%	60%	26%	9%	2%	2%	2%

PURPOSE IN LIFE 723 responses

I have one	My purpose revolves around making money.	My purpose revolves around serving others.	My purpose revolves around spiritual, eternal things.
88%	17%	37%	46%

MIDWEEK SERVICES

A.C.T.S. STUDENT MINISTRIES

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA

At Bethel Baptist Church, our purpose is to lead people to Lord Jesus Christ and to help each other become more like Him day by day. How can the student ministry of our church better understand this purpose and transmit its importance to the community?

One way that we foster this purpose statement is through our midweek youth service. This service has one key purpose that is fulfilled through all we do in our service. The following model is a model based upon one aspect of our purpose. Any midweek service should fulfill the purpose that it is intended to whatever that may be.

VALUE OF A MIDWEEK YOUTH SERVICE

The value of our midweek service cannot be measured by the same standard that our Sunday service is measured. We have seen tremendous success in the fulfillment of what our midweek service purpose is. As a result of our midweek youth service our Sunday services, Bible studies, and youth activities have increased numerically.

Another valuable aspect of our midweek youth service is that it allows our young people an outlet to serve in areas that they may not be able to in an adult service. It also allows for a sense of ownership to exist within the youth ministry. This sense of ownership promotes service and accountability and is healthy for the overall youth ministry.

MIDWEEK YOUTH SERVICE IMPERATIVES

1. Develop a philosophy for this evening will help determine and govern what your group will be doing
2. Develop an extended plan will help with the preparation and success of the midweek youth service
3. Develop a group of leaders that can commit to this service
4. Develop variety within the services
5. Develop uniqueness so that this service does not mirror your Sunday services
6. Develop a visitor friendly atmosphere that welcomes students into the youth ministry

MODEL OF MIDWEEK SERVICE

A.C.T.S. student ministries have developed a four week plan that encompasses all of our youth ministry purposes. In order to support our mission of evangelism, discipleship, encouragement and fellowship this midweek model was devised. It has served as a blueprint in planning and structure for the past several years.

WEEKS 1 & 3

These weeks focus primarily on outreach. We plan for our service to include an outdoor game that is active and promotes fellowship among the students. After this time is completed, we prepare drinks for the students so that they will feel appreciated. We then enter our youth room and offer a skit, an icebreaker, or something else that will transition well into a song service. After our song service, we offer a brief challenge from the Bible in the area of salvation, service, or surrender. This is not the time we choose to use as our deep Bible study times. It is a time to fulfill the purpose of outreach and evangelism.

WEEK 2

This week is focused on serving and the importance it plays in the success of our youth ministry. We have implemented three service committees that are important factors in the overall youth ministry. This service is used as an opportunity for the students to plan, organize, and lead in the youth ministry. It promotes ownership of the group and allows for everyone to have a significant role in the ministry. The plan for youth service committees is in *The Original Brain* on pages 6-27 through 6-32.

WEEK 4

This week is focused primarily on praising God and lifting our prayers unto Him. We use a PowerPoint show to lead our students in singing praises and lifting their hearts to God in prayer. This is an opportunity for the purpose of encouragement to be fulfilled. It is out of the ordinary and allows the students to experience variety in their church setting.

All of our services are approximately one hour in length.

MIDWEEK SERVICE IDEAS

- Missionary letter writing
- Care packages for college students
- Game night
- Debates
- Destination unknown services
- Meet with the adults in auditorium
- Encouragement notes to others in the church
- Notes to teens who have been unable to attend
- Planning nights
- Student Ministry night
- Singspirations
- Prayer night
- Visitation night
- Bonfire and testimony night

10 PRINCIPLES OF WINNING AND DISCIPLING CHILDREN

LEADING A CHILD TO CHRIST

Being asked to lead a child to Christ or counsel with a child who has come forward for a salvation invitation can strike fear into even the most savvy of children's workers. "Will I say the right thing?" "Will they understand what I am talking about?" "How can I get them to understand?" "Will I be able to tell if they are making a genuine decision?" While you may feel very comfortable with presenting the Gospel to an adult, everything changes when you are sitting across from a five to seven-year-old.

Part of this anxiety comes from the realization of how important the salvation decision is. We are talking about a decision that will effect this child's eternity. There is also the desire to have them make a genuine salvation decision. How many times have you heard a testimony from a teenager who has just accepted Christ, or got assurance of his salvation say something like the following? "I prayed a prayer when I was five, but I don't remember if I really meant it."

As ministers to the children of our churches, we need to prepare ourselves spiritually and mentally for the task of sharing Christ with our students. There are several principles that will help us with this process of leading a Child to Christ.

SALVATION IS A SPIRITUAL EVENT.

There are many methods and plans that can be used when leading a child to Christ. I will present several in this article. I will also present many principles for sharing the Gospel, some characteristics of children, and some do's and don'ts. Some of the details may even seem overwhelming. But through it all you must remember that the salvation of a child is a SPIRITUAL EVENT. You are not selling a car, you are not conveying mere facts, and you are not on a debate team trying to win a battle of wits.

When a child comes to Christ it is a spiritual event. The Holy Spirit is active in drawing that child to faith in Christ. The child is born again. They become a new creature. They become a child of God. The child stands justified before God, and they are given eternal life. At the moment of Salvation, the child is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The child is united with the body of Christ. All of these things are part of the spiritual miracle that takes place when a sinner places his unconditional faith in Christ as his only hope for salvation from his sinful condition. This is a spiritual event! It is not a mere ascertainment of facts.

Sometimes it is difficult for us to see all of these things happening in the life of a child, so we inadvertently reduce this salvation decision to the understanding of the facts, and repeating a prayer. Understanding that this is a spiritual event, and that the Holy Spirit is at work, should lead us to be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading.

1 You must be in a right relationship with God.

The most important thing you can do to prepare yourself to share Christ with a child is to be in fellowship with God. When there is unconfessed sin in your life, the Lord will not hear you, you grieve the Holy Spirit, and you are out of fellowship with Him. Keep a short sin account. Make sure that you are consistently, faithfully walking with God. The more time you spend with God, the better you will know Him, and the easier it will be to point kids to Him.

2 Always begin with prayer.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you wisdom and clarity. Pray that the Holy Spirit will open the heart and mind of the child you are talking to. Pray that the Holy Spirit will remove any distractions and

help the child to concentrate. Pray out loud right in front of the child. This sets the spiritual tone for the conversation, and the child will know that you are praying for them and care about them.

3 Use your Bible.

Even if you are using a Gospel tract or other plans like the Wordless Book, have your Bible open and use it. The child needs to clearly understand that these are God's words not yours. The Word of God is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16), it is the sword that is alive and powerful piercing the soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12), it is a fire and a hammer (Jeremiah 23:29), it is perfect—converting the soul (Psalm 19:7), and it will not return void (Isaiah 55:11). Illustrations and other explanations are good, but they are man's wisdom. Do not let them overshadow God's wisdom. The lion's share of your discussion should be from the Word of God.

4 Discern the work of the Spirit in the life of the child.

This is a tough one. One of the most difficult questions to answer is, "How do I know when a child is ready to be saved?" There are some signs that you can look for that show that a child is not ready that we will talk about them later. Knowing that a child is ready is difficult to discern. But if a child is ready to be saved, the Spirit will be working. Your moment by moment dependence on the Spirit is critical to discern this.

I remember the struggle my wife and I faced when leading our second daughter to the Lord. I had been talking with her for about thirty minutes, and I was not sure that she was ready to be saved. I was constantly praying that God reveal to us His working in her life. I was beginning to think that this was not the time, when she turned to her mother and said, "Mom, I REALLY believe in Jesus, and I REALLY want to be saved." Be in constant communication with the Spirit, and ask him to give you wisdom and discernment.

I was in the home of a mentally handicapped twelve-year-old who had the mental capacity of about a four or five-year-old. Mom and Dad thought that she was saved but were uncertain. We prayed together that God would reveal to us this girl's spiritual condition. As we began to talk, the girl answered many non-leading questions with a very simple, but a very clear profession of faith. I began to cry as the Holy Spirit impressed so strongly on my heart and the hearts of her parents the reality of her faith through her profession. When a child gets saved, the Spirit is at work in his life.

5 Do not force a decision.

Children are very impressionable, and are easily manipulated. It is very easy for an adult to fall into the trap of manipulating the salvation decision. This is not done maliciously; the children's worker only has the best intentions. The desire to see the child saved, and the desire not to squander this important opportunity, leads some workers to manufacture a decision. Fear of failure, especially with salvation is a very powerful influence in the life of a children's worker. Don't ask leading questions, ask open-ended ones. Don't do all the talking, but ask lots of questions. Understand that children are used to obeying authority, and they desperately want to please adults. So, handle them gently, and be willing to ask a child who is not ready to wait.

SALVATION IS AN ACT OF THE WILL.

When a person gets saved, he is making a choice. He chooses to no longer trust any other way of dealing with his sin and to trust Christ completely for salvation. This is an act of the will.

6 Look for signs that a child wants to be saved.

If the Spirit is convicting of sin and drawing the child to Himself, there will be a **desire** to trust Christ for salvation. Be careful of situations where a child understands the facts of salvation but is unsure what they want to do about it. This is where some parents and children's workers inadvertently push a child when he is not ready. A child may be asking spiritual questions about heaven and hell and who will go there. He

may ask, “Am I going to heaven?” He may be afraid about hell but not ready to be saved. Be willing to be patient and allow the Holy Spirit work. After sharing the Gospel, ask the question, “What would you like Jesus to do for you?” instead of asking the yes/no question, “Do you want to get saved?” This gives the child the opportunity to express the desire in his heart.

The morning before my oldest daughter accepted Christ, she came running into our bedroom and jumped on the bed, and exclaimed to my wife, “I’m ready!” To which my wife (startled awake by this early morning intruder) replied, “Ready for what?” “I’m ready to be saved,” my daughter replied. For several months prior to this, she had been asking lots of spiritual questions. On any one of those occasions, I could have easily sat down with her, led her through a plan of salvation, and had her pray a prayer. But this would have been my will and not hers. When she was ready, she was ready.

If you have a chance to observe the child over time, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this something that the child is persistently pursuing?
- Does this child seem genuinely concerned?
- Is this child’s following a friend, or is it a genuine desire and conviction?

Salvation is a spiritual event and an act of the will, but what a child believes is vital to the decision.

DOCTRINE IS IMPORTANT.

It is important what we believe and in whom we believe. While a Jehovah’s Witness or a Mormon can say that they believe in Jesus, the Jesus they believe in is not the Jesus of Scripture. They deny the deity of Christ. A Catholic can honestly say that they believe that salvation comes by grace through faith in Christ. But it is not by faith alone; it is faith plus baptism, faith plus the mass, and faith plus good works. These fundamental differences in doctrine separate heaven and hell.

“It takes a thorough understanding of the gospel and biblical terms to present the message at a child’s level . . . If adults do not understand the doctrines of salvation sufficiently to present them so children can understand, then their tendency is either to use poorly chosen terminology, or to burden the child with terminology that they themselves do not adequately understand” (Daniel Smith).

Since what a child believes is important, it is necessary to know what the child understands.

7 Ask lots of questions to get a good idea what the child really believes.

When counseling a child for salvation, do not do all the talking. Do not use yes/no questions. Ask open-ended questions that reveal what the child believes.

- Why did you come?
- What would you like Jesus to do for you today?
- Why do you want Jesus to be your Savior?
- How do you become a Christian?
- Why did Jesus need to die?
- How do you make Jesus your Savior?
- What would you like to tell Jesus?
- What difference do you think it makes for a person to be forgiven?

- Why do you think it's important to...?"

These open-ended questions will reveal the heart of the child and show what they are really thinking. Be careful of letting pat answers go without further question. "Why did Jesus die on the cross?" To which the child quickly replies, "To save me from my sin." This may be a rote answer that a child has heard one hundred times, but does not understand the meaning.

Since it is important what a child believes, we should be careful not to do anything to confuse them.

8 Avoid the use of vague or confusing phrases and avoid too much symbolism.

Children, especially younger ones, are very literal thinkers. Many times they do not make the connection with stories, illustrations, and symbolism. Illustrations are great for illuminating truth, but many times illustrations or symbols do more to distract from the message than to explain it. Many times I have watched the mind of a five-year-old wander as I was illustrating a point with a story. Sometimes it is better to just say, "The punishment for sin is death in hell" than to go into a courtroom story to explain punishing a crime. A good rule of thumb is to only illustrate concepts the child does not understand. If you are asking lots of questions and probing, you will know what the child understands and what is confusing.

Also, it is good to avoid phrases that are confusing or incorrect:

- Ask Jesus to come into your heart.
- Make Jesus the Lord of your life.
- Give your life to Christ.

9 Be complete in your Gospel presentation.

Any Gospel presentation should include the following elements.

1. The nature of sin and the need of the individual
 - God is holy.
 - I am a sinner.
 - My sin separates me from God.
 - There is nothing I can do on my own to get rid of my sin.
2. The person and work of Christ
 - Jesus Christ is God.
 - Jesus was perfect and without sin.
 - Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins.
 - I am forgiven because of His shed blood.
 - Jesus did not stay dead but rose again as He said He would.
3. Accepting God's free gift
 - God loves me even though I am a sinner.
 - God gave His son Jesus to die in my place.
 - I must admit that I am a sinner.

- I must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ alone as my only hope of salvation.

There are many good tracts that you can use that cove all these elements. Make sure that you are familiar and comfortable with whatever you use for your Gospel presentation.

The following is a recap as well as some additional Do's and Don'ts:

- Don't coerce or force a decision
- Don't ask leading questions
- Don't do all the talking
- Don't confuse the child with too many illustrations, or concepts
- Don't expect or accept 'standard' answers
- Don't overemphasize fear
- Don't fail to give the opportunity to get saved
- Don't insist that a child get saved now
- Don't tell a child that he is saved
- Don't think your job is over when the profession is made.
- Do start with prayer
- Do depend on the Holy Spirit
- Do use the bible
- Do use the child's name
- Do correct inadequate or incorrect understanding
- Do encourage the child to communicate with the Lord
- Do review what the child did in receiving Christ
- Do encourage the child to tell someone about their decision.
- Do involve and inform parents
- Do follow up
- Do have material to go through over a period of weeks.
- Do involve the pastor(s) at your church.

SOME PLANS OF SALVATION

There are many good plans to use for leading someone to Christ. There are many great Gospel tracts for children that can be purchased.

THE ROMAN ROAD

1. Romans 3:23—All have sinned.
2. Romans 6:23—For the wages of sin is death.
3. Romans 5:8—But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.
4. Romans 6:23b—But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
5. Romans 6:1-4—Romans 10:9-10, 13

THE ABC'S OF SALVATION

Admit that I am a sinner.

Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6; James 2:10; Romans 3:10-12; John 3:3; Acts 4:12

Believe in Christ alone to save me from my sins

Acts 16:31; Luke 5:32, 13:3; Hebrews 11:6; Romans 2:4, 10:17; John 3:16, 20:21

Call on the name of the Lord.

Romans 10:13

THE FOUR SPIRITUAL LAWS (by Campus Crusade)

1. God LOVES you, and offers a wonderful PLAN for your life (John 3:16; John 10:10).
2. Man is SINFUL and SEPARATED from God. Therefore, he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life (Romans 3:23; 6:23).
3. Jesus Christ is God's ONLY provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-6).
4. We must individually RECEIVE Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives (John 1:12; 3:1-8)

My personal favorite to use with children is the Wordless Book.

WORDLESS BOOK

Gold page: The gold page reminds me of Heaven. Do you know what Heaven is? (Response) Heaven is God's home. The Bible tells us that in Heaven, the street of the city is pure, clear gold-like glass (Revelation 21:21). God tells us many other things about His home. No one is ever sick there. No one ever dies. There is no night there. Every person in Heaven will be perfectly happy—always (Revelation 21:4-23). The most wonderful thing about Heaven is that God the Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus, are there.

God made heaven and earth. Can you name some other things He made? (Sun, moon, stars, trees and flowers) He made you, too, and He loves you very much. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world" (John 3:16). This means He loves each person, including you and me. Because God made you and loves you, He wants you to be part of His family and be with Him in Heaven someday. What a special place Heaven is! It is perfect because God is perfect.

But there is one thing that can never be in Heaven.

Dark page: That one thing is sin. This dark page reminds me of sin. Because you and I are sinners, we want to have our own way instead of God's way. Wanting our own way is sin. Doing, saying, or thinking bad things is sin. Sin is disobeying the rules God has given in His book, the Bible. Sin causes sadness in our world. Can you think of some things that are sin? (Response) Do you know that you are a sinner? God's Word says, "For all have sinned" (Romans 3:23). All means every one of us, including you and me. Sin separates you and me from God because He is perfectly right, without any sin at all. God cannot allow sin where He is.

God has said sin must be punished. The punishment for sin is death—to be separated from God forever (Romans 6:23). God knew there was nothing you could do to get rid of your sin. He knew you could not be good enough to please Him. But He loves you and wants you to be His child, so He made a way for you to be forgiven.

Red page: The red page shows the way. God loves you so much. He sent His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to earth from Heaven. He was born as a tiny baby. Do you know when we celebrate His birth? (Response) He grew up and became a man. Jesus was different than any other person who lived on the earth. He never did even one wrong thing. He is perfect.

But one day wicked men put a crown of thorns on His head and nailed the Lord Jesus to a cross. The Bible says while He hung there, God put all your sins on Him (Isaiah 53:6). All your anger, all your lies, and your meanness—all your sin—was put on the Son of God.

When Jesus was nailed to the cross, what came from His hands and His feet? (Blood) The Bible says that without giving of blood, there is no forgiveness (Hebrews 9:22). Jesus took your punishment of death for sin. He suffered so much. Then He cried with a loud voice, “It is finished.” When you finish a job, how much is left to do? Nothing. The Lord Jesus came to earth to take our punishment for sin, and He finished the work when He died on that cross. The Bible says, “Christ died for our sins . . . and was buried” (1 Corinthians 15:3). But after three days, the most wonderful thing happened. God gave Him life again. He raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus is a living Savior (1 Corinthians 15:4). He wants to be your Savior—to save you from your sin.

Clean page: This page reminds me that you can be made clean from sin (Psalm 51:7). God tells us about it in the Bible. (Let child read the whole verse with you.) “For God so loved the world, that he gave only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Are you part of the world? (Response) Yes, God loves you. God says if you believe in Jesus you will not perish—you will not be separated from God forever. He will forgive your sins. God says, “Whosoever believeth.” We could put your name in the place “whosoever.” If you believe in Jesus as Savior, what will He give you? (Everlasting life) That’s the kind of life you need to live in Heaven with God. If you believe on the Lord Jesus as your Savior, He will forgive your sin. He will be with you always and give you power to obey God. You can tell Jesus today that you have sinned and that you believe He died for you.

Green page: The color green reminds me of things which are growing, like leaves, grass, flowers, and trees. This page reminds me of the new life, the everlasting life, you have received from God. When you believe on the Lord Jesus as your Savior from sin, you are like a newborn baby in God’s family. God wants you to grow in a special way. The Bible tells you to “grow in . . . the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

As you learn more about Jesus from the Bible you will learn how to keep from sinning (Psalm 119:11). Ask Him each day to help you obey Him. When you do sin, tell God you have sinned. He will forgive you right away. The Bible says, “If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Ask Him to help you not to do that wrong thing again. (Lead the child in thanking God for His promise to help.)

(As time permits, talk with the child about those things which will help him grow as a member of God’s family. Explain you are not talking about growing taller or gaining weight, but learning to love and please the Lord Jesus more.)

1. Talk to God—Pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
2. Listen to God—Learn God’s Word by reading and memorizing it (Psalm 119:11).
3. Talk for God—Witness or tell others about Him (Mark 16:15).
4. Worship God—Go to Sunday school and church (Hebrews 10:25).

DISCIPLESHIP

10 Establish a solid foundation for the child’s Christian life through discipleship. After a child has trusted Christ as Savior, what is next? Follow-up on that decision is very important. In essence, most well designed children’s programs are discipleship programs by nature. But there

is some immediate follow up that should happen. If the parents have not already been involved, inform them of the decision. Let your pastor and/or ministry head know about the decision.

Next, get a good discipleship booklet for the child to go through. I recommend *Welcome to the Family*, a great children's discipleship manual that can be ordered from Regular Baptist Press (www.rbpstore.org). This booklet solidifies the salvation decision and takes the child through baptism, communion, prayer, Bible study, what the church is, and other topics.

I like to get a commitment from Mom and Dad to take their child through the booklet over a period of two to three weeks. If the parents are not Christians, I offer to go through it with the child or have a Sunday school teacher go through it with them. Going through the book usually serves to weed out false professions, solidify the salvation decision, or in some cases lead to a true decision.

After completing the booklet, I schedule an appointment for a pastor to visit the home to talk about the salvation decision and baptism. Let me say at this point that I think it is important to encourage the child to be baptized right away. The idea of waiting until the child is older to get baptized is not biblical. If a child is old enough to get saved, he is old enough to get baptized. If there is a concern about baptism because of a lack of understanding, that is a red flag to me about a less than solid salvation decision.

I believe a discipleship plan like this will help remove the number of false profession, as well as the "I don't remember if I really meant it" syndrome that seems to attack most Christian teens that were saved at a young age.

CONCLUSION

Children are a gift from God. Statistics now say that 85% of all salvation decisions are made between the ages of four and fourteen. D. L. Moody said that, "If I could relive my life, I would devote my entire ministry to reaching children for God." If you will put in the time to prepare yourself for the task of sharing Christ with a child and ensure that you are consistently walking with God, you can have the joy of seeing kids accept Christ with solid decisions that lay the foundation for a lifetime of service.

BEFORE YOU TURN IN YOUR KEYS!

Every youth worker reaches a time when he is ready to call it quits!

Planned any activities that bombed lately? Preached a sermon that put your teenagers to sleep? Have you spent considerable time with a teenager only to see him go back to his old ways? Have you experienced undue criticism?

Sometimes it is easy to wonder if anyone really understands the life of a youth leader! Quite honestly it is not that difficult to mount a case that justifies walking away from youth work.

How do you know it is really time to go? Does God have something greater for you somewhere else, or is He trying to teach you deeper lessons by staying where you are? Let's look at our options.

Every youth leaders gets discouraged at times. Make sure you don't miss God's will by a hasty decision made in the darkness.

I. Don't Leave Because

A. The teenagers are apathetic.

- The principle of setting goals
- Results in youth ministry are not usually immediate. It often takes three to four years to become established in a ministry to youth. Learn to set long term goals so you won't get discouraged with the events of today!

B. The parents are being critical.

- The principle of pleasing God not man
- Parenting a teenager today is no easy task. Many parents often live with the nagging feeling that they are failures at rearing a godly teen. It is so easy for parents to lash out in frustration and blame the youth workers for their teenager's problem. Be patient! These parents need a lot of love and support. Remember, the ultimate goal is to please God, not man.

C. The pay stinks!

- The principle of trusting God
- God knows your needs! He has a plan for taking care of you and your family. We could all make a better salary doing something else. Learn to pray for the specific needs and find the joy of seeing God answer those specific prayers.

D. You miss home.

- The principle of God's call
- Stay where God called you! He has a plan for your life and a place to serve! Many times people miss God's plan because of an unwillingness to leave their comfort zone. I live 600 miles from my parents and have come to realize that wherever God has called me to serve is my home.

E. They forgot to say “Thank you.”

- The principle of motivation
- Remember that teenagers do not typically know how to express gratitude effectively! Even when they are trying to compliment you, they will tack on a comment about some area of your life that is negative. The motivation for ministry to youth must come from a love for God and teenagers and desire to give our best for Him.

F. The pastor let you down.

- The principle of God’s sovereignty
- Be loyal to your pastor! You are an extension of his ministry. God has placed him over you as your spiritual authority. Remember, however, that pastors are not infallible! Sometimes they will make a mistake. (Don’t we all make mistakes at times?) Be quick to forgive and move on if something the pastor said or did let you down. God is sovereign, and He will teach you great lessons through these various trials.

Here’s another tip: If things have been kind of tense lately with the youth group, why not call up a few of your godly teens and take them out for pizza. Sometimes it’s easy to spend so much energy with problem teens that you lose perspective about the real joy in youth ministry!

II. How to Know When It’s Time to Go

- A. The Issue of Philosophy of Ministry
- B. The Issue of Personal Talents and Abilities
- C. The Issues of Doctrinal Differences
- D. The Issue of Integrity of the Pastor
- E. The Issue of God’s Will and Personal Ministry Goals

III. How to Know the Will of God

Five Key Principles!

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.

DEVELOPING A VOLUNTEER YOUTH STAFF

God has given the youth pastor a responsibility as a minister of the Gospel to be a disciple and a disciple maker. *Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen, Matthew 28:19-20. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple, Luke 14:27.*

Every youth pastor has an opportunity to be involved in a discipleship ministry with the teenagers in his youth group. There is always a dilemma in how to make time to have personal contact with each teenager. An effective youth pastor will recruit and train volunteer youth staff members to assist in the day-to-day details of the youth program. One of the most exciting investments of time and energy will be spent in discipling adults to become disciplers of teenagers. The youth staff will grow spiritually as you teach them how to disciple teenagers and trust them with a few key teens to focus on. Most youth pastors and their wives get a minimal amount of “adult fellowship”; therefore, a good youth staff can be a tremendous source of encouragement in our ministry.

HOW TO DEVELOP A YOUTH STAFF

Begin by recruiting godly examples.

Obviously there are no perfect Christians in our church and even those of us in full time ministry have our share of spiritual battles, but we must keep in mind that the type of adults we have leading our teens will have a great influence on the product of our youth ministry as a whole. Look for adults who . . .

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Are saved | • Honor authority | • Have management skills |
| • Have a sense of humor | • Are separated | • Are dependable |
| • Are real | • Have discretion | • Are responsible |
| • Are surrendered | • Have a good marriage | • Love God |
| • Are flexible | • Are soul conscious | • Love teenagers |

Develop youth staff job descriptions.

One of the key reasons adults do not volunteer for ministries in the church is a lack of knowledge of what they will be doing. No one likes to fail. How is the potential youth worker to know whether he is qualified to work in the church youth group if he does not know what he will be doing.

Following are some examples of a youth worker’s job description.

SENIOR HIGH TEAM LEADER POSITION

A. Function: To be used of the Lord in the lives of senior high young people. To love, encourage, become involved with, and set an example of the Christian life to them. To do everything possible to make Colonial Hills Baptist Church youth ministry one that glorifies God and strives for excellence.

B. Responsibilities

1. For Your Ministry:
 - a. Attend Wednesday night youth meetings.

- b. Attend youth activities.
 - c. Build relationships with senior high young people working closely with the leaders.
 - d. Have personal contacts with teens throughout the year by telephone, notes, etc.
 - e. Help lead them in their responsibilities in the youth meeting and Sunday school.
2. For Your Growth:
- a. Have a consistent, quality devotional life.
 - b. Have an organized prayer life, growing more and more in love with Jesus Christ.
 - c. Seek opportunities to witness to the unsaved.
 - d. Listen to one tape and read one book on youth ministry during the year.
3. You Will Know You Are Succeeding When:
- a. You know the names of all your youth group members and something about them.
 - b. Teens start coming up to you to say “Hi” or just to talk.
 - c. You have a sense of “shared” ministry with your team.
 - d. You know them well enough that they come to you with a personal problem.
 - e. Your team fulfills their responsibilities in youth group in a way that glorifies God.
- C. Term of Service: One year. Everyone is to take a one-month vacation each year in order to be renewed and refreshed.

TRAINING YOUR YOUTH STAFF

Now that we have a youth staff, how do we keep them fresh in their ministry to youth? Youth ministry has one of the highest turnover rates in the church. It is a very stressful job. Our youth staff look to the youth pastor for support, guidance, and training so they can grow in the ministry God has given them. Here are some training suggestions:

- Have a monthly youth staff meeting. (We meet 30 minutes before Sunday school the first Sunday of the month.)
- Have a planning/training meeting quarterly (August, January, and May).
- Recommend books and tapes on youth work.
- Develop a youth resource library of books and tapes youth staff can check out.
- Be available for youth workers before and after meetings to offer support, training tips, and encouragement.

LESSONS FOR LONGEVITY

I QUIT! Have those thoughts ever crossed your mind as you have been involved in ministry? Obviously, serving others has its ups and downs. You may often feel defeated, dejected, disheartened, disillusioned, and downright discouraged. You want to quit! But what is it that causes a youth worker to decide to call it quits or determine by God's grace to endure for the long haul? It sure is easy to stick around when everything is going well.

- You are excited.
- Teens are excited.
- Parents are supporting you.
- You feel needed.
- You feel accepted.

But take away a few pieces of the puzzle and how do you respond? That's the true test of commitment.

No one ever accomplished much who quit before the task was completed. If we want to see positive things happen in our youth groups for the glory of God, we must show our young people that we are committed to Christ and that we will be there for them. It is easy to quit, and anybody can do it, but it takes someone with dedication and determination to endure through hardship.

Jeremiah 9:2; 20:9

Getting discouraged in ministry is easily accomplished when we look at our problems, but we must take our eyes off self and focus on others . . . those to whom we minister.

I. Why Does Discouragement Come?

- A. Everyone will have to face discouragement.
- B. What has brought you discouragement in the past?
- C. Discouragement comes because
 1. You have not met a goal you set.
 2. You are not consistent in your own Christian life.
 3. Things do not go the way you wanted, planned, or intended.
 4. You are struggling with parental support.
 5. The teens you work with do not seem to have any spiritual interest.
 6. One of your teens has fallen into sin.
 7. People you witness to reject God.
 8. You feel alone.
 9. Satan seems to be winning all the spiritual battles.
 10. Your teens do not seem to heed your biblical counsel.
 11. Problems arise and you are not sure how to deal with them.
 12. You find out others do not like how you run things.

- D. Even though we will undoubtedly face difficult circumstances in our life, we ought to not “throw in the towel.”

II. Principles About Discouragement

- A. Discouragement often comes after we have seen God do some great work—1 Kings 17-18; 19:1-4.
- B. Discouragement causes us to lose our vision and focus on ourselves—1 Kings 19:5-10, 14.
- C. Discouragement can be used as an opportunity to get closer to God—1 Kings 19:11-14.
- D. Discouragement helps us to see God is not done using us—1 Kings 19:15-21.

How is it that a person stays involved with the same young people over an extended period of time through a variety of circumstances? I believe that it involves several reasons.

III. Keys To Longevity—DETERMINATION

- A. Maintain a positive attitude.
- B. Depend upon God—Philippians 4:13; 2 Corinthians 12:9.
- C. Understand your motivation: Why do you do what you do?—2 Corinthians 5:14.
- D. Understand God’s purposes for you—Romans 8:28.
- E. Draw close to God, for He will carry you through.
- F. Focus on others, not self.
- G. Battle through your discouragement; there is hope.
- H. Reflect on what God has done for you and through you. What has been a blessing to you?
- I. Remind yourself of God’s call on your life.
- J. Endure for the long haul—2 Timothy 2:1-4.

IV. The Necessity of Endurance—Keeping On

- A. Endurance is essential to our faith—2 Corinthians 11:23-31.
 1. *Endure* means to endure hardship; remain firm under suffering or misfortune; suffer trouble; stay under; undergo; bear; to continue in the same space.
 2. There is a great need for faithfulness in the midst of hardship.
 3. Believers who endure will be rewarded.
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:11 “. . . *out of them all the Lord delivered me.*”
 - b. James 1:12 “*Blessed is the man that endureth . . .*”
 - c. Galatians 6:9 “. . . *we shall reap if we faint not.*”
- B. Our endurance will be tried and tested.
 1. We may fail, but failure can breed success.
Illustration of Thomas Edison who saw each failure as a step closer to success
 2. Endurance is essential in facing life’s difficulties—2 Timothy 2:3.

- C. We are to endure all things.
 - 1. Endurance is not a common quality.
 - 2. It is easier to quit than to endure, but we need to follow Christ's example—Hebrew 12:1-2.
- D. How can we endure?
 - 1. Realize you belong to God and that He has a purpose for everything—Romans 8:28.
 - 2. Depend upon God's strength, not your own—Philippians 4:13.
 - 3. Get encouragement from others—1 Thessalonians 5:11.
 - 4. Be armed/prepared to endure—Ephesians 6:11-18; 2 Timothy 2:1-4.

Are you able to endure for the long haul, or do you give in when the going gets tough?

NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP!—Winston Churchill

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY YOUTH STAFF

In traditional student ministries, there has always been a high priority and yet daunting task of getting volunteers involved. Once this task is complete, the new task is to keep these volunteers *in* the ministry. There have been many effective methods in accomplishing this, but there have also been just as many ineffective methods. The challenge of finding and keeping good volunteers is nothing new to youth ministry; however, this challenge does not have to be as difficult as one might think it to be.



RECRUITING VOLUNTEER STAFF

1. Pray for laborers—Matthew 9:37-38.
 - Many times there are volunteers waiting in the church that are qualified for student ministry.
 - The Lord will be faithful in giving His church the right volunteer staff.
2. Invite parents and the adult community of the church to participate in student events and services.
3. Fully disclose all expectations of their leadership before regular involvement begins. (Allow for a month to pass before a volunteer commits to the student ministry.)

KEEPING VOLUNTEER STAFF

Proven Methods to Hang on to Your Ministry Team!

Got volunteers? Getting them is one thing . . . but what's the trick to keeping them?

Here are “Five Ways to Hang on to Your Ministry Team!” by Jonathan McKee:

1. TIME
No—not the magazine—the other thing that we don't have enough of. Yes, no matter how you slice it, staff requires time. But think of the alternative. Either you spend 20 hours a week with students or no one else does. Or you spend 10 hours with students, and 10 hours a week developing 10 others so that they can EACH spend five volunteer hours a week with students. Do the math. Jesus did; that's why He spent a good amount of time developing the twelve. Block out a monthly meeting for several of your staff. This is a great time to ask them how they are doing, be an encouragement to them, and maybe even talk a little about ministry. Breakfasts, golfing, retreats, staff-laser-tag, dinners—regardless how you do it, if you invest in your volunteers, your investment will multiply into the lives of students.
2. COMMUNICATION
E-mail is a great way to communicate with your staff team. Produce a simple, weekly update that you only send to staff. Fill this with encouragement, updates, praises such as kids who made commitments, etc. This is a great tool for reminding staff what to bring, what time to show up, what the small group questions of the week are, etc. Don't stop at the email; pick up the phone every once in a while just to check in. If you've got one of those cool cell phone plans with free calls after 8:00 p.m., program all your staff numbers in your phone and call them on the way home from the grocery store or the gym. Keep in touch with your staff, know what's going on in their lives, and provide them an avenue of communication so they can stay current with ministry.
3. MORE THAN JUST A STAFF MEETING
Do your volunteers groan when they attend a staff meeting? How about adding creative twists to staff meetings?

- Have your staff meetings over for pizza or ice cream. Meetings are always better over food!
- Have your staff meetings at the house of one of your student's parents. Ask them to cook dinner for your staff. Halfway through the meeting, have them come in and share a story of encouragement how the staff have made a difference in their son/daughter's life. Maybe have the student come in and share what they like about the ministry.
- Highlight a different staff person each staff meeting and have every other staff person share something they like about that staff person. If you're at a restaurant, have everyone buy that person's meal that night.
- Do fun, team-building games where the staff have to work together to solve something. For example, have everyone stand in a circle. Now tell everyone to stay where they are, but lean in, reach and grab the hands of two people in the circle other than the people next to them. Now tell them to get untangled and form a perfect circle again—without letting go!

Don't settle for the “normal” staff meeting. Use it as a time for fun, encouragement, and team-building for your ministry team.

4. BENEFITS

Do what you can for your team!

- It's not about a small budget or even a non-existent budget.
- Do everything you can to not charge the staff for events. (Pass the cost along to the students by adding a dollar to any event.)
- This shows that the volunteer staff has value.
- Show your appreciation for their service in front of the student ministry.
- Empower and reward volunteer staff with opportunities to serve in areas where they are spiritually gifted.

5. STAFF RETREATS

Staff retreats are an excellent way to train staff, plan, organize and equip them for student ministry. This is also a great opportunity to build stronger relationships with those you are entrusting the students of your ministry with. Our volunteers are one of the greatest assets. We need to build in to them so that they can in turn build in to the student community.

MINISTRY IMPLICATIONS

- Thinking theologically in youth ministry is crucial to the development of Christ followers.
- Our goal is to promote not what we believe to be important but what God knows to be important. (This philosophy is promoted in Scripture.)
- “This is not about perfection, but about God working through our imperfection and even our failures. That is the whole idea of grace”—*Mark DeVries, Family Based Youth Ministry*.

1. **Success comes through empowerment of leadership: You can't do it alone.**

Psalm 127:1, Ephesians 4

- Spiritual gifts offer a tremendous amount of opportunity for others to serve.
- The youth pastor/leader can function as too many pieces of the puzzle.
- Pacing, walking along a student throughout life, is an important part of spiritual leadership.
- Allowing this to happen can be sloppy but more effective in the long run.

2. Success comes through building a wide infrastructure.

- Ministry that promotes student relationships with adults is healthy for the body of Christ.
- Allowing students to experience more than the youth ministry will strengthen their faith and lead to mature Christ followers.
- Creating a broader base will lighten the load on a “one-man show.”
- Remember, youth ministry is not about the youth pastor.

3. Success comes through carrying out your ministry philosophy

- A.C.T.S. Student Ministry philosophy dictates that we create opportunities for our staff to be with students (Pacing).
- A.C.T.S. Student Ministry philosophy is strengthened by active youth staff, the family, and adult participation in the church.
- A.C.T.S. Student Ministry philosophy is “Relational Based Ministry” that reinforces relationships with the adult community in the body of Christ.

4. Success comes through strong faith in God.

Psalm 127:1 Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.



WHAT IS A COUNSELOR?

Everybody will be a counselor.

When we call you a counselor, what does that mean? A biblical counselor is a committed, maturing believer who is trained to apply biblical principles to deal with the problems of everyday living.

The Bible is our foundation and our tool.

Psalm 1 ¹Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ²But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. ³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. ⁴The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. ⁵Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 ¹³Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 ¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

FOUR COMPONENTS OF COUNSELING

1. Understand the problem.

Proverbs 18:13 He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

- Questions
- Observations

2. Give hope.

1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Hebrews 4:15-16 ¹⁵For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

3. Present the decision.

Romans 6:6-7, 12-13 ⁶Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin

might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. ⁷For he that is dead is freed from sin. ¹²Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. ¹³Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Philippians 4:6-9 ⁶Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. ⁹Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

4. Develop a plan.

Romans 12:1-2 ¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. ²And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

James 1:22-25 ²²But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. ²³For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: ²⁴For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. ²⁵But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

**EVERY COMPONENT IS IMPORTANT!
WHICH ONE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT?**

WINNING THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

This important part of counseling must not be under-emphasized, or the effectiveness of solid counseling will be undermined. No young person will open up to a counselor who has not taken the time to be his friend. This is winning the right to be heard, for we will always value the advice of a friend.

WAYS TO WIN THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

1. Be a good listener. Find out the interests of the various young people and do what you can to promote their interests.
2. Be available. Let the young people know that you are looking forward to being with them. This availability is best shown in attitude, not mere words.
3. Bear with the young people in their idiosyncrasies. Sometimes it is easy for us adults to look “down our noses” at some of the attitudes and interests of the young people. This will hinder our ministry with them.
4. Exercise tough love. Young people want to look at you as their leader. They expect you to act like a leader and not “one of the gang.” This is sometimes hard for young leaders.
5. Be prayerful. Only God can prepare the hearts of these dear kids, so pray to Him that He will open the way. Pray for each young person by name.
6. Be positive. When you live before these kids, let the love of the Lord Jesus shine brightly through you.
7. Be yourself. Don't try to copy another's personality. Let the Holy Spirit individually direct your abilities to be used to present the Savior.

MENTORING 101

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

- Mentoring is done by ordinary people.
Hope for those . . .
 - who are not the best preachers or teachers
 - whose ministry toolboxes seem limited
 - who are busy with many ordinary responsibilities
 - who are just normal people who want to serve God
- Mentoring is a life!!!

ESSENCE OF MENTORING

1. It is a life that is following after God.
 - a. Primary characteristic of a Christian (Ephesians 5:1)
 - b. Lifetime pursuit (Philippians 3:12-14)
 - 1) 1 Thessalonians 1:2-6
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1
2. It is a life that is fit to be followed.
 - a. Paul's desire should be our desire (Philippians 1:20).
 - b. Paul's desire for those around him was to be followed.
 - 1) 1 Thessalonians 1:2-6
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1
3. It is a life that is faithfully communicating the need and value of following Christ to others.
 - a. Faithfully—consistently, not turned on and off
 - b. Communicating—actions and words
 - c. The need—you have to!
 - d. And value—it is worth it!!!
 - e. Following Christ—that is what life is all about!
 - f. To others

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Philippians 1:10; Mark 3:14

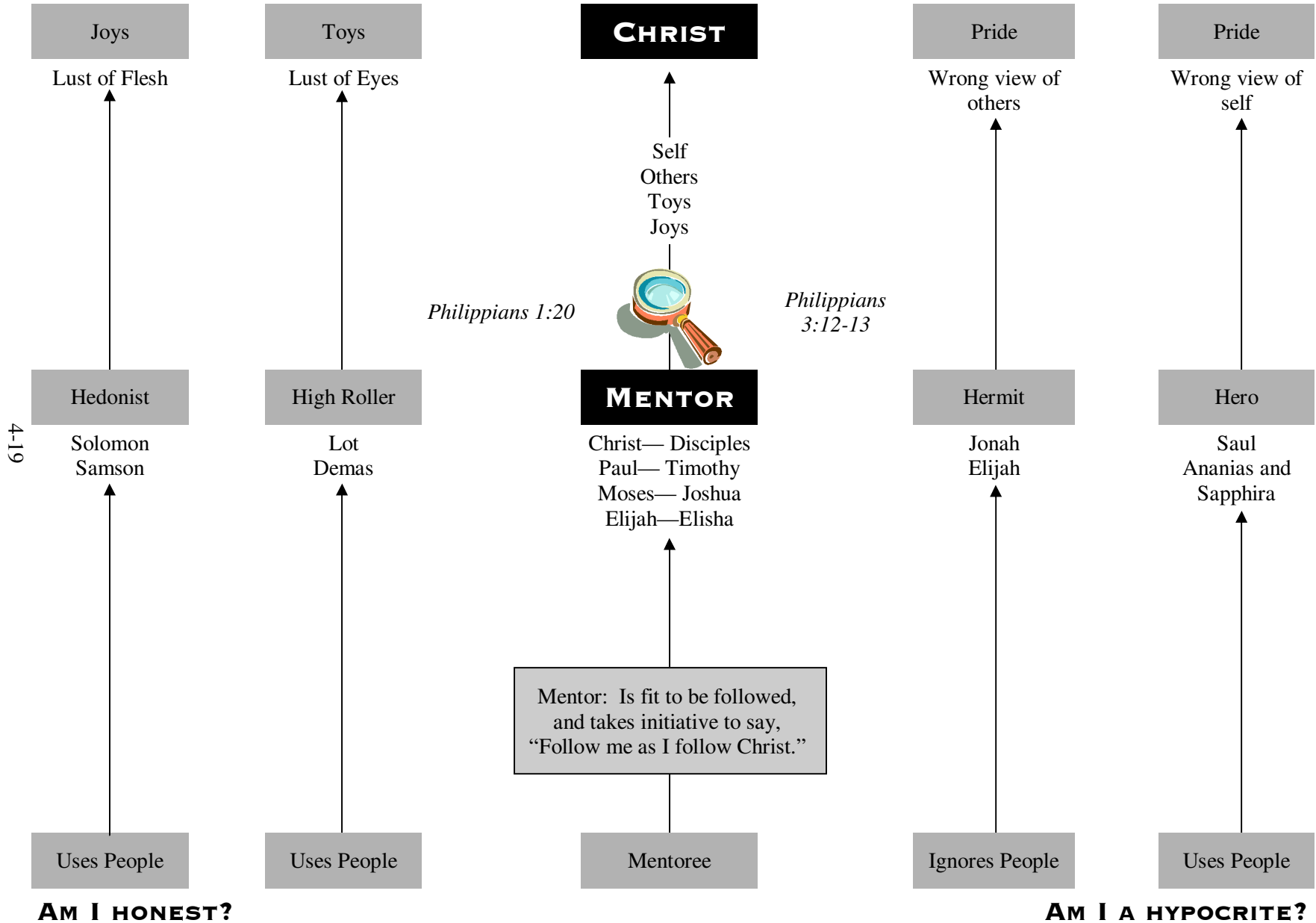
1. Choose somebody!
“Reach the reachable; teach the teachable.”
2. Create opportunities to go individual!
 - a. Car trips.
 - b. Mountain Dew runs.
 - c. Give them work.
 - d. Take them with you as you do ministry.
 - e. Give them ministry responsibility.
3. Get interested in what they are interested in!
 - a. Food
 - b. Hobbies
 - c. Future
 - d. Families
 - e. Life
4. Master the art of asking questions.
 - a. Open-ended questions, not yes or no
 - b. “Questions trigger the conscience; accusations harden the will.”
5. Encourage.

CONCLUDING THOUGHT

It is God’s plan, and it works!

**2 TIMOTHY 2:2—THE SAME COMMIT THOU TO FAITHFUL
MEN WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO TEACH OTHERS ALSO.**

TITUS 2:6-7



MENTORING 102

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

Matthew 22:37-40

DEFINITION OF MENTOR

“Is fit to be followed, and takes the initiative to say, “Follow me as I follow Christ.”

“One who has a life that is faithfully communicating the need and value of following Christ to others.”

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR MENTORING

Mark 3:14—And he ordained twelve that they should be with him.

Matthew 5:2—And he opened his mouth and taught them.

1. Christ had a select group of disciples as well as a select few within the select.
 - a. Questions to ask concerning our select group:
 - 1) Are they reachable and teachable?
 - 2) Am I displaying good stewardship?
 - 3) Does working with this person jeopardize others?
 - b. Choose someone!!!
2. Take the broadly taught truths and expound them more diligently to the disciples (or the select group) (Mark 4:34).
3. Christ would draw analogies from everyday experiences.

Mark 4—seeds, different types of soil, candles, corn, grains of mustard seed.

 - a. Become familiar with what is familiar to them.
 - b. Notice the events going on around them and use it as a trampoline for teaching (2 Samuel 12:1-7).
4. Christ gave his disciples responsibility in ministry.

For instance: Mark 6:6-13 (feeding of 5,000)

 - a. Have a ministry responsibility list.
 - b. Teach the responsibility and follow up on it.
 - c. Remember, we're using the ministry to build people not people to build the ministry!!

5. Confrontation is part of mentoring (Leviticus 19:15-18).
 - a. It is rooted in a submission to the second great commandment.
 - b. Confrontation is meant to be a lifestyle not an unusual event.
 - c. We fail to confront because we have yielded to subtle and passive forms of hatred.
 - d. We fail to confront because we have yielded to more active forms of hatred.
6. Accompanied Christ in ministry.
 - a. Christ followed up what they saw with instruction and explanation.
 - b. Reminded them of the cause!
 - c. Enabled them to follow on once Christ had ascended to Heaven

CONCLUDING THOUGHT

2 Timothy 2:2—the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

GOD'S CALL TO FULL-TIME SERVICE

1 TIMOTHY 1:12-17

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The word “enable” (*endunimo*) means to empower. “In the apostle’s own life and ministry, the power of Christ means a continual strengthening (Philippians 4:13; 1 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 4:17). This strengthening takes the form of support, and is thus to be construed, not in terms of manna, but in terms of a personal relation between Christ and his servant” (Vines).

What constitutes a call to full-time service?

Today we see much confusion and misconception among Christians regarding the concept of full-time service.

- Entertainment vs. participation.
- Modern priority of self-interests and materialism.
- Goal of life of ease without the need of sacrifice.
- Retirement plans and benefits packages at work deemed necessary.
- Don’t live too far from home; after all, there is much to do here, too.
- God wants to make me miserable if I let Him.
- Don’t do it if you can do anything else.
- Parents must agree to God’s call.

Presuppositions

- Are you truly saved?
- Do you really love the Savior?
- He will empower you for His work.
- There will be an inevitable judgment where you will be held accountable for your responsibilities, abilities, and opportunities to use them as God desires.
- God faithfully keeps all His promises.
- God has already given us His idea of our life priority (Matthew 6:33).
- God’s will (*thelema*) is not hidden and can be known.

TEN CALLS TO A LIFE OF MINISTRY AND SERVICE

1. The CALL of reasonable service
 - a. 1 Samuel 12:24
 - b. Romans 12:1-2
 - c. 1 Corinthians 4:2
2. The CALL of given grace—Use of spiritual gifts
 - a. Romans 12:3-8
 - b. Ephesians 3:8
 - c. Acts 20:28
 - d. 1 Corinthians 12:28
3. The CALL of the mentor
 - a. 1 Timothy 4:14
 - b. 2 Timothy 2:2; 3:10-14
4. The CALL of the qualified volunteer
 - a. Isaiah 6:7-8
 - b. 1 Timothy 3:1
5. The pre-ordained CALL of God
 - a. Acts 26:14-19—Paul
 - b. Jeremiah 1:1-10—Jeremiah
 - c. Jonah 1:1-2—read what happens to those who say “no” to this call
6. The CALL of a purposeful salvation
 - a. Ephesians 2:8-10
 - b. Matthew 25:14-25
7. The CALL of providential circumstances (man's view) or God's intervention in the affairs of man
 - a. Esther 4:14
 - b. Daniel 3:16-30
 - c. Genesis 24:27
8. The CALL of daily decisions
 - a. Luke 9:23
 - b. Joshua 24:15
 - c. 1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 2:21; Philippians 2:5
9. The CALL of eternal values
 - a. 1 Corinthians 15:51-58
 - b. 1 Corinthians 3:11-16
 - c. 2 Corinthians 4:1, 16-18; 5:10
10. The CALL of obedience to God's will
 - a. Philippians 2:13
 - b. Colossians 4:17

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CULTIVATING A CHRIST-LIKE COMPASSION

INTRODUCTION

Theme: Our desire ought to be to cultivate a Christ-like compassion in our life.

One of the most effective ways to impact others for the Gospel of Christ is by possessing a Christ-like compassion for others. **How often do we pay attention to those around us?** Many times we get so wrapped up in the moment we are living in that we fail to notice those whom we are to minister . . . people around us.

What is **COMPASSION**?

G4697 (*Strong's Concordance*)—to have the bowels yearn, that is, (figuratively) feel sympathy, to pity: - have (be moved with) compassion.

Psalms 78:38—He being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity.

Matthew 9:36—But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with **compassion** on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Matthew 14:14—And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with **compassion** toward them, and he healed their sick.

Matthew 15:32—Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have **compassion** on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

Matthew 20:34—So Jesus had **compassion** on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

Mark 1:41—And Jesus, moved with **compassion**, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

Mark 6:34—And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with **compassion** toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

Mark 8:2—I have **compassion** on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat.

Luke 7:13—And when the Lord saw her, he had **compassion** on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

Luke 10:33—But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had **compassion** on him.

Luke 15:20—And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had **compassion**, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

HOW IS IT THAT WE CAN CULTIVATE A CHRIST-LIKE COMPASSION IN OUR LIVES?

I. WE MUST SEE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS (Matthew 9:1-35).

A. **Attention**—genuine interest = look beyond the exterior of a person.

1. Man with palsy healed (Matthew 9:1-7)
2. Matthew called (Matthew 9:8-9)
3. Sitting with publicans and sinners (Matthew 9:10-13)
4. Raising Jarius' daughter (Matthew 9:18-19, 23-26)
5. Woman healed (Matthew 9:20-22)
6. Two blind men healed (Matthew 9:23-31)
7. The demoniac healed (Matthew 9:32-34)
8. Ministering to the multitudes (Matthew 9:35)

B. *Jesus* took notice of *the multitude* (Matthew 9:36); He observed.

C. Time after time *Jesus* noticed others and their specific need.

D. This requires that we take the focus off of self and look to others.

E. What can I do to notice the needs of others?

F. How often do we notice the needs of others?

II. WE MUST BE MOVED BY THE NEEDS OF OTHERS (Matthew 9:36).

A. **Sensitivity**—we must **CARE** (Psalm 142:4)!

B. **Jesus was moved with compassion on them:** His bowels yearned for them; He was touched with a feeling of their infirmities.

C. **He was moved with compassion on them**—He pitied them.

D. **Because they fainted**—The word used here refers to the weariness and fatigue which results from labor and being burdened.

E. It wasn't enough for Christ to notice the need . . . **He was moved by the need.**

F. Christ desired to **help** those in need.

Matthew 9:36—were distressed and scattered

G. **God's people must care!**

1. Jeremiah was concerned over his generation (Jeremiah 9:1).
 2. Paul was concerned for the people of his day (Romans 9:1-3).
 3. Jesus consistently demonstrated concern (Matthew 9:36).
- H. How often are you moved by others when you see them in their need?

III. WE MUST RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.

- A. **Action**—goes beyond thoughts or words.
 Luke 15:20—His father had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.
- B. **He visited not only the great and wealthy cities, but the poor, obscure villages. There He preached; there He healed.**
- C. **He taught in their synagogues.**
- D. **He encouraged his disciples to pray for them** (Matthew 9:38).
- E. Jesus **reached out** to whomever He could.
 Matthew 20:29—And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.
 Matthew 20:30—And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.
 Matthew 20:31—And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.
 Matthew 20:32—And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?
 Matthew 20:33—They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.
 Matthew 20:34—So Jesus had **compassion** on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.
- F. Someone has said, “Sympathy is about **feeling**, compassion is about **doing**.”
- G. It’s not good enough to see people in their need; we should be compelled to **do something** about it . . . exercise **discernment**
1. Physical need
 2. Emotional need
 3. Spiritual need
- H. When you see someone has a need, and you can help them, what do you do?

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION

Do you possess a Christ-like compassion?

- I. **We must see the needs of others.**
- II. **We must be moved by the needs of others.**
- III. **We must respond to the needs of others.**

Do you have a genuine compassion for others? Will you cultivate a Christ-like compassion in your life?

Christ demonstrated compassion to you by giving His life on the cross of Calvary, so that you might have life. Will you follow His example of possessing compassion . . . a compassion that drives you to action?

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEENAGERS AND THEIR PARENTS

TEXT

Matthew 18:16-22

INTRODUCTION

- I. Be willing to care. We should maintain the attitude with our parents and our teenagers. (I care too much to let you do this.)
 - A. Words of encouragement.
 - B. Notes of encouragement.
 - C. Acts of encouragement.

Other verses of reference: Proverbs 6:16; 1 Corinthians 13:1-2

A major key to healthy ministry with the teens and the parents of our young people is communicating to them unconditional love. All situations that we deal with in our youth group should be dealt with out of a motivation of love. We should communicate clearly that we care about the parents of our young people, and we care about the teenagers themselves. If people know that we are approaching these problems from a heart of love, they will be very open to our leadership in the lives of the family.

- II. Be willing to communicate. (Have you specifically stated the boundaries?)
 - A. Be specific.
 - B. Be steadfast.
 - C. Be scriptural.

Other verses of reference: Jonah 1:1-3—God gave Jonah specific boundaries regarding His specific will for his life.

In order to establish a strong parent ministry, communication is a key. You should be willing to begin working on the project of putting things in writing. You should be willing to write a parents manual regarding the guidelines of your youth group, discipline procedures for your youth group, and specific goals and objectives of the group so that every one knows the direction of the youth ministry of your church. People will not be surprised if they know the boundaries have been set, they have been clearly communicated, and they have been put in writing. Above all, parents will always appreciate that there is a scriptural basis for everything that we do.

Suggestions for developing a parent manual:

III. Be willing to confront (Matthew 18:15).

- A. Attack the problem not the person.
- B. Speak the truth in love.
- C. Ask for a commitment to change.

One of the largest shifts that I have seen in youth ministry over the last ten years is the necessity to confront people with their problems from a biblical perspective. Many young people today are not being confronted with the problems in their lives. Many adults are afraid of the teenagers, and afraid to bring to their attention areas in their lives where they should grow. In order for us to maintain the type of healthy youth ministry that is required in the day that we live, we have to be willing to confront young people and parents in areas of sin in their lives. We must know how to give them a proper biblical answer to make the necessary changes.

IV. Be willing to call parents.

- A. Respect their time. Don't call at suppertime!
- B. Be positive that this is a solvable situation.
- C. Assure them that you want to help (and not hurt.)

Be sure that when you call parents you approach them with the right spirit. This is their family. We are ministers of the gospel who are just trying to help from the outside looking in. We need to remind parents regularly that we are not the enemy. The enemy is the world, the enemy is Satan and the enemy is Satan and all of his vices. But many times parents do begin to develop a spirit that anyone in their life that points out a problem in their life or the life of their young person, they begin to view them as an enemy in their life. We need to make sure we remind our parents and our teenagers that we are really here to help them. And so the willingness to give a call to address the problem is out of a motivation of love not out of a motivation of spite or vengeance.

V. Be willing to challenge to godly living (1 John 3:4-12).

There has definitely been a blending over the years between the lifestyle of the Christian and the lifestyle of the unsaved. We must be willing and we must be specific about what God expects from us and the lifestyle we live as a Christian.

VI. Be willing to be consecrated yourself.

- A. Are you completely dedicated to your Lord?
- B. Are you willing to surrender your conflict to the Lord?

Following are some suggestions for establishing a parent ministry, allowing it to grow, and maintaining it over the long haul:

DISCERNMENT

Definition:

From *Webster's 1828*—Discern: To separate or distinguish

1. To separate by the eye or by understanding
2. To distinguish, to see the difference between two or more things
3. To discriminate, to discover by the intellect

Discern: To see or understand the difference, to make a distinction, as to discern between good and evil, truth and falsehood.

The command to be discerning: 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22.

God's Thesis	COMPROMISE	Satan's Anti-thesis
Truth	SYNTHESIS	Error

Spiritual Discernment: The divinely given _____ to _____ God's thoughts and ways from _____ others—Psalm 119:66.

PREREQUISITE QUESTIONS

Circle one:

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----|----|
| 1. Am I sure that I am saved? | YES | or | NO |
| 2. Am I willing to go God's way if it is different than my way? | YES | or | NO |
| 3. Am I now promising to prayerfully and honestly seek to understand God's Word with a goal of knowing God's way? | YES | or | NO |
| 4. Do I really desire discernment in this area? Do I desire it enough to pay the price? | YES | or | NO |

SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT GUIDELINES

1. Pray consistently for wisdom and understanding concerning this area—1 Kings 3:5-14; James 1:5.
2. Live a life of obedience—James 1:22.
3. Get advice from discerning church leaders and stay consistent in church participation—Ephesians 4:11-14.
4. Seek and pray for spiritual judgment and for the Holy Spirit's illumination of Scriptures—1 Corinthians 2:11-16; John 16:13.
5. Study the Scriptures—Acts 20:28-32; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:15-16; 2 Timothy 3:15-17.
 - a. Look first for direct precepts and absolute commands from God regarding your area of concern.
 - b. Develop principles for spiritual discernment. These are derived from a study of the Word.
6. Keep on growing and learning—1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18; Luke 2:52.
 - a. Preparation—Ezra 7:10.
 - b. Trials—James 1:2-4.
 - c. Chastening—Hebrews 12:5-11.
 - d. Self-Discipline—1 Timothy 4:7-8.
 - e. Goal—Romans 8:29.

DISSOLVING DOUBTS

1 THESSALONIANS 5:21-22

Directions:

1. Be sure you understand 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22.
2. Make a list in the doubtful column of the areas and things in your life that you are uncertain as to whether or not you as an obedient Christian should be participating in. Be as specific as possible with this list.
3. Go through the Spiritual Discernment Guidelines (*page 5-2*) on each item listed.
4. As you come to conclusions on these doubtful areas, cross them off the doubtful list and move them to the good or evil column, depending on your study of the Word of God and your prayerful conclusions.
5. At the end, all the items on your doubtful list should be moved to one of the other columns. However, you must be honest. If it is still an area of doubt for you, then make your final decision based on Romans 14:22-23.

“GOOD” THINGS TO HOLD FAST TO IN MY LIFE	DOUBTFUL LIST THINGS I NEED TO “PROVE” OR “TEST”	“EVIL” THINGS TO ABSTAIN FROM IN MY LIFE
	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.	

GROWTH: MOVING FROM BOX TO BOX

DOUBTFUL BOX

Is something good or bad, right or wrong, holy or evil?

How can I know for sure if something is okay or sinful for me?



1. Honestly answer each of the prerequisite questions.
2. Go through the spiritual discernment guidelines.
3. Study and develop biblical principles that will help you decide.
4. Decide by faith.

Future changes and growth on your part may make it necessary to do this again if the area becomes doubtful .

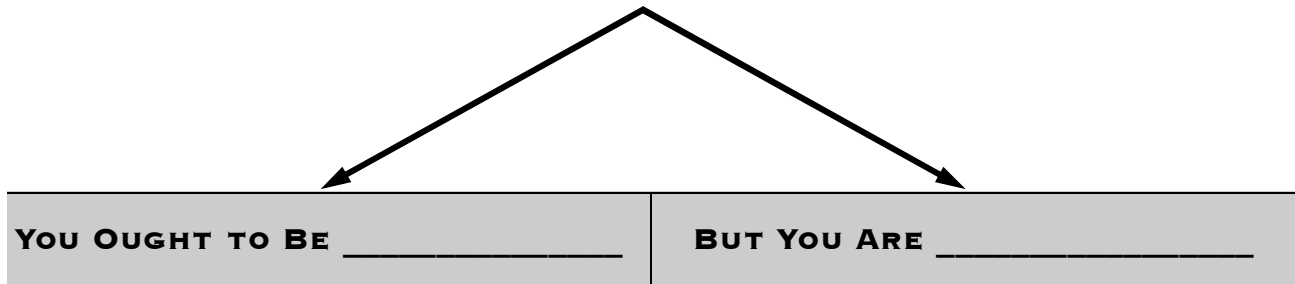
BY FAITH BOX

1. How is this going to work in my life? What changes do I need to make in order to implement this now?
What?
When?
How?
2. How can I help others with this?

BEING WHAT YOU OUGHT TO BE

HEBREWS 5:11-14

WHEN FOR A _____



WHICH LIST BEST DESCRIBES YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE TODAY?

HUMOR AWRY

Given how serious church and religion can be to some, “Christian humor” may strike some as non-biblical or irreverent. Does humor have a place in ministry? What role should humor play in reaching a student for Christ? Commenting on the importance of humor, one author stated, “Life is serious all the time but living cannot be. You may have all the solemnity in your neckties, but in everything important you must have mirth or you will have madness.” Allowing humor to be a part of a student ministry can be a very effective tool, but is the risk worth it? The following are some helpful tips in maintaining balance in humor and solemnity.

Humor in the Bible: Did humor really exist in the Bible?

- The first account of laughter occurred when God told Abraham and Sarah they would bear a child in their old age.
- Jesus used ironical and paradoxical phrases to confound, teach, and grab the attention of His hearers. (Jesus considered humor a hook to set the stage for learning.)
- Many of the scathing comments to Jewish leaders are believed by some to be historical and sarcastic comments that would have caused the listeners to laugh.
- Not all biblical humor is healthy humor. The mocking of Christ and the mocking by the fool are humorous to some but are certainly inappropriate.
- There is much word-play and punning throughout the Bible. This however is not justifying the use of humor in all arenas.
- Isaiah 61 (*basar*) “to preach” offers as an example to carry cheerfulness in our ministry. *Strong’s Concordance* states that this is reflective of being fresh, cheerful and announcing good news.
- Proverbs offers wisdom parables that hint to sarcasm or humor. (*Proverbs 22:13*, “*there is a lion without . . .*”)

Humor Used Effectively: Humor can be used effectively in student ministry and evangelism

- Humor breaks down barriers and can challenge the hearts and lives of the listener.
- Humor can be more memorable to the listener.
- “Laughter is the shortest distance between two people”—Victor Borge.
- Humor in skits can be a wonderful way for teens to connect with each other.
- Humor in lessons will capture the attention of students.
- Humor is a great way to break down the walls of communication that may hinder receptivity of the message.
- Rabbi Shmuley Boteach: “Most people find it difficult to receive information from someone who has little or no sense of humor.”
- “You cannot teach people unless you have their attention By using illustrations, questions, and even humor, this is more likely to take place. Most people don’t liked to be preached to, but most people enjoy being spoken to”—Trevor McIlwain, New Tribes Missions.
- Even Charles H. Spurgeon emphasized humor and how effective it can be. He devoted one entire chapter to its use in his autobiography.

Observations:

- Everyone loves to laugh.
- Most youth leaders enjoy making their students laugh.
- Many times making a student laugh becomes the goal rather than using humor as a tool to gain attention or teach a lesson.
- If the leader is not prepared to use humor in a specific way, the humor can quickly get out of control.
- Maturity and discernment must dictate all humor or it will go awry.

- The issue at hand is not quantity of humor but quality of humor.
- Maintain balance in all meetings and events with respect to humor and silliness.
- Humor cannot be manufactured; it must be natural. (If humor is not your gift, don't force it to be a part of your ministry.)
- Humor can be funniest at the expense of others (definitely inappropriate).

Surprisingly, little has been written on the topic of humor in the Bible or humor in ministry. The caution we all must heed is that humor has its place, but we must guard against any humor that promotes harm/damage and allows for the tearing down of others. Humor is a great tool as long as you control it, and it does not control you.

YOUTH MINISTRY THAT CROSSES CULTURE

The United States has often been referred to as a “melting pot.” This is due to the large population of people within the United States who are from other countries and cultures. As we continue to preach and teach the Gospel, we must consider the needs of those to whom we are attempting to reach. In order to do this successfully, we must learn about the peoples and cultures of those to whom we minister. This is no easy task, but the benefits are well worth the effort.

Illustration of the monkey and the fish in chapter one, page fourteen of *Cross-Cultural Connections* by Duane Elmer.

The Bible is a book that crosses culture and needs to be lived out everywhere.

I. Gaining An Understanding

- A. “One of the greatest stumbling blocks to understanding other peoples within or without a particular culture is the tendency to judge others’ behavior by our own standards.”—James Downs
- B. We often have good intentions founded on great motives but lack the proper understanding and knowledge of how to effectively communicate to others outside our own culture.
- C. “We have been created in the image of God, and it is god-likeness we share...Thinking that all people are like me can only lead to disillusionment. Am I the center of the universe?”—Gladis De Pree (p. 64)

II. Preparing To Reach Out

- A. The importance of preparation and a right attitude
- B. We must look beyond ourselves and our own thought process
- C. The global picture based on 1,000 people (p. 19)
 - 206 would be Chinese
 - 167 would be Indian
 - 79 would be from Central and South America
 - 50 would be from the former Soviet Union (Eastern European)
 - 51 would be North American
 - 45 would be Western European
 - 33 would be Indonesian
 - 24 would be from Pakistan
 - 22 would be from Bangladesh
 - 21 would be from Japan
 - 21 would be from Nigeria
 - 118 would be from other sub-Saharan African and other Asian countries

The median age of those in the more economically developed countries would be about thirty years, while in the developing countries it would be under sixteen years.

D. Religiously, the global village of 1,000 people would look like this:

Christian: 330, leaving 670 non-Christian (p. 20)

Muslim: 198

Nonreligious: 126

Hindu: 135

Buddhist: 60

Ethno-religionist: 38

Atheist: 25

New-religionist: 17

Sikh: 4

Jewish: 2

Other: 65

III. Knowing The Culture

A. We live in a society with many differences and cultures:

1. Male and female

2. Young and old

3. Parent and child

4. Ethnicities or races

B. Understanding differences

1. Understand the cultural context

2. Illustration of newlyweds and the different ways a man thinks as compared to a woman—
Illustration of buying snow tires for an anniversary gift for his wife (p. 36-37)

C. “Entering another culture is to encounter daily difference.” (p. 64)

D. “One expression of wisdom is knowing more and more how to interpret and respond to life’s experiences.” (p. 31)

E. The way we act and respond is a reflection of the culture in which we grew up. In order to effectively reach other cultures, we must make ourselves aware of their thought process so we can better understand them and meet them where they are.

F. We often act out of our own frame of reference (the man buying a shotgun for his wife so they could go hunting together).

G. Obtain a fresh perspective.

H. Illustration of Joseph as he adjusted while in Potiphar’s house

IV. Communicating With An Impact

- A. Build relationships.
- B. Communication is both verbal and non-verbal.
- C. “We usually communicate from our own frame of reference.” (p. 39)
- D. Ministry is relational. (p. 36)
- E. Example of Jacob in Korea—adjust and relax
- F. “We stand in awe of the ocean, the thunderstorm, the sunset, the mountains; but we pass by a human being without notice even though the person is God’s most magnificent creation.” Augustine (p. 93)
- G. *Romans 15:7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*
- H. Build trust
 - 1. “The glue of all good relationships.” (p. 98)
 - 2. “Nothing significant happens between people unless there is a strong bond of trust.” (p. 98)
- I. Acceptance—meet people where they are (John 4—woman at the well)
- J. Principles for cross-cultural communication (pp. 39-40)
 - 1. All of us are products of our cultural heritage, which dictates how we see the world and how we interact with the word, including gift giving. Everything we say and do reflects our heritage.
 - 2. We tend to think that everyone else sees and interacts with the world the way we do
 - 3. Judgment comes quickly
 - 4. When we learn about another person’s cultural heritage, the person’s perspective and intentions, we are better able to understand and accept more quickly
 - 5. Withholding judgment can be the best gift we give another person—stay open-minded.
 - 6. Ask why the other person behaved in a certain way or said something in particular.

How can we effectively minister to teens and families from various cultures? Three skill sets needed as we approach another culture (p. 87).

- 1. Openness
- 2. Acceptance
- 3. Trust

How can we effectively cross over and relate?

- 1. Know about their culture and customs.
- 2. Know their characteristics.

3. Get into their communities.
4. Know lifestyles—multifamily living.
5. Know that they are not always like we are. Familiarize yourself with their thought process
6. Know their needs.
7. Attempt to know their language.

Will you take the time necessary to cross over and get to know those you work with so that you might minister and serve more effectively and efficiently?

(Several of the principles used in these notes are from concepts gleaned from the reading of *Cross-Cultural Connections* by Duane Elmer, Inter Varsity Press, 2002; ISBN 0-8308-2309-3).

TRICKS FOR TEENS

A word of caution: In today's culture of mysticism, psychic power, and demonic activity, it is important to clearly define the difference between a trick, puzzle, or illusion and black magic. There is an aspect of magic with which a Christian should have nothing to do. When one does tricks, it is important that that aspect is not emphasized. (1 Corinthians 10:21-33; Philippians 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)

Purpose of the trick: A knowledge of why you are doing tricks will help you know what kind of tricks to try and what types of tricks to avoid. Ask yourself the simple question, "Why am I doing this?" to help you figure out your purpose. Listed are some possible purposes for using tricks.

1. Helps gather the attention of the audience to the stage, much like a stunt or crowd breaker.
2. Used to teach a lesson or prove a point that may be spiritual or not much like an illustration or visual object lesson.
3. Connects you to the audience. Gives you a common ground to talk about, much like telling a personal story that may be of interest to the audience.
4. Humorous transition that takes you from a very active part of your event to a quieter part of your event.
5. Many times an entertainer uses tricks to amaze and awe the crowd. Although some of your tricks may be amazing, I would recommend that awing the crowd would not be your main purpose for doing tricks.

One ingredient of every trick: No matter what trick you are doing or how easy it may be, there is one crucial ingredient—MISDIRECTION. Misdirection is a talent that is most easily grown when you use it over and over. Many times I will start using a trick on children three to five years old. Your ability to misdirect is incredible with this group. At this age, they will probably close their eyes if you ask them to, which makes doing tricks really easy. Listed are several tools of misdirection:

1. The audience will look wherever you look, therefore don't look where the trick is happening.
2. Use a story to lead the audience in a wrong direction. Many times the story will cover those critical moments when the trick is done but the audience thinks that you are just setting up the trick.
3. Allow for lots of extra motion. This covers the critical motion and makes it seem as if it is just part of everything.

If you could only buy one book that did a good job of explaining the tricks with words and illustrations, pick up *Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic* (ISBN 0-89471-623-9).

Things that I avoid—

1. Tricks that involve cards
2. Eerie sounding music or attitudes
3. Magic words like Abbra-Kadabbra
4. Magic Wands
5. Tricks that take hours to perfect, because they are really not that important

Things that I like—

1. Tricks that use everyday items around the house
2. Tricks that are more mechanical than sleight of hand
3. Non-magic magic tricks
4. Tricks that I can goof up and the audience does not know if that was planned or not
5. Small props

Non-magic Magic Tricks (ooooo-ahhhhhh tricks)

1. Finger appear from nowhere
 - Transfer the finger to the other hand
 - Finger from a member of the audience's ear
 - Juggling fingers
 - Throwing fingers
2. Finger-linking rings
3. Little Nail/Big Nail
4. Red shoe string/blue shoe string
5. Levitating knife
6. Levitation of one foot
7. Poke my head through this hole
8. Mental trick—How many fingers am I holding behind my back?

WHY ARE YOU IN YOUTH WORK? WHAT ARE YOUR MOTIVES?

WRONG MOTIVES	RIGHT MOTIVES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to re-live my teen years. It looks like a fun, “spiritual” job to do. It should be easy. • I still think and act like a teenager, so I might as well get involved. • I like to stay up on all the latest fads and fashions anyway. • No one else will do it, so I guess I will. • My preacher talked me into it. • I was looking for a good excuse for getting out of the house anyway. • It is such a glamorous, fun job. • I want to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is what God wants me to do. • I have a concern, love, and burden for the youth. • I have something the kids need— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ A discerning knowledge of the Word of God ◇ A life testimony and practice that validates my teaching ◇ A love for the Lord and for youth • This is my place, at this time, in this local church body to exercise my spiritual gifts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ A ministry with others ◇ A place for my personal growth • I want to.

PROJECT G.O. (GLOBAL OUTREACH) A MINISTRY FOCUSED ON ETERNITY

MISSION TRIP PREP SHEET

Mission trips are an exciting way to get people involved and burdened for missions. If you have ever been on a mission trip before you know the feelings that are associated with such a trip. Maybe you have never had the opportunity and privilege of participating in such an adventure; there are life changing experiences awaiting you. As you prepare to embark on such a journey, there are several vital elements that ought to be considered. Here are some crucial questions:

1. Why is this trip important?

2. Where do we want to go and with whom will we minister?

3. What will we do when we get there?

4. How long will this particular trip be?

5. How will we get to this particular destination?

6. What will this trip cost us monetarily?

7. Who will be able to participate in this trip?

8. What are the benefits and dangers (precautions) of taking this trip?

9. How can we successfully build our ministry team?

10. What do we want to see God accomplish on this trip?

Take some time and work through these thought provoking questions that will aid in making your God-given dream a reality.

MISSION TRIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Age: _____ Birth Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ - _____

Work Phone: (____) _____ - _____

Cell Phone: (____) _____ - _____

E-mail Address: _____

I understand that I should only attend this year's mission trip if I am committed to reaching others for Christ and have a desire to see them grow.

Signature of Applicant

Date

***Note: If you are planning on attending this year's mission trip, this application and a \$100.00 non-refundable deposit must be submitted to (group leader) _____ no later than (deadline date) _____.*

***Not everyone who signs up for this year's mission trip is guaranteed to be able to attend. Each individual is responsible for fulfilling the requirements given as well as prove by your attitude and actions that you are willing to serve.*

Please answer the following questions:

Have you accepted Christ as your Savior?

Briefly write out your salvation testimony.

Have you ever been scripturally baptized?

If no, why haven't you been baptized?

On a scale of one to ten—one being poor and ten being excellent—how would you rate your relationship with your parent(s)?

Briefly explain:

On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your relationship with your brothers and sisters?

Briefly explain:

Briefly describe the type of friends you have:

On a scale of one to ten, how would you describe your relationship with authority in your life (coaches, teachers, pastors, boss)?

Briefly explain:

On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your spiritual growth?

Briefly explain:

What would you say are your three greatest strengths?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What would you say are your three greatest weaknesses?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Do you have any specific needs we can help you with right now?

MEDICAL RELEASE AND PERMISSION FORM

Participant's Name: _____

The above named has my permission to participate in (event) _____ with (group name) _____ from (date) _____ to (date) _____. I understand that by signing this form I am allowing the above-named to participate in all activities that are a part of this event. I also release (organization) _____ from responsibility and liability from injury or illness that may occur during this event. I hereby authorize any adult leader of this activity, as agent for me, to consent to any necessary medical examination or treatment as prescribed by a licensed physician, surgeon, or dentist. I expect to be contacted as soon as possible in the event of needed medical attention.

Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

Parent or Guardian's Name (Printed)

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ Birth Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ - _____

Work Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Father

Work Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Mother

Cell Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Father

Cell Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Mother

E-mail Address: _____

Other Contact: (____) _____ - _____ Who is this person? _____

Insurance Company Name: _____

Policy Number: _____

Has the above-named participant been to the hospital in the last six months?
If yes, please explain:

Please list any medications being taken by the participant during this activity and the frequency of taking the medication:

Medication should be

_____ Staff Regulated

_____ Self Regulated

Leader has permission to distribute to participant

_____ Tylenol

_____ Aspirin

_____ Motrin

_____ Other (please specify)

_____ Pepto or the like

List any allergies (if any):

Is there anything in particular that your child could or should not do?

PARTICIPANT COST SUMMARY SHEET

Activities/Touring	\$ _____
Emergency Fund	\$ _____
Film and Developing	\$ _____
Food (\$ _____ per day x _____ days)	\$ _____
Gas	\$ _____
Gifts (for host/hostesses and missionary)	\$ _____
Lodging (\$ _____ per day x _____ days)	\$ _____
Meals (while traveling—\$ _____ per meal x _____ meals)	\$ _____
Medical/Travel Insurance	\$ _____
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ _____
Passport	\$ _____
Spending Money	\$ _____
Supplies (VBS, outreach, activities)	\$ _____
Tracts/Publications	\$ _____
Transportation on Field (Divide total cost by the number of participants)	\$ _____
Travel to Field	\$ _____
Visas	\$ _____
Total Estimated Expenses per Participant	\$ _____

PLANNING AN EXTENDED MISSION TRIP

Mission trips have had profound effects on countless numbers of lives. When you consider the individuals that have been touched by the Gospel of Christ, the decisions that have been made for full-time service, and the impact that these trips have on those that have taken them, it does not take long to understand the benefits and even the necessity of such endeavors.

WHY SHOULD WE TAKE A MISSION TRIP?

- One of the greatest reasons to take a mission trip is to **understand** and **see** first hand **God's awesome power**.
- Mission trips also provide opportunity for **encouragement**, both for the missionary and for the ones on the trip.
- **Exposure** to foreign missions and different cultures is yet another reason to take a mission trip.
- Adventure and **experience** in broadening one's horizons and talents in areas of ministry.
- Create **enthusiasm** regarding world-wide evangelism and outreach with the intent to develop a person's heart and challenge them with the reality that God can use them to make a difference.
- Provide an atmosphere for positive **life change** and potential **surrender** of one's life to God's will.

HOW DO WE BEGIN TO TAKE ON SUCH A TASK?

- **Pray**—Seek God's will for what He would have you to do.
- **Plan**—Begin to make plans early so your mission experience will be positive and provide the most impact.
- **Promote**—Present your desires to your pastor, your teens, their parents and to your church to create excitement and cultivate a passion for world-wide outreach; enlist people's prayer and financial support.
- **Prepare**—Meet with your group at least once a week to inform them of the trip details, relay to the participants your expectations, to check on their spiritual growth, to challenge them with their privilege and responsibility, and to pray with and encourage them.

WILL THIS TRIP JUST BE A "GLORIFIED VACATION"?

- If you successfully share your vision regarding your purpose, people will not think you are simply taking a vacation. When you are on your trip, however, make sure you plan for some amusement. There ought to be a balance of ministry activity and fun activity. One should not seek to serve, serve, serve, and neglect having fun; but there should not just be fun, fun, fun, without service.
- Relay your goals and objective to those involved in your trip preparation including your pastor, the teens, the teens' parents, your sponsors, and your church congregation.
- Encourage your pastor to hold a commissioning service for those taking the trip. This will serve as a reminder to all that the participants are not only representing your church but also Jesus Christ.
- Be sure to communicate with everyone involved.
- Discuss the importance of responsibility—following through on assignments, tasks, fund-raising, meetings, projects, church attendance, example, and the like.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS WHICH NEED TO BE CONSIDERED AS THIS MINISTRY BEGINS?

- One of the greatest dangers that can arise is the idea that “we are the elite.” Continually challenge them with the reality that we are to be humble servants who have an opportunity to minister in a unique setting and culture.
- Identify the specific roles of each of the following and make efforts to communicate this to each: leader, sponsors, parents, students, missionaries.
- Constantly work on building team unity. Everyone needs to understand that they are part of a team, a unit which possesses the same goals and purposes. They are not an entity unto themselves. It is natural for groups within the group to form. When this happens though, it is easy for the group’s unity dynamic to diminish.
- Understand that not everyone who wants to go will be able to go. Undoubtedly, someone may not be able to take the trip for one reason or another: disqualification, not raising enough support, failure to follow through on projects and assignments, illness, etc. Do not allow this to be a distraction which causes the focus to be lost. Encourage the participants, however, to keep their commitment to take the trip once they have signed up.
- Be aware of distractions that will arise. Satan will attempt to use anything he can to deter the group from the task at hand. Be flexible with your schedule and plans while you understand that God allows things for a reason.
- Discuss your expectations openly with the group. They need to know what you as a leader desire from them.
- As you take this trip, think about purchasing travelers insurance for each individual. This is an added cost but it will prove to be a good resource if something were to happen. (It would cover things like lost luggage, trip cancellation, illness, death, etc.)
- Attitude plays a big part. Encourage everyone to keep positive even when things are not as you wish they could be. Homesickness, illness, weariness, lost possessions, disagreements, and frustration with a new culture can be a major cause of bad attitudes. Be careful!
- Adapt to the culture in which you find yourself. This does not mean you have to sacrifice your biblical doctrine, but refrain from saying, “But we don’t do it like this at home.” Effective ministry occurs as one immerses himself into the culture in which he finds himself.
- Be sure you take care of all the expenses while you are on your trip. Most missionaries do not bring in enough support to take care of a group of people and all their needs. Make sure you cover all the gas and transportations expenses, food and lodging cost, outreach materials, supplies for activities, entrance fees to museums, parks, and the like, and even cover the expenses for the missionary and his family. It should not cost the missionary anything to have you come and serve with them. Be a blessing as often as you can!

WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE?

- First, to glorify God
- Second, for the good of others
- Third, for our own growth

MISSION TRIP EVALUATION

Here are some helpful questions to consider upon the return home from your mission trip. Thinking through these questions and answering them with your group will be of great value to you as you plan future trips.

1. What was good about the trip?
2. What were the initial reactions of those who took the trip?
3. How did the missionaries react to your group? Do you think they would have you back to their field? If yes, why? If no, why not?
4. What were the reactions of those whom you served?
5. What would you have liked to do that we did not do?
6. What could we have left out and not lost out?
7. How did reality differ from your expectations?
8. What were the attitudes that were expressed during the trip?
9. Were there any obstacles that had to be overcome?
10. How did the different culture impact the trip?
11. Were there enough funds for the trip?
12. What needs to be improved?
13. Overall, how did things go?
14. What advice would you give to someone going next year?
15. What one thing impacted your life the most?

- Divide and conquer—the concentric-circle approach.

- Make some dust—do something, keep on doing it, don't stop.

DISCIPLINE QUESTIONS THAT TEACH

What did you do?

Insist on complete honesty. Not “why”; they have plenty of excuses.

Was that right or wrong?

Teach the right way when their answers are unbiblical.

Teach values and judgment.

What would have been a better choice?

Involve them in alternative choices.

You must help them learn how to make right choices.

Next time, what will you choose to do?

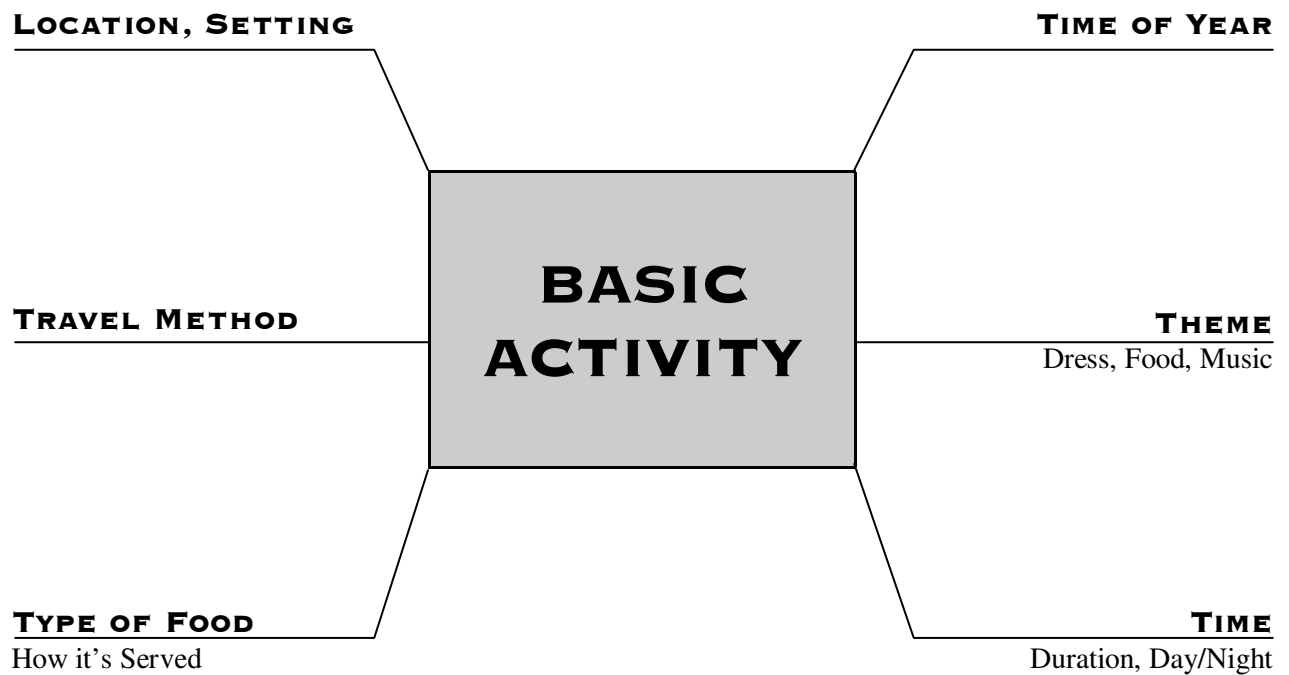
Establish a verbal contract concerning future behavior.

Should you fail, what would be a fair (just) consequence?

It must fit the offense. Establishes future consequences; be very consistent.

BASIC TYPES OF ACTIVITIES	
PARTY	
TRIPS	
EVENTS	
ENTERTAINMENT	
EXCURSIONS	
SERVICE	

VARIETY FORMULA



HOW TO . . . BUILD AN ACTIVITY

What type of activity do you think is needed?

A. Evangelistic

B. Service

C. Unity Building

BRAINSTORM LIST NINE IDEAS FOR AN ACTIVITY		
1.	4.	7.
2.	5.	8.
3.	6.	9.

What type was the last activity?

When was the last time that we did the activity suggested? How did it go?

ELIMINATE THREE SUGGESTIONS.

Will the activity split the junior high and high school?

How many adult staff will be needed?

Are there any special transportation considerations?

What cost limits should we set? What was the cost for the last activity?

ELIMINATE FOUR MORE SUGGESTIONS.

What kind of refreshments? Are we doing food with a theme?

Will this interest any unsaved?

CHOOSE ONE SUGGESTION.

HOW TO . . . GET PARTICIPATION

WHAT IS PARTICIPATION?

The act or state of participation, or sharing in common with others. To partake: to take or receive a portion. To share: to use, experience, or enjoy with others. To have, get, use, etc., in common with another or others.

Acts 2:44-47 “. . . *had all things in common*”

Acts 4:32ff “. . . *had all things in common*”

WHY IS PARTICIPATION IMPORTANT?

Participation is a key tool in the process of spiritual growth. Participation can happen on many levels: laugh, listen, talk, think, sing, play, plan, lead. It can happen by accident, but you will be much more successful if you have a plan!

IS PARTICIPATION BIBLICAL?

Consider some of the many examples:

Adam—Genesis 2:18-24

Noah—Genesis 6-8

Abraham—Genesis 22

Moses—Exodus 3-4

Elijah—I Kings

Miracle of water to wine—John 2:1-11

Miracle of loaves and fish—Matthew 14-15; Mark 6,8; Luke 9; John 6

Miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead—John 11:11-45

SOME PARTICIPATION BLOCKERS

Hijacking

Fear

Attitude

Habit

Anger

SOME PARTICIPATION LUBRICATORS

Pattern of home

Example of adults and youth

Planned progression

Respect for individuals and the group

Input from youth

Relationship with individuals

Success

HOW TO . . . USE SHADOW PUPPETS

Puppets are always a hit with the juniors. Here is another way of easily attracting their attention to a story. With the use of a simple stage made of PVC pipe and a white sheet combined with an overhead projector, leaders can make a silhouette puppet stage. Choose a story of your choice, then make simple silhouettes of the characters attaching a straw or Popsicle stick for a workable handle. You may also hinge the characters with brass brads, creating motion. By placing these characters on the overhead projector, you have many possibilities to size and action adding visual affects—color transparency film, texture, etc. Tell your story as a helper acts it out. Silhouette shapes can be found in coloring books or from almost any picture. Shadow puppets allow you to make these characters big for a large group to enjoy. For many great ideas, you may wish to purchase the book *Worlds of Shadow* by David and Donna Wisiewski by Teaching Ideas Press.

HOW TO . . . USE POWERPOINT

POWERPOINT FOR DUMMIES: BASIC TRAINING

I. **B**eneficial

A. Considerations to PowerPoint use

1. Will it benefit the teacher?
2. Will it benefit the students?
3. What is the distraction level for the teacher?
4. What is the distraction level for the students?

B. Benefits of PowerPoint

1. Teaching tool
2. Learning aid

II. **A**ppropriate

A. Define your purpose—Why are you using PowerPoint?

1. Slide show as the presentation itself
 - a. Entertaining
 - b. Generates interest
 - c. Technology is highlighted
2. Slide show as a presentation tool
 - a. Visual aid for learning
 - b. Communicates main thoughts
 - c. Technology is hidden

B. Define your goal—What are you trying to accomplish?

1. Communicate content
 - a. Make the slides easy to read
 - 1) Font: size, style, color
 - 2) Text: main thoughts only, two to three points per slide
 - 3) Background: attractive, but subtle
 - b. Reduce distractions
 - 1) Grammatical errors
 - 2) Formatting inconsistencies
2. Entertainment: Creative communication

C. Define your audience—What is your audience spectrum?

1. Age

2. Gender
3. Competence level
4. Characteristics

III. **S**imple

- A. Select a theme
 1. Fonts
 2. Graphics
 3. Background
- B. Emphasize with caution—Overemphasis is no emphasis at all!
 1. Color
 2. Size
 3. Position
 - a. Isolation
 - b. Differentiation

IV. **I**nteresting

- A. Toolbox idea: Keep all your options available, but use only the ones that will do the job
- B. Use the PowerPoint features
 1. Animation: text movement
 2. Backgrounds
 3. Bullets
 4. Sound
 5. Templates: preset styles
 6. Transitions: slide movement from one to another

V. **C**onsistent

- A. The importance of consistency
 1. Reduces distractions
 2. Lends credibility to the speaker
 3. Will not be noticed unless is missing
- B. How to achieve consistency
 1. Create a common theme throughout
 2. Check the overall picture
 - a. Graphics/Backgrounds: same/same family throughout

- b. Fonts: headers and body text
- c. Placement
- d. Transitions

VI. *BASIC* Tips

- A. Plan your work then work your plan.
 - 1. Sketch slide layout on paper first.
 - 2. Search with a purpose for graphics and clipart—know what you are looking for.
- B. Practice makes prepared.
 - 1. Learn the technology—software and hardware.
 - a. Utilize resources.
 - 1) Web (<http://www.microsoft.com/office/powerpoint/default.asp>)
 - 2) Help
 - b. Have good speaker notes.
 - 1) Clearly defined “click” and “transition” spots.
 - 2) Know what is happening.
 - 2. Be comfortable with your level of knowledge and use it.
 - 3. Keep improving.
- C. Perform with confidence.
 - 1. Learn how to manage technical glitches.
 - 2. Be prepared for the unexpected (power outages, etc.).
 - 3. Review how to use your tools.
 - a. Mouse
 - b. Keyboard
 - c. Remote control
 - 4. Speak to the audience, not the screen.
 - 5. Make the audience comfortable by your platform demeanor—always be in control.

HOW TO . . . GET TEENS ON TIME!

GOD IS . . . ORDER AND PEACE

1 CORINTHIANS 14:33

DEFINITION

God is separate from all confusion and disorder.

- Explained
For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace . . . 1 Corinthians 14:33.
And let the peace of God rule in your hearts . . . Colossians 3:15.
- Expanded
Psalm 104:19-30
O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches (verse 24).
- Example
Mark 4:35-41
And He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm (verse 39).
- Extended
Psalm 8
O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens (verse 1).

CONSIDERATIONS

- Parents
- Culture
- Training
- Leadership
- Apathy

TIPS AND TRICKS

- Lead by example—be on time yourself!
- Train PARENTS that time is important.
- Train teens that time is important.
- Invite your core leaders (staff/teens) to meet for prayer for the service fifteen minutes before it begins.
- Schedule teen soul-winning on Wednesday after school and keep them until church begins.
- Create an environment where the teens WANT to be on time.

DUM-DUM SEGMENT *(See page 3-7.)*

- Door prizes (candy, cheap toys, and worthless gifts)
- Sing the beginning Jingle together—"Jingle Bells"
- Getting to Know You questions
- Would You Rather
- Trivial Pursuit questions
- Bible Balderdash
- Bang, Who'd I Shoot?
- Playing nose flutes
- Pictionary/Charades
- "One time" stories

- Homemade commercials
- PowerPoint games and funny photos (Running pictures of the teens on the screen as they are coming in catches their attention; kids love to see themselves.)
- Indoor human scavenger hunt
- Next in line
- Simple counting
- Touch the block
- Who wants to be a millionaire? Who wants to win a whole bunch of chocolate? Bible Millionaire.
- Funny songs
- Skits
- Timed relays
- 13th word
- Shoe jungle
- Indoor volleyball with beach ball
- Poster contest
- Write cards to visitors, shut ins, or those that need encouragement

Getting teens on time has a lot to do with the lives of leadership living before their teens that God is important. If we make time for what matters in planning and organizing a well-thought out youth ministry, we will be instrumental in developing teens that have a well-thought out view of God. Working on *Getting Teens on Time* is a way that we can communicate our love and priority for God's order, and, at the same time, communicate to our teens that we love them and do not want to waste their time while they are with us for those few short moments.

HOW TO . . . BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN ADULTS AND ADOLESCENTS RELATIONAL BASED MINISTRY

THE PROBLEM WITH CONTEMPORARY YOUTH MINISTRY

- Can we really say that as a result of a program oriented ministry our students are better off today than before student ministry even existed?
- One mistake I often made attending seminars, reading books, and magazine articles, or even while attending seminary was attempting to implement a carbon copy program from someone else's ministry.
- Much of what has worked for someone else is a result of personal experience for a particular group of people.
- Consider this fact: Many young people who are active in a youth ministry never darken the doorstep of that same church as an adult.
- The problem incurring in the lives of today's adolescents is not a problem that has been created by adolescents. It has been created by youth ministries that are not preparing adolescents for adulthood.

THE NEED TO BE FEEL SUCCESSFUL

- Effective and successful student ministry cannot be measured in days or even years. It is measured in decades. How tempting it is to view ourselves as successful simply because we had a large number or a super exciting activity.
- What is the determining factor in achieving success?
 - ◇ Is it numbers?
 - ◇ Is it personal accomplishments?
 - ◇ Is it congratulatory remarks by others?
 - ◇ Is it being recognized?
 - ◇ Is it building a great program?
- Can programs really offer the growth needed, the maturity moments required, and the relational knowledge of the God they serve?

ONE FACTOR CONTEMPORARY YOUTH MINISTRY LACKS: BALANCE

- Balance comes from an honest approach to how current ministry operates. The question of the hour is not about program based ministries being wrong or ineffective. The question is based upon whether or not the program based ministry is balanced in its approach to reaching adolescents.
- There is a paradigm shift in how ministry is being done today. There is a noticeable difference between ministry today and ministry fifteen years ago.
- I remind you of the illustration concerning Paul and Timothy. Timothy was the object of Paul's ministry not just an end to it.

- The premise of my challenge is to move students on to a relational ministry from solely a program based one.
- The trend among youth ministry is a realization that program based ministries create a gap in the development of adolescents.
- This gap is the focus of a balanced ministry created to establish well rounded youths that will stay in the church body and function as a member of the body of Christ should.

RELATIONAL BASED MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY

Relational ministry defined is when students are encouraged to build relationships with those in their home and church community. It is when the leader takes the initiative and provides opportunities for relationships to blossom. Program based ministry is different in the sense that the program is what dictates success and what is going to be accomplished in the life of each student. Program based ministries can fall prey to not being tailored to individuals. Richard Dunn, author of *Shaping the Spiritual Lives of Students*, offers this thought, “In the midst of profound disillusionment with church and religion, adolescents are crying out for genuine spiritual experiences with a living God. If the twenty-first century adolescents do not engage the living Christ in authentic relationship, they are destined to commit idolatry.” The most important relationship to be sought is that of Jesus Christ. Programs can hinder one from beginning this relationship. It is also important to enhance relationships with other adults as well as with other teens. “Programs are not the villains in this story,” Kenda Dean, author of *The God Bearing Life*, states. We ought to attempt to bridge a balance between programs and people. Programs are necessary but only in the context of building relationships.

One aspect of relational ministry we must consider is the isolation of students away from the adult population of the church. If students are only connected to the student community, the students feel disconnected and leave as soon as graduation occurs. Is it any wonder why youth are leaving the church today in greater numbers than ever before? It has been the practice of many fundamental churches to isolate teens from adults rather than integrate them into the congregation and build healthy relationships. This is a pattern one can fall into very easily. The problem with this pattern of ministry failure is that there is a growing “chasm” between youth and adult congregations. If it is not addressed and reversed, the affect on churches could be detrimental.

Relational ministry can be applied in many ways. The beauty of relational ministry being balanced with program ministry is that it allows the student to enjoy programs while at the same time experience relationships that promote spiritual growth. The premise is that ministry which lacks depth and substance will not be ministry that is eternal. The idea of partnering with teens, parents, church leadership, and other spiritual adults is a biblical idea and one that I believe ought to be considered for an effective and successful ministry. Are program based ministries ineffective? Certainly not. Student ministry simply needs to be well rounded and balanced.

RELATIONAL BASED MINISTRY

Hebrews 10:19-25

**THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH IN THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS
WILL CONTINUE MORE AND MORE TO LOOK LIKE A
PINK CADILLAC WITH HUGE TAIL FINS.— ANONYMOUS**

- The truth of this statement is alarming, because at times the church is not feeding all her sheep.

- Churches as they continue to operate will notice in the next generation a decline of sheep. There is an epidemic that is taking place in the churches of America that will lead to the fulfillment of the already mentioned statement.
- That epidemic is the isolation of the youth community from the adult community.
- What is taking place in ministry today is a massive exodus of youth leaving the church after they are no longer in the youth ministry.
- **The reason that this is occurring is not**
 - ◇ **boring singles classes**
 - ◇ **games that are enjoyed as a teen**
 - ◇ **lack of dedication to Christ**
- I believe fault lies with youth ministry and the structure we've set up.
- What we have practiced in youth ministry is a separation of adult community and student community.
- This has created a chasm that is growing with each year that goes by.
- When a student leaves the youth ministry, he does not know how to connect to the adult community within his own church.
- What choice does he have if we have created the chasm?
- What alarms me is that the next generation of leadership will not enjoy the meeting we are having today.
- The sheep of the future will not be fed due to the lack of preparation on our behalf.
- My goal this morning is to raise the awareness of the pending problem that we will be facing.
- Our goal should be to strive for a biblical philosophy that will bridge the gap.

1. WE MUST CONSIDER CURRENT OBSTACLES IN MINISTRY.

- The author of Hebrews alludes to the fact that there may be disharmony in the body of Christ.
- He also alludes to the fact there are responsibilities that are not being met.
- The author is telling the Hebrews that there seemingly is a lack of **community**.
- **The first century church possessed something that the 21st century church lacks—COMMUNITY.**
- A recent poll taken by George Barna Jr., found that Americans are the loneliest people in the world. The people of Western culture in a condition of atomization, people drifting away from each other.—John Locke, *The De-Voicing of America, Why We Don't Talk To Each Other Anymore...*
- **Alexis de Tocqueville** observed that prior societies did not have a word for individualism.
- **The hard-to-swallow truth is that many churches are satisfied with being made up of individuals rather than a unified body meeting the needs of each other.**
- **Two observations**
 - 1. Students do not talk to adults.**
 - 2. Adults do not talk to students.**
- The reality is that verse 25 is revealing the current condition of the church
“Let us not give up the meeting together as some are in the habit of doing.”

- The current condition of many churches is that they have labeled church as “**KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.**”
- When this is branded on a household item it brings protection and safety, when this is branded on a ministry it creates isolation.

2. WE MUST CONSIDER THAT WE WERE CREATED FOR COMMUNITY (VERSES 24-25).

- An important bi-product of the cross is community (verses 20-22), specifically, the community within the church.
The author of Hebrews gives specific results of the cross:
 1. Consider one another.
 2. Provoke unto love and good works.
 3. Meet together.
 4. Exhorting one another.
 5. And doing it more today that we did yesterday.
Everyday the Lord's return is prolonged means that we should become more of a community.
- This community must transcend age.
- The ministry of feeding sheep depends heavily on the ministry of community.
- The community of the church is about building relationships within the church.
- The community of the church is a powerful organism that is a gift all should experience.
- Understanding the significance of the church body being one community will bridge the gap that currently exists.

3. CONSIDER THE WAY CURRENT MINISTRY OPERATES.

- Looking at Scripture causes one to reflect personally on the challenge offered.
- **This idea is not another program to be instituted, but rather a mindset.**

CONCLUSION

- The message behind this passage is that unity is a natural result of the cross, but has unity occurred in the ministries that are represented?
- My greatest concern is that as we minister to the youth population of our churches that they will be able to connect to the body of Christ and fulfill a scriptural plan for bridging the generational gap.

HOW TO . . . DESIGN A BROCHURE OR WEB PAGE

PHASE 1: BRAINSTORMING

1. Have a goal—What am I promoting?
2. Don't get stuck in a rut—What should be different?
3. Overemphasis is no emphasis—What should be emphasized?
4. Know your limitations—How can I better use the tools I have?
5. Just because you can, doesn't mean you should. Keep it simple!

PHASE 2: DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

1. Who?
2. What?
3. Where?
4. When?
5. How much?

PHASE 3: OVERALL LOOK AND FEEL

1. What is my theme?
2. What is the benefit for those who attend?
3. Is my brochure readable?
4. Does the brochure appeal to my audience?
5. Does my brochure say what it should?

PHASE 4: ACCURACY

1. Did you edit content?
2. Did you edit mechanics?
3. Did you edit printed graphics?
4. Did you edit printed text?
5. Did you edit consistency?

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Good dictionary—hard copy or online (Merriam Webster OnLine at www.m-w.com)
- Style manual (*The Chicago Manual of Style, 15 Edition*—www.chicagomanual.org)
- Thesaurus (*Roget's Thesaurus*, www.m-w.com)
- Art Explosion (*Art Explosion 800,000* available at www.bestbuy.com for \$99—34 CDs of clipart, photographs, and fonts)
- e-Sword (www.e-sword.net)
- Microsoft Office web site (<http://office.microsoft.com>)
- Idea file
- Kelly Paper or an office supply store with a large variety of paper
- Quality digital camera (not expensive, check megapixels when buying)

HOW TO . . . USE SURVEYS AND EVALUATIONS IN YOUTH MINISTRY

SURVEY SAYS . . .

An effective youth worker must understand the message he is communicating and his intended audience. The use of surveys and evaluations helps the youth worker gather information and perceptions so that he can better understand the students by gaining insight on his teens' habits, beliefs, and environment.

How much do you know about the teens to whom you minister? What do they eat? Do they eat with their family? Do they pray regularly? Do they like their siblings? How many pets do they have? What are their aspirations? Who are their heroes? What are some of their daily struggles? Do they understand the Bible? What do they like about themselves? How would they spend \$100 if they could?

A humorous questionnaire, a personal evaluation, or an information-gathering survey is just what is needed to give a leader firsthand knowledge so that he can effectively meet the needs of those under his teaching.

VARIOUS WAY TO INCORPORATE SURVEYS/ POLLS

1. To reinforce teaching, to address specific topics, to demonstrate a need, to bring about introspective thinking, and to communicate their response.
 - a. A method to involve participation.
 - b. A means to create thought.
 - c. A unique game to set the stage for a topic.
2. To gain information about teenage perspective.
3. To gather information.
 - a. Personal information
 - b. Anonymous information.
4. To evaluate an event.
5. To create witnessing opportunities.
 - a. As a way to open a door with a stranger.
 - b. As a training tool for soul winners.

In Jesus' training you see a clear example of asking the opinions of people which then became an opportunity to ask what they believed—this is what really mattered (Matthew 16:13-16).

HOW TO DEVELOP A USABLE SURVEY

1. Start with a definite reason for the survey. What information am I trying to gather and why?
 - a. Assess the spiritual depth

- b. To gain an understanding of the families to whom you minister or a strength.
 - c. For outreach and training.
 - d. To keep “in touch” with youth culture. You can take the temperature of a community culture through your teens’ experiences.
2. Remember the purpose when you get the information back.
 3. Use information to guide choices of topics and patterns to address.
 4. Ask the right questions carefully. Sometimes questions are confusing and do not allow for a clear and accurate response.
 - a. Include open-ended questions.
 - b. Include multiple choice (with familiar responses) but include a space for another response if the ones given are not their choice.
 - c. Include questions that rate the level of their thought on the subject.
 - d. Include suggestions for questions from teens, other youth sponsors, and parents.
 - e. Ask clear, thoughtful questions. Avoid leading questions.

DANGERS OF SURVEYS

1. Remember that polls/surveys indicate opinion not necessarily truth.
2. Percentages from opinion can be misinterpreted and misused.
3. Not all information gathered should be conveyed.
4. Youth ministry should be principle-based not opinion-based.
5. Misuse of information can damage relationship.
6. Remember that a survey does not solve the issues; it is a means to address issues.
7. Accuracy is affected by the openness and truthfulness of those surveyed.
8. Leaders may become discouraged.
9. Leaders may overreact or become reactionary.

It is amazing the many useful and effective ways that surveys and evaluations may be used. As you begin to develop youth group-specific surveys and evaluations, you will encourage relationships, gain understanding, and expand effectiveness.

BEING TREATED FAIRLY

A major source of griping is the feeling that I am not being treated fairly—Ephesians 4:29-32; Philippians 2:13-15.

Answer these questions. Think before answering!!

1. Is there anyone here who has never had the feeling that you were being treated unfairly?
2. Who was that feeling directed toward?
3. How many had that feeling directed toward someone other than father, mother, employer, teacher, or God?
4. Did it help or hinder your relationship with that person?
If it is not made right, it settles into bitterness.
5. What is fair?

- a. Fair is not always equal.

Parable: Master paying same for different amounts of work—Matthew 20:1-16

- b. Root to unfair feeling

- 1) Lack of understanding “whole” situation

Examples:

- a. Brother of prodigal son—Luke 15:25-32
- b. Hell—result of rejecting the sacrifice and invitation of the Son of God—John 3:36

- 2) Sin nature

- a. Selfishness
- b. Covetousness
- c. Pride—Satan
- d. Rebellion—Cain (do it my way)
- e. Laziness (slothful)
- f. Strife and arguing—Philippians 2:3

Sin distorts perception. Example: David and Bathsheba, Nathan and prophet

- c. Fair is faith and trust in the promises of God in the Word.

- 1) Example: Joseph

- 2) Philippians 2

6. You can solve the effects in your own life by taking unilateral action.

- a. Give up your “rights.” You never have a right to sin—I Corinthians 6:19-20.
 - 1) Right to determine future—Romans 8:28
 - 2) Right to material things—Matthew 6:33
 - 3) Right to “do your own thing”—Hebrews 13:17; Romans 13:1-7
 - a. Three parts to obey—to know, submit, do
 - b. Definition of submission—willing attitude to put yourself under authority
 - c. Examples:
 - i. Children obey and honor parents—Ephesians 6:1-2
 - ii. Wives to husbands—Ephesians 6:5-8
 - iii. Employees to boss—Ephesians 6:5-8
- b. Trust those placed over you as “*minister[s] of God to thee for good*”—Romans 13:1-7.

DEVELOPING A PATTERN FOR CHANGE

I. Recognize Your Problem—Genesis 3:1-12, 14.

Don't play the blame game.

Attitude is more important than aptitude.

II. Repent of Your Sin—Luke 13:3; 2 Corinthians 7:10.

We must take the same perspective as God if we are to enjoy the forgiveness of God.

We recognize that it is not a person's biology but his theology.

III. Reorder Your Priorities—Proverbs 23:7; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 4:8.

Changing Our Thoughts—event, evaluation, emotion

Changing Our Habits

IV. Restoration to Fellowship—Psalm 51

Failure is a reality for all.

Forgiveness is available for all.

THE FORGIVENESS CONNECTION

TO BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Why Should I Forgive?

Christ's answer to a specific question regarding abuse of forgiveness principle—Matthew 18:21-35

- It is absurd to be forgiven sins worthy of hell and not forgive another person.
- Judgment and chastisement result from not forgiving others.
- We are to forgive someone over and over again—even for the same offense.
- The unmerciful servant had a wrong view of his own sin and of God's grace.

Who Should Seek Forgiveness?

- If you have wronged others—Matthew 5:23-24
- If someone has wronged you—Matthew 8:15-17; Luke 17:3-4
- Anyone desiring mercy—Proverbs 28:13
- Anyone who wants to love God—1 John 4:20-21

How Should I Ask for Forgiveness?

With a repentant (change of mind pointing to a change of direction) spirit

NOT

- “I’m sorry”—only focuses on you and your feelings
- “I apologize”—no action required by other party; without response, bitterness will grow

BUT

- “I’ve been wrong,” “I have wronged you,” or “I have sinned”
- “Will you forgive me?”

RESPONSE

- “Yes, I will” (from the heart)

Commitment to

- Not bring matter up again to the offended party, to others, or to self.
- Not dwell on it.

Until offense repeated

- Repeat the forgiveness process.

Then

- Fruit of new habit pattern of life will result in forgetting.

Must I Forgive?

- It is commanded by Christ—Colossians 3:13.
- Example of Christ is the standard.

When Should I Ask for Forgiveness?

- *Let not the sun go down on your wrath, Ephesians 4:2b.*

What If I Don't Feel Like Forgiving?

- Do it anyway; it is a command and an act of the will to obey—Romans 12:17; Colossians 3:13; Ephesians 4:32; Luke 17:3-4; Galatians 6:1.
- *“Take heed to thyself.”* There are consequences for not forgiving—Luke 17:3.
- It will determine how you are treated by others and by God—Luke 6:31-38.

How Is It Possible to Be That Forgiving?

- Remember the example of Christ—Colossians 3:13; Matthew 18:25; Luke 23:34; 1 John 1:9.
- Remember the price paid to make forgiveness of sins possible—Hebrews 9:22; Ephesians 1:7.
- Focus emotion on Christ, not on the offending person.

What Should I Do Now?

Ask the Lord, “Is there someone to whom I need to go to ask forgiveness or to forgive?”

One of the most important connections in building relationships is developing the willingness to admit wrong, to ask for forgiveness, and to graciously give forgiveness. Without this, a connection in the body of Christ is severed and does not function properly.

**RELATIONSHIPS FRACTURE
BITTERNESS GROWS
THE SPIRIT IS QUENCHED
BLESSINGS STOP
REVIVAL IS STYMIED**

HIGH IMPACT TEENS H.I.T.

TEENS WHO ARE GROWING IN CHRIST-LIKENESS ROMANS 8:29

Definition of Christ-like:

1. Saved—he has come to know Christ as Savior.
2. Spirit-controlled—he is living by the power and prompting of the Holy Spirit.
3. Studying the Word—he is developing a personal relationship with Christ through Bible study and prayer.
4. Soul winning—he regularly shares his faith with others in order to see them saved.
5. Separated—he is living different from “the world,” not conformed to it.
6. Sacrificially praising God—he willingly testifies (by spoken word or song) of what God is doing in his life.
7. Serving out of love—he ministers in the context of the church out of love for God and others.

SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES FOR QUESTIONABLE ACTIVITIES

We are commanded to test all things and to discern from that testing between good and evil. (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)

1. Does it cause someone else to sin? (Stumbling-block principle—the law of love) (Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8; 1 Corinthians 10:23-33)
2. Lay aside not only sins, but every weight that keeps us from being the best possible Christian. (Hebrews 12:1)
3. Make no provision for the flesh. (Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:16-22)
4. If it is doubtful, it is dirty. (Romans 14:23; James 4:17)
5. A Christian should be separate from the world. (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17)
6. Does it glorify God? (1 Corinthians 10:31)
7. Would Jesus Christ have done it? (1 Peter 2:21)
8. Would you be ashamed if Jesus Christ came and found you doing it? (1 John 2:28)
9. Can you feel free to do it when you remember that God, the Holy Spirit, dwells within you? (1 Corinthians 6:19)
10. Is it fitting conduct for a child of God? (Romans 2:24; Colossians 1:10)

BIBLE TEACHING IDEAS: CHAPTER TOPIC TITLES

Have your class choose a book of the Bible to give a title to every chapter in a way that will be easily remembered for the time they need to show people where in the Bible this answer is found. Here are some easy steps you may use to come up with your “official” chapter topic title.

1. Read the chapter (one a week or class). This is not meant to be a deep study.
2. Mentally highlight the important parts of the chapter.
3. Write them out in a easy to remember manner.
4. Have the class give their ideas and together choose the title for the chapter.
5. Keep record and print them out for them to keep.
6. You may play some review games or give rewards for those who memorize them.
7. Review them regularly.

THE BOOK OF ACTS

One: Jesus goes up, disciples sent out, Judas replaced

Two: Church beginnings, Pentecost & Peter's power-filled preaching

Three: Lame man leaps, repentance preached

Four: 5,000 believe

Five: Ananias and Sapphira punished, Apostles imprisoned, counsel of Gamaliel

Six: First deacons, Stephen arrested

Seven: Stephen's sermon and death

Eight: Saul creates havoc, Phillip's God-directed ministry

Nine: Saul blinded, healed, and converted

Ten: The “New Plan” revealed, first Gentile converts

Eleven: The “New Plan” defended, the Church at Antioch

Twelve: Peter jailed and rescued, Herod dies

Thirteen: First Missionary Journey, Jews oppose and Gentiles believe

Fourteen: Paul stoned and churches established

Fifteen: First Jerusalem council, separation of Paul and Barnabas

Sixteen: Macedonian call, walls shake, prisoner freed

Seventeen: Believers “turn the world upside down,” Paul’s sermon on Mars Hill

Eighteen: The Lord encourages Paul, Priscilla and Aquila disciple Apollos

Nineteen: John’s disciples receive the Holy Ghost, riot at Ephesus

Twenty: Sleeper dies and lives to tell about it, Paul’s passionate address to the Ephesians

Twenty-one: Paul goes to Jerusalem despite warnings

Twenty-two: Paul’s personal testimony

Twenty-three: Paul saved as 40 men go hungry

Twenty-four: Paul’s self defense and reasoning before Felix

Twenty-five: Paul appeals to Caesar, Festus has a problem

Twenty-six: Paul tried before Agrippa

Twenty-seven: Paul’s stormy journey to Rome

Twenty-eight: Paul arrives at Rome; placed under house arrest

TEACHING BIBLICAL MODESTY

WHAT IT IS

Sense of propriety
 Proof of self-control
 Dignity
 Unassuming
 Discreet
 Humble

WHAT IT IS NOT

Forward or bold
 Proof of self-indulgence
 Flashy, blatant
 Presumptuous
 Arrogant, vain

INCLUDES

Dress
 Speech
 Conduct
 General Appearance
 Attitudes

MODESTY IS NOT WHAT YOU WEAR; MODESTY IS WHAT YOU ARE.

What Does the Bible Teach About Modesty?

Note other words used in Scripture that pertain to the meaning and principle of modesty.

Modest	With respectability, decorum; proper, seemly, suitable; diffident (not bold or forward); unpretentious; not showy; moderate; not excessive or extreme; not extravagant	In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array (1 Timothy 2:9). Moral qualities accompanying modesty: Shamefacedness—bashful, easily abashed, blend of modesty and humility Sobriety—Being wise and watchful in spirit and conduct; seriousness without sadness or melancholy; sensible
Chaste Chaste conversation (manner of life)	Clean, pure, consecrated, unsullied	That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, <i>To be</i> discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed (Titus 2:4-5). While they behold your chaste conversation <i>coupled</i> with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward <i>adorning</i> of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But <i>let it be</i> the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, <i>even the ornament</i> of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands (1 Peter 3:2-5).
Discreet Discretion	Good judgment, prudence, carefulness, good taste, understanding	<i>As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion</i> (Proverbs 11:22). Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee (Proverbs 2:11).

HOW WE TEACH MODESTY

BY INSTILLING BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES (DEUTERONOMY 6:5-9)

Exaltation	Psalm 24; Colossians 3:23; 1 Corinthians 10:31	God is the Creator; His original purpose is that all I do should bring glory to Him. Does what I am doing delight and honor God?
Edification Expedience	Colossians 3:17; 1 John 2:3 1 Corinthians 6:12	God's purpose for me is Christ-likeness. My purpose in life is to live for His pleasure and glory. Does this build me up spiritually and help me be more like Christ? Is my goal higher than momentary personal pleasure?
Cause and Effect	1 Peter 3:4a; Matthew 15:18-20; Proverbs 4:23; Jeremiah 17:9; Proverbs 23:7	What I believe and desire will ultimately determine how I think, speak, and act. What I do or say is a reflection of the condition of my heart. Am I willing to judge my motives in how I dress? What does my dress say about me?
Worship —Acceptance —Fear of man	Romans 8:18-32	What I do expresses worship to God or something else (idolatry). What do my actions, speech, and appearance tell about whom or what I worship?
Trust	Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 19:7-11	I do not always understand God's way; but I know His way, no matter how hard, is always best. Am I willing to submit to His ways and live my life according to His precepts?
Enslavement Association Entanglement	1 Corinthians 6:12; 2 Peter 2:19; Ephesians 2:1-5; 2 Peter 1:4; Proverbs 22:3; Romans 13:14	What do my actions, words, and appearance say about my desires and whom I want to please? Because of my strong desire to be accepted, I realize I may be tempted and become entangled in sin and ungodly associations. I must make <i>no provision for the flesh</i> .
Example Stumblingblock	Romans 13:10; I Thessalonians 4:4-7 (go beyond—to overstep the proper limits; defraud—to stir up desires that cannot rightfully be fulfilled)	Is there anyone I would not want to see me while I am doing this, dressed this way, talking like this? Does it cause others to sin?

WHAT DOES MODESTY LOOK LIKE IN APPEARANCE AND CLOTHING DECISIONS?

- Carefulness in dress for the sake of others, not allowing own comfort and convenience to rule decisions
- Sensitivity to the nature of man's makeup to be more easily aroused by sight
- Appropriateness of dress for each occasion
- Acceptance and enjoyment of sexuality and sensuality in appropriate place (with her husband in private)
- Discretion about the purchase of new fads and styles

- Appreciation of inner beauty
- Focus on being attractive without being alluring and seductive

QUESTIONS ABOUT FIT, FASHION, AND FUNCTION THAT NEED AN ANSWER

1. Why was it immodest to show your ankle in the early 1890's and now it is not?

Fashion or styles of apparel change for many reasons: temperatures, fabric available, dyes available in certain areas, sewing techniques and machinery, stature in community (position, wealth), cultural movements, historical events. In the early 1900's several factors influenced fashion.

Various social trends were at work during the 1920s. Historians have characterized the decade as a time of frivolity, abundance, and happy-go-lucky attitudes. Several years had passed since the end of World War I. People felt free-spirited and wanted to have fun. As a result, fashions became less formal. At the same time, improved production methods enabled manufacturers to easily produce clothing affordable by working families. The average person's fashion sense became more sophisticated.

The feminine liberation movement had a strong effect on women's fashions. Most importantly, the corset was discarded! For the first time in centuries, women's legs were seen. A more masculine look became popular, including flattened breasts and hips, and bobbed hair. Style, at all social levels, was heavily influenced by the newly created, larger-than-life movie stars. For the first time in history, fashion influences and trends were coming from more than one source.

Paris continued to be the seat of haute couture (high fashion). Coco Chanel exerted a great influence during the decade, appealing to the practical American woman through her use of simple ensembles, scarves, and inexpensive jewelry. For women, face, figure, coiffure, posture, and grooming became important fashion factors in addition to clothing. In particular, cosmetics became a major industry. Glamour was now an important fashion trend, due to the influence of the motion picture industry and the famous female movie stars. The 1920s saw the emergence of three major women's fashion magazines: Vogue, The Queen, and Harper's Bazaar. Vogue was first published in 1892, but its up-to-date fashion information did not have a marked impact on women's desires for fashionable garments until the 20's. These magazines provided mass exposure for popular styles and fashions.

Written by [Carol Nolan](http://fashion-era.com), fashion-era.com

Edited by Julie Williams

In a changing American culture in 1920, what would have been a modest woman's response to the shortened skirt? She needed to be discerning, asking the probing "why" and "why not" questions. Because it takes time and prayer to answer those questions and because a modest woman would not want to draw attention to herself, she would probably not have been the first to show the leg above the ankle. After the style became more established, she would still need to discern whether or not the style was sensually alluring, drawing attention to the body, and thus be deemed immodest. If the new style passed the tests, she might then decide to make the change. Our culture is always changing, and as a general principle, we as Christians should not be the first (and thus be faddish) or the last (and thus be dowdy) to make the style changes that do not violate biblical principles.

2. Doesn't God want us to be attractive? Attractive—yes; sexy—no; appealing—yes (to our husband; Proverbs 5:18-19)

3. How do you know what is “appropriate” for different functions? Are there some activities that we cannot do?

Bible times: People wore robes that were belted with sashes. To “gird up loins” was to take the garment from the back and tuck into sash, thus being appropriate for work in the fields, etc.

4. Is there a difference in “style” and “fad”? Yes.

- Style has some lasting qualities; fads do not.
- Style is based on what looks good for the individual; fads are based on “what’s in.”
- A person with “style” will be appropriate (suitable, fit, proper); a “faddish” person will be more concerned with acceptance.

5. Is there anything wrong with being “in style” or following fads?

Clothing and other body adornment are effective forms of non-verbal communication. A wise Christian will look at each style and each fad and ask, “What am I communicating?” and “Does this communication glorify God?” A girl needs to know that she is inviting a host of assumptions about her character if she dresses in a sexual way.

6. Why are fashion styles always changing?

- The purpose of advertising is to create discontent with the status quo—to create a covetous attitude.
- “Marketing Cool” (Frontline, PBS)—Making more money is the issue; young people are being used because they have a lot of money to spend. Strategy: going to most radical teens to decide what to market next (“mook” with young teen guys; “sex” and “midriff” with young girls); Viacom (MTV), Sprite.
- The continual changing of clothing designers to exploit different sensual parts of the body. Why? Make more money.

7. Am I responsible for somebody else’s wrong thoughts?

No, but we are held responsible for our own motivations. In Proverbs 5 we learn that a husband can be “ravished” (captivated or intoxicated) with his wife. That is power, but a girl’s motive should not be to intoxicate many, but only one—her husband. In 1 Thessalonians 4:7 we are told not to “defraud” another, which is to stir up desires that cannot rightfully be fulfilled in marriage. Young girls need to be taught how the male mind works and how alluring dress is a major source of temptation to young men.

8. Does the Bible give us definite guidelines of dress? When God was the designer . . .

Adam and Eve—Principle: needed covering

- Adam and Eve designed aprons (Genesis 3:7) —girdle, loin-covering, loin-cloth, belt
- God designed coats (Genesis 3:21)—tunic, a long shirt-like garment usually made of linen (here made of skins); root meaning—covering

The Priestly Garb—Principle: special dress to show honor and respect for God

- *And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty (Exodus 28:2).*
- *And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broideder coat, a mitre, and a girdle (Exodus 28:4a).*

Saint's Clothing in Heaven

Revelation 6:11; 7:9, 13, 14—a robe, a loose outer garment extending to the feet, worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank

9. What can we learn from women of Bible times about clothing?

Strange Woman of Proverbs 7—Principle: clothing and appearance communicate to others.

Attire of a harlot (loud, stubborn, impudent face, aggressive, deceptive, flattering)

The Virtuous Woman—Principle: clothing is more than clothes.

- a. *She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple (Proverbs 31:22).*
- b. *Strength and honour are her clothing (Proverbs 31:25a).*

10. What does the Bible define as “nakedness”?

11. In Scripture “nakedness” often means that only the undergarment was worn (Peter in John 21:7) or implies shameful exposure (Isaiah 47:1-3), and nakedness is often associated with “shame” or disgrace” (Isaiah 47:3a; Nahum 3:5; Ezekiel 16:37; Revelation 3:18).

12. Why did God not just tell us exactly what we should wear ?

God did not create us as robots; He wants us to think. He wants input into our thinking through His Word, and He wants us to bring into captivity our thinking to that which exalts Him. He graciously gave us imaginations, thoughts of beauty, and an enjoyment of variety.

Tips and Cautions:

1. Notice how God taught in Genesis 3—by questions that He already knew the answer for
 - a. *Where art thou?*
 - b. *Who told thee that thou wast naked?*
 - c. *Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*
 - d. *What is this that thou hast done?*

Our questions should be thoughtful, gracious, open-ended, and not condescending— even at a time of rebuke. Always react with reason, not rage.

- a. Describe this girl's (picture of girl) appearance.
 - b. Where does the eye go first? (for a guy? for a girl?)
 - c. What message is she giving?
 - d. In what different ways is she giving the message?
 - e. When you read Proverbs 7, how would these girls compare?
2. Rebuke does not equal a teachable moment; there are better times to teach than when rebuking.
 3. Although it is necessary to establish dress guidelines for your youth group, be careful in supposing that the establishing of rules teaches a teen how to live biblically. God's Word is our source book for all things pertaining to godliness (2 Peter 1:3). We must not shortcut the process. Bible principles must be taught, questions must be asked and answered, discussion must be encouraged, and compassion for young Christians must be intact.
 4. A young person's reception to the teaching of modesty is dependent upon her spiritual maturity. If steps one through three on the Spiritual Ladder (*see Chapter 3 of The Original Brain*) have not been taken, teaching of Christian modesty may be mentally "rejected" even as it is being taught. Is the young person willing to do what God says? A youth that is not "willing" to obey God's Word is only taught Christian modesty as a method of controlling the "group dynamics," not as a means to becoming more spiritual.
 5. Caution: Ladies should talk to girls about immodest appearance. It is inappropriate for men to discuss these issues with young ladies, and any discussion opens the door for problems for male youth leaders.

REVIVAL: IS IT POSSIBLE?

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Any gathering—parents, youth, etc.

PRIMARY TEXT

2 Chronicles 7:14; Jeremiah

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

Romans 13:11-12; Psalm 119:126; Psalm 85:6; Hebrews 3:2; Psalm 42:1-2; Romans 9:21; 2 Timothy 2:21; Psalm 1; Matthew 6:33

PROPOSITION

The primary point of this message is to prove that . . . revival can happen in the life of every believer as we are broken before the Lord.

OUTLINE

Jeremiah

1. Realized that he was clay in the Potter's hands (Jeremiah 18:1-6).
2. He ate God's words (Jeremiah 15:16).
3. He realized he must trust God (Jeremiah 17:5-8).
4. He recognized God's promise of encouragement (Jeremiah 33:3).
5. He discovered that if you seek God with all your heart, you will find Him (Jeremiah 29:11-13).
6. He found that God is worthy of our praise (Jeremiah 32:17a).
7. He saw that NOTHING is too hard for our God (Jeremiah 32:17b, 27).

ILLUSTRATIONS

Quote: JN. Darby, "To be hungry is not enough. We must be starving to know God. When the prodigal son was hungry, he ate the husks with the pigs; but when he was starving, he turned his face back to his father."

Story: I recall hearing a story about a group of tourists who were visiting Charles Haddon Spurgeon's church in London. The great "prince of preachers" had long since died, and the church had suffered the loss. Yet, it remained a popular tourist attraction. As this particular group was being shown through the old facility, they came to the great auditorium. As they stood at the rear of the sanctuary, they could hear in the distance a man's voice. They determined that this voice was coming from the front, down near the pulpit. In the dim light, they ventured forward and upon arriving at the platform, they saw the figure of an elderly man on his knees near the foot of the pulpit. With tears streaming down his face, the old man was crying, "Lord, do it again!"—Dr. John Goetsch.

RESOURCES USED/CREDITS

21st Century Revival by Dr. John Goetsch

WHY BE DIFFERENT?

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Workshop for youth conference, any youth gathering.

PRIMARY TEXT

Romans 12:1-2

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

2 Timothy 2:21; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Hebrews 12:14

PROPOSITION

The primary point of this message is to prove that . . . if we truly desire to follow Christ, we must be different from the world.

OUTLINE

1. We need to be different because God commands it (1 Peter 1:15-16).
2. It is reasonable (Romans 12:1-2).
3. It is not an option in order to see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).

ILLUSTRATIONS

People are looked at differently for various reasons:

- Economic status—for the way they dress
- Educational status—the way they act
- Sheep example

Christians are to be different in looks, actions, etc., from the world.

RESOURCES USED/CREDITS

Pursuit of Holiness by Jerry Bridges

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Sunday/Wednesday youth group

PRIMARY TEXT

2 Timothy 2:15

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2; 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Ephesians 4:14-15

PROPOSITION

The primary point of this message is to prove that . . . the Bible clearly commands that we all be students of the Bible.

OUTLINE

Steps:

1. Ask for help from the Holy Spirit.
2. Spend time gathering knowledge.
3. Rightly divide the information.
4. Define Bible words.
5. Compare verses.
6. Meditate on these verses.
7. Seek wise counsel.
8. Make personal application.
9. Keep a notebook.
10. Be thankful.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Explain the meaning of study. When we want something badly enough, we will study. Examples: tests/exams, driver's license, a love letter that was given to you. When it comes to God's Word, we must study the same way.

RESOURCES USED/CREDITS

- *How to Study the Bible For All It's Worth* by Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart
- *The Teenage Years of Jesus Christ* by Jerry L. Ross

THE LOVE GOD HATES

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Sunday School, Christian school chapel, Wednesday youth meeting

PRIMARY TEXT

1 John 2:15-17

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

Romans 12:2; James 1:14; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:22; Hebrews 11:3; 13:14

PROPOSITION

The primary point of this message is to prove that . . . every believer must recognize his responsibility in this world.

“A Christian cannot help being in the world, but when the world is in the Christian, trouble starts,” Warren Wiersbe.

OUTLINE

1. The Command: Love not the world.
2. The Characteristics: Lust of flesh, eyes, and pride of life.
3. The Consequences: The world passeth away.

ILLUSTRATIONS

- A red light means stop. That is a command, not a suggestion.
- Eve “saw” the tree was good (Genesis 3:6).
- Lot “lifted up his eyes” and chose (Genesis 13:10).
- David “saw” Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:2).
- Current statistics of how much time we spend enjoying the world’s pleasures.

RESOURCES USED/CREDITS

- Barne’s Notes from the *Online Bible*
- *The Marks of a True Winner* published by Pro Teens

SEEKING A DEEPER DEVOTION

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Sunday School

PRIMARY TEXT

Psalm 119:10

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

Psalm 86:11; Psalm 27:4; Revelation 4:8-11; Revelation 5:9-14; Psalm 5:7; Psalm 95:6; Deuteronomy 6:1-2; Psalm 16:11

PROPOSITION

The primary point of this message is to prove that . . . every believer can seek a deeper devotion, personal relationship with God.

OUTLINE

1. Pray for growth.
2. Meditate on God.
3. Worship God.
4. Fellowship with God.
5. Obey the will of God.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Draw your attention to God's majesty:

- Isaiah 6; Revelation 4—God's holiness
- Isaiah 40—God's greatness
- Psalm 139—God's omniscience/omnipresence
- Revelation 1:10-17; Revelation 5—Christ's majesty

RESOURCES USED/CREDITS

The Practice of Godliness by Jerry Bridges

THE PATH OF A GOOD CHOICE

Read Joshua 24, "Determined Decision."

Joshua gave an example of a biblical way to make good choices.

1. Look at all of the facts.
 - a. What facts did Joshua present about the character of God and His actions in the past?
 - b. What did God give the Israelites?
2. Look at all of the possible choices.
 - a. What choices did Joshua present to the people?
 - b. How did the people respond?
3. Look at all of the consequences of all of the choices.
 - a. What were the consequences of making the right choice?
 - b. What were the consequences of making the wrong choice?
4. Make the choice
What did Israel choose?
5. Follow through with the choice.
 - a. What did Joshua do to remind the people of their choice?
 - b. Did the people actually do what they decided to do?

When you have a tough decision to make, what process do you use when making that decision?

Memorize and meditate on Psalm 1.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A CHOICE

CHOICES HAVE IMPACT!

Read 1 Kings 12 and 2 Chronicles 10.

Your choice will set your direction. For example, Rehoboam made several choices that set the direction of his reign. Compare two kings:

Trace the direction of the king's reign by the choices he made.

REHOBOAM	JEROBOAM
What did the people and the old men council Rehoboam to do during his reign?	How did Jeroboam council Rehoboam?
Why did Rehoboam not see this?	How did the people of Israel respond?
What did his friends council?	What was Jeroboam worried about?
Whose advice did Rehoboam follow?	How did he respond to this worry and attempt to control the people?
What happened to his kingdom?	What did the people do?
How did he respond to the actions of the people?	

How do choices that you make affect the directions of your life?

Memorize and meditate on Proverbs 21:17, 21.

EVALUATE WHAT YOU VALUE

Read Matthew 6:19-21, 24 and Matthew 13:44-46

Luke 12:33-34—Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

What does it mean to value according to these passages of Scripture?

How do these passages implicitly define value?

What does “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” mean?

What does it mean to treasure something?

How will we treat what we treasure?

How will your values affect your choices?

What do you treasure? Be totally honest with God and yourself.

Will that which you treasure last forever?

If that which you treasure will not last forever a change must be made. This is a change of mind concerning what you hold to be of great worth. This change is called repentance. A change in values always leads to a change in life.

Memorize and meditate on Matthew 12:35.

CHOICES YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MAKE

Read Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Jeremiah 2:13, and 2 Kings 17:1-23.

Sin always has consequences. You cannot hide your sin from God. You will always be found out. The children of Israel had specific commands to avoid idolatry and worship and serve the living and true God. After the kingdom divided, the ten northern tribes of Israel never returned to God. Look at the choices the Israelites made and how it affected the kingdom.

Deuteronomy 28:47-48—Because thou servest not the LORD thy God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

What was the command and promise of God to the people of Israel?

What was the positive action to this conditional contract?

What was the negative side of this conditional contract?

What was the sin of the people of Israel that caused God to use a pagan nation to judge them?

What was God's reaction to the people's sins?

Did the people turn to God after He judged them?

What choice did the people make that they could not afford to make?

Do you ever make choices that you cannot afford to make?

Memorize and meditate on Galatians 6:7.

THE CHOICES THAT GOD MAKES

Read the following:

- 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7—Sanctification
- 1 Thessalonians 5:8—Thankfulness
- Philippians 2:12-16—Working out salvation
- Ephesians 6:5-8—The actions of the employee
- Galatians 1:1-5—Salvation
- 2 Corinthians 8:1-6—Giving
- Romans 12:1-2—Transformation
- Matthew 21:27-31—Parable of two sons and a vineyard
- 1 Peter 2:13-16—Submission to government
- 1 Peter 4:2—Not living in the flesh to the lusts of men
- Revelation 17:16-17—Destruction of the whore
- Ephesians 1:5—Predestination

Verses concerning the ministry call:

- 1 Corinthians 1:1
- 2 Corinthians 1:1
- Ephesians 1:1
- Colossians 1:1
- 2 Timothy 1:1

Verses concerning suffering:

- Hebrews 10:32-39
- 1 Peter 3:14-20
- 1 Peter 4:19

Ideas:

What God Values (Himself, His Glory)

1 Timothy 2:1-10

Philippians 2:5-11

A LOVE SO STRONG

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Valentine Banquet

PRIMARY TEXT

John 3:16

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

1 John 4:7, 16; 1 John 4:10; 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:11; 1 Corinthians 13

PROPOSITION

Every believer needs to recognize that God is love.

OUTLINE

1. True love's foundation is God.

God is love.

2. True love's focus is giving.

a. Love gives.

1) Jesus Christ gave us everlasting life.

2) We ought to love one another.

b. 1 Corinthians 13.

1) Love is patient.

2) Love is kind.

3) Love doesn't puff itself up.

4) Love envies not.

5) Love beareth, believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things.

6) Love never fails.

*You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving!

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Every couple should know

a. To not yell at one another unless the house is on fire

- b. It is easier to complain after a fault than to forgive one.
 - c. The correct answer to “Do you love me?” is not “I married you, didn’t I?”
 - d. The silent treatment was invented by a kindergartner
 - e. How to make your spouse laugh
 - f. The game of Scrabble has been known to ignite major arguments
 - g. Major house projects may need to be followed by minor marital counseling
 - h. Genuine love is valuing a spouse as God does.
2. What is love? As told by four to eight-year-olds—
- a. When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You know that your name is safe in their mouth.
 - b. Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your French Fries without making them give you any of theirs.
 - c. You really shouldn’t say I love you unless you mean it . . . then you should say it a lot.

YOUR SERVANT HEARS

RECOMMENDED SETTING

Sunday School

PRIMARY TEXT

1 Samuel 3:1-10

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

Genesis 12 (Abraham); Genesis 22 (Isaac); Genesis 24 (Rebekah)

PROPOSITION

Every Christian must realize his responsibility to respond correctly to the Lord when He calls.

OUTLINE

Three keys to a correct response:

1. A servant of God responds with persistence.
2. A servant of God responds by listening.
3. A servant of God responds with obedience.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Abraham—Genesis 12
2. Isaac—Genesis 22
3. Rebekah—Genesis 24

RESOURCES USED/CREDITS

All the Men of the Bible by Herbert Lockyer

TAKING ON GOD'S CHARACTER

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Sunday School, Teen service

PRIMARY TEXT

Colossians 3:12

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 4:22-24; Hebrews 1:9; Romans 12:9; Philippians 3:12; Romans 6:19

PROPOSITION

Every Christian must take on God-like character in order to practice godliness.

OUTLINE

1. Devotion to God is the only acceptable motive for actions that are pleasing to God.
 - a. Too often our motives are self-centered rather than God-centered.
 - b. Example of Joseph (Genesis 39:9).
 - c. Example of Abraham (Genesis 22:12)—It was the fear of God that motivated him to obey God.
 - d. 1 Corinthians 10:31—"Do all to the glory of God."
2. The source of our power is Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:5).
 - a. Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ."
 - b. We maintain the relationship by beholding the glory of Christ in His Word.
 - c. We stay connected to Him through prayer.
3. The responsibility for developing and displaying God's character is ours.
 - a. We must realize that the Bible teaches both responsibility and dependence in all aspects of the Christian life.
 - b. Philippians 3:12-14 communicates the intense effort needed to walk with Christ.
 - c. Philippians 2:12-13, Remember-God works in you!!
4. This character involves both "putting on" and "putting off" of certain traits (Ephesians 4:22-24).
 - a. Put off your old self (Hebrews 1:9; Romans 12:9).
 - b. Put on the new self.
5. We are to pursue growth in all the fruits of the Spirit.

- a. We need to have balanced growth in godly character.
The fruit of the Spirit is the result of the individual Christian seeking to grow, under the direction and aid of the Spirit, in every area of Christian character.—Jerry Bridges
 - b. We are responsible to exhibit all of the traits of godly character in a balanced fashion.
6. Growth in all areas is progressive and never finished (Philippians 3:12).
- a. Even in those areas in which we have grown, there is always need for further growth.
 - b. Growth in Christian character is never finished until we go to be with Christ and are transformed completely into His likeness.
 - c. Godly character is absolutely necessary for spiritual survival.
 - d. There is a sense that we are growing in character every day. In which direction are we growing?
 - Are we growing toward godly character?
 - Are we growing toward ungodly character?
 - e. Every day we are training ourselves in one direction or the other by the thoughts we think, the words we say, the actions we take, and the deeds we do (Romans 6:19).

RESOURCES USED/CREDITS

Practicing Godliness by Jerry Bridges

WISDOM IN DECISION MAKING

RECOMMENDED SETTING

Youth Activity

PRIMARY TEXT

Proverbs 18

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 3:5-6; 4:5,7; Romans 18:1-2; Proverbs 23:23; John 14:6; Proverbs 19:20; 12:15; 13:10

PROPOSITION

Every one of you needs to recognize your need to make wise choices in every area of your life.

OUTLINE

Guidelines for Decision Making

1. Trust the Lord (Proverbs 3:5-6).
2. Get the facts before making the decision (Proverbs 18:13).
3. Be open to new ideas.
 - a. Be a learner, not a know-it-all (Proverbs 18:2).
 - b. Renew your mind (Romans 12:1-2).
 - c. Buy the trust and do not sell it (Proverbs 23:23).

God is Truth—John 14:6, “I [Jesus] am the truth.”
4. Consult godly counsel before making your decision.
 - a. It improves your likelihood of success (Proverbs 20:18; 15:22).
 - b. It increases your wisdom (Proverbs 19:20; 12:15; 13:10).

I MADE A DECISION, SO NOW WHAT?

RECOMMENDED SETTING USE

Youth Group

PRIMARY TEXT

Philippians 1:6

SUPPORT SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:22; Philippians 3:20; 2 Peter 3:11; 2 Timothy 2:15; Psalm 119:9-11; 1 Corinthians 4:1; Romans 14:12; Ezra 7:10; 2 Timothy 2:2; Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:5; Hebrews 13:5; Philippians 4:13; 1:6; John 3:16; Genesis 28:15

PROPOSITION

Every believer must recognize that through Christ we have the ability to keep and continue in any spiritual decision we ever make for God (Philippians 4:13).

OUTLINE

Four steps in understanding how to keep a decision that you have made for God (after you have already acknowledged that there is a need)

1. Adjust your lifestyle (2 Corinthians 3:18).
 - Plan your life around God rather than trying to squeeze God into your life.
2. Access the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15).
3. Make yourself **accountable** (1 Corinthians 4:1).
 - a. To God—through prayer and Bible study
 - b. To parents—through obeying them and speaking to them about your decisions
 - c. To spiritual leaders—asking for prayer on certain issues
 - d. To friends—being a good example of a Christian young person and encouraging them to do right with you; accountability partners
4. You can have full **assurance** that God will keep you (Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:5).
 - a. What are some reasons we quit on decisions we have made?
 - b. What are some good reasons that we should keep the decisions we have made? Hebrews 13:5; Philippians 4:13; 1:6; John 3:16; Genesis 28:15

ILLUSTRATIONS

Reasons we quit on decisions:

- Pressure is too great.
- I am in this alone!
- God doesn't care about me.
- My friends are all doing it.
- I'm still going to heaven.
- I can always just make this decision again some other time.
- I don't have the strength to keep going.

A LOSER'S REWARD

RECOMMENDED SETTING

Youth Activity

PRIMARY TEXT

1 Corinthians 10:31

PROPOSITION

The next time you play an active game consider this initiative. Reward the losers after the competition is over. Be careful to leave yourself some time to discuss what you have just done. Often in life the only ones who are rewarded are the ones who won, but many on the losing side gave their best and in some cases may have out performed those on the other team.

OUTLINE

- Does the best team win every time?
- Did you play for the reward? Why do you do your best?
- Would you give up a win in order to have a reward?
- Do good workers go unnoticed sometimes? Does being noticed and rewarded determine your personal value?
- Would you rather win the competition or receive the reward?

It is not the critic who counts, nor the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly . . . who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who have never known neither victory or defeat.—Teddy Roosevelt

GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE

During the early 1970's I was youth pastor at Faith Baptist Church. On any given Sunday morning, we would have an average of 160 secondary-age young people in Sunday school. We divided the Sunday school into individual classes by grade with separate classes for boys and girls. This gave us a total of twelve Sunday schools teachers with a couple of extra subs.

I prepared all of the Sunday school lessons, and on Wednesday evening I would teach the lesson to the teachers. The volunteer youth group adult sponsors were also in attendance, so they would know what the youth were learning. Then the teachers would take the material I had taught them, adapt it to their style of teaching and the age group of their class, and teach it the following Sunday.

The following pages are one of those series of lessons we used, including the overall goal and outline for the quarter along with the lesson outlines for the teachers for the first month. I remain confident this material would form the basis of a great series of lessons for teens. The message is relevant as any contemporary material for it comes from God's eternal Word.

—Walt Brock

INTRODUCTION—GOD'S WILL

BASIC AIM FOR THE WHOLE SERIES

To help each teenager understand the doctrine of God's will and be surrendered to it.

TITLES AND SUBJECTS OF FUTURE LESSONS

1. Why is it important to know God's plan for our life?
2. What is God's will (definition)?
3. What are the prerequisites to knowing God's will?
4. How to find God's will (basic steps to follow)
5. Psalm 37, Proverbs 3, and Romans 12.
6. Important New Testament teachings on God's will.
- 7-10. Applying God's will to specific situations.
 - Major decisions such as marriage, college, occupation
 - Spirit-filled life, absolute surrender
 - Believer relationships with believers, unsaved relatives, the world, the Lord, and unsaved friends
 - Worldly activities and doubtful things

LESSON 1: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES?

PROPOSITION

To help the teens see the real necessity of doing God's will and the folly of a self-will life.

OUTLINE

1. Because we ought to love the Lord (love=self-sacrificing desire to meet the needs of the loved person), and thus do what He wishes (John 14:15, 21, 23-24; 1 John 3:22).
2. Since He has promised rewards and blessings in this life for our obedience (1 Peter 3:10-12).
3. Since He has promised rewards and blessings in heaven for our obedience (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 10:35).
4. In order to avoid the chastening of the Lord to bring us back to Him (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 11:31-32; 1 Peter 4:17).
5. Because we ought to be an example to other Christians (1 Corinthians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 3:9; Hebrews 13:7).
6. In order to not be ashamed at Christ's second coming (1 John 2:28).
7. Because we really are not able to plan our own lives (Jeremiah 10:23; Isaiah 53:6; Psalm 119:176).
8. Because only God knows what the future can and does hold (Isaiah 46:9-10; 48:17; Psalm 1:6; 142:3; Proverbs 27:1; James 4:14-15).
9. Because God wants us to know His will (Colossians 1:9; 4:12).
10. Because God commands us to know His will (Ephesians 5:17; 6:6; 1 Samuel 15:22; Acts 5:29; 1 Peter 4:1-2; Philippians 3:13-14).

ILLUSTRATION

The Life of Joseph—Genesis 37-50

To many people it may seem that Joseph's life was filled with one setback after another and that he just ended up lucky. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Joseph's life was directed each step of the way by God and even the hard times God used for good (Romans 8:28) for Joseph. Point out to your class:

1. Joseph's attitude, even when wronged. No desire for revenge even when as Pharaoh he had his brothers in his hands.
2. The Lord's leading behind the scenes of his life (Genesis 39:2, 21; 41:39-41).
3. Joseph's willingness to do what God wanted. This idea runs through the whole story.
4. Joseph's realization of God's plan for his life (Genesis 45:4-8).
5. The result of Joseph's life and obedience to the Lord. Saved Israel from starvation (Genesis 45:7).

6. The difficulties that may come in life that God means for ultimate good for the individual or for His glory (Genesis 50:20).

LESSON 2: WHAT IS GOD'S WILL?

PROPOSITION

To instruct the teens as to the correct definition of what God's will actually is, and, in so doing, to help them to decide that that is what they want for their lives.

SCRIPTURE

There is no single extended passage of Scripture that teaches the doctrine of God's will; however, the doctrine can be traced all through Scripture from Creation to the last chapter of Revelation. It is therefore necessary to use many different references in teaching about God's will for one's life.

OUTLINE

I. What is God's Will?

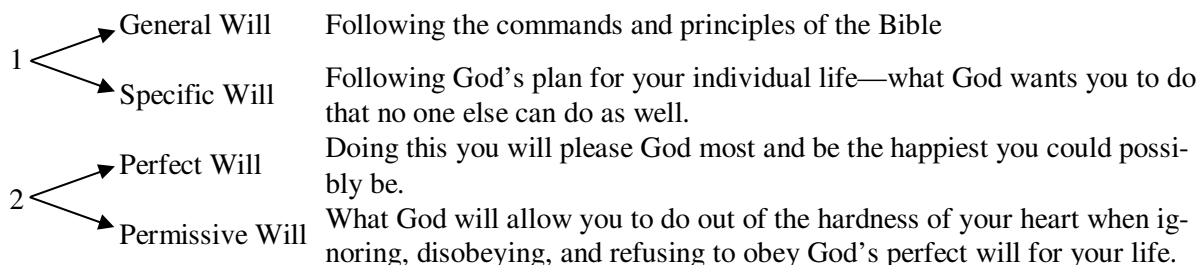
A. God's Will in Greek

1. *Prothesis*—Used eight times: purpose; to set a goal before one's self. God "set before Himself" a goal or purpose to accomplish and He is now bringing it to pass (2 Timothy 1:9; Romans 8:28).
2. *Eudokia*—Used nine times: good pleasure; that which seems good or pleasing to God; a good choice (Ephesians 1:9).
3. *Thelema*—Used sixty-two times: will; a desire which stems from the heart; to want something from the heart; to want (Ephesians 1:9; 1 Timothy 2:4; Matthew 21:31; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6; Acts 16:7).

The one that we are going to be most interested in is *thelema*, which is primarily what God wants us to do, not what He has determined for us to do. It is definitely possible to please God and do what He wants us to do or to displease God by not doing that which God desires from His heart for us to do.

4. *Boulomai*—Used thirty-four times: to plan, to decide, to desire something from the mind (stronger word than *thelema*); God's sovereign plan (1 Corinthians 12:11; 2 Corinthians 1:15; James 3:4; Acts 27:12; Ephesians 1:11).

B. Categories of God's Will



CATEGORY	MARRIAGE	OCCUPATION
General Will	To marry a born-again Christian	To do nothing immoral, but to work and not be lazy
Specific Will	To marry the exact person God wants you to marry	Exact occupation
Perfect Will	Same as specific—God knows how you will be happiest.	Exact occupation
Permissive Will	What God will allow you to do when out of the hardness of your heart you refuse to do God's perfect will.	Lesser occupation of your own choice

II. God's Plan

A. It is a personal plan.

1. Psalm 32:8.

- “Instruction”—enlightening of the intelligence
- “Teaching”—the pointing out of a definite course
- “Guidance”—the advice needed for particular problems

2. God said “I will” do these things (Psalm 32:8) for you.

B. God's plan is for believers only.

1. Psalm 32:8 is contingent upon having sins forgiven (Psalm 32:5).

2. Psalm 25:12.

3. Romans 9:20-23. } *Just fulfilled the requirements*

C. God's plan is wonderfully detailed.

1. Every step is ordered by the Lord (Psalm 37:23).

2. Directs our paths (Proverbs 3:6).

3. Things work together (details) for good (Romans 8:28).

4. God's program is continuous (Isaiah 58:11; Hebrews 13:5).

5. God's program is definite and specific (Isaiah 30:21; Proverbs 15:19).

6. God's plan allows for special counsel from others and wisdom from Himself.

a. Counsel (Proverbs 12:15; 15:22; 19:20-21; 20:18; 24:6)

b. Prayer to the Lord (Psalm 143:8; Psalm 27:11; Psalm 73:24; James 1:5)

7. God's plan is sure to be profitable.
 - a. Jeremiah 17:7-8
 - b. Joshua 1:8
 - c. Psalm 1:3
8. The will of God is always good (Romans 12:2).
9. God created you to fulfill His will (Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 25:15-30—talents; 1 Corinthians 12—spiritual gifts).

III. A Child's Definition—God's will in my opinion is . . .

- A. "For a person to completely submit to God's plan for his life."
- B. "To try to be perfect like Him."
- C. "What God wants you to do today and in the future."
- D. "What God desires for you to do."
- E. "What God wants us to do without complaining and hating what He says."
- F. "To do what He wants you to do and not what you want to do."

LESSON 3: PREREQUISITES TO KNOWING GOD'S WILL

PROPOSITION

To show the teens that God does not just automatically direct our paths and show us His specific will for our lives. This specific direction comes only after certain basic prerequisites have been fulfilled.

OUTLINE

- I. In order to know God's specific will for his life, one needs first of all to be saved. What does it mean to be saved? Four important factors about salvation.
 - A. You need to be saved (Romans 3:10, 23).
 - B. You cannot save yourself (Romans 4:5; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).
 - C. Jesus Christ came to save you (John 3:16; Romans 5:8)
 - D. You can be saved right now . . . today (Romans 10:9-10, 13).
- II. Be willing to follow God's general will for your life.
 - A. 2 Corinthians 13:5—In this verse we told to examine ourselves for salvation; check yourself against these tests of salvation. (*Good for teacher to find verses to support each point and have student look up and read in class.*)

1. Keeps His commandments
 2. Practices kind attitudes toward other Christians
 3. Has no love for present world system
 4. Practices righteousness as manner of life; not just abstain from wrong, but do right
 5. Does not continually practice (habitually) sin
 6. Overcomes the world system
 7. Is sound on essential doctrine
 8. Often hated by the world
 9. Answered prayer
 10. Truly loves God and the brethren
- B. 1 Corinthians 11:26-32—In this passage we are told to examine ourselves to make sure we have no sin in our life that we should confess and forsake on our own before God has to force us to do so through chastisement. Check your willingness to obey God in the following areas of His general will for all Christians, which includes YOU if you are saved.
1. To separate from known sin (1 Thessalonians 4:3).
 2. To grow spiritually through Bible reading (1 Peter 3:18).
 3. To pray properly
 - When (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
 - What (Philippians 4:6)
 - Why (John 16:24; 1 John 3:22; 4:14)
 - Who (John 14:13-14)
 4. To tell others about Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20).
 5. To keep the commandments of Christ (John 14:21).
 6. To have no unequal partnerships with the unsaved (2 Corinthians 6:14).
 7. To be different from “the world” (Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17).
 8. To do good to all men, especially Christians (Galatians 6:10).
 9. To obey (by outward actions) and submit (heart attitude and agreement) to those over you, i.e. parents, teachers, and pastor (Hebrews 13:17).
 10. To be willing to lay aside not only the sins but also the weights (borderline things that we could be more spiritual without) that keep you from being the best possible Christian (Hebrews 12:1).
 11. . . . And many more throughout the Bible.

- III. Be willing to submit to God's specific will for your life when He shows it to you—no matter what it is. This means an unconditional, no-strings-attached surrender to do whatever God wants you to do.

LESSON 4: HOW TO FIND GOD'S WILL

PROPOSITION

We have been talking so far about why God's will is important, what is God's will, and the prerequisites to knowing God's will. Now we will discuss the basic steps to actually finding out what God's specific will is for each individual. Be sure to review some each week from all previous related lessons.

OUTLINE

Steps to follow in finding God's will

1. Meet all three of the prerequisites for knowing God's will.
 - A. Be saved. (Review if any possible unsaved in class.)
 - B. Be willing to do God's general will—obey the commands of the Scripture.
 - C. Be willing to submit to God's specific will—guidance in decisions to be made.
2. Surrender your own will to God's will; there must be an honest willingness to do God's will. (This is 90% of the problem.)
3. God's will is always in agreement with the Bible; therefore, seek the Lord's will through the reading and study of the Bible.
4. Note the providential circumstances. (Be careful this is not used incorrectly: 1) excuse for self-will; 2) as a test when doubting God as Gideon did—compare Judges 6:12-24; 36-40.)
5. Pray and earnestly ask the Lord to show you His will.
6. Do not depend on feelings.
7. Seek the advice of good Christian people.
8. Peace of mind from God is a good indication that you have found and are doing God's will. If God fails to give you peace of mind, you should re-examine the previous steps because He has promised to give us peace if things are right with Him (Colossians 3:15; Psalm 119:165; Philippians 4:7).
9. Wait (Psalm 62:5).
10. Be flexible. The Lord may lead you into something in order to prepare you for something else. Examples: Moses (Acts 7:20-37) and Joseph (Acts 7:9-18). (Read and discuss at least one.)

MAKING TRUTHS COME ALIVE

USING OBJECT LESSONS TO TEACH SPIRITUAL TRUTHS TO KEEP CHILDREN FROM THE "WAYSIDE"

Key Verse: *Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.*

Why Use Object Lessons?

1. Christ sets the example as our Master Teacher.

- The Bible records over 50 parables, or object lessons, by which Christ used nature or concepts common to man to explain spiritual truths and concepts.
- Paul reminds us of how creation reveals God in *Romans 1:19-20*, "*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.*"
- God uses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise in 1 Corinthians 1:25-31. The context of this verse is referring mostly to people of low birth and rank, but the overall theme of the verse signifies that God uses the insignificant to bring significance to His power.

2. People learn better by relating to the familiar things of life.

- Effective teaching meets a student where he is and uses what the student knows to expand and cause the student to comprehend a new concept.
- Warning: Most children under the age of nine cannot comprehend abstract things. They see most things as concrete. Don't muddy the water with confusing concepts.
- Object lessons are effective when a concept is explained, understood, and then applied. Object lessons fall short if they don't include application.

"Repeatedly, we see Jesus paint a picture in the minds of those he taught, a living, applicable lesson using objects. As a teacher, your goal should be the same, to vividly teach applicable lessons that become a living picture in the minds of imaginative children" (www.letusteachkids.com).

LESSONS YOU CAN USE

VISUALIZE THE STORY

LESSONS FROM THE RED SEA

Material: sealable plastic bags, cornstarch, water, cooking oil, blue food coloring.

Verses: Exodus 15; Proverbs 4:11-13; 2 Corinthians 2:14

Lesson: Begin your lesson by explaining the Israelites' situation—ahead of them was this foreboding sea that was 20 miles or more in length and behind them was their enemy charging at them. Read about the fear that came from being in such a situation. Then read Exodus 14:13-14 and begin to show the children what happened when God took control of the situation. Finish by reading the passages in Proverbs and 2 Corinthians and then end with the illustration. Apply it by reinforcing to children and/or adults that there is nothing too big for God and that we do not need to fear.

Lesson idea came from Susan Lingo

LESSONS FROM THE WISE AND FOOLISH

Material: casserole dish, a flat medium-size rock, two Styrofoam cups, mud, water

Verses: Matthew 7:24-27

Lesson: Read the passage and then ask children why they think the foolish man's house fell. If speaking to an older audience, have them relate the storm in the passage to the "storms" they may face at school, at home, with friends, at work, and within themselves. Ask why a foundation needs to be strong. Illustrate it. Then end your discussion by asking them how they can incorporate a strong foundation in their life.

Lesson idea came from www.kidssundayschool.com

LESSONS FROM THE THORNY CROWN

Material: Ocotillo stem

Verses: Matthew 27:29

Lesson: Your goal with this illustration is simply to show your audience the reality of the events prior to the crucifixion. The crucifixion is difficult to picture because we have never seen anything like it, but when people see an actual object like that of Bible times, the picture tends to stay with them making the illustration very effective.

UNDERSTAND A DIFFICULT DOCTRINE

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE OF TRIALS

Material: piece of wood, sandpaper

Verses: James 1:2-4; 1 Corinthians 10:13; other verse relating to suffering and trials

Lesson: Begin your lesson by asking the audience to describe the piece of wood you are holding. They will answer with *rough, splintery*, etc. Ask them to think of themselves as that piece of wood—sinners with lots of potential needing lots of work. Ask them if they think that anyone would want to sit in a chair made out of rough wood. What then do we need to do to this piece of wood to make it usable? That's when you pull out the sandpaper and you begin to sand away the rough edges. You can extend the object lesson by talking about how to sand . . . you need to use some force but not too much or you will scratch the wood, etc. Ask them to think of this sandpaper as a temptation or trial in someone's life. Notice how the sandpaper is rubbed against the wood. The friction can seem painful, but in the end it leaves a smooth, usable piece of wood. The wood becomes beautiful with a little friction. That is the same in our life . . . God smooths out the rough edges to make us more usable. The best part of this illustration is that God is the perfect Carpenter, and He knows just how much pressure to apply to get the best results (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Lesson idea came from www.kidssundayschool.com

UNDERSTANDING THE BLESSINGS OF GIVING

Material: lots of pennies, 8½ x 11 sheet of paper, scissors

Verses: Luke 6:38; Proverbs 19:17; other verses on giving

Lesson: Begin with how God loves a cheerful giver. Ask students how in the world they could be cheerful if they had to give away things. Ask them if they would like some money. Hand out pennies to several people in the audience. Not everyone will get one, but this is okay. Then have those that received a penny give it to someone else who doesn't have a penny. This will most likely be difficult to do but God tells us that we need to give as it has been given to us, and the Lord will give us more. Let me illustrate this for you. When we give, we receive more in return. You then show them the corner-cutting illustration and then end by asking children to list things that God has given them. Try to direct them to kindness, forgiveness, peace, joy, love, goodness, etc., as well as the material things God has given. Then ask them how they plan to give to others what has been given to them.

Lesson idea came from Donald Burns

UNDERSTAND (OR TRY TO) THE TRIUNE GOD

This object lesson can be done with a couple of different kinds of objects. An egg has three parts and water has three forms. Both work well, but for this lesson, we will do the three forms of water.

Material: water, ice, jar with water and then covered with plastic, hot water

Verses: Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:6; John 10:30; Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 5:6-7; 1 Peter 1:2; other verses on the uniqueness of each Godhead

Lesson: How is it that God is three Persons in One—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit? Just as water has three different forms or states, so our God is also a God with three unique forms. Solid form of water (ice) represents God the Father. God is our solid fortress. Liquid form of water represents God the Son (Jesus). Jesus cleanses us by the shedding of His blood just like water cleanses away dirt and grime. Gaseous form of water (vapor) represents God the Holy Spirit. Although the gas form of water cannot be seen with the eye, we can see the results by feeling the heat of hot water and witnessing rain and other kinds of condensation. Conclude by applying the different roles of each Godhead to the child's life. Show the purpose of each Godhead in a believer's life.

Lesson idea came from Sarah Keith

UNDERSTAND THE ACT OF FAITH

Material: glass of water, a round piece of cardboard

Verses: Hebrews 11:1; 2 Corinthians 5:7; other verses on faith and trust

Lesson: Start this lesson by seeing if children can define faith? Most likely you will get some synonyms like *believe* or *trust*. Ask them if they can think of anything that they can't see but still know that it is real. You should get answers such as *love, God*, etc. If you get an answer like *God*, ask them how they know that *God* is real. Ask them if they can believe in something or someone that they cannot see. Pour some water into a glass and place a round piece of cardboard (slightly larger than the glass rim) on top of the glass. Invert the glass of water while still holding the piece of cardboard in place. Tell children that you are going to prove that there is something in the room although they cannot see it. Remove your hand from the cardboard. Explain that although gravity is trying to pull the water down from the cup, the air in the room is keeping the water from falling. The air is stronger than the pull of gravity! Conclude by asking some children to walk under the glass and tell them that they are putting action to their faith. They have faith in the air because they know and believe the air is real, although they can't see the air. We can have that same faith in *God*. We do not need to see *God* to know He is real. We see His strength and power in creation, and we see His holiness and justice in His dealing with His people. *God* is stronger than the pull of sin and evil. He is worthy of our faith in action. How can we put feet to our faith?

Lesson idea came from Maurice Sweetsur

UNDERSTAND THE BODY OF CHRIST / IMPORTANCE OF UNITY

Material: a ballpoint pen, paper

Verse: 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; other verses on working together

Lesson: Begin by asking children what they believe is the most important part of a pen. Be sure to hold up the pen and maybe even show different parts like the ink, the clicker, the ballpoint, etc. Ask a child to come forward and try to write on some paper. (Prior to class you removed the spring from the ballpoint.) Of course the child will not be able to write. What is the problem? You hope to hear from the children that the pen is "missing a part" but most likely they'll begin by saying that the pen is broken. Re-insert the spring and have the child try to write again. Conclude by showing children that every part of the pen is necessary for it to function properly. Every part serves a purpose. Then read the verse in 1 Corinthians and apply the same principle to the body of Christ. How can we be more usable for *God*? What do we need to realize in order for us to work together?

Lesson idea came from www.kidssundayschool.com

GRASP A BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE OR TRUTH

GRASP THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR WORDS

Material: a tube of toothpaste, small dessert dish

Verses: Psalm 19:14; Proverbs 10:19; Proverbs 12:18; Proverbs 15:1; Proverbs 18:4, 8; James 3:2-12; Ephesians 4:29; other verses on speech

Lesson: Begin with the tube of toothpaste. Tell the children to be sure that they watch very carefully. Squeeze out the entire tube of toothpaste onto the plate. Ask for a helper. Ask the helper to put all of the toothpaste back into the tube. “What do you mean *you can't* put it back in the tube? It is nearly impossible to put the toothpaste back into the tube. Did you know, children, that our words are just like this toothpaste? When we choose to speak to others, we can't take back those words so we need to be very careful not to use hurtful or lying words. The Lord says He loves pure words. How can we be sure that what we say is pleasing to the Lord and not words we wish we could take back?” Psalm 119:9-11 is another verse that can aid in the application of this lesson. Psalm 141:3 brings in the “cap” of the tube.

Lesson idea came from Charles Kirkpatrick

GRASP SALVATION

Material: one balloon with air, one balloon with helium, tape or string

Verses: Romans 10:9-10, Matthew 7:23

Lesson: Tape a balloon on each side of a table. The balloons do not need to look similar in color or shape. It may be best to make the balloon with no helium slightly bigger. Start pumping the children to find out which balloon they think will get to the ceiling the fastest. You can even have them cheering for a certain balloon or splitting them into groups depending on which balloon they think will go the highest. Either way, really build up the momentum. Count together with the children and then release the two balloons at the same time. Why did one get to the ceiling faster than the other? Was it because of its color? Its size? No! It's because of what was inside the balloon. Illustrate this point with salvation . . . heaven can represent the ceiling. Although none of us are in a race to get to heaven, we can know that if Jesus resides in our heart, we will be there one day. Please note that nowhere in the Bible does the phrase “ask Jesus into your heart” exist. Be careful not to add to the Bible, but the Bible does make clear that at the time of salvation when a child believes with his heart and trusts Christ to save him that the Holy Spirit takes up residence in the child's life.

Lesson idea came from Karl Bastian

GRASP THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING YOUR TESTIMONY

This lesson can go many different directions depending on how you handle the discussion. But the best truth from this illustration is that what you are inside eventually comes out in the “heat of the moment.”

Material: tea bags, hot water, clear water pitcher that can handle hot water

Verses: 2 Corinthians 4:7-12, 16-18; 1 Corinthians 3:13; Romans 8:18

Lesson: Begin by labeling your different material. Label the tea bag with the word *Christian* and explain to the children that today they are going to learn how they are a lot like a tea bag. Demonstrate the process of making tea so the children can see it. Ask them if they now know why we are a lot like a tea bag. Tell them that the hot water represents tough times, and that during those times, what we are inside and what we believe comes out. You can relate this illustration to several truths such as the purpose of trials in our life, we aren't as useful when the water is cold, true character comes out, we should point others to Christ, etc. End by applying this to the child's life depending on what direction you go.

Lesson idea came from Barney Kinard

GRASP THE "LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE" PHRASE

Materials: flashlight, bowl of mud and manure, bowl of water

Verses: Matthew 5:16; Psalm 51:2; Psalm 119:9; Jeremiah 33:3, 8; 1 John 1:9

Lessons: The flashlight represents our life and how we are to be a light in this world of darkness. Demonstrate how the flashlight shines in dark places and gives light and direction. And then talk about how as Christians we sin and our light gets "muddy." At this point you need to dip the light into the mud of sin and then show how sin covers our light. Use the bowl of clean water to illustrate how we go to God to cleanse us from our sin. Ask children how we can keep from sinning and stay clean. Ask children for some ways that we can be a light. Use the verses above to show them how God forgives and cleanses and also lets us know how to keep from sinning.

OTHER OBJECT LESSON POSSIBILITIES

Grasp the Sinless Life of Jesus

Materials: magnet, paper clips, safety pins

Verses: Hebrews 4:15 _____

Lesson: _____

Materials: wax, candle

Verses: _____

Lesson: _____

Materials: pencil, pencil sharpener

Verses: _____

Lesson: _____

Materials: one hard-boiled egg, one uncooked egg

Verses: Proverbs 28:14 _____

Lesson: _____

PARABLES OF CHRIST

FOUND IN ONE GOSPEL

The Barren Fig Tree—Luke 13
The Draw Net—Matthew 13
The Friend at Midnight—Luke 11
The Good Samaritan—Luke 10
The Good Shepherd—John 10
The Fine Pearl—Matthew 13
The Great Supper—Luke 14
The Hidden Treasure—Matthew 13
The Householder—Mark 13
The Laborers in the Vineyard—Matthew 20
The Marriage of the King's Son—Matthew 22
The Pharisee and Publican—Luke 18
The Piece of Money—Luke 15
The Pounds—Luke 19
The Prodigal Son—Luke 15
The Rich Fool—Luke 12
The Rich Man and Lazarus—Luke 16
The Seed Growing in Secret—Mark 4
The Sheep and Goats—Matthew 25
The Tares—Matthew 13
The Ten Talents—Matthew 25
The Ten Virgins—Matthew 25
The Two Debtors—Luke 7
The Two Sons—Matthew 21
The Unjust Judge—Luke 18
The Unjust Steward—Luke 16
The Unmerciful Servant—Matthew 18
The Unprofitable Servants—Luke 17
The Wedding Feast—Luke 12
The Wise Steward—Luke 12

FOUND IN TWO GOSPELS

The House on the Rock—Matthew 7, Luke 6
The Leaven—Matthew 13, Luke 13
The Lost Sheep—Matthew 18, Luke 15

FOUND IN THREE GOSPELS

New Cloth—Matthew 9, Mark 2, Luke 5
New Wine in Old Bottles—Matthew 9, Mark 2, Luke 5
The Fig Tree—Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21
The Mustard Seed—Matthew 13, Mark 4, Luke 13
The Sower—Matthew 13, Mark 4, Luke 8
The Wicked Husbandmen—Matthew 21, Mark 12, Luke 20

EXTRA RESOURCES

Websites

- www.kidssundayschool.com
- www.letusteachkids.com
- www.ChristianCrafters.com
- www.sermons4kids.com
- www.kidology.org
- www.objectlesson.net
- www.childrensministry.org

Books

- *A to Z Object Talks* and *Edible Object Talks* by Susan L. Lingo, Standard Publishing
- *Practical Illustrations of Bible Truths* by Muriel Davis, Regular Baptist Press

Distributors

- www.christianbook.com has several books available that give more resources on object lessons.

WHAT IS YOUR DTE?

A couple years ago, I was in a hurry to get to the church for a youth activity and feeling a little crunched for time. My vehicle had a computer that tells you miles per gallon, length of trip and DTE. My gas gauge was pretty low but I thought, "I can beat the system." I switched the computer to the DTE setting, which of course tells me my Distance to Empty. I watched the numbers as they dropped to seven miles to empty, six, five, and on down to two miles to empty as I whipped into the parking lot! Once again . . . a victory was won! I was at the church on time for the activity and did not have to waste precious time to stop for gas. I thought later, "Wouldn't it be interesting if we had a DTE gauge which was installed to monitor our walk with God?"

So many times I have found myself running to do the next *thing for God* that I was convinced I could not take *time for God*. It would be so foolish to start out a trip to summer camp with all church vehicles on empty, because you just don't have time for a fuel stop! I am afraid many of us in youth ministry start too many days with God running on empty, because we convince ourselves we do not have time to spiritually fuel up. Sound familiar? What about your devotional life, prayer life, your outside reading or even exercise? Are you taking care of yourself? I have recommitted myself as we enter the New Year to spend more time taking care of the things that produce the energy I need to do the work of God. How about you?

DOG FOOD AND THE DEVIL'S DECEIT

Materials: Can of Alpo, a can of apple pie filling, tape, and a few plastic spoons

Verse: *John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

Preparation: Carefully take the label off the can of Alpo and place it over the top of the can of apple filling. Use tape to attach the Alpo label. The Alpo can is now useless except to feed your dog, or if you're really feel adventurous, just place it in your wife's cupboard. Who knows? You may end up with Alpo Chili one of these evenings.

Lesson: Explain to your young people that you have heard that dog food actually does taste good. Find out how many of them have actually eaten dog food. Ask if there are any volunteers to try the dog food. Assure them that it really does taste good. (*Tip: you will undoubtedly have someone who raises his hand to volunteer because he likes the attention. Don't pick that person. Choose someone who has the look of disgust on his face. It works well even if he turns you down at first, and you have to beg him to come up and try it.*) Once you have chosen an unenthusiastic volunteer, then try to get him to taste the dog food, which is really the apple pie filling with the Alpo label on it. If he takes a bite, then you should take a bite and talk about how tasty it is. Feel free to have several volunteers try it.

At this point, most everyone is grossed out because it looks as if you are gladly digging into Alpo. Read the verse to your group and talk about how the Devil is constantly telling you lies. The Devil will even take something that is very good and tell you that it is horrible. Because of the labeling of this, can you believe that it is dog food when in reality (take the label of as you are saying this) this is not dog food? It is apple pie filling. The Devil wants you to believe that living for God is like a diet of dog food, when in reality living for God is the sweetest most enjoyable way to live. Don't be fooled by the Devil's lies about the Christian life.

THE LAW OF THE PENDULUM

WHAT YOU REALLY BELIEVE AFFECTS THE WAY YOU ACT

In college, I was asked to prepare a lesson to teach my speech class. We were to be graded on our creativity and ability to drive home a point in a memorable way. The title of my talk was, "The Law of the Pendulum." I spent 20 minutes carefully teaching the physical principle that governs a swinging pendulum. The law of the pendulum is: A pendulum can never return to a point higher than the point from which it was released. Because of friction and gravity, when the pendulum returns, it will fall short of its original release point. Each time it swings it makes less and less of an arc, until finally it is at rest. This point of rest is called the state of equilibrium, where all forces acting on the pendulum are equal.

I attached a three-foot string to a child's toy top and secured it to the top of the blackboard with a thumbtack. I pulled the top to one side and made a mark on the blackboard where I let it go. Each time it swung back, I made a new mark. It took less than a minute for the top to complete its swinging and come to rest. When I finished the demonstration, the markings on the blackboard proved my thesis.

I then asked how many people in the room believed the law of the pendulum was true. All of my classmates raised their hands; so did the teacher. He started to walk to the front of the room thinking the class was over. In reality it had just begun. Hanging from the steel ceiling beam in the middle of the room was a large, crude but functional pendulum (250 pounds of metal weights tied to four strands of 500-pound test parachute cord.)

I invited the instructor to climb up on a table and sit in a chair with the back of his head against the cement wall. Then I brought the 250 pounds of metal up to his nose. Holding the huge pendulum just a fraction of an inch from his face, I once again explained the law of the pendulum he had applauded only moments before. "If the law of the pendulum is true, then when I release this mass of metal, it will swing across the room and return short of the release point. Your nose will be in no danger."

After that final restatement of this law, I looked him in the eye and asked, "Sir, do you believe this law is true?"

There was a long pause. Huge beads of sweat formed on his upper lip, and then weakly he nodded and whispered, "Yes."

I released the pendulum. It made a swishing sound as it arced across the room. At the far end of its swing, it paused momentarily and started back. I never saw a man move so fast in my life. He literally dived from the table. Deftly stepping around the still-swinging pendulum, I asked the class, "Does he believe in the law of the pendulum?"

The students unanimously answered, "No."

From *How to Speak to Youth* by Ken Davis

USING OBJECT LESSONS

Zoned out! Out to lunch! Deer in headlights! Mental wandering in a brainless wasteland! Are these the phrases that are used to describe your lessons? Do you have difficulty getting the attention of your audience? Object lessons can be a valuable tool or a harmful distraction depending on how you use them.

How do we think?

- In outline form . . . no.
- In written form . . . no.
- In principle form . . . no.
- With pictures . . . when we find ourselves thinking, we find ourselves with mental pictures.

Ingredients of a Good Object Lesson

1. Understanding the audience

- a. What are their needs?
- b. What are their experiences?

2. Using correct words

- a. What is understood?
- b. Pieces of a puzzle that draw a picture
 - Each word depending on the audience has a picture related to that word. What are the pictures that come to mind when these words are spoken?
 - Cool
 - Romantic place
 - Dream car
 - Many times our pictures are just a little bit different based on our experiences, yet we use the same word.

3. Using God's creation

- a. Using what I can see to explain what I can not see
 - Milk of the Word
 - Fruits of the Spirit
 - Send laborers into the harvest
 - Reap what you sow
- b. Using our experience in the world to teach spiritual lessons

- Washing the feet of the disciples
- Baptism

Dangers of Object Lessons

1. Preaching the object lesson instead of the truth of the object lesson
2. Assuming that all aspects of the object provide good lessons
3. Object lesson overwhelming the truth
4. Object drawing a different picture for the audience than the one intended by the speaker

Metaphors weld the imagination with experience (2 Timothy 2:1-6, Hebrews 5:11-14, Daniel 3).

Good books to help

- *The 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching* by Wayne McDill
- *Preaching & Teaching with Imagination: The Quest for Biblical Ministry* by Warren W. Wiersbe

MAGIC REFOLD

SIN SEPARATES ME FROM JESUS

THE BASIC IDEA

To demonstrate that our sins separate us from God and that only through repentance do we have a relationship with Christ.

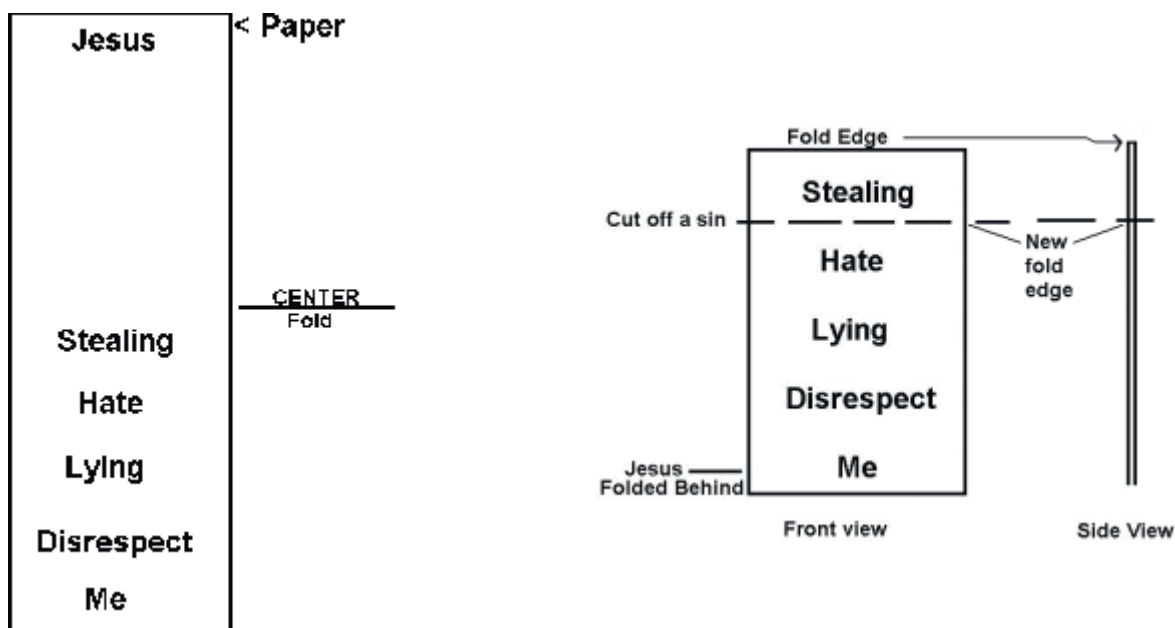
During this lesson the presenter cuts sins out of the center of a piece of paper which brings “Me” closer to “Jesus.” The paper will never be in two pieces showing that Christ’s purpose is to bring you to salvation. He will never leave you or forsake you.

How is the trick done? The piece of paper has rubber cement all over the back and a heavy coating of talc over the rubber cement. The paper is folded and each sin is cut off from the folded edge, by cutting both sides (The Jesus and Me sides) of the paper at the same time. The paper stays together because as you cut the paper, the rubber cement from both sides is pressed together by the cutting of the scissors. The cut edge actually re-bonds itself back together. This is a very light bonding of the glued edges so do not manhandle the paper; also, do not let the kids handle it, or it will come apart. The talc is there to keep the glued backs from sticking together. Please note that any trick can go bad and all tricks require practice. Do not try to do this cold in front of your class.

SUPPLIES

1. One sheet of paper
2. Pen, pencil, or magic marker
3. Scissors
4. Rubber cement
5. Talcum (talc) powder

SETUP



As you can see from these examples, you start with a piece of paper with “Jesus” typed (or written) at the top and “Me” at the bottom. Find the center of the paper by folding the length in half. Do not write or type any sins on the “Jesus” side of this fold. On the “Me” side of the fold, write or type several sins. Completely cover the back of the paper with rubber cement and let dry. Then **completely** cover the rubber cement with talcum powder.

With Jesus at one end and Me at the other end, fold the paper in half so that “Jesus” and “Me” are now back to back. They are not glued together, because the talc keeps the glue from gluing them together. With “Jesus” and “Me” back-to-back, you always cut at the fold end with the list of sins visible to your audience. At this point your audience sees “Me” at the top with a list of sins under “Me.” They can not see “Jesus” because “Jesus” is folded up directly behind “Me.” Cut the sin off that is closest to the fold. As you cut the sin off, the scissors expose a new, clean (un-talced) glue edge at the cut edge. The scissors squeeze the two cut edges (Jesus side and Me side) together to glue them back together as you cut. (The two edges are glued together, not the backs.)

Every time you cut a sin off, the cut edge becomes the new fold edge as described above. You are cutting and re-gluing the paper edges back together at the same time along the cut edge. It is a neat trick. This is not a very strong joint, so be careful as you straighten (unfold) the paper out so your audience can see the entire paper. From a distance, you cannot see the cut edge well. It looks like it has just been folded. Point out that when you repent of your sin, the distance between “Me” and “Jesus” is smaller; we grow closer to Jesus. Most people repent of all of their sins at one time. They remove all of the things that block their relationship with Jesus all at once. What we are trying to show is that sin blocks our relationship with Jesus and repentance brings us closer together.

LESSON

Hold up the piece of paper (flat, with no fold) and show that on Jesus’ end of the paper there are no sins (1 John 3: 4-11; Hebrews 9: 14-15; John 20:31; 1 John 2:1). Jesus has no sins (1 John 3:5); He is perfect. On the “Me” end of the paper is a list of sins. Each sin stands between me and “Jesus.” Repentance is the only way to cut out sin (2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 1:3, 7-8; 1 John 2:1-6, 25).

Fold the paper at the center and hold it up with the sin side up, so the audience can see it. Every time we repent, Jesus is true and faithful to forgive us of our sin. If our sin is stealing (say whatever sin is closest to the fold), we cut that sin out of our lives by repenting. You can cut the sins out one at a time if you wish or all at once, whichever works for you. (Cut the sin that is closest to the fold (stealing) off of the paper by cutting both sides of the fold.) Hold the paper up again so that everyone can see that the paper is still in one piece.

Note that when you cut out the sin, “Me” actually got closer to “Jesus.” Repeat the steps of repentance and cutting out the sin as many times as you need to cut out all of the sin on your paper. (At this point the paper should be short enough where “Me” should be right next to “Jesus.”) This is God’s perfect will, you and Jesus standing side-by-side in righteousness. All of your sins are gone (1 John 3: 1-24). You may find these verses helpful—James 1: 26-27, James 2- 3 (especially verses 8 through 18), and 1 John3: 11-24.

Youth Leaders Right Brain

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GAMES FOR A LARGE GROUP

Activity Night	3
Bigger and Better Scavenger Hunt	3
Christmas Clue	4
Church-based Family Feud	6
A Day Away	6
Handball	6
High-Tech Skits Activity	7
Ice Capades Activity	7
Lightning	8
Marshmallow Shot	9
Mexican Bowling.....	9
Mystery Night.....	9
Pumkin' Derby	9
Riddles & Puzzles.....	11
Rock Gym	11
Round Robin Volleyball	11
Sardines	12
Shoppers in Disguise.....	13
Snow Trip.....	15
Super Bowl Outreach Extravaganza	15
Three Ball.....	15
Torpedo	16
Ultimate Frisbee Football.....	16
Video Scavenger Hunt	16
Video Scavenger Hunt: Nerdsville Night.....	19
Water Balloon Golf.....	21
Water-soaked Kickball.....	22
Whomp 'Em Basketball	17
Zone Challenge.....	23

GAMES FOR A SMALL GROUP

Birdie Camo	25
Brown Bag Lunch.....	25
Create a Scavenge.....	25
Digital Dialog	26
Frugal Scavenge	27
Giant Jenga	27
Heads You Squeeze, Tails You Don't	27
Musical Pillow Fight.....	28
Namogories	28, 30
Newspaper Scavenger Hunt	28
Speed Cootie.....	28, 31

SKITS

Fifty Sayings.....	33
Four Old Timers	34
Manure Skit	35
Romeo and Juliet	36

Scene Skit 37
Slow Talkers of America..... 39
This and That 40
Was It Something I Said? 41

STUNTS

Bouncers 45
Bubble Gum Sculpture 45
Clothespin Decorating..... 45
Flinch..... 45
Four Corners 45
Helmets of War 46
Hula Pass 46
Latex Gloves 46
Marshmallow Guns 46
Ring and Spear 47
Speaker Questionnaire Stunt..... 47
Stomp and Launch 47

TEAM BUILDERS

Human Overhand Knot 51
Warp Speed..... 52
Honor Ball 52
Stick, Stones, and Bones 53
The Web 53
Touch the Block..... 54
Flipper 54
Simple Counting 55
Dividing Teams..... 55
Puzzle Variation..... 56

THEMES

Safari 59
Prison Party Games 59
Storm the Castle..... 60
Unknown Zone 62
What Was It Like? 63

WARM-UPS

Personalized Puzzles 67
Space Soccer 67
The Tick 67

EXAMPLES

Christmas Clue: Brochure Examples 1
Christmas Clue: Clue Sheet Examples 2-3

ACTIVITIES FOR A LARGE GROUP

ACTIVITY NIGHT

The last Wednesday night of each month we break from our normal Bible-study routine and have “activity night.” This is a night where we break from our normal schedule of events and utilize our gym for a time of recreation. After our song time and a short devotional, we explain the game that we will play. Normally, we take opportunity to play new games on these evenings in order to introduce the teens to new ideas. The following have been real winners:

1. Chuck It
2. Baton Tag
3. Whiffle Ball
4. Kickball
5. Indoor Soccer
6. Dodge Ball (with countless variations)
7. Duck –Duck- Goose
8. Three-Ball—*see page 13*
9. “Whomp’ Em” Basketball—*see page 17*
10. Lightning—*see page 8*

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	5-200
Props	Few
Cost	None
Type	Recreation
Time	45 min.
Referee	1-3

Key: \$=*props cost only*,
 \$\$=*low individual cost*,
 \$\$\$=*high individual cost*

**Everyone must participate—
 No exceptions!!**

BIGGER AND BETTER SCAVENGER HUNT

One of our group’s favorite things to do is go on a scavenger hunt. This has worked very well for us and is easy to put together. Divide your group into groups of four to five teens each. Each group starts with a penny. Their objective is to go to people’s homes and find something bigger and better than that penny. They must trade the penny for the item that they are receiving. They continue trading until they are satisfied with what they have received, or until the time has expired. They are to return what they have found to the church for judging. Ideally, each group only returns with one item. Many times each group has several items, because they could not decide which item was the most valuable. Here are a few items that we have seen—

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Brand new Nissan car hood (from a body shop) | 6. Ten-speed bike |
| 2. Computer | 7. Old car |
| 3. Couch | 8. T.V. |
| 4. Washer/Dryer | 9. Table and Chair |
| 5. Baby stroller | |

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	None
Type	Scavenger Hunt
Time	2 hours
Referee	1 per car

Tips and Tricks:

1. Get parents to drive
2. No live animals!
3. Teens are responsible to take home what they bring in.
4. Items cannot be borrowed and returned! Everything given must be able to be kept.
5. Set a return time. Deduct points for being late.
6. Give extra points for visitors that return with groups.
7. Give prizes to the largest, most valuable, and weirdest items.

Variations:

1. Sell items for a youth fundraiser (yard sale).
2. Donate items to the Salvation Army or some charitable organization.
3. Begin the night with anything besides a penny. Be Creative!

CHRISTMAS CLUE

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-60
Props	Many
Cost	\$\$
Type	Mystery/ Adventure
Time	2-3 hours
Referee	2 refs 10-14 staff

This activity grew out of a brainstorm meeting with our youth sponsors. We created the clues after developing the story. Taking some ideas from a game (Crack the Case) got us started, but a book or a newspaper might provide a great mystery. Our parents and youth sponsors loved creating and being involved in this. The digital pictures on the teens' clue sheet handout were taken by a teenager on his digital camera. (See Examples 1-3 for the clue sheet and brochure.) Much of the fun grew out of what we had available. The best clues came from the leaders, which made it very personal. We made sure to include parents, so that important adult-teen relationships could be built. The adults enjoyed this activity as much as the teens. Some of the hosts were unsaved, and we had a great opportunity to share the Gospel with them, as well as the visiting teens.

Object: Solve the mystery. We gave the teens a short statement of what happened and told them they must uncover what the crime was, how it was done, and other pertinent facts.

People: We recruited 16 leaders—adult sponsors, college students, and parents—for characters. The character names we took from the hobbies and occupations of the people who were characters. (Our mute was a parent who had to have his jaw wired shut from a surgery.) We gave each of them a name, name badge (made by an engineer who volunteered to make the badges with his own equipment), and clues which they could reveal when they were asked a question which pertained to the clue. They would not just give a clue because they were asked for it.

Place: We used three homes of church families who live next to each other. Clues were planted in each house, and characters could mingle in the three houses. A church or a large residence with multiple rooms would work also.

How It Was Played: After dinner, we divided into teams of five or six people. We grouped the teens much like they were seated during the meal and tried to even out the younger and older teens. We did not give any free clues, for we felt this group might quickly solve the puzzle. The teens could get information from the 16 characters about the mystery and about where clues might be found. We announced that one of the characters would be giving out bad information and that the teens should avoid that character. We also told the teens to ask direct questions seeking information and to not just ask, "Do you have a clue?" One leader during the game would tell them if their answer were right or wrong. You may want to limit the times they may check their answers; our group did not abuse this.

The groups had to find a videotape card that allowed them to hear a video message by our mute character (the only time he spoke for the evening), a phone number that had a coded message, a phone (we only allowed one to be working), a key to a room with a clue, a book in a library with a clue, a clown mask hidden in a toolbox, and a password for a clue on a computer. They discovered the importance of these things from the characters.

Case: Harold reads the morning paper, looks in the phone book, and drives to a residence. He rings the bell, pulls a gun on the man who answer the door, and says, "I want \$100,000—NOW—or you're dead!" Two police officers suddenly appear from the next room and arrest Harold. You must discover the following:

1. What did Harold read in the newspaper?
2. How and in what manner did he commit the crime?
3. Why the gun and the demand?
4. What crime did Harold commit?
5. Whose house did Harold visit?
6. How was he caught?

Objects: Locked toolbox with mask in it, Scrabble board with word clues, phone number written by a word, video clue, backwards clue, key to find, phone to find

Answer: Harold robbed a bank and stole \$50,000. He then reads in the newspaper that \$150,000 had been stolen from the bank during a bank robbery. Harold assumes that the bank teller stole the other \$100,000. He looked up the teller's name in the phone book and drove to the address to get the rest of the money. The

police had used the newspaper article as a trap to lure him based on his greed. When he came to the bank teller's house, they arrested him for the theft.

We stopped the game after two hours, and the teens submit their answers to the six questions. We had one team that was correct on five of the questions. We awarded each of the members of the winning team with a Clue game. (Wal-Mart had donated a few games to us.)

Message: We ended with a message. The mystery of the Gospel is a great topic on which to preach.

CHARACTERS AND CLUES

Bus Driver: Rolin Out

1st and 2nd clues: Do you know why banks have drive-thru tellers? So the real owner of the car can get a look at it now and then.

3rd clue: Jokes often have important meanings. (This was intended to give clues to a bank and a teller.)

Carpenter: O.N. Level

1st: Harold was a forceful type of guy.
2nd: Harold took what he wanted.

Computer Nerd: PC Pocket

Unlimited bogus clues

Contractor: T. Builder

1st: This tape is interesting; it has helped me measure my patio.

2nd: One thing it can't do is measure rain or control flow. (Video tape card was hidden in a storm drain out back)

Craft Lady: C. Anne Paste

Phone books have addresses in them.

Editor: Paige Maker

1st: There were two editions to the newspaper.
2nd: The second edition was a set up.

Electrician: Sparky Watts

For Sparky to answer, a group member had to play a game with him. If no one would play, he had no clue for the group.

1st: Harold was a two-faced kind of guy
2nd: It sounds kinda funny, but I think Harold stashed something in the tool chest.

(A clown mask, which was clue to the bank robbery and related to how he held up the bank, was hidden in a tool-box placed in a noticeable corner.)

Engineer: Pie R. Squared

1st: He is a Darwin Award winner for gullibility
2nd: His greed sprung the trap.

Home Cook: Betty Crocker

When breaking computer passwords, remember that people use things easy for them to remember. Like kids' names, birth dates, initials—easy things. Remember easy is the key.

(We had a clue on a computer with the password EASY.)

Hostess: W. L. Come

1st: Yes, there is a working phone upstairs in the guest room.

2nd: Yes, I have a key right here.

Legal Secretary: Noel Itall

Today's date is an interesting key to the night. (This was a clue to a combination lock on Sparky's tool-box with the date as the combination.)

Librarian: Ube Quiet

1st: Libraries are a place of good information.

2nd: Deposit slip for \$50,000 in a book

3rd: W. Harold's Swiss bank account (We had a book in the library with a deposit slip.)

Mute: Sylent Knight

1st: Notes are great motivators

2nd: It was a written crime. (He communicates by hand signals or written notes.)

***Mystery 1—Botanist: Jenetik Code**

1st: Give coded message

2nd: It must be decoded by a pad.

(This character gave a message that could be decoded by a telephone keypad. The message was a telephone number that they could call if they found the one working phone, which was located in an upstairs apartment in one of the houses.)

***Mystery 2—Teacher: Giv N. Grades,**

1st: Some occupations have name placards, especially where you have to stand in line

2nd: Name placards have full names.

(This character just sat around and was kind to those who addressed her, not giving any hints that she was a part of the game.)

Shopper: Koo Pon

The news article was 100,000 too high.

Sports Nut: Si Young

This character gave sports trivia unless he was called on the phone. When someone called, he told them the newspaper article reported \$150,000 begin stolen.

**Not pictured, see Examples 3.*

CHURCH-BASED FAMILY FEUD

Family Feud's concept of surveys and then guessing the most popular choices is a great game for a part of a youth activity or a mixer. This game takes prior planning.

1. Select a target group—This might be parents, church members, the youth group, a school, etc.
2. Create a survey—Ask informative, funny, thought provoking questions that have a short answer: What is your favorite color? What is your least favorite subject in school? Name a historical monument. Name a small breed of dog. Name a prophet of the Bible. Who is someone in the Bible with a name beginning with "D". You might include 10 or more questions.
3. Order the survey results— Take the top grouping (the top five answers). You may not wish to use every answer. Keep track of how many selected each answer to give points accordingly. Choose how many rounds you will have and take the best questions from the survey. Save the others for another time.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20-30
Props	Few
Cost	0
Type	Mixer
Time	10-30 min.
Referee	1

A DAY AWAY

There is something about leaving the familiarity of home and spending a day out of town as a youth group. This is a great way to get people involved with the youth as leaders and chaperones. It is also a wonderful opportunity to invite friends and to promote fellowship with believers. We have found a great place to go where there is plenty of hiking, beautiful scenery, open fields for any and all activities you would desire to play, adequate pavilions for lunch, equipped with picnic tables and grills, and best of all it is inexpensive. We are able to travel far enough away to get out of the city, spend the day, and return the same evening.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	5-200
Props	Many
Cost	\$\$
Type	Get Away
Time	12 hrs.
Referee	*Many

**Make sure to have much help from adults to assist in leadership.*

HANDBALL WITH A HOMEMADE HANDBALL COURT

We were without a gym and without handball goals but wanted to play handball, a game with two teams who try to score points by throwing a ball through the other team's goal. In order to keep an important tradition intact, we made our own outdoor, parking lot handball goals.

Rules: Teams may not take more than three steps with the ball. Players score points by throwing the ball through the goal. All offensive players must throw the ball outside the goalie area (designated by cones). Only the goalie and one defender may be in the goalie area. (It is about the size of a basketball key from the free throw line down.) After a score, the team scored on starts the ball from the goalie and passes it forward. It is in play from the time the goalie throws it. Each goal is one point.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	15-30
Props	Some
Cost	\$10
Type	Group Competition
Time	30 min.-1 hr
Referee	2

Variation: We found that the girls were being overwhelmed by the guys and left out of the play. We added a second ball allowing the guys to score only with the red ball; the girls could score only with the blue ball. We did allow each ball to be moved up by guys or girls but they had to score with the appropriate ball. This raised the level of participation, and we found that the guys and girls developed good strategies together.

Equipment: Two goals, one to two balls, and 10 or more cones. We used a small soccer size (two or three) ball which was light, soft, water-type balls covered with nylon and rubber. We located them at Toys "R" Us (\$2.99). We made our goals for \$5.00. We went to a sprinkler shop and bought PVC pipe (two 4' lengths, one 5' length, two corner sleeves) for a goal which made a U-shape 5' wide and 4' tall. The shop even cut this for us. We used parking lot cones (3' cones are best, but you can get by with smaller ones) as our bases, putting the PVC pipe through the top holes. The goals worked great and can be set up and taken down in minutes.

HIGH-TECH SKITS ACTIVITY

Divide into teams of four or more teens. Assign each team a camcorder to record their skits. Hand out a few different skits the teens may use. (We used four skits taken from *The Original Youth Leader's Brain*.) Then give them 30 minutes—this could be lengthened if necessary—to practice and record their skits. Afterwards, play the videos from each group and vote on the best video, best actor, best supporting actor, best group participation, etc.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	15-80
Props	Few
Cost	0
Type	Group Video
Time	1½ hours
Referee	1/group

With our group, each video received great applause. We have seldom laughed so hard as a group. We were pleasantly surprised at who was willing to do the acting. Teams were very original, and the same skit came out many different ways. There were even some homemade commercials and songs added to some of the skits. Keeping the groups small (five) helped the participation level as all were needed.

ICE CAPADES ACTIVITY

This activity was inspired by consistent weeks of cold, wet, and windy weather. To add to the fun, run this activity during the winter when it is cold. We ran several games, many of which were relay events. We separated the young people into four teams of 10 or so teens and had them come up with team names. After that we played some *chilling* games. Here are some we came up with, but you can create your own.

1. Ice Spitting Contest (at a target)—Each member of the team had to spit a piece of ice into a bucket that was set about five feet away. Only one person could go at a time, and he could spit only one piece of ice at a time. The first team to complete the relay wins 1000 points, the second 800 points, the third 600 points, and so on.
2. Ice Spitting Contest (distance)—We chose one guy and one girl from each team to participate in this event. One at a time, they hurled one piece of ice across the gym floor. The team whose piece of ice went the farthest won the competition and points were awarded as in #1. You can judge the distance either where the piece of ice hits the floor or where it ends after it has stopped sliding on the floor.
3. Ice Melting Relay—Each team was given equal amounts of ice to melt, but they could not pick it up off the ground. Also, they could not stand on the ice to crush it. Points were awarded for the first team to accomplish this task. It would have worked better if blocks of ice were used and a set time was given for the teams to melt the ice. The blocks of ice could be weighed before and after the game.
4. Ice Drinking Contest—Eight people from each team had to drink 6 oz. of an Icee in order to win the race. This was played like a relay. Once one person finished his Icee he ran back to his team, tagged a teammate, and they proceeded to a chair where he would drink his Icee. It was hilarious to see the kids react when they got a “brain freeze.”
5. Ice Cream Eating Contest—We had four guys attempt to eat a half gallon of ice cream in five minutes. If someone had accomplished the task in five minutes, he would have won \$20. We gave an additional five minutes (10 total), and one guy almost finished it. Another two minutes, and the ice cream would have been gone.
6. Hand Freeze—We had a girl from each team come and hold her hands in a bucket of ice water. The girl to keep her hand in the bucket the longest was the winner. We used 5-gallon buckets filled half way with water and then used about a bag and a half of ice in each bucket. In the 10 minutes or so that we watched the girls, only one gave up. The girls would have kept going if I hadn't stop the game. (To make the water colder, you can add rock salt, which is used when making homemade ice cream). It's pretty safe to be in the water for about 15 minutes, but beyond that, watch out.

Some other games that we didn't get a chance to play and try out are—

1. Ice Sledding Relay—We wanted to use blocks of ice and have a teen get pushed from one side of the gym to the other and back again. We were going to use this as a relay game so everyone could participate.
2. Ice Sculpting Contest—Given enough time and the right tools, teams were going to compete in creating an ice sculpture out of a block of ice. Ample time should be given to each team when using this game.
3. Block Standing—We wanted to see how long someone from each team could stand on a block of ice barefoot. This activity was kind of like #6 above.
4. Snowman Building—We wanted to get enough crushed ice so each team could compete in building a miniature snowman. Teams would have been awarded points for size of the snowman, creativity, and originality.

At the conclusion of the event we gave everyone a popsicle to enjoy.

What you will need:

1. Bags of ice for ice spitting contest (target and distance)
2. Buckets or garbage cans for targets (a Frisbee, cup, or plate would work too)
3. Blocks of ice for ice melting contest
4. Enough Icees for each team to have several 6 oz. cups to drink
5. Several ½ gallons of ice cream (one per team is good)
6. One 5-gallon bucket for each team with one or two bags of ice for each bucket with some rock salt (optional) for the “Hand Freeze”
7. A block of ice for each team for the “Sledding Relay” and for the “Block Standing”
8. A block of ice for each team for the “Ice Sculpting”
9. Enough crushed ice for each team to build their snowman
10. Popsicles or other ice cream snack

LIGHTNING

This game, also known as “Bump Out,” is a fun game to get everyone involved, even if they do not like basketball. Line up the entire group behind the free throw line. The first two in line each have a basketball. The first person in line shoots, trying to make a free throw. Once the first person shoots, the second person in line may shoot a free throw. If they miss, they continue shooting until they make their shot; only the first shot needs to be a free throw. If the second person makes their shot before the first person, person 1 is “bumped out.” After each shot goes in, the ball must be thrown to the next person in line, and he continues the process. Each person is responsible for getting his own rebound. Anytime the second person in line makes a shot before the first person in line, person 1 is bumped out. The name “Lightning” comes from how fast each one is scurrying around trying to make his shot, even after he has missed. Also, when only a few people remain, it is Lightning quick. The last person standing is your winner.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	5-100
Props	Few
Cost	0
Type	Basketball
Time	30-45 min.
Referee	1-2

Tips and Tricks:

1. Do not allow interference with anyone's shot or basketball.
2. Each one must retrieve his own basketball, whether his shot is made or missed.
3. Throw nicely to the next person in line.
4. Once it is down to two individuals, let them rest shortly before continuing.

MARSHMALLOW SHOT

When playing tag games or large games like capture the flag, determining when someone is caught can be difficult. Marshmallows are a good projectile that allows you to throw at someone, not hurt them, but be fairly clear that they were hit.

We played a take the hill style elimination game with marshmallows. It is simple fun and fairly inexpensive. You may want to stipulate whether teams can get the marshmallows wet.

MEXICAN BOWLING

In honor of Mexican Independence Day, we took ordinary bowling and transformed it into an international activity. After Saturday morning visitation, we took the group that made visits bowling. We encouraged each one to dress up in Mexican outfits. We awarded the best dressed with a prize for participation. Even I, as the leader, was able to receive many donated items from our church people to get involved in the dress-up. Bowling in a sombrero is not as easy as you may think! Offering to buy the teen with the best score a large drink or lunch at the end is a good incentive to keep them motivated to participate. Variations to the same old activities always work well.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	2-200
Props	None
Cost	\$\$
Type	Bowling
Time	1-2 hours
Referee	0

MYSTERY NIGHT

In order to make this work, you must have a good relationship with your senior pastor and a good measure of trust from your parents. We planned a night together as a youth group and kept the event a secret so as to make it interesting for the kids. We promoted the event as one that the teens would regret missing if they did not come. We did our best to make it worth their while. We had teens come to the church at a designated time. We loaded them all on the bus, not telling them where we were going. They all had their crazy ideas, but I sat them down in the bus and began to tell them a story. Our pastor and assistant pastor happened to be out of town for the weekend, and the story ended with the need to teepee their houses. We used 72 rolls of toilet paper on each house. I think the teens were shocked that they could actually be participating legally in something like that. Needless to say, the group had a wonderful time and will never forget Mystery Night. Each of the pastors had a welcome reception waiting for them as they arrived home!

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	5-50
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Secret Mission
Time	3 hours
Referee	0

Tips and Tricks:

1. Don't try this if you are in danger of losing your job! Our pastors laughed it off as "that crazy youth pastor."
2. We charged the teens \$2 to cover the cost of toilet paper. We brought all of that in a car following the bus so not to give away our secret.
3. Absolutely nothing besides toilet paper should be used.
4. Take the mystery night idea and run with it. Even if toilet papering does not work for you, the teens were intrigued and excited about what the night was all about.
5. As a service project, the group could go back the next day and clean up the mess.

PUMPKIN DERBY

We were looking for a unique harvest party game and had thrown out several ideas that included a pinewood derby, like many of us had done in elementary school, and a pumpkin decorating contest, the old standby for the last few years. We decided to combine the two ideas and came up with the "PUMPKIN DERBY." Very simply, families or teams of four have about forty-five minutes to design, build, decorate, and test their choice of full size pumpkin or small gourd. Once the pumpkin racers are built, set up a bracket and race a single elimination race. Winner is the fastest one down the track.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-200
Props	Many
Cost	\$1-2/person
Type	Race
Time	1-2 hours
Referee	1

Building a Pumpkin Racer: This is the most important part of making this event fun and exciting. We started by announcing the pumpkin derby several weeks ahead of time so that folks would begin to think about their design and even bring some of their own props. We shared all kinds of different ways to build a pumpkin racer—independent suspension, duck-tape frame, three wheelers, two wheelers, light, heavy, gutted out, aerodynamic. Before everyone arrived we had built one for an example and had set out a treasure trove of stuff that others could use to build theirs. Make sure all the teams name their pumpkins.



Treasure trove: Necessary items

- Enough pumpkins and gourds to let everybody choose which one they wanted to use
- Duct tape—lots of it
- 5/8 dowels cut 18 inches long for the axels
- Rubber bands for keep the wheels on the axels
- Four-inch wheels but out of a 1x6—each wheels needs a 3/4-inch hole for the axel

The two primary ways a pumpkin racer is built are boiled down to an axel that is pushed through the pumpkin, then the wheels are attached or a chassis is built that gives the pumpkin a little nest it can rest in.

Treasure trove: Optional items

(This is where you can have fun!)

- Think in terms of a small junkyard of opportunities
- Spray cans of paint—to give them that custom paintjob
- Puffy paints—to paint on logos and words
- Scrap lumber—for the custom chassis
- Collect of nuts, bolts, fasteners
- Twine
- Action figures—every pumpkin needs a driver
- Knives to carve out the pumpkin
- Staple guns to help build the chassis
- Whatever junk you can find around the house



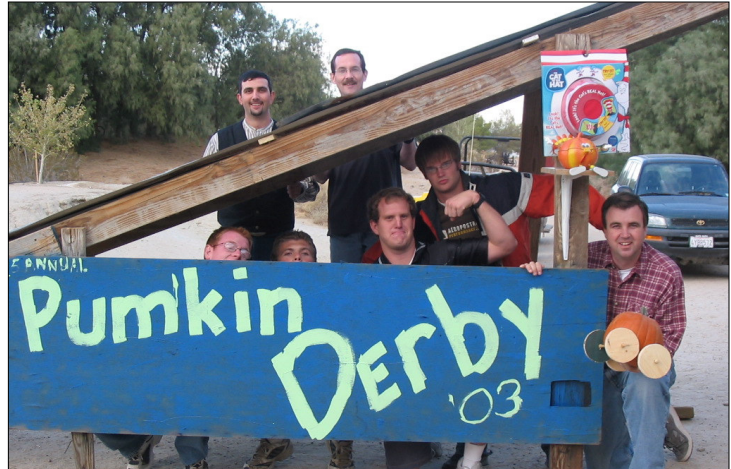
The Racetrack: Use corrugated metal to make a race-track as big as you would like. We built ours off the top of a garage and then built a ramp from the edge of the garage down to the ground level. We used two pieces of metal side by side to allow two pumpkins to run at the same time. We allowed people to use the last five feet of the track to test how their racer would travel. Remind them that the grooves in the metal can help their pumpkin stay on track. A pumpkin with wheels the right width is crucial to your pumpkin staying intact



Speedy Rodriguez—the winning gourd

The Race: We posted the bracket on the side of the race track and did the gourd division first. We gave two racers to the guys at the top of the garage, and they held a 2x4 board in front of both racers. When the referee (who was at the finish line) said go, the guy at the top would lift the board and let the racers go. The referee had to announce a winner; many times it was the Right Brain-10

pumpkin that went furthest as opposed to finished. The winner could then modify or fix his racer until he was up again. The loser usually picked up a few pieces. Some of the most fun of this event was watching the spectacular crashes of decorated pumpkins flying off the garage. Round two was a race between two winners and so on until we had one winner. We had two divisions (Pumpkin and Gourd), and we raced the winners of the two divisions at the end. (By the way, a two-wheeled gourd won the whole thing).



Tips and Tricks:

1. If you have an adult who can build, let him be a Pumpkin Racer Advisor who can help any or all of the teams
2. Let people know this activity has a good chance of wrecking most pumpkins. Don't get too attached to your creation
3. Videotape it—you'll have lots of spontaneous reactions. One video of the race and one of the crowd would be ideal
4. The more stuff in the treasure trove the better. Gather everyone around the treasure trove to build their pumpkin racer.
5. Don't build them secretly. The ideas of one will inspire others
6. Provide all sizes of wheels.
7. We did this with families, and it worked great.
8. This activity allows some to get really involved and others to get somewhat involved. That mix is fine and necessary.
9. Combine visitors and core folks together on the same team.

RIDDLES & PUZZLES

For an annual family fun night, we went online to a riddle website and chose a number of good riddles. They can be printed in a large font, one riddle per sheet. We posted riddles around the church, sometimes in unlikely places, and offered a reward to those who discovered the answer. We gave a caramel apple for each solved riddle. After a riddle was solved, we take down that page. This activity is great for those who have an interest in mind games.

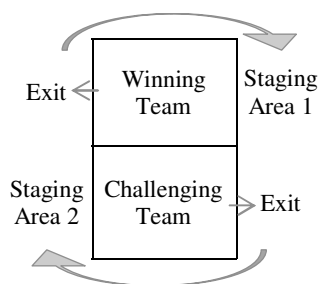
ROCK GYM

Many cities and towns have rock climbing gyms that can be rented out exclusively for a group. Rock climbing done with a good group is safe, exciting, and unity building. Rental costs in Phoenix were \$10 per person for three hours of exclusive gym time, with the option of staying on as long as we wanted. This included all of the climbing equipment. Our teens were instructed in safe climbing procedures and then were carefully watched and helped during the event. This turned out to be one of our better youth activities.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	2-50
Props	0
Cost	\$\$
Type	Adventure
Time	2 hours
Referee	0

ROUND ROBIN VOLLEYBALL

Divide group into four equal teams. From the north side of the court, the “winning” team begins play by serving the ball as one would in a regular volleyball game. All the regular rules apply with the exception of the serve. The ball is always served from the north or winners’ side of the court. When the ball falls on the



challengers' side, the challenging team is out and must exit to their right, run around the court to staging area two (next to challengers' side of court) and wait for their next chance to defeat the current winning team. If the ball, whether on the serve or return, falls on the winners' side or the north side of the court, then the winning team exits to their right and the challengers run under the net and occupy the winners' court. The team in staging area one (next to the winner's side of the court) occupies the challenger's court.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Volleyball & VB Net
Cost	\$\$
Type	Volleyball
Time	30 min-1hr.
Referee	1

Here's how it gets fun and exciting! The winning team does not have to wait for the challenging team to be ready. As soon as they have retrieved the ball, they can serve, regardless of the readiness of the opposing team. Also, the losing team does not have to retrieve the ball for the winning team. It is always the responsibility of the winning team to retrieve the ball, and no other team is permitted to touch the ball after it has fallen. The losing team must quickly get off the court so the next team (from staging area one) can occupy it and be ready. Our entire church had fun with this as an activity for Family Night.

SARDINES

Gather your group together inside and send one person out to hide. Tell this person beforehand to hide in a fairly obvious place. Explain the rules to the rest of the group:

1. Set the boundaries for the game.
2. Each person looks for the one who is hiding.
3. When he finds that person, he should hide with him.
4. If a person is with others and thinks he has found the person hiding, he should try to hide with him without the others knowing.
5. As time goes on and more and more people join the one hiding, they will try to keep themselves hidden as their group grows from one to many.
6. The referee will end the game after about 20 minutes.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	12-50
Props	0
Cost	0
Type	Hide & Seek Variation
Time	20 min./game
Referee	1

Ask for questions—they will usually revolve around what the boundaries are—and send them on their way looking for the person hiding and becoming a sardine when they find him. The next person to hide is the first person who found the “one.”

Tips and Tricks:

1. Play speed sardines—the one hiding must hide in an obvious spot, defined as not hidden. The game only lasts for four minutes.
2. Give a pad and paper to the one hiding and have him record each person in the order that they found him. The order determines how many points are given. Anybody who does not find the one hiding gets the same score as the last person who found the him. If you are the second person to find the one hiding, you would get two points. If you are the eleventh one to find the one hiding, then you get 11 points. If there are 25 people playing and only 14 people find the one hiding, then each player who didn't find them would get 14 points. Play several rounds to determine an individual winner or give points to teams that they are already on. In this type of Sardines, the same person may hide for each round
3. Add a Marco Polo variation in which the one hiding must make a fish sound at 5, 10, and 15 minutes.
4. Play with and without flashlights or add reflective tape to each person as a headband.
5. Play in pairs to avoid any guy/girl problems.
6. Add Coast Guard (more of your staff) to the area to keep a watch on sardines.
7. Halfway through the game, the entire school of sardines must move to a new spot at least 30 yards from where they are presently. The referee indicates when the sardines need to start moving. They have one minute to make the move.

SHOPPERS IN DISGUISE

A wonderful activity during Christmas, this scavenger hunt is more of the human kind. Split teens into groups of five or six. Take them to the mall, with their goal being to find as many people in the mall that are related to your church as possible, and get those people to sign their paper (*see page 14*). This hunt takes a little more work those organizing the event, because you want to get as many people in your church to plan on being at that mall on that evening as you can. We planned the activity for the last Friday night before Christmas when the mall would be the most crowded. We asked our church people to commit to shopping for Christmas that evening between the hours of 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. We arrived with the teens at the mall at 6:45 p.m. and met back together as a group at 8:45 p.m. We asked certain ones in the church to be “shoppers in disguise,” meaning they would dress up in a crazy disguise. Our school principal wore a wig and went very unnoticed. Others posed as a mall janitor, a pregnant woman, a bag lady, and a military man. We were able to commit 40 other adults to be at the mall that evening. The kids had fun, but the adults had a blast! It was great to see that much participation from our church family.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	0
Type	Scavenger Hunt
Time	2-3 hours
Referee	1/group

Tips and Tricks:

1. Don't allow the teens to go shopping.
2. Do not enter questionable stores (Spencer's Gifts, Victoria's Secret, etc.). We put a trustworthy teen or leader in each group to help with this.
3. Be polite!
4. Don't run!
5. Don't get kicked out of the mall.
6. Give a paper to each group with all the names of people that they are looking for, with a place for their signature.
7. In case there are others whom you didn't know would be at the mall, leave an area for their signatures on the paper. (We had ten of these people that weren't on the list.)
8. Designate a meeting spot and deduct points for those who are late. We would cross off one name per minute they were late, starting with the most points.
9. Only you know how many points each person is worth and who is dressed up. Obviously, those dressed in disguise are worth more.
10. Don't underestimate the creativity of your adults. Challenge them to go all out and participate.

Objectives:

1. To find as many people that are related to our church as possible
2. To get them to sign your paper
3. To be on time to the designated location
4. To do all these things better than the rest so your team wins

Rules:

1. There is to be absolutely NO SHOPPING! (If you see a wonderful deal, come back and buy it tomorrow on your own time.)
2. *Do not enter* questionable stores. If you wonder if it is questionable, that is the definition of questionable—Don't go in! (*See #2 under Tips and Tricks above.*)
3. In all you do, you ultimately represent the Lord Jesus Christ—show it in your actions. You also represent our church (and people will know that because we will be driving up in our church bus), so don't do anything that would compromise our church name. Finally, you represent your parents, and they will find out if you mess up on the first two!
4. You are to find people related to our church and have them sign next to their name. You will receive points for every signature your team receives.

SHOPPERS IN DISGUISE

PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

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5. If you see someone who is related to our church that is not on the list, you may have him or her print and sign their name on the bottom and they will be a bonus for your team.
6. The team with the most points wins! (You must always stay together as a team! If you split up, your team will be disqualified.)
7. There is one leader in each group to whom the whole group is responsible. Listen to them and do as they say.
8. Don't be late to the final meeting spot at 8:30, which will be given to you upon arrival at the mall.
9. **All teens must return to the church on the bus. You may not leave with your parents, even if they are at the mall as a "shopper in disguise."**

SNOW TRIP

Each January we plan to escape the warmth of Phoenix and retreat to Flagstaff where there is cold, white snow. We plan a whole day of activities, beginning with tubing, sledding, and slipping and sliding down the hills. We build snowmen, play snow football, have snowball fights, and make snow angels. So many of our teens have spent so little time in snow (some of them have not even seen snow!) that this is always one of our highlights of the year. This requires much supervision, and our adult leaders always have just as much fun as the teens. Dress warmly!!

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	5-200
Props	Many
Cost	Travel \$
Type	Snow Trip
Time	12 hrs.
Referee	Many

SUPER BOWL OUTREACH EXTRAVAGANZA

Using one of the largest events in the history of the world, we have had a wonderful opportunity to reach out to the community in which we live. On Super Bowl Sunday we meet from 4-8 p.m. in our church fellowship hall as a youth group and watch the Super Bowl! We come dressed in our favorite team's colors and bring lots of junk food to eat as we watch the game. We project the game on the wall with our projector/VCR unit and enjoy a life-size presentation of the game. There are several tips that work well for us in making this a God-honoring outreach:

1. This is an **EVANGELISTIC** tool. We work extremely hard at getting visitors here. We have had salvation and dedication decisions made at this activity. Our teens know that if there are no visitors, they will lose this opportunity.
2. We turn off all commercials and the halftime show. During commercials we ask trivia questions and have the teens do skits. During halftime we have a Gospel message presented, followed by an invitation.
3. Follow-up is key! One of the greatest blessings is being able to work with those that have come to church for the first time and attach them to our youth ministry. We have seen those added to the church through salvation, baptism, and membership as a result of this ministry.
4. Get a leader you trust to be in charge of handling the remote!! (One of our parents handles this for us). Unfortunately, the teens enjoy the commercials and halftime more than the game itself, so you need to control that aspect, without exception.
5. Make the visitors that come feel welcome. This presents a great amount of time to be able to get to know each one. Make them desire to become a part of more than just this activity.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	Any
Props	Few
Cost	Food
Type	Outreach
Time	4 hrs.
Referee	0

THREE BALL

This is a variation to the game of kickball or baseball. Divide the group into two teams. One team is in the field first, as in baseball. Their objective is to get all three objects that are thrown or kicked back to home plate before the player arrives. The other team is up to bat. They have three objects that they will try to throw or kick as far away from as many people as they possibly can. Objects that work well are tennis balls (small, medium, and large), footballs, kick balls, soccer balls, and Frisbees. When they have thrown (or kicked) all three, they must run around all the bases the opposite way (from

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	0
Type	Baseball
Time	30 min.-1 hr.
Referee	1-2

3rd base around 1st base to home plate) before all three objects reach home plate. If they do, they receive one run for their team; if not, the other team has one out against them. Once the team has three outs, it is the other teams turn to be up at bat.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Alternate batting team boy/girl to make things fair.
2. Variation: Allow the entire team to bat each inning, giving each one equal opportunity; this way no one has to make the “first or last out”.
3. If the ball is caught in the air, it is an automatic out.
4. Make the fielding team produce a catcher so he must catch the ball that is thrown and touch the plate in order to make an out.
5. Use an impartial, responsible adult to keep score.

TORPEDO

This game is a gym-version of the pool game “sharks and minnows.” Using a basketball court or marking your own, you need a large rectangle. Two kids are chosen as the “launchers” while the rest of the group (anywhere from 15 to 50 kids works fine) lines up outside one of the short sides of the rectangle. The launchers stand on either of the long sides of the rectangle, armed with dodge balls or something similar. A leader shouts “TORPEDO!” and the kids start to run as fast as they can to get past the line on the other side, where they are safe. While they are running, the launchers try to hit as many people as possible with their dodge balls, while staying behind their own lines. They usually can only get one good throw in, since they can’t cross the line. Any runner who gets hit must sit down exactly where he is. They are now land mines. Now it gets interesting. Each time the kids torpedo across the room, there are more and more land mines to hit them. The youth on the floor can try to touch the runners. Anyone touched must sit down, too. Eventually you get down to two lonely runners and then one winner.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	15-50
Props	2 game balls
Cost	0
Type	Dodge Ball
Time	
Referee	1

ULTIMATE FRISBEE FOOTBALL

Object: To move a Frisbee from one end of the field to another scoring as you pass the Frisbee into the end zone.

Props: Frisbee, sideline/goal line markers, whistle

Game play: Divide teams into even sides. One team passes the Frisbee into play from their side of the field to the other team kick off fashion. A team moves the Frisbee by passing it to their players without it dropping on the ground. A player may take up to three steps before passing. The opposing team can intercept a pass or just knock the Frisbee to the ground. Anytime the Frisbee hits the ground, it is given to the team that did not have possession, regardless of who knocked it down. No tackling is allowed.

Variations:

- You may choose to have two teams playing at once. We often have two Frisbees (different looking—one for the girls and one for the guys) and play two games simultaneously on the same field.
- Using a different object will change the nature of the game.

VIDEO SCAVENGER HUNT

Here is an activity that most people have heard of in the past. Perhaps you just need a good list of things to collect. Split your group up to leave in cars and then video as many of the following scenes as they can. Have them plan out their time carefully; they will lose 100 points for every minute they are late getting back to the church. Scoring could take a while to watch through all the footage that was collected, so instruct

your camera people to only roll on the point-scoring event.

1. Group in front of a church without a steeple—100 points
2. Group around a rare/unusual road sign—150 points
3. Close-up of an expired license plate—200 points
4. Group getting arrested! Be creative and earn an extra 100 points—500 points
5. Someone in group proposing to a stranger—250 points
6. Group singing Barney's "I love you" song to McDonald's Manager—300 points
7. Getting \$1 worth of gas—150 points
8. Group finding most expensive meat in supermarket—200 points
9. Entire group in a dumpster—400 points
10. Group on a fire engine—200 points
11. Entire group **ON** a flagpole (not just around it)—150 points
12. Group running bases on baseball field—175 points
13. Cop eating donut—300 points
14. Everyone in a bathtub—300 points
15. Barking dog—100 points
16. Everyone in a boat—150 points
17. Everyone in a swimming pool—200 points
18. Group standing by the most election signs—300 points
19. Find a green "Johnny Rattler" fishing lure in Wal-Mart—200 points
20. Someone riding a horse—100 points
21. Group running a track lap—100 points per person/per lap
22. Group helping someone take out his or her groceries—100 points
23. Vacuum out the vehicle you are in—200 points
24. One person in group drinking formula out of a baby bottle—300 points
25. Group standing next to Ken Griffey, Jr.—250 points
26. Someone in group wearing Burger King crown and being knighted with a French fry by a BK manager—500 points
27. Entire group eating breakfast at a stranger's dinner table—300 points
28. Entire group on a slide—150 points
29. Group by a really old vehicle (before 1970)—250 points
30. Group with the tallest man standing next to the shortest woman (have them state their height)—250 points
31. Group next to a girl with red hair in pig tails—200 points
32. Everyone eating baby food—400 points
33. One person in group kissing a live frog—500 points
34. Group sitting in a taxicab—300 points
35. A stinky diaper (must show what is stinky!)—400 points
36. Someone coming out of a PortaJohn—250 points
37. Stationary clock changing from 7:06 to 7:07—100 points
38. Video a stranger doing an interesting/unusual human trick—350 points
39. One person in group making a sandwich at Subway—450 points
40. First team to return—300 points

Other ideas:

1. Video a fork in a flowing creek—difficult to video at night.
2. The whole group must try some type of food from/in a store or restaurant that no one from the entire group has ever tried. (Deli may give samples.)
3. Video a dog marking a vehicle tire.
4. Video a group member petting a baby goat or lamb.
5. Have someone give you a guided tour of their back yard.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-50
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Scavenger Hunt
Time	1-3 hours
Referee	1/group

6. Go to a fast food restaurant. With at least one employee from the establishment, the entire team must do the a Broadway high-kick for at least fifteen seconds.
7. Feed some fish inside a aquarium.
8. Sing to and/or pray with an elderly shut-in, church leader, pastor, or to those at a retirement home or nursing facility. Be sure to tell them how much you appreciate them. Stay for at least five minutes per visit. NOTE: I suggest you visit fairly early in the scavenger time. It's also good to call first. (If you meet another group in a home, then visit together!) Limit four.
9. Have someone give you a guided tour of their freezer.
10. Cameraman: video another video camera taping you for at least five seconds; security cameras are okay.
11. For at least fifteen seconds, the whole group must dry their left socks in a laundry-mat dryer.
12. Tastefully invite someone outside any scavenger team to church with you. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit here! Limit five.
13. With proper permission from parent/guardian: Interview a person two to six years of age on some current global news event. The interview must last at least twenty seconds.
14. Within a business establishment, under the obvious influence of helium, at least one member of your group must interview someone who will not be returning to the starting point. (Suggestion: discuss a strange topic such as the rising cost of cat food) Interview must be at least twenty seconds long.
15. A team member must play Patty-Cake with an animal (live, non-human) for at least fifteen seconds. (The animal may have the assistance of another human in playing Patty-Cake.)
16. Along with at least one other person who will not be returning with you to the starting point, have the whole group blow bubbles. Each person in the group must have a bubble in the air (one blown by that individual) at the same time. Video the time from the first bubble blown to the time that each person has their bubble in the air. Each bubble counted must be in view of the camera.
17. The whole group must have a fifteen second conversation with one of the following:
 - a) A four-legged non-human animal physically more than 4 feet tall. This can be done from a distance of approx fifty feet or less.
 - b) A large statue of some type (ie: Ronald McDonald Statue or Morris the Horse in Tryon)
18. At someone's house, team member(s) must ride in/on/upon some sort of wheeled toy (tricycle, bicycle, wagon, etc.) At least two laps must be made around the house. For more fun, switch out the members per lap . . . or have a race. Be careful!!! Please do not damage anyone's toys or yourselves.
19. Slice a whole lemon into equal pieces. Each person participating must bite down into their slice and hold in the teeth for at least three seconds. Be sure to video! Limit one slice per person and one lemon.
20. Bring back canned food items for the local food bank ministry; it's okay to leave these at the starting point or church. Limit fifteen.
21. The whole group must feed some ducks for at least twenty seconds.
22. The whole group does a "nuggie" circle for at least fifteen seconds.
23. Go through a fast food drive-thru and order something really silly (two packs of salt, one and a half napkins, duck sauce, a straw, fried snails, Scooby, Shaggy, Darth Vader, etc.). One or many group members can participate.
24. Video acquiring a smiley faced balloon that was once a display model!!
25. Entire team plays hacky-sack with a real hacky-sack for at least twenty seconds.
26. Video the whole team singing and doing the Hokie Pokie in a grocery store. (Participate for at least fifteen seconds.)
27. In a public establishment with proper permission from the manager over the intercom, the entire group sings a song with great joy—"We Wish You a Merry Christmas," "Pharaoh-Pharaoh," a birthday tune, a few lines of some old TV show like "Gilligan's Isle," "The Brady Bunch," "The Flintstones, etc. Must use entire group, must last 10 seconds or more.
28. Video your whole team standing in a tent.
29. Have the whole group involved in a video commercial clip where the intent of the commercial is to sell a product that is really stupid (air, water, dirt, money, etc.). Each team member must participate in the clip in some way (interviewer, interviewee, sound/lighting effect, testimony, etc.). The clip must be at least twenty seconds long.

30. Video your whole group in a VW beetle. Must have owner's permission.
31. Test someone's smoke detector.
32. Go to a house and have the whole team "Trick or Treat!" Limit three—five extra points will be given for each time the whole team gets candy.
33. Video a team member picking up litter clearly in front of an "Adopt-a-Highway sign." **THIS LITTER MUST NOT BE PLANTED!** Be sure to add your comment to the video.
34. Inside a store, the whole group does two rounds of Duck-Duck-Goose—must last at least fifteen seconds.
35. Video the whole team building a people pyramid and doing a cheer for their team.
36. Interview a shopper inside food store who is not a part of any of the other teams and who was not at starting point when we started. Ask them to name every type of pet they have ever had and what their names were, what toothpaste they use and why, and what has brought them out to the store. Be polite!
37. Have your whole team fit into one closet in someone's house for thirty seconds. If the closet has a door, you must close it. If it doesn't, just remain confined to the closet space.
38. Order one medium combination drink (a little of all the drinks they have on fountain put into that one cup) from a restaurant drive thru with your best Darth Vader impersonation. Also, order as many straws as there are people in your team. Then park the car in one of the parking spaces at the restaurant, set the drink somewhere safe, get out of the car and run around it (all of you in the same direction) while each of you rub your heads and do your best Curly "Woo! Woo! Woo!" impersonation. Then you all must each drink the drink at the same time with the straws.
39. The entire team must stand in a circle without shoes.
40. Each person must vacuum the feet of the person to their left.
41. Have one team member explain and demonstrate a "skin the cat" on the monkey bars.
42. Video a team member scoring a goal (basketball, soccer, field goal). Must use a real ball.
43. Video team members playing jump rope while reciting a jumping rhyme. To receive additional points, each time a different team member must do a different rhyme.
44. Video your entire team inside your car while going through a carwash.
45. At someone's house, a team member must demonstrate and teach us how to wash a load of laundry. We'd like "dos and don'ts" please.
46. Standing in front of a restaurant, a team member explains why this restaurant's food and service is better than the restaurant down the road—must last at least twenty-five seconds and include "convincing" examples.
47. Stage the scene of a minor accident. **DON'T DO ANYTHING DANGEROUS!**
48. Video entire team cleaning someone's bathroom and explaining proper cleaning methods.
49. Each team member explaining what "the bomb" means. A variety of meanings is best; try not to agree on the definition.
50. Video the entire team crossing a busy intersection doing a chicken walk all the way across the street. Stay between the crosswalks the entire time and get out of the street before the light changes colors.

VIDEO SCAVENGER HUNT: NERDSVILLE NIGHT

We entitled our video scavenger hunt "Nerdsville Night" based on all the crazy things they had to accomplish. Split teens into groups of four or five. There needs to be an adult leader in each group that is comfortable with handling a video camera. The goal is to complete as many of the items listed as possible. All things listed must be caught on camera in order to receive full points. Each item is worth a set number of points, each listed on their paper following the item. The team with the most points wins a prize awaiting them back at the church. Points are deducted for every minute past the two-hour limit that they are late.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Few
Cost	0
Type	Scavenger Hunt
Time	2 hrs.
Referee	1 per car

Tips and Tricks:

1. The referee (adult) in each car must make sure that the group does completely what they say.
2. Anything your driver does with your group, add 100 points per item.
3. Any materials that are needed for the evening must either be purchased from a store, as you need them, or received from people who wish to help.
4. Award extra points to each team that returns to the church on time.
5. Have the kids dress like nerds to add to the excitement.

Following is the list that we used for our scavenger hunt.

NERDSVILLE NIGHT SCAVENGER HUNT

Drivers: Please circle each item that is completed. It is your responsibility to make sure that your group is completely honest in their endeavors.

1. Your entire group must sing and do the motions to "Father Abraham" as loudly and as obnoxiously as possible while standing in a large dumpster—1,000 points
2. One person must get into a shopping cart while another person pushes them through any grocery store. (One trip around the entire store)—400 points
3. One person must dive to the bottom of a pool and kiss it—1,000 points
4. Go through the drive-thru of any hamburger restaurant and order a cheeseburger with no meat . . . bring it back with you—400 points
5. One guy in your group must put on lipstick, blush, and eye shadow and go into Taco Bell to ask for a glass of water (any Taco Bell)—800 points
6. One girl must ask a complete stranger "Do you think I'm good-looking?" until she gets "Yes" for an answer—400 points
7. One guy must go into the Wal-Mart say to the customer service lady, "I know that we haven't known each other long, but will you marry me?"—400 points
8. Get the autographs of six different gas station attendants (different gas stations for each one)—600 points
9. Sell one cup of dirt to a stranger in front of Wal-Mart for at least a quarter—500 points
10. One person in your group must smell the shoes of every other person (your nose must be within 3" of the shoe)—500 points
11. Go to the door of a complete stranger and sing, "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" (the entire group must participate, or it does not count)—800 points
12. One person must swallow a live goldfish—1,000 points
13. Two people in your group must put shaving cream around their mouth and Q-tips hanging out their noses, then go ask a stranger if he/she will help them—600 points
14. Three people in your group must put shaving cream over their entire face and walk inside Metro-Center Mall from Robinson's May to Dillard's—800 points
15. One person must ride a kid's ride outside of any grocery store—300 points
16. All the guys in the group must paint their fingernails and toenails . . . being able to show us when you get back to the church—1,000 points
17. One person must go into any dollar store and ask, "How much is this?" three times—400 points
18. One person in the group must witness to a mannequin at the mall for at least three minutes—1,000 points
19. The entire group must buy a set of party hats at the dollar store and wear them the rest of the night in everything you do—500 points
20. Two people must stand by the water fountain in the mall and get 10 signatures (total) on your petition to "Save the Amoebas"—1,000 points
21. Two people must stand by the water fountain and sing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" while throwing pennies into the fountain—600 points

22. Convince some department store clerk to let you make an announcement of their choice over the store paging system—800 points
23. Get the autograph of one person that is at least 6'5" (have them write down how tall they are)—400 points
24. Get a policeman to read you your rights—700 points (If you can get him to lock you in a cell for at least two minutes, you may add 1,000 points to the 700 points)
25. Your entire group must go into a Target Café. One guy and one girl must sit at a table sharing a slurpy while the rest of the group sings "Happy Anniversary." (The group must sing until the entire slurpy is eaten.)—800 points
26. Your entire group must stand in the front entrance of Toys "R" Us (inside by the cash registers) and sing "I Don't Want to Grow Up . . . I'm a Toys 'R' Us Kid"—600 points
27. At any stop sign, one person must get out and read the book of Jude out loud—1,000 points
28. Your entire group must get out on the corner of 43rd Av. and McDowell and do 50 jumping jacks—600 points
29. Do a Chinese fire drill skipping backwards around the car—500 points
30. One person must eat one small can of cat food (all of it!)—1,000 points
31. One guy and one girl must stand by the door of the restrooms in any mall food court. As people enter say, "Thank you for using our restrooms. Please let me know if you need assistance"—for three minutes—800 points, add 100 points for each extra minute you stand welcoming people into the restroom
32. Everyone in your group must get out and hug and kiss a stop sign—600 points
33. Go up to a complete stranger, act as though you know them, and ask if they remember your name . . . tell them you went to kindergarten together—500 points
34. One girl must find a lady who uses Secret, get her signature, and ask her, "Do you use it because it's made for a woman or because it's strong enough for a man?"—700 points
35. Sell your autograph to a complete stranger for at least a quarter—500 points
36. Your entire group must stand in front of any grocery store (outside by the entrance) and look up into the sky and point for at least three minutes. Don't say anything; just look and point—800 points
37. Convince a complete stranger to let you make a call with their cell-phone. With that cell phone, call Pastor Brent's cell phone to verify that you accomplished this task—800 points
38. Pass out 10 tracts—1,000 points
39. Convince a place that sells ice cream (Dairy Queen, McDonald's, Burger King, etc.) to give each one in your group a free ice cream cone with your choice of flavor—1,000 points
40. Teepee the pastor's house without anyone in the house catching you (Only toilet paper is to be used; no destructive materials; must use at least four complete rolls to get the points.)—5,000 points

Bonus Points:

- First group back to the fellowship hall—3,000 points
- Second group back to the fellowship hall—2,000 points
- Third group back to the fellowship hall—1,000 points
- Anything your driver does with your group, add 100 points per item.
- Any materials that you need for this evening must either be purchased from a store, as you need them, or, as it goes in the process of begging, gotten from people that will feel sorry for you and lend a helping hand.

WATER BALLOON GOLF

Supplies: cones, hula hoops (or some something to mark your golf hole), water balloons for fifty people (We had 450 but could have used a few more), duct tape, printed maps and score cards, a place to play

Teams of two with two teams at each hole.

Set up: Around your property set up golf tees and placed a bucket of forty balloons at each tee. Then place

a hula hoop at the place teens need to golf to. You can lay the hoop down and have them catch from inside the hoop, or suspend it sideways and have them making a catch with the balloon passing through. Have holes with buckets to throw it into, and balls to knock off, or balls suspended that have to be hit, even small rings to pass through. Duct tape was used to set up hoops that were sideways for the toss trough. We also suspended balls by duct tape having the teens hit the ball. Once you begin to set up the course you can imagine many ways to make the course interesting.

Play: Players in teams of two or three start at the hole (use a shotgun start) with each team member (teams of two) alternating throws. Teams must fulfill the specific task at each hole before it is completed. Each time a person throws the balloon it costs him a stroke. If the balloon does not break, the individual may try the shot again from where he last threw it. Any distance gain will cost a stroke. Players may take shots at targets again and again if the balloon does not break and if they return to the place they took their last shot.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Don't make the holes too long, or you will use too many balloons. (Over 150 yards is getting too long.) We allowed teens to take another shot at a hole if the balloon did not break (They would catch these.), but they had to putt it from their previous position.
2. We had a twelve-hole course, which would take normal play about an hour. It was fun to see holes intersecting each other with water balloons flying everywhere.
3. We were playing with another church and divided teams by having teens select someone from the other church to team up with. This worked well and seemed to break the ice.

Variations:

- Use tennis balls for everything but the putting, then substitute them with a water balloon which would be kept at the holes instead of the tees.
- To make it frisbee golf, use frisbees.
- Use water balloon launchers to lengthen the distance.

WATER-SOAKED KICKBALL

Props: one to three inflatable kiddie pools, a ball, home base, garden hose, one to three tarps, and a field. You will also need a hose person.

Set up: Place your pools for the first through third bases. Put a tarp or plastic before the pools for a slip n slide effect. Use a regular base for home plate.

Game play: Play regular kickball rules.

Variations:

- Use a big plastic ball to limit the guys range. You may have two balls, giving the ladies the advantage.
- Allow teams to load up the bases (pools) allowing them to run only when it is safe.
- Allow them to continue to go around if they make it from third base to first without stopping on home. (They do score if they touch home even if tagged before first base.)

WHOMP' EM BASKETBALL

The rules of basketball apply in the fact that baskets are attempting to be scored. We did this game at our school camp, and our kids loved it. Divide the boys into two teams that will play basketball against each other. Divide the girls into two teams that will play defense against the boys. One group of boys and one group of girls is on the same team going against the other group of boys and girls. Each girl must have a pillow in order to play defense. They may "whomp" the boys by hitting them with their pillow in order to keep them from scoring. The boys, amidst the distraction, must attempt to score baskets in the hoop. The team with the most points wins. Play the game in rounds so to give breaks in between the beatings. Not as many points will be scored as you may think.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10-100
Props	Many
Cost	0
Type	Basketball
Time	45 min.-1 hr.
Referee	3

Tips and Tricks:

1. Girls must use pillows for hitting, nothing else.
2. Boys may not rip pillows out of girls' hands.
3. With each new round, enter another basketball into the competition.
4. If playing on a full court, make side hoops available to be scored on with each new round.
5. With each addition of a basketball and hoop, add a referee to keep an eye on scoring.
6. Be prepared to control the chaos.

ZONE CHALLENGE

This is meant to be a challenge that goes the whole time of the activity. You will need to make or buy play cash to use as currency. You may also give out money for those who volunteer during the activity.

Each person will begin the Challenge with six Zone cash bills. The object is to win as much Zone cash as you can throughout the retreat/activity. The one with the most cash at the end will win a unique prize.

You win zone cash by challenging other people to a challenge game. There are four challenge games you may choose from.

- Thumb Wrestling
- Rock, Paper, Scissors
- Coin Flip
- Bible Trivia True or False

Rules:

1. You must accept any challenge. Thumb Wrestling is the only challenge game one may decline, but one must accept any other challenge game suggested.
2. Sudden death, no two out of three.
3. Challenger must bring a coin to the coin toss, and they must be heads.
4. One does not have to accept two challenges in a row (from the same person).
5. Treat one another respectfully!

ACTIVITIES FOR A SMALL GROUP

BIRDIE CAMO

Fill a canning jar almost full of birdseed. Hide 20 small objects in the jar. Instruct your teams to try to discover all 20 objects by rotating and shaking the jar. The teams should make a list of the objects they find. The first team to list all twenty is the winner. Here is a list of potential objects to go in your jar:

Bottle cap	Washer	Stick	Thumbtack
Pencil	Peanut	Rubber Band	Match
Credit card	Dry Wall Screw	Clothespin	Brad
Paper clip	Rock	Safety Pin	Nail
Quarter	Hershey's Kiss	Button	Pen Cap
Nickel	Army man	9 volt Battery	Ear Plug
Key	Cotton Ball	Aspirin	Crayon
Eraser	Chalk	Bobby Pin	Twist tie
Ring	.22 shell	Mint	
Earring	Leaf	Razor blade	

BROWN BAG LUNCH

If you are doing an activity over lunch, this is a good way to see how your teens react to the unexpected. Make up lunches for the teens in advance. Decide how many items you will include (sandwich, chips, drink, fruit, dessert, etc.). Place all of one item in the lunch bags so that each teen will have five of one item. It is very fun to watch who does what.

- Notice who initiates what
- Notice who shares
- Notice who hoards
- Notice anyone left out and for what reason

Debrief:

- Ask them how things went and what they thought of the lunch.
- Ask them what they noticed.
- Ask them if anyone felt left out.
- Have them evaluate how they did as a group considering one another.
- There are many scripture that my give instruction on how we should react—Matthew 20:25-28; Proverbs 11:24; Acts 2:44; 4:32

CREATE A SCAVENGE

Give each team a list of crazy names and the kids have to go out and collect items they think best fits the name on the list.

For example:

1. APBJ
2. Zipper zapping shoestring fuse
3. Idaho
4. Tweed
5. Snail egg
6. Chicken lips
7. Will be
8. Snipe
9. Yellow grot grabber

10. Portable electric door knob kneele
11. Dip flipper
12. Giant wahoo
13. Portable electric thumb twiddly drummer
14. Whizzle topper
15. Blue dilly-dilly
16. Foreign sanctions
17. Miniature torpedo snatcher
18. Gigantic monkopotomus
19. Common sink slapper
20. Edumacation
21. Fiddle chord
22. 119
23. Visible sizzle
24. Travel
25. Skippity do dah

A panel of judges can determine the winners based on each team's explanation of how their items fit the various descriptions in the list.

DIGITAL DIALOG

Activity: Road Rally

You will need a digital camera, car, driver, and objectives sheet for each group. You will also need a video projector or TV. (Our problems came in trying to get all the pictures put on the computer while teens were waiting. You may want a snack time while the pictures are downloaded from the cameras for the message time.)

Divide teams into groups and give them the objective of choosing a truth from the Bible and illustrating it with their cameras. You probably will need to give them ideas. We handed out a sheet of truths from Proverbs and the Sermon on the Mount (*see next page*), but let them choose any biblical truth. At the end of the night we had the teams teach the truth to the other groups. The beauty of this activity is that the teens spend the night thinking and proving a truth from Scripture. Be ready to discuss to application of the truth. We set up a computer to display the pictures using a video projector.

DIGITAL CAMERA ACTIVITY

Your mission is to illustrate a truth by your imagination and the camera that is with you!!

State the truth you want to illustrate with the passage where it is found.

- Truth's location
- Truth stated
- Truth explained
- Truth applied

Some of the truths you may discover may be quickly and easily illustrated, others may take the whole time. If you have time and want to do a few, you may.

- The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12).
- Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7).
- Salt and light
- Say what you mean; do it. Keep your word without having to swear by something (Matthew 5:33-36).
- Eye for an eye (Matthew 5:38-42).
- Love your neighbors and your enemies (Matthew 5:43-48).
- Do good acts without show and demonstration—how heaven rewards (Matthew 6:1-4).
- When you pray (Matthew 6:5-15).
- Lay not treasures for yourselves on this earth (Matthew 6:19-21).
- No man can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24-)
- Seek ye first the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:25-34).
- Ask, seek, and knock (Matthew 7:7-12)
- Enter in at the narrow gate (Matthew 7:13-14)
- The wise man and the foolish man (Matthew 7:24-27)

Parables:

- The unrighteous judge
- The friend at midnight
- Parable of the soils
- The Good Samaritan
- The Prodigal Son

Proverbs:

- The slothful man roasteth not what he took in hunting (Proverbs 12:27)
- Better is a little (Proverbs 15:16)

FRUGAL SCAVENGE

Prepare a list before hand of several items found in the mall. Make it a variety such as a one-carat diamond ring and a Hershey's chocolate bar. Have ten to fifteen different items. Break up into teams of three to four and give each team a copy of the list. They are then given 30 minutes to find all the items on the list for the **cheapest** price. Have them record the price and store for each item and meet back in the food court to compare notes. The team that spends the least for all items is the winner.

GIANT JENGA

This is a giant version of a classic game that most people would already know. Wooden 2x4's can be cut to 12" or 15" depending on your preference of play. Each level should have three boards, just like the regular game. A good game should be built with 21 levels. This would mean cutting and sanding 63 boards. Like the classic game, teams should alternate pulling the board of their choice from the full stack being careful not to cause the remaining stack to topple. The boards they remove should also be replaced on top of the stack. The team to finally cause the stack to fall, loses.

HEADS YOU SQUEEZE, TAILS YOU DON'T

This is a great game for 10-30 kids. Arrange your group in two teams, seated in two lines of chairs that are facing each other. At one end of the seated teams the game leader should sit with a quarter in hand. At the far end of the seated teams, place a banana on top of an upside down trash can. The object is to be the first team to pick up the banana. Teams will join hands all the way down their line and, without talking, signal each other all the way down the line with a squeeze of the hand. The squeeze will start with the signal of a flipped coin landing on heads.

The game leader should state to the teams, "On heads you squeeze, on tails you don't." That should be stated many times to remind folks as you flip. The entire team should be instructed to turn their heads and watch the direction of the banana. The only one looking any other direction are the two participants next to the game leader who are watching the coin. The first team to have their player on the banana-end pick up the banana will be rewarded by rotating everyone on their team forward toward the banana. The player who just picked up the banana now rotates to the game leader's end and becomes the coin watcher. If a squeeze starts early or accidentally, the banana will be picked up at a wrong time. If a banana is picked up while heads is on the floor, a penalty is assigned by making the teams rotate in reverse. The first team to completely rotate forward to their starting positions is the winning team.

MUSICAL PILLOW FIGHT

Put your group in a circle with two pillows in the very center. Mark off a square in the middle about 4' x 4'. Give the teens two cones or another object then play the music. When the music stops have the two face each other with pillows in the center. The match-ups tend to be amusing. Give a twenty second time limit and a boundary of cones. If a person is knocked out of the cones, they lose. Declare the winner if both remain in.

NAMOGORIES

Pick a broad category and place it at the top of the scorecard. (*See page 30.*) Give each team of three to five people one minute to put as many items as are related to the 'Gory as possible. The team is only trying to get one word for each letter of the alphabet. Their team scores points when they use a letter that all the other teams do not use. They do not have to use the same word just use the same letter. When two teams have both used the same letter then no score is given. The next round the time gets shorter (i.e. 55 seconds) and a new 'Gory is chosen.

Tips and Tricks:

1. This game works well for small groups of six to 10 that way you only have two teams of three to five.
2. Each team should choose a secretary to write all the words. Another variation is two secretaries working on the same scorecard.
3. You will need to have a judge who decides if words are close enough to the 'Gory.

Possible 'gories:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Christmas | 8. Thanksgiving |
| 2. Race cars | 9. Cooking |
| 3. Travel | 10. TV |
| 4. Kindergarten | 11. Vegetables |
| 5. Trees | 12. Dogs |
| 6. Pets | 13. School |
| 7. Church | |

Lesser Known 'Gories that are fun:

1. Motion sickness
2. Zits
3. Words that don't exist
4. Bad attitudes
5. Puppy love

NEWSPAPER SCAVENGER HUNT

Give each small group an old, full Sunday paper. Call out items to find in the paper. The first team to bring the item up to the podium wins that point. Find specific ads or columns in various sections of the paper that they should deliver directly to you. Ask for specific page numbers, people's names, obituaries, restaurant names, or places of business. It is quite easy to get multiple copies of the same day-old or week-old newspaper from your local paper's office. Call them up and tell them what you are doing. Most of it is disposed to a recycler anyway.

SPEED COOTIE

Objective: To get the most points by building your cootie

Participants: 4-40

Length: 20-25 minutes

Each person receives a speed cootie form that is their official scorecard. (*See page 31.*) Take the number of people in your group and divide by two for the number of die you will need. Put the die in all different

places in the room; these become your cootie stations. Have two people sit down at each cootie station. When you say “Go,” they may begin to alternately roll the dice trying to build their cootie. When one person in the group totally builds their cootie they yell “COOTIE,” and every person must go to a different cootie station with a different partner and begin a new cootie. You may call this Round 2. You may have up to eight rounds with the scorecard provided. You may score each round by counting up the points of their partially completed cootie. Only the person who yelled cootie gets the high score of 52.

In order to build your cootie, you must first roll a one to get the body. At that point you may begin collecting a tail and legs. You must first roll a two for the head, before you can begin collecting eyes and antennae.

Tips and Tricks:

1. Use just one pen at the cootie station.
2. Once you have played against someone, you may not play against them again.
3. You must alternate back and forth with the dice. If your opponent is slow, tough noodles.
4. Stop after Round 4 (halftime) and add up the points to see who the halftime leader is.
5. As the ref, use a whistle to add to the bedlam.
6. You may also make each round only last for a certain amount of time.
7. Watch for those who get creative with their cootie drawings.

NAMOGORIES

'Gory: _____

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____
- I. _____
- J. _____
- K. _____
- L. _____
- M. _____
- N. _____
- O. _____
- P. _____
- Q. _____
- R. _____
- S. _____
- T. _____
- U. _____
- V. _____
- W. _____
- X. _____
- Y. _____
- Z. _____

Score:

'Gory: _____

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____
- I. _____
- J. _____
- K. _____
- L. _____
- M. _____
- N. _____
- O. _____
- P. _____
- Q. _____
- R. _____
- S. _____
- T. _____
- U. _____
- V. _____
- W. _____
- X. _____
- Y. _____
- Z. _____

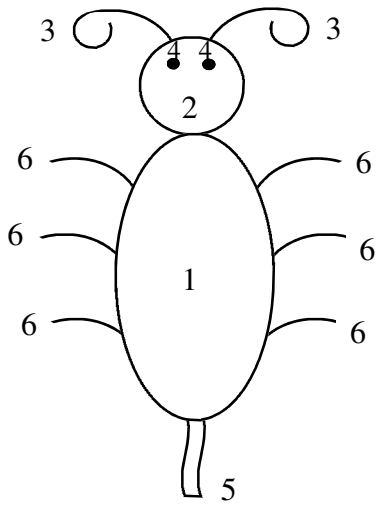
Score:

'Gory: _____

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____
- I. _____
- J. _____
- K. _____
- L. _____
- M. _____
- N. _____
- O. _____
- P. _____
- Q. _____
- R. _____
- S. _____
- T. _____
- U. _____
- V. _____
- W. _____
- X. _____
- Y. _____
- Z. _____

Score:

SPEED COOTIE

SKITS

FIFTY SAYINGS

Andy Andrews first compiled this list of the 50 most famous parental sayings. Memorizing them as a list and reciting them in under 90 seconds will take some work, but is a funny, impressive routine.

1. You'd better change your tune pretty quick or you're out of here.
2. I mean it. Do you understand?
3. Don't shake your head at me. I can't hear your head rattle.
4. Don't mumble. You act as if the world owes you a living.
5. You've got a chip on your shoulder.
6. You're not going anywhere looking like that.
7. You're crazy if you think you are.
8. If you think you are just try me.
9. I don't know what's wrong with you.
10. I never saw a kid like you.
11. Other kids don't pull stuff like that.
12. I wasn't like that.
13. What kind of example do you think you are for your brothers and sisters
14. Sit up straight. Don't slouch.
15. Would you like a spanking.
16. If you'd like a spanking just let me know and we can get this thing over with.
17. You're cruisin' for a bruisin'.
18. I am you're father, I brought you into this world and I can take you out.
19. As long as you live under my roof, put you're feet under my table, you'll do as I say to do.
20. You think the rules don't apply to you. I'm here to tell you they do.
21. Are you blind?
22. Watch what you're doing.
23. You walk around here like you're in a daze.
24. Something better change and change fast.
25. You're driving your mother to an early grave.
26. This is a family vacation.
27. You're going to have fun whether you like it or not.
28. Take some responsibility.
29. Pull your own weight.
30. Don't expect others to pick up after you.
31. Don't ask me for money.
32. Do you think I'm made out of money.
33. Do you think I have a tree that grows money?
34. You'd better wake up and I don't mean maybe.
35. Do you act like this when you're away from us?
36. We've given you everything we possibly could . . . food on the table . . . a roof over your head . . . things we never had when we were your age.
37. You treat us like we don't exist.
38. That's no excuse.
39. If he jumped off a cliff, would you jump off a cliff too?
40. You're grounded.
41. I'm not going to put up with this another minute.
42. You're crazy if you think I am.
43. If you think I am, just try me.

44. Don't look at me like that.
45. Look at me when I talk to you!
46. And don't make me say this again.

FOUR OLD TIMERS

This is an old script from a Monty Python routine. It has been done with all kinds of variations: this is the original form.

- 1 What a great meal that was. Who'd a thought 30 years ago that we'd be in such a fine place eating such a fine meal.
- 2 In those days we'd be glad to have the price of a cup of tea.
- 3 Cold tea.
- 4 Without milk or sugar.
- 1 Or tea.
- 2 Right.
- 3 In a cracked cup and all.
- 4 We never had a cup! We used to have to drink out of a rolled-up newspaper.
- 2 The best we could manage was to suck on a piece of damp cloth.
- 1 But you know, we were happy in those days, though we were poor.
- 3 Because we were poor! My old daddy used to say to me, "Money doesn't buy happiness."
- 1 Yeah, he was right. I was happier then and I had nothing. We used to live in this tiny old house with great big holes in the roof.
- 2 House! You were lucky to live in a house. We used to live in one room, all twenty-six of us. No furniture, half the floor was missing, and we were all huddled together in one corner for fear of falling.
- 3 You were lucky to have a room. We used to have to live in an alley.
- 4 Oh! We used to dream of living in an alley. Would have been a palace to us. We used to live at a shipping yard in a garbage dumpster. We used to get woke up every morning by a load of rotting fish being dumped all over us.
- 1 Well, when I say house, it was only a hole in the ground covered by a sheet of tarp with holes in it. It was a house to us.
- 2 We were evicted from our hole in the ground. We had to go live in the lake.
- 3 You were lucky to have a lake! There were one hundred fifty of us living in a shoebox in the middle of the road.
- 4 Cardboard box?
- 3 Yeah.

- 4 You were lucky! We lived for three months in a paper bag in a septic tank. We would have to get up at six in the morning, clean the paper bag, eat a crust of stale bread, and go to work at the mill fourteen hours a day, week in, week out. For six cents a week, and when we got home, our dad would thrash us to sleep with his belt.
- 1 Luxury! We used to have to get out of the lake at six o'clock in the morning, clean the lake, eat a handful of hot gravel, work a twenty hour day at the mill for two cents a month, come home and dad would thrash us to sleep with a broken bottle if we were lucky.
- 2 Well, of course, we had it tough. We used to have to get up out of shoebox at twelve o'clock at night, and lick the road clean with our tongue. We had two bits of cold gravel, worked twenty-four hours a day at the mill for a cent for seventy-four years, and when we got home, dad would slash into us with a bread knife.
- 3 Right! I had to get up in the morning at ten o'clock at night, a half-hour before I went to bed, drink a cup of sulfuric acid, work twenty hours a day at the mill, unpaid, had to get permission to come to work, and when we got home, and dad and mother would kill us and dance on our graves singing hallelujah.
- 4 Right! And you try to tell the young people of today that, and they won't believe you!

MANURE SKIT

Cast: Two peasant boys—one smart and one dumb, one salesman, three to six consumers

Setting: The two peasant boys walk in with a bucket of cow manure in one of their hands. A table is in the center of the stage/area.

The peasants get in front of everyone and talk about how they have been working in manure all day. (Throughout the skit, the smart one is making fun of the dumb one by telling some of the dumb things he has done. For example: slaps flies on his forehead, comments on how he acts in the grocery store, etc.) As they are about to enter the grocery store, they remember that they have one more bucket of manure that they haven't gotten rid of. They see a table and say, "We'll leave it here and pick it up on the way out."

They go into the store. Soon after, the salesman comes out and puts up his sign about a "new crumpet spread." He has all the supplies but no spread. He then finds the bucket of manure and says, "This must be it" as he puts the spread on the crumpets and starts handing them out.

Three individuals or couples come out with various costumes and accents. They all try the crumpets and spread and make favorable comments. The salesman in advertising it says things like "made fresh daily," "good ole' country flavor," "extra chunky brand," and "down-home taste."

After the last consumer finishes his sample and starts talking about how good it is, the two peasants come out. The big dumb one asks if he can have a sample. After more smart comments about eating, he says okay. They smell it and say, "This smells like manure." They look at it and say, "This looks like manure." They finally taste it and say, "This is manure." The crowd of consumers hears this and makes a mad rush on the salesman.

Once the stage is cleared off, the big dumb one gets a big finger full, licks it off, and says, "But mother never put in on crumpets!" They walk off licking their fingers.

ROMEO AND JULIET

Cast: Instructor, Romeo, three fair maidens, Juliet

Setting: Romeo is in training to meet the woman of his dreams. Little does he know how soon he will meet Juliet.

(Instructor and Romeo enter, obviously in a heated conversation.)

I: Thus it shall be, and thus it shall be!

R: I shall not act in such a manner!

I: Do ye want me to show unto thee the ways of wooing a woman or not!?

R: Yes, indeed ye shall, but . . .

I: Thus ye must heeds my sayings. Ye must treat a woman like a lady. Treat her with respect!

R: How do I do so?

I: Ye could begin by presenting her with this beautiful rose and compare it thus to her beauty. *(Fair maiden enters.)* AAAHH! Here comes a fair maiden now!

(Romeo doesn't want to confront her, but his instructor pushes him over.)

R: *(He clears his throat.)* Good day, fair maiden. May I bless thee with this rose, which ever so gracefully reminds my of thy beauty?

FM1: Thank you, kind sir.

R: For its stem is long and thorny, and it will soon wilt and die, and now thy face is as red as its petals, and . . .

FMI: *(She slaps Romeo, throws the rose at him, and runs off.)*

I: Ye are a foolish idiot! Ye cannot compare her to such grotesque things!

R: Then what shall I do?

I: Forget the rose! To woo a fair maiden effectively, ye must have a spot of tea with her. At which time ye can confer, converse, and otherwise hobnob in such a manner as to make her heart melt in your hands. Okay, here comes another lady! *(Instructor pushes Romeo towards her.)*

R: Good day, fair maiden. May I ask thee to join me for a spot of tea?

FM2: Thank you, kind sir. I shan't be long, though!

R: *(He doesn't help her with her chair. After she sits down, he pours tea in the cups and sits down on a whoopee cushion. He then begins laughing and clapping his hands.)*

FM2: *(She picks up her cup, throws the tea in Romeo's face, and runs out.)*

I: *(As he wipes off Romeo's face)* Ye are quite rude, my man. Quite rude!

R: Okay, me thinks I am sorry.

I: Ye had better do more than think!

R: What shall I do now?

I: First, ye must never again let that happen! Secondly, treat her as a lady. Pull out her chair for her that she may sit down. Also, oh, bother . . . here comes another one! *(The instructor pushes Romeo. Romeo acts as if he is thinking as he approaches her.)*

R: Good day, fair maiden. May I ask thee to join me for a spot of tea?

FM3: Yes, I shall. Thank you, kind sir.

R: *(Romeo bows gracefully and begins pulling out her chair and continues to pull it out until she falls on the floor.)*

FM3: *(She stands up, pulls out a huge can of Mace, sprays Romeo with it, and runs out.)*

I: No, No, No! Ye must push the chair back in that she may sit down thereon, you fool! This shall be the last time I instruct thee. If ye shall fail once more, I shall depart with much haste! Now, I was about to say . . . introduce thyself to the fair maiden, and . . . oh, here she comes . . . remember, this is **final!** *(Instructor pushes Romeo.)*

R: Good day, fair maiden. I am Romeo.

J: Good day to you, kind sir. My name is Juliet.

R: May I ask thee to join me for a spot of tea?

J: I shall love thee for it, sir.

R: *(Romeo pulls out her chair and slides it back in for her.)*

J: *(Juliet sits down on the whoopee cushion and innocently gives a petite, "Oops!")*

R: *(Romeo slightly smiles with a questioning look and begins to sit down.)*

J: *(Before Romeo can sit down, Juliet pulls his chair out from under him. She laughs at him lying on the floor.)*

R: *(Romeo begins laughing hysterically with Juliet. They get up and walk out arm in arm still laughing.)*

(Instructor slowly walks out awestruck.)

SCENE SKIT

Characters follow instructions in parenthesis. The hard part is getting together all the props you need, but most of them are easy to find. Encourage the characters to really ham it up and to have fun. It is guaranteed to be a winner, especially at camps and conferences

Cast

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Manuel—dressed in black | 6. Maggie—dressed in an old-fashioned dress |
| 2. Patrick—dressed in white | 7. Zingerella—dressed like a housekeeper |
| 3. Sun—boy or girl | 8. Night—boy or girl |
| 4. Two people to be the “hours”—they hold signs | 9. Narrator |
| 5. Two people to be the “curtains”—they hold signs | |

Props

Signs:

- Curtains (2)
- Stairs
- Time
- No (30+)
- Hours (2)
- Sun
- Night

Pitcher of water

Chalk

Broom

Banana

Iron

Salt shakers (2)

Notes

Podium

Trading or postage stamps

Pail (bucket)

Police whistle

Rope

Large, wooden match

Script: To be read by the narrator as the characters act according to the instructions given in parenthesis.

The curtains part. (*Beginning at center stage, two people with signs that say “curtains” walk away from each other.*)

The sun rises. (*Person with “sun” sign stands up.*)

Our play begins.

Manuel do Populo, son of a wealthy merchant, is in his study carefully pouring over his notes. (*He pours water from a pitcher all over some notes.*) He stamps his feet (*He licks stamps and sticks them on his shoes.*) impatiently, and calls for his maid, Zingerella. Zingerella tears down the stairs (*She rips down a sign that says “stairs” and tears it up.*) and trips into the room. (*She trips and falls down.*)

“Go fetch Maggie O’Toole,” demands Manuel.

Zingerella flies (*She waves her arms in a flying motion.*) to do her master’s bidding. Time passes. (*Person holding “time” sign walks across the stage.*) Manuel crosses the floor—once, twice, thrice. (*He takes chalk and makes three X’s on the floor.*) At last, Maggie comes sweeping into the room. (*She sweeps with a broom.*)

“For the last time, will you marry me?” insists Manuel.

Maggie turns a little pail. (*She turns a pail upside down.*) “No!” she shouts, “A thousand times NO!” (*She throws the papers with “No” on them.*)

“Then I will have to cast you into the dungeon,” says Manuel in a rage.

She throws herself at his feet. (*She falls at his feet and lies there.*) “Oh, sir,” she pleads, “I appeal to you.” (*She hands him a banana peel.*)

Haughtily he says, “Your appeal is fruitless,” (*He hands the banana peel back.*) and stomps out of the room. (*He stomps his feet.*)

Maggie flies about in a dither. (*She waves her arms in a flying manner.*) Oh, if only Patrick would come; he would save her! The hours pass slowly. (*Two people with “hours” signs walk across the stage.*) Finally, Maggie takes her stand (*She stands behind the podium.*) and scans (*With her hand above her eyes, she looks around.*) the horizon. Suddenly, she hears a whistle. (*Patrick blows a police whistle.*) Could it be . . . ?

“Maggie, it is I, my love, your Patrick!” He enters the room and tenderly presses her hand. (*He irons her hand with the iron.*)

She throws him a line. (*She throws a rope at him.*) Just at that moment, Manuel reenters and challenges Patrick to a duel. In a fury, they assault each other. (*They take the salt shakers and sprinkle each other.*) Finally, Manuel gives up the match (*He hands Patrick a wooden match.*) and departs.

“At last, you are mine!” says Patrick.

He leads his love away into the night. (*They bump into the person with the “night” sign.*)

The sun sets. (*Person with the “sun” sign sits down.*)

Night falls. (*Person with the “night” sign falls down.*)

The curtains come together. (*People with “curtain” signs walk toward each other.*)

Our play has ended.

SLOW TALKERS OF AMERICA

Here is a famous old Bob and Ray routine. If you have never heard this hilarious duo, you can find their recorded work through The Radio Foundation, Inc. Their website is www.bobandray.com.

Host: I haven't had a chance to talk with our next guest yet, so I wonder if you would be kind enough to tell us your name and where you've come from.

Harlow: (Speaking plainly, with deliberate pauses between each word) Harlow P. Whitcomb from Glens Falls . . .

Host: New York, right? Glens Falls, New York?

Harlow: New York. I'm president and recording...

Host: Secretary—recording secretary, right?

Harlow: secretary of the S.T.O.A.

Host: What does that stand for?

Harlow: The Slow Talkers of

Host: America, huh?

Harlow: America. We believe in forming our thoughts,

Host: words

Harlow: ideas

Host: ideas

Harlow: opinions carefully,

Host: Before uttering them so you'll never be misunderstood, right?

Harlow: and thoroughly before uttering them, so that...

Host: You'll never be misunderstood!

Harlow: we will never be misunderstood. We are here

Host: in New York City...

Harlow: in New York City attending our annual

Host: convention – your annual convention.

Harlow: membership convention. All of our members are here. All talking

Host: slowly

Harlow: slowly. Every one of them—all two hundred

Host: members

Harlow: and fifty

Host: members

Harlow: seven members are here talking slowly, as opposed to the members of the F . . .

Host: T.O.A.

Harlow: T.

Host: O.A.

Harlow: O.

Host: A.

Harlow: A., the Fast

Host: Talkers of America

Harlow: Talkers

Host: of America

Harlow: of

Host: America

Harlow: America. We have a credo, which each

Host: new member must learn

Harlow: new member must learn. I, a member of the . . .

THIS AND THAT

The key to this working is confident presentation. Have fun with it, think that you are funny, and it will be funny. Approach center stage with your collection of cards tucked away someplace in a folder. Don't say a word, just make adjustments on stage of the microphone, your line of sight. Be meticulous without speaking just to increase the curiosity and anticipation of your act. Once the crowd is waiting in hushed anticipation, turn your first card around boldly and hold it there for two beats. Speak clearly into your mike with deliberate forcefulness saying, "Here."

“Here,” saying it again as if maybe some people don’t get it and you need to repeat it.

“Here,” as if to say, of course this is brilliant!

Hand it out to somebody close by and say it again directly to them, “Here.” Say it in such a way that they will take it from you.

“Here,” asking for it back, if you don’t get it right away, say it with aggression, “Here!” as if, give it here right now!

“Psst,” holding it in front of you while saying in a whispered tone, “I’m behind here.”

Now saying in a sneaky, mischievous tone, “You probably can’t see me because I’m under here!”

“Here” stating with finality.

Place the card on the ground, point at it one last time and state, “Here.”

Rummage through your stash of cards again and pull out the next one. Hold it up famously and state, “This”

“Do you like This?”

“Listen, can everybody see This?”

“I tried to make This big enough for everyone to see.”

Looking at the same person you spoke with earlier say, “Will you hang on to This for me?” Hand it over, pause, look back at them and say, “Hey, let me get This from you real quick.”

“I’m through with This. To keep This safe, I’m going to place This over Here.” As you say the last part place the This card over the Here card.

Now that you’ve got the idea, here are the following cards and what phrases are used with them.

That. If you liked This, you’re gonna love That. Be honest with me now, do you think That is funny? Because some of you didn’t get This, but now you’re laughing at That. Take That. Give me That! What are you doing with That. That belongs to me. I’ve gotta keep That with This over Here.

It. Whoops, I dropped It. You’ve gotta watch It, cause It’s slippery. It’s sharp too, you see, It’s got four very sharp corners and, ouch, see It can cut you. Forget It.

Do you like These. Do you think These are funny? Because I’ve got three of These. I’ve got These, and These, and These. Let’s do something with These. Could you distribute These for me, yeah just pass These out. We’ll do something with These in just a second. OK seconds up, lets pass these in. Could you collect These for me? Yes could you keep These in alphabetical order for me, thank you.

Well would you like to see More. Because I just happen to have More! I thought you might want to see More, so I made More this morning.

Well, if you would like to come see This or That later, if you’d like to browse through These or if you could think of More of These—no I’ve already got More and These, anyway, I’ll be over Here. Oh, that’s All.

WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID?

Boy: See that big guy subbing in for the forward down there?

Girl: Yes.

Boy: He's going to be our best man next year.

Girl: *Our* best man?

Boy: Yup.

Girl: Wow! Well, that's kind of sudden, don't you think?

Boy: Well, I think we've seen it coming for a while now.

Girl: Wow! This will be great! There's so much to do and plan for; there's the reception, and the honeymoon . . . It'll be fun working on it together, huh?

Boy: Yea, they work great together, don't they?

Girl: Well, have you thought about how many kids you want?

Boy: 13!!

Girl: 13! That many? My goodness!

Boy: C'mon ref! There's no foul!

Girl: Okay, 13 kids isn't so bad. I mean, I like kids. But with 13 kids you've got to have some sort of plan for discipline. How are you going to handle that?

Boy: Slam 'em! Beat 'em!

Girl: Beat 'em! Honestly! What's the point of having kids if you have to scrape them up off the floor!

Boy: Yea! Scrape 'em off the floor!!

Girl: Really, there must be a better way.

Boy: Kill 'em!!

Girl: Honestly, Joe, sometimes you say the most shocking things!

Boy: OH!!! That was beautiful!

Girl: You really think so? I bought it just for tonight. Now, have you thought about a food budget? How are you going to provide food for all those kids?

Boy: Steal it! Take it away!

Girl: Well, I don't think we'll be that bad off! Joe? What made you start dating me in the first place?

Boy: Rebound man! C'mon! RE-BOUND!!

Girl: You started dating me on the rebound?

Boy: C'mon, pass! Pass it!

Girl: Fine, but I still don't think that's a very good reason to start dating someone. Have you thought about a place to live? We'll have to get an apartment; because we won't be able to afford a house.

Boy: YES! Travelling!!

Girl: Traveling! With 13 kids? I don't think so!

Boy: C'mon defense!

Girl: I'm not being defensive. I'm just trying to get you to see all the facts.

Boy: Out of bounds! Way across the line!

Girl: You're right. You will be the head of the house, so I will be meek and submissive.

Boy: Yea! Alright!

Girl: If we have a girl, do think I should do her hair like mine?

Boy: C'mon! My grandma can do better than that!

Girl: What!

Boy: Don't be such a baby!

Girl: I'm not being a baby! I'm trying to carry on a civilized conversation!

Boy: Stuff it!

Girl: Stuff it!? I don't think I want to marry you, Joe!

Boy: What? Mary, your roommate? Yea, she's right over there! Hey, Mary!

Girl: Well, I can see where your mind has been all evening! I don't want to marry you, in fact, I don't ever want to see you again!

Boy: What? Was it something I said?

STUNTS

BOUNCERS

Have a team of people throwing ping pong balls to one catcher, attempting to catch the ping-pong balls in a muffin pan. The first team to fill each muffin cup has won the challenge. Try it Tic-Tac-Toe style as well. Your two catchers can pass the muffin pan back and forth until their respective throwers work with them successfully to land three in a row.

BUBBLE GUM SCULPTURE

Give everyone two pieces of bubble gum. Ask for volunteers; give them a plate and rubber gloves. Send them to collect the gum from their team or a specified group of people. Allow them to pick another person to assist them in sculpturing the gum. Give them three minutes to design a great sculpture. If you wish to give them more time, you may do something else during the sculpture period. We had ballerinas, hockey sticks and lips created. Be sure to have gloves for each person sculpturing.

CLOTHESPIN DECORATING

This quick competition involves at least four people (two on a team), but as many as you think you can handle! Have one good-spirited, fun-loving person from each team get on their knees facing the audience. Tell the audience that the person on their knees will be decorated by the person standing up. At this point, you should explain that the only decorations that will count are those that are attached to the person's head: not the collar, shirt, or hands, just the head. (If you have one person with glasses, this could easily eliminate any unfair advantage.) Allow the suspense to build as to what they will use as decorations; then unveil the clothespins. After the audience calms down, you will need to remind the contestants that only those clothespins on the head will count, and that the team with the most clothespins applied will be the winner. Put 30 seconds on the clock and GO!

To ensure participation from the person chosen to be decorated, we picked two counselors and allowed them to choose their teammate (one person from their cabin). As you choose a person to be decorated, remember that hair length will have a great impact on the amount of clothespins applied.

FLINCH

This works best with 10-12 people forming a semi-circle around one person with the ball. Use a Nerf-type, very soft ball for this stunt. Each person in the semi-circle must stand facing the center with his hands clasped behind his back. When the ball is thrown to them, they must catch the ball. If the ball is not thrown to them and they flinch to catch the ball, they are out. If the ball hits them and falls to the ground, they are out.

FOUR CORNERS

Have your group stand and choose a number between one and four. Tell them to lock their number into place by holding the corresponding number of fingers up in the air. Once they have committed to a number, have some random selection of one of those numbers. (You could draw numbers from a bowl; we have had success with having the camp speaker randomly call out a number of his choosing.) Those that have chosen the correct number stay in this elimination game. Those that are still standing choose again a number between one and four. Continue eliminating until you get down to one winner. Change it from round to round for the sake of variety. Sometimes tell your group to choose a number between one and two. If you would like to draw the game out longer, have the selected number be the one that is eliminated instead of the one that awards the winner. The wackier way you can come up with selecting your random number, the more enjoyable it will be for your group.

HELMETS OF WAR

Two old hard hats or safety helmets will be needed for this event. Drill drywall screws up through the top of the helmet so that it can still be worn. You will look like a porcupine with spikes coming straight out from the helmet. Get a bowl of fruit and start tossing it at your helmet of death. Compete in teams throwing one apple at a time from a reasonable distance. The sight is very amusing to see spiked apples lodged on a volunteer's head. If you have you volunteer sit in a chair on the stage, your apple-tossers can lodge their fruit from the side.

HULA PASS

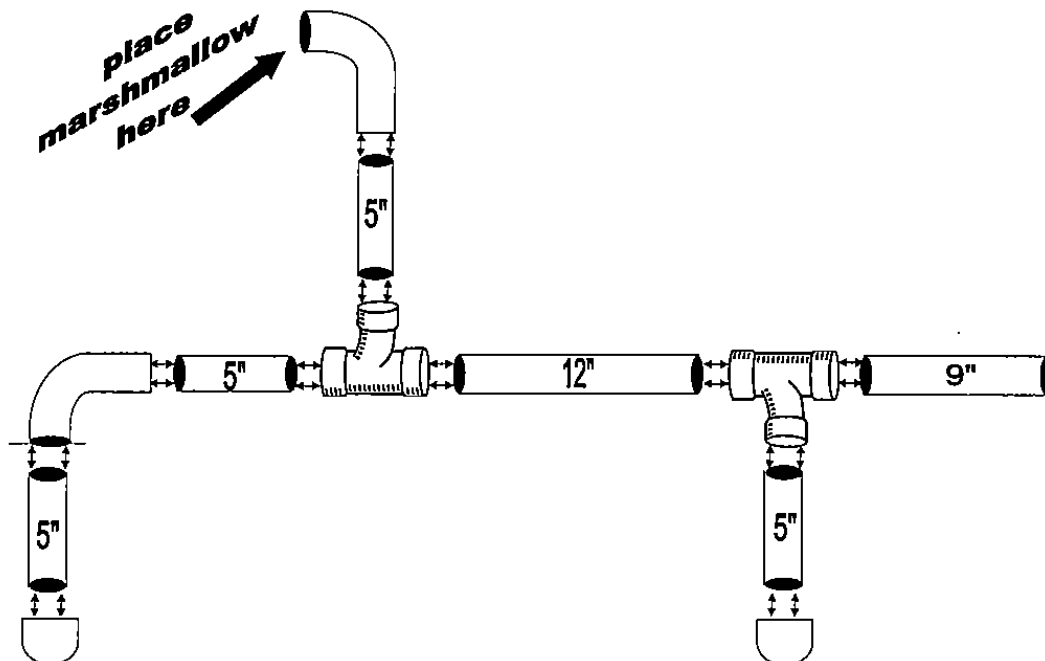
Have at least two teams of about ten people participate. Each team member should be connected to the other members of his team by a small eighteen-inch piece of rope. Your teams will then have ten people standing in a line. Instead of standing hand-in-hand, they are each connected by their short ropes. Give each team a hula hoop, and have them pass each person in their team through the hula hoop. The first team through the hula hoop is the winner. If anyone lets go of the rope, the entire team must start from the beginning.

LATEX GLOVES

Get two people (or the more the better) who are not allergic to latex, and have them put a medical exam glove on their head, covering their nose, but not their mouth. The object is to see who can pop the glove first by blowing it up. Breathe in through the mouth and out through the nose. Turning your hands upside down and pinching off a seal around your face will keep the glove from flying off of your face. It is a fun little race to watch and shouldn't take more than a minute to finish.

MARSHMALLOW GUNS

Have two people partner up to form a team. One has a marshmallow gun, and the other has a five-gallon bucket. Have the two stand about fifty feet apart and see how many marshmallows they can catch. The more teams you have competing, the better, because it doesn't matter who shot the marshmallow, as long as you pull it out of your bucket at the end of thirty seconds.



RING AND SPEAR

Two teams of six to ten people see how many of 10 rings their team can spear. For rings, you could use Mason jar rings or cut the center out of some Frisbees; what you use may depend on the age and ability of your group. For the spear, use a broom and have one team member stand on the straw end of the broom; so that the broom has up-and-down movement but limited side-to-side movement. The distance between ring and spear can be adjusted to the age group, ability, or material used for rings. (Hollowed out frisbee rings fly surprisingly well).

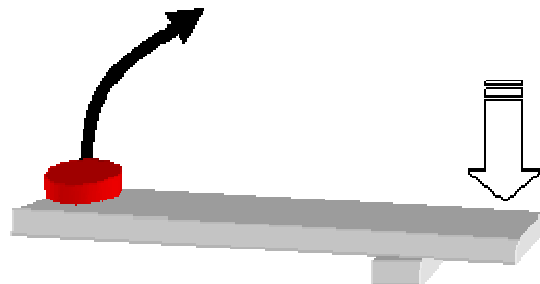
SPEAKER QUESTIONNAIRE STUNT

1. What is your age?
2. What is your wife's age?
3. How many pets have you had?
4. How many jobs have you had?
5. How many dogs have you had?
6. What is your weight in pounds?
7. What is your high school GPA?
8. How many children do you have?
9. How many girlfriends have you had?
10. How many books are in your library?
11. What is the farthest you have ever run?
12. How many speeding tickets have you had?
13. What is the fastest you have driven in mph?
14. What was your least favorite grade in school?
15. How many states have you visited in your lifetime?
16. What is the longest message you have ever preached?
17. What is the most you have ever spent on a pair of shoes?
18. From Ironwood, how many miles are you from your home?
19. What is the most consecutive hours you spent awake at any one time?
20. What is the most consecutive days you have gone without taking a shower?
21. If you add all the numbers in you Social Security Number, what would it be?
22. If you add all the numbers in you phone number including area code, what would it be?

STOMP-AND-LAUNCH

For this competition, you will need to make two launchers out of 2x4 pieces of lumber. They will need to be at least two feet long. Cut off about one inch and attach it to the board about three inches away from the end.

Give each team a launcher and a five-gallon bucket. One person launches while the other one catches. Be sure to choose something soft but heavy to launch. Bean-bags work really well. If you only have one or two bean bags per team, it is fun to watch them try to toss the bean-bags back to the launcher and catch the next one at the same time!



TEAM BUILDERS

Team builders, adventure games, initiatives—called by many names, these activities provide a wonderful environment for learning. Team building activities can be used in many ways. In this section, we will discuss the philosophy of team builders, give a few suggestions of how team builders could work for a youth leader, lay out a few pitfalls to avoid, and provide some challenges that one can use anywhere, with minimal props.

JED'S QUEST: A TEAM BUILDING CHALLENGE

The purpose of Ironwood's Jed's Quest is to build unity in the group and to establish a way of thinking that applies spiritual truth to everyday situations. In the process, groups also learn to work together and to communicate in order to complete a difficult task; personality traits are brought to light, leaders emerge, quiet individuals' ideas are valued, and each member is included. Some groups learn foundational principles and others "fine tune" their relationships. All will realize anew the need for skills in communication, encouragement, planning, and cooperation. Individuals must think through problems and formulate suggestions to overcome an obstacle.

Where did the name "Jed's Quest" come from? Jedediah Smith was one of the most important men in the exploration days of the Old West. He packed in more achievements between his twenty-third and his thirty-third birthdays than most men do in a lifetime. He was the first man to travel the length and width of the Great Basin, the first to reach California overland from the American frontier, the first to cross the Sierra Nevadas, and the first to reach Oregon by a journey up the California coast. He saw more of the West than any man of his time and was familiar with the territory from the Missouri River to the Pacific, from Mexico to Canada. He survived disasters and massacres. His courage, character, and passion make him an authentic American hero. But it goes deeper than that; he was known as a modest and unassuming man in an age of braggadocios men. His testimony stands through the grueling test of time. His Christianity is mentioned in secular history books. He had a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that pervaded every accomplishment. This balanced life is what we want to communicate through "Jed's Quest." A self-sacrificing endurance, courage under fire, character in an era of indulgence, and the intelligence and leadership qualities that inspire men to follow no matter what the cost—this is the spirit of Jed's Quest.

Aside from the satisfying and well-sought-after feeling of meeting a challenge, at Jed's Quest we take time after each challenge to discuss the process. Even more important than reviewing the process is the time for discussion of spiritual analogies: "What spiritual, or unseen, truths can we learn from this crazy little event?" As well as all the social, physical, and mental advantages being gained by the participants, using Jed's Quest is important to the adult leaders. It reveals attitudes and qualities of those in their group. The single most significant factor of Jed's Quest is that it provides a perfect setting for a multitude of spiritual, teachable moments for the participants.

THE NEED: WHY IS TEAM BUILDING IMPORTANT?

We are the body of Christ. A self-sacrificing love is the foundation of the health of our "body" (John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13). This is not a quality that comes without a daily "dying to self." Romans 12:1-2 are familiar verses to us: ". . . *present your bodies a living sacrifice.*" Don't stop reading there! The rest of the chapter deals with the how to. Consider verse five: "*So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*" Being a living sacrifice involves serving people—giving up my rights in order to promote the body we are members of. First Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 also deal with the importance of caring for and building up each member of the body. Our society, our schools, our churches, and our families will crumble if teamwork is not practiced. But our sinful nature cries out, "Me first!"

Tragedies and violence involving young people give us an urgent reminder. Teamwork is a way of thinking that requires overcoming our sinful nature.

THE SETUP: HOW DO I BEGIN?

Preparation

1. The challenge, or simulation, should include a bit of a story-line. Some creativity in the explanation will add to the group's fun and level of participation. Most of the challenges involve a few props. Keep a box or duffle bag with a few supplies, such as blindfolds, lightweight ropes of various lengths, tennis balls, and hula hoops. You can keep adding to it as you try new events.
2. The facilitator should think through the challenge from beginning to end and make sure to allow enough time for both the success of the group and the wrap-up/application time. Trying the challenge out on a test group of friends may be helpful, but do not let anyone who will participate later be part of the test group. Spend a little time thinking of the needs of your group and some potential applications for the challenge. Pray for wisdom. Keep a note pad and pen handy as you supervise the challenge; jot down comments that you hear and reactions you notice. Keep a few "pats on the back" in your notes too. The hardest task for the facilitator is silence. Set up the challenge with your story-line, answer a couple of clarification questions, and then sit back and watch the group.
3. The group will need to be prepared. If you only have a short time available to you, your first teambuilding challenge should be a very simple one. Allow them an easy success with a minimal struggle. Emphasize one aspect of teamwork at a time. Communication is a good lesson to begin with. Communication blocks, effective communication, destructive communication, non-verbal communication—all make up part of a big life lesson! As your group learns some of the foundational principles of teamwork, you can increase the difficulty of the challenge. A review of some of the lessons learned in the past will give the group a head start on the challenge of the day.

THE PROCESS: WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

The challenge should be physically safe. If there is a potential of physical risk, teach the group to "spot" each other and to value each other's well-being. There will be a few risks in each challenge. These risks involve the participants allowing themselves to become vulnerable physically, emotionally, and socially. Address this vulnerability briefly before a challenge that you believe will cause them stress. Have them commit to each other verbally. This could be done as a part of a "time-out," if you need to step into the process because the group is headed down a destructive path and you are short on time. Think of a few ground rules for edification. These could be established by your group as part of one of the team challenges.

The facilitator has a difficult assignment. It is a delicate balance to allow the group to struggle and yet to ensure a successful outcome. The facilitator should not fear struggle and wrong behavior as a part of the process. The teachable moments that such emotions allow are invaluable. The balance is to keep the emotions from going over the edge where the damage done cannot be recovered from in the time you have available. The facilitator needs to patiently allow the participants to make mistakes, try various strategies, and learn to communicate.

Some things to avoid: 1) adults or non-participants on the sidelines talking or laughing, 2) sideline observers offering suggestions, 3) a challenge that is inappropriate for your group (i.e. for guys and girls together, for a wide age range, or for a physically challenged person). There is extreme value in the group overcoming a perceived handicap. Do not hurry the process. It is more valuable to do one challenge well and take advantage of the teachable moments than to hurry through three or four challenges.

JED'S QUEST IN A DUFFEL BAG

BAG INVENTORY LIST

- One soft-sided game ball
- One roll of masking tape
- Four matching sticks
- Four matching stones
- Two sets of two matching dominoes
- One 6" x 2" x 4" block of wood
- 20 5' sections of white rope
- One 5' section of red rope
- One queen flat sheet
- One 50' section of rope

HUMAN OVERHAND KNOT

The Challenge: Pass out a 5' length of white rope to about ten people, and ask them to stand in a line that forms a link of people each joined by ropes they are holding with each other. As they stand there holding ropes on either side of them, ask them to imagine themselves as one long length of rope. Then challenge your group to tie a simple overhand knot in the center rope without anyone letting go of his rope. If you trade the center rope out with a colored rope, it will be easy for them to see which one they are trying to knot.

Props or Limitations: This activity is more of a challenge than it might first appear. You might need to take a length of rope to demonstrate what an overhand knot looks like.

Rules: Remember to enforce the rule that nobody is to let go of his grasp on his ropes. This challenge can be so challenging we are going to anticipate dealing with frustration during our spiritual application time.

Spiritual Application:

1. *Proverbs 16:24 Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.* What is the natural reaction in the middle of a frustration? How does it cause you to react when people around you speak negative words? What is the advantage of sweet, calm words? *Proverbs 16:32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty.*
2. *Proverbs 14:4 Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.* Did it take work to be successful? Did it sometime appear to be a confusing mess? Can you think of times when success requires some sacrifice?
3. *John 14:6 I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.* We were not going to have success with this exercise until half the group went through that loop in the rope. How is that like salvation?

WARP SPEED

The Story: We are a group of scientists who have come up with a theory that may allow us to travel through time. The main hurdle in accomplishing this incredible feat is how fast we need to travel in order to break through the time barrier. We must practice traveling at warp speed before we can imagine moving that fast ourselves. We will start by forming a circle and passing a volunteer back and forth until the volunteer has passed through everybody's hands. Establish a pattern first that carries the volunteer across the circle, back and forth, so that the volunteer never moves to the hands of the person just to your left or right, and passes through every scientist's hands without repetition. Maintain that order and repeat the process until you get our volunteer moving at warp speed. The more you attempt, the faster our volunteer will make his journey. Can we accomplish our goal of warp speed?

Props or Limitations: A small, soft-sided ball to be your "volunteer."

Rules: Practice this phrase until you know it verbatim. It is the only rule you will give. "The volunteer must start in this scientist's hands, leave his hands and pass through all the other scientists' hands in the same order you have already established and end in this scientist's hands." Choose for the group one who will start the volunteer being thrown around the circle. A good way to ensure that the rule is followed while they are first establishing a pattern is to have each of your scientists raise one hand until he has been included in the pattern that is being established.

You will probably have participants ask you, "How fast is warp speed?" Respond by asking them how fast they think they can do it. "Can we try for 20 seconds?" When they accomplish that goal, have them set a new goal, every new attempt, repeating just the one rule. After a few goals have been reached, announce, "We won't be able to reach warp speed without doing this in under one second."

Do not be too much of a stickler for any rules, because you have only mentioned one rule that must be followed. Eventually you will have someone arrive at the idea of dropping down between hands or throwing it through outstretched arms and register a time of under one second. This would be great progress for a group who first guessed they could accomplish the feat in 20 seconds.

Spiritual Application:

1. *Proverbs 24:16 For the just man falleth seven times and riseth up again.* Failure to reach a goal on the first attempt does not mean you are defeated. What does failure do for you personally? How does a group usually react to failure?
2. *Proverbs 11:14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.* No one person's idea made us successful here. What was it that brought us to success? What makes us successful in life? To whom are you giving the credit for your personal successes in life?+

HONOR BALL

The Challenge: Stand in a wide circle facing each other. This is an elimination game built on the simple rules of throw and catch. When a ball leaves one person's hands and ends up some place other than somebody else's hands, somebody is responsible. The person responsible for the dropped ball must *volunteer himself* for elimination and take a knee. Whether a person takes that responsibility is solely up to the individuals in this game.

Props or Limitations: One ball that can be thrown and caught is all that is necessary. The official in this game does not have the responsibility of calling people out, only of clearly stating the rules. This was a game introduced by Native Americans who desired to teach honor to their children. The winner will not always be the last one standing. Winners are those who have honor at the end of competition.

Rules: When a person is eliminated, he must stay in the circle, but take a knee. Anybody may throw it to anybody else he wishes. Intentional bad throws and bad catches are not allowed. When the ball hits the ground, a person cannot be compelled to take a knee, it is completely up to the individual. If the leader points at you, you must take a knee. (You may want to point at someone who was obviously not at fault to see if he understands what it is to have honor.)

Spiritual Application:

1. *Proverbs 11:16 A gracious woman retaineth honor.* What does it mean to have honor? What was an example from this game that showed much honor?
2. *Proverbs 20:3 It is an honor for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.* Is there any honor in argument?
3. *Proverbs 29:23 . . . but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.* How does it make you feel to call yourself out in a game? Is there ever any feeling that you are still right, but you just called yourself out because you were supposed to? Is there anything honorable in this game about defending yourself?

STICKS, STONES, AND BONES

The Challenge: Using six objects (two sticks, two rocks, two dominoes) each, have two players sit on the ground, back to back. Instruct one of your participants to arrange his six objects in front of him however he wants to. Once he has them in his desired arrangement, ask him to describe the arrangement to his partner so that it looks exactly like the original. The partner is not able to respond or speak in any way. When the original arranger has explained enough to his own liking, instruct him to say, "I'm finished." Compare to see the result.

Props or Limitations: Each participant should be partnered, sitting back to back. Each should have two dominoes, two craft stones, and two 3" sections of dowel rod.

Rules: Limits to talking make this an effective exercise. The original arranger should not receive any indication that his instruction has or has not been received. Anyone watching should be asked to not give any grunts and groans of approval or disapproval.

After the exercise has been completed once, try it once again with the same partners and watch the improvement take place. If they still seem to be very challenged, allow the second participant to speak and respond to instructions.

Spiritual Application:

1. *James 1:19b . . . let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.* What does it take to communicate successfully? Did we always have good communication? Did repeating the exercise help us to improve?
2. *1 Corinthians 2:16b . . . But we have the mind of Christ.* The goal in communication is not just talking and listening, but having others think and understand what you are thinking. Does it take work to communicate effectively? What does it say of the person to whom you do not communicate?

THE WEB

The Story: You have been captured and placed inside this cave by a giant, man-eating spider. This spider has been guarding the exit while it waits for its next meal. As you sit quietly, hoping to be rescued, you notice that the spider has dozed off. Now is your chance to escape. Be sure not to touch any part of the web. That would surely wake the spider so that you would be his next meal.

Props or Limitations: Use masking tape in a large or double doorway; construct a pattern large enough for people to crawl through. Make your openings up high large enough to guide people through with help from their teammates. Create some large holes on the bottom so that the final person can easily get through.

Rules: The object of this exercise is to cross your entire team from one side to the other. Everyone must start on the same side. If the masking tape web is touched, the person who touched must return to the starting side and bring one person with him. No holes in the web may be used twice. Once a hole is used it is closed off from anybody else. In an especially large group, with not enough web holes for each person, the leader may choose a few holes that may be used more than one time.

Spiritual Application:

1. *Proverbs 19:20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.* Did we take time to plan out a strategy before we began? How important is going into a project with an orderly plan? How frustrating is it if you are involved with a project that has no plan?
2. *Proverbs 18:19 A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city.* How difficult would this be if you could not use each other's help? If this group had contention, would it be more difficult to be successful? Why? How important are your relationships with other when you think about working towards success?
3. *Proverbs 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established.* Was there just one idea that made you successful? How do we arrive at ideas that finally work for us? Does each of us have a responsibility toward our group?

TOUCH THE BLOCK

The Challenge: The challenge issued for your group (of about 15) is to have everybody in the group touching the block without anybody touching each other.

Props or Limitations: Use an empty aluminum can or a 6" block of 2" x 4" wood.

Rules: Fingers, noses, elbows, or toes making contact with the wood is legal contact. Any hair pulled from a human head does not count as legal contact. You might say that any hair more than five inches away from its head of origin does not count, but usually the idea of not being able to touch each other eliminates the ideas that are too far gone.

Spiritual Application:

1. *Proverbs 15:22a Without counsel, purposes are disappointed* How many ideas did we go through before finding a successful one? Was it an original idea or one that needed to be flexible?
2. *Ecclesiastes 8:5 . . . a wise man's heart discerns both time and judgment.* How is this activity like life in having wisdom and discretion? Are there times when you should or should not be familiar with people?

FLIPPER

The Story: The desert pygmies have captured us and demanded that we cook them supper. As we stand inside this giant frying pan, the only safe place to stand without burning our feet is on the steak we are cooking for dinner. This big juicy steak can hold us all on top of itself, but is now cooking unevenly. It is our job to flip the steak so that we can have it evenly cooked, without being burned by the giant frying pan it is sitting in. The pygmies have told us they would release us if we cook them a good steak.

Props or Limitations: One, queen-sized flat sheet should easily hold fifteen people standing on top.

Rules: Flipping the sheet so that nobody touches the ground in the process should be done with no outside assistance. Chairs and tables cannot be used as props, and everyone should stay on the sheet at all times. We have found an effective flipping method to be twisting it from end to end like a bow tie. Other methods are also possible.

Spiritual Application:

1. *Matthew 18:15 . . . if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault . . . if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.* What was your system of communication on the steak? Did you find yourself in a panic as you ran out of room?
2. *Proverbs 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.* How important are the right kind of words in “hot” situations? What is your responsibility when you hear negative words in a “hot” situation?
3. *Proverbs 15:1 . . . grievous words stir up anger.* How did the communication make you feel towards accomplishing the goal? How would it make you feel when your ideas were coldly rejected?

SIMPLE COUNTING

Challenge: Announce to your group that you simply want this group to count off from one to ten. “We will count, as you would expect, from one up to ten using consecutive numbers. Anybody may start us off by shouting out, ‘one.’ The next number is ‘two’ and anybody may call out the next number at any time. Attempt to do this without planning ahead of time what anyone is going to say and without two people speaking at the same time. If two people shout out ‘three!’ we need to start over at one and try to build back up to ten.”

Props or Limitations: No props are needed, and this is an event that will work well with any size group.

Rules: Be sure to have fun with the mistakes that are made. You will likely have somebody shout out, “Eight!” after you have built up to “Three.” Some people just do not get the idea of counting in consecutive numbers. Do not get frustrated with these miscommunications; they will happen.

Be ready with a quick, “Oh, start over” when you hear two voices at once. Somebody may not hear from the back of the room as well as you can up front, standing up. As some groups become frustrated, ask them leading questions that will allow them to see that they are attacking the problem without first developing a plan. They know that they cannot talk except for shouting out numbers, so lead them into the concept of non-verbal communication.

Spiritual Application:

1. *Proverbs 2:11 Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee.* How often do you plunge into a task without understanding. Take time to plan. What are we involved with now that we might need to take more time to plan?
2. *Proverbs 13:10 Only by pride cometh contention* Why do we all want to be the one to say the final “10”? Why is there so much frustration that comes as a result of two people talking at once?

DIVIDING TEAMS

During a winter camp, we decided to allow the teens divide themselves into teams, something I have never considered before afraid of a bad division and a huddling of those who may not want to participate. After a lesson on the importance of influencing others, a very short instruction was put on the board for them to divide themselves into teams evenly. This precipitated many questions to which I just referred to my short

instruction on the board. Then we sat back and observed. We noticed some did not even try to be a part but went and played, others stood around others helped and some commanded. After 15 minutes I pulled them back together and refocused the efforts and asked those not participating why they were not. Issues that were brought up—

- Some did not feel they needed to participate. We challenged their abandoning their task.
- Some did not feel any would listen. We allowed them to speak.
- Some did not speak for they did not want to be rejected or ridiculed.
- Some challenged those who took charge. We sought a good way for ideas to be heard.
- There are many good ideas but all could not be done so cooperation was needed.
- One teen asked “why should we care whose team we are on if we truly care about every one here?”
Do we really love one another?

After a time of frustration where I was asked many times to divide the teams myself, they did finish (about twenty minutes). We then dealt with some of these issues listed about and had them divide again. They did better but still had some friction. The teams they came up with were very even without bad divisions. In the end they learned the lesson of the difficulties leadership entails and were more patient and less critical.

PUZZLE VARIATION

What we did: We had 40 teens split into eight groups at tables. We had eight puzzles (four animal and four Indian—each different) which we had blended with different difficulties but all the same goal—finish the puzzle.

We tried to duplicate the puzzle initiative but had a few differences that changed the whole event. Instead of getting the same type of 100 piece puzzles, we purchased four of animals and four with Indians. The Indian puzzles were a bit harder and smaller but still had 100 pieces. We did not mix the types of puzzles. What happened was that we had two groups of four puzzles that had to work together, instead of eight groups that had to work together.

What this did was give a comparison between how the groups of four worked together. In our case, one group worked well together sharing and helping when the rules allowed, and the other group hoarded and traded and worked individually at the table without considering others who needed help. It turned out that the team that shared right away finished first, and the team that hoarded to make sure they would finish, never did. They also frustrated the other three tables from which they had pieces. We later debriefed the lessons, which were many. We had to be very careful not to alienate the ones who made choices that had bad results.

Lessons:

1. One team had pieces another team needed but that team had no pieces the first team needed. A trade could not be made.
2. There are some people who cannot “make a trade” in exchange for what they need from you. There are times that if someone is going to be helped, it has to be done without any strings attached. The help must be given freely.

Matthew 10:8b . . . freely ye have received, freely give.

Proverbs 3:2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Proverbs 11:24-25 ²⁴*There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.* ²⁵*The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*

3. The team that gave first, finished first. The team that hoarded did not finish, for others would not work with them. Do good guys always finish last?

2 Corinthians 9:6 *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

Proverbs 10:3 *The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but He casteth away the substance of the wicked.*

4. Decisions that may hurt others are often done with no intention of hurting, angering, or discouraging others. We often just do not consider others in our decision at all.

The results in your group will be different but will offer many opportunities to learn from. We had to be careful not to make “bad guys” out of those who did not share. We noticed after doing two initiatives at our homebound winter retreat that the teens listened more attentively after a few “failures” in initiatives. It brought a humbleness that prepared them to listen and receive instruction.

THEMES

SAFARI

We used a Safari theme for our Winter Retreat. We stayed home, but wanted to give it a “Winter Retreat” feel. Here are some things we did for our theme:

- Each teen brought their own camping chair. We removed all the normal chairs from the youth room and set up our own chairs.
- Each teen brought a mess kit to eat with during meals. They used their utensils and did their own dishes.
- Everyone was encouraged to dress in camping attire.
- We used a patio fire pit to have a fire during breaks and meals and to roast marshmallows.
- All our terms for events were Gathering, Guide Time, Kilimanjaro’s Challenge, Feeding Rituals, Big Game Hunting, Nocturnal Recreation, Limited Hibernation, Safari Surroundings, Truth Tracking, Rabbit trails, Knocking Off the Dust.

PRISON PARTY GAMES

CRIMINAL’S CODE

Have one line per team, parallel with the long end of the game area. At the other end of the room, have a balloon in each of the five buckets on each team’s side. Each balloon contains a piece of paper. The first person in line will run down to the designated container and blow up and tie the first balloon. They will then run to the back of the line and begin passing the balloon over the next person’s head and that person will pass it under the next person’s legs. When it reaches the front of the line, the first person in line will sit on the balloon and pop it. After the balloon pops, the individual should collect the piece of paper in the balloon and run to the end of the line. As soon as the balloon is popped, the next person in the front of the line begins the process all over. Each team will work together to make a sentence out of their five—“Criminal’s Code.” The team that is done first will receive extra points. When the whistle blows, each team will have a chance to read their “code.” (500 points for the first team done, 25 points for the best sentence)

FUGITIVE RELAY

Each team will line up against the long end of the room facing the opposing team. Sponsors will be designated team fugitives and will stand at the short end of the playing area. Ten to fifteen team members (depending on the group size) will be chosen to stand on the other end, opposite from their team. When the whistle is blown, one of the ten to fifteen members will run to an article of clothing lying in the main game area and continue on, placing it on the sponsor. Meanwhile, the other team will be throwing balls at the “runner.” If the runner is hit by a ball, they must stop where they are and continue to stand. The next one in line will begin trying to clothe the designated sponsor. The team member left standing may be used as a blockade. (A referee or leader should be in the middle retrieving the balls back to the opposite team. A referee or leader should also be at the front of each line). When all the sponsor(s) have at least five articles of clothing on them, the game has concluded. (100 points for each article of clothing on the “fugitive,” 25 points for the first team done)

BALL AND CHAIN GANG

Each person on the team should receive a balloon of his team’s colors and a piece of string. Each team will also receive a certain number of pennies. These pennies should be put inside balloons; whoever has a penny inside their balloon is a “gang leader.” The balloon should be blown up, and one end of the string should be tied around the balloon. The other end should be tied around the person’s ankle. The object is to pop the other team’s balloons without your balloon popping. If your balloon pops, then you are out. You cannot pop anyone else’s balloon, nor can you protect your “gang leader’s” balloon. The pennies are worth more points, so it is important to protect the balloons of your “gang leaders” from being popped. If you pop an

opposing “gang leader’s” balloon, you keep the penny. When time is up and the whistle blows, points will be tallied to see who has won. (Each balloon popped is worth 50 points; each penny is worth 500 points.)

BOOK ‘EM

Each team will have to divide up into smaller groups of five, depending on the size of the group. Each group of five will have an object (i.e., rope) that they will need to hold onto throughout the game. There will be 15 small buckets hidden throughout the property/facility. Each bucket will be numbered one through 15. On the whistle, all of the groups will begin searching for the buckets. The buckets will contain fingerprints (blue and red). Each group will take only one fingerprint of their own team’s colors from each bucket. Each fingerprint will have a number on the back correlating with the number on the bucket. Each group will have to start with the first bucket and go in consecutive number order until they reach the fifteenth bucket. When the points are tallied at the end, if a number is missing and the group has consecutive numbers after the missing number those fingerprints will not count.

There will be extra point objects hidden; and, if collected, they should be turned in at the end of the game for major bonus points (“Billy Club,” Hand Cuffs, and Dynamite). **WATCH OUT!** There may be “officers” lurking about waiting to catch someone. (Referee: Officers should not be “hunting” until about 10 minutes into the game, because the teams will need time to get some fingerprints). If a group is caught, the officer will take two fingerprints. The group will then have to go back and replace the number (fingerprints) that was taken. The first group done with all fifteen will receive extra points, and all groups that get all 15 will receive extra points.

There will be a “judge” roaming the grounds. If a group wants to risk it, they can ask him “What is your decision?” He will then give the group a card that says “Guilty” or “Not Guilty.” If the group receives a “Guilty,” then the judge will take five fingerprints from the group. If the group receives a “Not Guilty,” then the judge will give them a special fingerprint card that is worth twenty-five fingerprints. The special card will not take the place of any of the consecutive fingerprint cards. It is merely a bonus.

Don’t tip the buckets over, stay together in your group, and only take your own teams fingerprints. If a team is caught cheating, the group will not finish the game and they will be disqualified. (25 points per fingerprint, 25 points per bonus item, “Not Guilty” card worth 25 fingerprints, 500 points for all 15 fingerprints)

JAIL BREAK

Two small rooms will be designated the “jail,” one for each team. Each team will wander around the building (only in the desired areas). There will be at least two jailers (referees or leaders). These jailers will be catching individuals and placing them in captivity in one of the two rooms. If someone is able to run up and touch one of the doors without getting tagged, then they must yell “Jail break!” As soon as “Jail break!” is yelled, all of the prisoners will have a chance to escape. If they are not tagged again, then they will be free.

STORM THE CASTLE

CROSSING THE MIGHTY MOTE

Each team should pick out five to 10 girls, depending on the group size, to ride the “boat” across the “mote.” All other team members lie on the floor in a row. On the whistle, one “fair maiden” should get on the “boat” (mattress), and the team members on the floor use their feet and/or hands to keep the “boat” afloat to reach the other side without the fair maiden falling off. If the fair maiden falls off, she must go back and begin again. The first team with all of their fair maidens across the moat will receive points, and points will be awarded for each person that was brought across. Also, have a timed, speed round with as many people as the team can handle to get across. If anyone falls off, no points will be given for that person. Note: If girls are on the floor with skirts or culottes, remind them to use their hands and not their feet. Note: Referees/leaders can cheer, carry mattresses back to the front of the line, or be part of the river. They cannot carry the mattress down the river. They can only guide it.

YOU'RE JUST JOUSTING

Guys against guys, and girls against girls. Both teams stand at the opposite end of each other. Girls in one line, guys in another line both parallel with each other but across from the other team. The first person in each line sits on the "horse" (creeper) with jousting pole. Second person, on the whistle, pushes them out to the middle but cannot cross the designated lines or a penalty will result. Jousters cannot use poles in a swinging motion or in side ways manner. Must use the padded end to jab. Female jousters can also use the shields if desirable. If the jouster hits the opponent's face or head, points will be subtracted. The object is to knock the opposing jouster off his "horse" or at least to dislodge him. The pusher or referee should retrieve the cart and joust.

Needs: Four jousting poles with padded ends, four carts (creepers)

CRAZY CATAPULTING

Set up a volleyball net with sheets draped over them, like Blind Volleyball. Have a team on each side of the net. Team 1 will begin with all of the balls on their side. Before the whistle blows, the catapults need to be set up in different designated areas. The catapults will consist of two individuals on Team 1 facing each other an arm's length apart. On the whistle, Team 1 will pick up the balls, go to the catapult of their choice, and rest the ball on the catapult's hands. However, the individual can hit the ball. Anyone on Team 1 can be a scout and inform their members of the direction to hurl the ball but cannot pass the center line. Referees can retrieve balls or help keep track of who is out. The object is to hit individuals on Team 2 on the other side of the net. Those individuals on Team 2 must face away from the net. They cannot move from the spot where they are standing before they are hit with the ball, or they will be out. They may move from the spot where they are standing only every other blow of the whistle. (They must stand in one spot on the starting whistle and can move around the next time the whistle is blown. They must stand still again after the next whistle, and so on.) The target team must stay in a designated area. After an individual is hit with the ball either in the air or on a bounce, they will be out and must assume the sitting position. There will be a specified time limit for the team to complete their mission. The area from which the ball is catapulted when hitting it's target will be worth different points, depending on the area. When the first round is over, the teams will switch rolls.

PASSING THE GOLDEN GOBLET

Both teams will line up parallel to each other with each individual facing the front of the line. A large bucket filled with water will be at the front of both lines, and a small empty bucket will be at the front of both lines and a small empty bucket will be at the end of both lines. On the whistle, the person at the front of the line will grab the golden goblet, fill it with water, and begin passing it back over each person's head. Each person must touch the golden goblet as it is passed. When the goblet reaches the last person in line, he will empty the contents into the empty bucket and run to the front of the line, beginning the process over again. The first round will conclude when the bucket at the end of the line is filled up to the first mark. Round two will be the same, except the goblet will be passed in an over-under manner. Round three will be a speed round with two goblets going at once.

ESCAPE THE DUNGEON

Both teams will line up together within groups of five to eight, parallel to each other against the long sides of the game area (across from each other). One of the groups of four to five or six to seven individuals (depending on the activity size) will be chosen as their team's starting knights. They will line up perpendicular and on the opposite side of their team. On the opposite side of the knights will be six scepters. The first knight will have a shield to protect himself. On the whistle, he will attempt to retrieve one of the scepters and return back past the line while the opposing team is hurling balls at him. If he is hit only in the air, he must stop, drop the shield on the floor, and remain standing in the place where he was hit. As soon as a knight drops the shield on the floor, the next knight in that group will run and pick up the shield and continue. This will continue until all of the scepters have been obtained or until all of the individuals within that

group are “dead.” Then, they will have to return to the starting place and go to the ball throwing line. The next group will begin going through the same process until all the scepters are retrieved to the starting line. To add variety, one to two tables can be set on their side and used as protection. If the jester appears on a side, the team throwing the balls can switch their target to the jester. He will be worth a lot of points if hit. (Preferably, done for the team that may be way behind.) This will also give the knight a better chance. If the jester catches the ball, points will be deducted.

STORM THE CASTLE

Have each team split up into groups of five to eight, depending on the group size. Fifteen buckets will be hid around the whole facility. Each bucket will have numbered “gold coins” in correlation with the number on the bucket. It is the goal of each group to get all of the gold coin in consecutive order.

The following are bonus items for each group to find: fair maidens (Ladies will be walking around dressed as fair maidens. If a group finds a maiden they will have to journey with the group), king’s scepter, fairy’s wand, and golden slippers. The Jester will also be walking around; a group may approach him and ask, “How is the day, my good man?” The Jester will then randomly draw a circular card with a smiling face or a frowning face. If he draws a smiling face, that group should keep it as points for the end of the game. If the jester draws a frowning face, then he will take five gold coins from the group. (The group must have five gold coins before asking).

There will also be forest robbers that will jump out at you. If they tag anyone in your group, you must give them one gold coin of their choice. If your group has picked up a fair maiden, the lady will be set free from you. If your group yells “Jester” and all individuals are lying on the floor, than you are safe from the robbers. If one individual is not lying on the floor, than he could still be tagged.

All of your group must stay together at all times. If you are found without your group, you will be disqualified. Do not turn over or move any of the buckets. Do not turn on or off any lights which have already been turned on or off. We will not count any gold coins out of consecutive order. To add variety, extra points could be granted to the team that finds matching slippers within their groups.

UNKNOWN ZONE

Cross the unknown with the twilight zone (where the unexpected happens)—leaves you with a night or retreat of fun with the teens.

Time: Have a time to begin and end but nothing else communicated. (Leadership will need a timetable but no one else.) For a retreat, we gave them booklets with the events they would do but not the time. Giving them a name of an event which they did not know added to the suspense.

Caption: *Expect the unexpected.* Go places you do not usually go, play games you have not played, and have breakfast for supper and supper for breakfast.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

Pharaoh's Contest with God: We took the theme of the Pharaoh's contest with God with the purpose of teaching the ten plagues in a way that each would remember the events and Scripture detailing each plague. The night went without a hitch, with participants and teachers thoroughly enjoying the evening. We gave about 1½ hours for the event. We also ended with a message on the tenth plague and the Passover.

Each host will have a "booth" to teach their particular plague to the participants. At the beginning of each group the Scripture should be read (not preached) and allow the application to come in the event. Leaders should remember that there are nine different plagues to visit, so 10 minutes is the maximum time at each booth. It is important that you understand the details of the story so that these may come out in the event.

Host(s)	Plague	Room/Area
	1 Water to Blood	
	2 Frogs	
	3 Lice	
	4 Flies	
	5 Pestilence	
	6 Hail/ Lightning	
	7 Boils	
	8 Locusts	
	9 Darkness	
	10 Death to firstborn	

Plague 1: Water turned to Blood

You'll need red food coloring, corn starch, water, and bowls.

Mix the water and corn starch until the mixture is thick. Add enough food coloring so the mixture is dark red. Have kids dip their hands into the mixture. They'll find that when they tightly squeeze the mixture, it becomes solid. When they open their hands, however, it becomes liquid and flows through their fingers. You will need to pre-mix the batch to get the right mix. Their fingers will be slightly stained. Also, a bit of sulfur smell and plastic fish add to the picture.

Passage: Exodus 7:14-19; 20-24—In the contest with Pharaoh—second miracle but first judgment. You may choose to read only the last four verses depending on how long your object lesson takes.

- How would this plague affect a person?
- Was only the water from the river effected? Anything else?

Plague 2: Frogs

You'll need one hundred small plastic frogs, flashlights, and a dark room.

Spread the frogs throughout your room, then turn off the lights. On "go," send the young people on a frog hunt using only a flashlight. The one who finds the most frogs wins the hunt.

Passage: Exodus 8:1-5, 6-11, 12-15—Remember your time in the amount of Scripture you read. There are three sections to this passage: the instructions, the plague, and the stopping of the plague.

Thought: Pharaoh's magicians could imitate the judgment but could not stop it. Many times man can create disaster, but he is unable to stop or change it (like sin).

- From where did the frogs come?
- What was left at the end of this plague?

Tip: Have a few extra flashlights available, but announce that flashlights will be needed for the evening. Consider if you would like this inside or outside.

Plague 3: Lice

You'll need tiny seed beads, plastic containers with dividers, and tweezers.

Depending on the size of your class, you can use this activity in two ways.

- Have kids try to get as many gnats (seed beads) as they can from one section of the container to another in 10 seconds using only tweezers.
- Our hosts brought in pictures of lice and rice which they put in the hair of the group and had people pick the lice out of the hair with tweezers. This went very well.

Passage: Exodus 8:16-19—Point to consider: This is the first plague that Pharaoh's magicians could not imitate.

Plague 4: Flies

You'll need fly rubber stamps (available at craft stores), stamp pads, and paper.

See how many imprints of a fly children can stamp on a blank piece of paper in ten seconds. Another option would be setting up a relay race with an obstacle course for the kids to navigate. Once they reach the paper, they must stamp as many flies as they can in ten seconds.

Passage: Exodus 8:20-24

- What parts of the land were plagued with flies and which parts were not? Why is this important?
- How would flies "corrupt" a land?
- Have you ever been bitten by a fly? Have you ever swallowed a fly?

Plague 5: Pestilence

You'll need small plastic animal figures such as camels, donkeys, horses, cows, etc.

Before children arrive, hide the plastic animal figures around the room. On "go," give kids 10 minutes to find all the animals. If they have trouble, use hints such as, "You're getting cold" or "You're very warm" to guide them to the hidden animals.

As you read the story you may make a closer application by putting dots upon 3/4's of the animals these illustrating the ones that died and the others being the ones that were the animals of the children of Israel. None of the cattle of the children of Israel suffered from the pestilence, this was a sign from God to Pharaoh.

You may if you have enough let the ones who have an unspotted animal keep one.

Passage: Exodus 9:1-7

- What is a murrain?
- What happened the many of the Egyptians cattle?
- How many cattle died of the Israelites?
- How did pharaoh respond?

Plague 6: Festering Boils

You will need some Vick's Vapor rub and band aids.

We wrote one of the key verses on the back of the band aids using on, two or three words per band-aid. We had the children smell the vapor rub and asked them to think of what it smelled like. We then had them imagine the smell that would have been in Egypt as people were trying to heal and take the sting away from the boils. To finish our time, we had the group open up the band-aids (we had put the written on band-aids back in the wrappers) and to put the verse in order on the chalk board. They could use their Bibles. We gave a treat for participation. Our goal was to make it smell like a hospital and to make them think of what they would do with painful boils all over them.

Passage: Exodus 9:8-12

- What action did God tell Moses to do to bring this plague on Egypt?
- Who did the boils affect?
- What did the magicians do, were they able to imitate this?
- How did Pharaoh respond?

Plague 7: Hail and Lightning

You'll need a spray bottle filled with water, four dozen 1-inch plastic balls, and blindfolds (or a dark room).

Turn the lights out, then group children in a tight circle. Read the story of hail and rain. Mist kids with water while another adult throws the plastic foam balls in the air, allowing them to fall on kids. We used a strobe light and had a screen made by a sheet to shield leaders who were throwing the "hail."

Passage: Exodus 9:13-21 (warning), 22-25

- What did the people do who feared the word of the Lord?
- Who did this affect?
- What was involved with the hail?
- How bad was it?
- What ran along the ground?
- How did Pharaoh respond?

Plague 8: Locusts

You'll need blindfolds and very stale potato chips.

On this project we thought that using the big tarps in the youth closet with some corn chips bought in bulk would create the atmosphere of the locust. If one added locusts hanging from the ceiling they would get the feeling. (Using some tape with the tarps would keep the mess from seeping onto the carpet.)

Blindfold each person and hand them a few "locusts" to crush with their hands or feet.

Passage: Exodus 10:12-20

- What action did God command Moses to do to bring on this plague?
- What direction was the wind that brought the locust?
- To what extent was the destruction of the locust?
- What wind cast out the locust and where were they sent?
- How did Pharaoh respond?

This illustration will need to be inside. You will need tarpaulins, tape and corn chips. One will need to probably read the verses and make the application before they enter the room. (We were never able to do this as we ran out of leaders. We told the group that the locusts did not make it to family fun night.)

Plague 9: Darkness

You may use blindfolds or a totally blacked out room. Remove any tripping hazards.

Give the group simple tasks to accomplish in the dark to point out the difficulty and judgment of this plague. You may team them up and have them walk to a friend with all the friends giving directions at the same time, or you could have two blind fold walks with the second one having obstruction which eliminate the one who touch them. You may want to have a candle with you for the beginning when you are reading the Scripture. Don't be afraid to improve on the idea, just communicate the changes before doing them.

Passage: Exodus 10:21-23

- How was the darkness described by God?
- How long was the darkness?
- What did the Egyptians do?
- What happened with the children of Israel?

Plague Ten: Death of the Firstborn

Preach the significance of the Death Angel and the fact that this plague affected all and the only way of protection was the Passover lamb. Preach the Gospel and give an invitation.

WARM-UPS

PERSONALIZED PUZZLES

On www.eclipsecrossword.com you can download a free crossword puzzle program which allows you to make personal crossword puzzles. If you collect information at the beginning of an activity, you can print and copy your personalized puzzle in about 10 minutes. We collected names and some personal information (I have broken my nose twice.) and easily made a crossword using the puzzle as a way to get the teens mixing with each other. If copier access is limited, plan to collect your information the week before the event.

SPACE SOCCER

Set chairs back to back in a straight line. Place two chairs at the ends of each line side by side. You will need a chair for everyone playing and ten assorted balloons (12-16 inches).

Playing the game: Teams are placed back to back with a goalie on each end for each team. Have the goalies placed on the chair closest to the other team. Start with two balloons of the same color, then add other balloons as you like. If you make the added balloons another color, give them a higher point value. Teams bat the balloons to their goalie. (Passing but not holding may be an option you add as the game gets more familiar.) Teams score when their goalie controls the balloon in their hands. Give one point to begin with and two points for a different colored balloon. Play in timed rounds and escalate the fun by increasing point values and balloons. You may limit the extra balloons (add only one) but make them three or four times the value of the other balloons. The team with the most points win.

Key rule: Players must stay seated on the chairs.

Variations:

- Different size balloons.
- Vary the number of balloons.
- Try the teams alternating on each side.

THE TICK

Take the time to fasten a regular clothespin to some kind of plastic bug. This is your tick. Announce to your group that the tick will be attached to any unsuspecting victim that it might find. If you find it on your own person, subtly attach it to some other unknowing "friend." As the tick slowly and secretly rotates it's way around the crowd, let folks know that you will occasionally announce tick checks. As your group identifies who does have the tick, that person might have to do some public display. Perhaps sing some nursery rhyme or run around the room saying, "My clothes are the host of big ugly bugs!" This will become a running activity all the way through your event. Don't be surprised when it comes back to you!

INTEGRATING THE YOUTH GROUP WITH THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF YOUR CHURCH

1. What is the biblical mandate for the local church to be concerned about the education of children?
2. Why is your church interested in the education of children?
 - a. Evangelism.
 - b. Discipleship.
 - c. Both evangelism and discipleship.
 - d. Practical means to an end, i.e. knowledgeable and productive adults, or no provision for youth equals no families, or way to expand staff and facilities.
3. What is the methodology your church goes about meeting their goals?
 - a. Provide a Christian school choice for the families.
 - b. Provide a home schooling choice for the families.
 - c. Don't provide any schooling options for parents, but rather offer strong youth group program and staff for the families, especially for those who have their children attending public schools or secular private schools.
4. What is the attitude of the general church population regarding youth?
 - a. Despise not—respect and value; thought of as expenses or as investments—Matthew 18:10.
 - b. Offend not—spiritual and physical protection—Matthew 18:6.
 - c. *Suffer [allow] little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me—Matthew 19:14.*
 - d. Receive them—Matthew 18:5.
 - e. Give unto them—Matthew 10:42.
 - f. A child's faith is the standard of faith for an adult, not the other way around—Mark 10:14-15; Matthew 18:3-4.

SIX THINGS TO CONSIDER OR UNDERSTAND

*Hebrews 10:23-25 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us **consider one another** to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

Consider—with the mind attentively fixed on “one another”; contemplating with continual consideration the characters and wants of our brethren, so as to render mutual help and counsel. Synonyms—understand, contemplate, observe, think.

1. Consider your local church.
 - a. The Great Commission goal
 - b. Church polity
 - c. Pastor's practice and recommendation
 - d. View of youth in the church
 - 1) Responsible for
 - 2) Influence upon
2. Consider the families in your local church.
 - a. How many do what?
 - 1) Christian school
 - 2) Home school
 - 3) Public/other school
 - b. What are the attitudes of one group towards the others?
 - c. Family make up and needs
 - 1) nuclear
 - 2) single parent
 - 3) blended
 - 4) grandparents
3. Consider the youth in your local church, especially in relation to the areas of Christ's childhood growth—Luke 2:52.
 - a. Physically—puberty, adults, hormones, experience, curiosity, invincible.
 - b. Socially—influence of contemporary society, outside friends.
 - c. Mentally—learning, doubt, abstract thinking, new ideas.
 - d. Spiritually—saved, growing; they need help (Proverbs 22:6) parents, mentors, church.
 - e. Goal at age twenty-four—2 Thessalonians 2:12a “that ye would walk worth of God.”
 - f. Main areas of growth and main goal for each.
 - 1) Physically—maturing
 - 2) Socially—others-first
 - 3) Mentally—understanding

- 4) Spiritually—good heart, Matthew 13:22-23
 - a) Heart belief—Romans 10:9-10
 - b) Heart prepared—Ezra 7:10
 - c) Heart right—Psalm 78:8
4. Consider the pros and cons of the educational options.
 - a. Christian Education pros and cons
 - b. Home schooling pros and cons
 - c. Public education pros and cons
5. Consider the role of the youth group with each option.
 - a. Christian education
 - b. Home schooling
 - c. Public schools
6. Consider your role as youth leader.
 - a. What are your personal preferences?
 - b. How does the church define your role?
 - 1) Whom do you serve?
 - a) Pastor?
 - b) Families?
 - c) Youth?
 - 2) Is there a written description of your goals, duties, and resources?
 - c. Are you content? If not, can you work to change the situation properly?

POSTMODERNISM

“What we are experiencing is the most significant cultural shift in the last 500 years.”¹

“This is not a new paradigm, it is a deconstruction of the way the old paradigm had worked and a reflection on its impact on culture, church and community.”²

“The twentieth century is the name of a train that no longer runs.”³

The above statements made by contemporary thinkers must be heard by fundamental youth workers if we are to engage in what seems to be the future culture and condition of the world we minister in. The twenty-first century has been labeled as the “Second Reformation” and is being touted as the most spiritual awakening a generation has seen in hundreds of years. This phenomenon that is taking place has been labeled as “post-modern.” As fundamentalists seek to define, discover, and even dialogue about this topic, there must be a basic understanding of what is taking place. Opening our minds to the philosophy that is emerging can be viewed as dangerous unless our minds are firmly rooted in God and His revelation of Himself. As a fundamentalist you might not want to exist in this world or do ministry in this world, but understand this, it is there. The world is changing and will never be the same again. What does this world look like? Where are the Beaver Cleavers, Bobby Bradys, Punky Brewsters, and the other students that use to be in my ministry? The journey we are going to take in this session is a journey that does not end today but must be continued in your lives and ministries. This time will only serve as a starting point to assist you on this journey.

THE JOURNEY

There are two fundamental questions that the postmodern world is most interested in.

1. Who are we?
2. Where are we?

Answering these questions will help define a generation that is currently becoming the largest group in the world.

DEFINING THE JOURNEY

Postmodernism is—

1. A worldview—orthodox Christianity requires an adequate worldview to appear reasonable to a post-modern world. How can we say, for instance, that Christianity is valid when the universe is so immense and old? There are three basic factors in the development of a postmodern worldview: cosmology, time, and history.
2. A relation of science and mathematics, not just a Christian development—“the discussion of postmodern culture focuses to a great extent on an emerging new individual identity or subject position, one that abandons what may in retrospect be the narrow scope of the modern individual with its claims to rationality and autonomy.”⁴
3. Globally focused.
4. Deeply theological.
5. Connected to a community.
6. Anti-materialism.

7. Technologically adept.
8. Experiential..
9. Participatory
10. Missional living.

Postmodernism is not—

1. The implementation of a band or the change of a worship style.
2. Women involved in ministry.
3. A Christian-only conversation.
4. Always based on the argument of the rejection absolute truth.
5. In the church, a rejection of ancient ways and historical Christianity.
6. A desire to fake reality—What is pop culture telling us is the most viewed television? Reality TV.

DEBATING THE JOURNEY

There are generally two conclusions concerning postmodernism.

Chuck Colson—One begins by stating that there is no paradigm shift-taking place and the efforts to promote postmodernism are the result of church leaders living out a dying hope. “It would be the supreme irony—and a terrible tragedy—if we found ourselves slipping into postmodernity just when the broader culture has figured out it’s a dead end.”⁵

Brian McClaren—Another begins by defending the paradigm shift that is claiming to happen at this time. “In your column, you pronounced ‘postmodernism’ dead or on life support or at least losing strength. You’re kind of right, because the kind of postmodernism you describe—the philosophy that claims there is no transcendent truth.’ What you describe as postmodernism—a claim that ‘there is no such thing as truth,’ a rejection of all moral values, or their reduction to mere preferences—may have been purported by a few crazed graduate students for a few minutes at a late-night drinking party. But to paint the whole movement with that brush is inaccurate.”⁶

DESIRE OF THE JOURNEY

What does the postmodern want to accomplish? What does the postmodern want to see accomplished in the context of ministry and youth-work? **Authenticity—earning the right to be heard.**

“Postmodern people crave authenticity in their leaders. Living in a cynical, media-soaked world, they have seen it all. We can’t deceive them. They want the real thing.

How can we be authentic communicators? For centuries it was taught that authentic speech entails three elements:

1. *Logos*—our words
2. *Ethos*—our character
3. *Pathos*—our conviction

Authentic communication involves our character and our conviction, not just our words. This is especially true in the postmodern era.

Postmodern people respond best to a preacher who:

1. Is a whole person—they want to know who we are and what we do, not just what we say and believe. They want to know the difference the living God has made in our personal lives.
2. Speaks genuinely from the heart—merely reading words from a manuscript is not enough. If we show an honest passion about a subject, it helps them to believe in that subject as well.
3. Respects them as people—postmodern people do not like to be controlled or manipulated. They do not respond to guilt or obligation. They do not want emotionalism for its own sake.
4. Brings them to God—we are disciples, not preaching machines; we teach people to be disciples, not trained listeners. The purpose of the Scriptures from which we preach is to change lives—2 Timothy 3:16-17.
 - a. **Bible emphasis**—“the postmodern era rejects the idea of authority. For us to preach with authority, it is not by being an authority ourselves. It is by trusting in the authority of God to speak through the Scriptures. We believe that Scriptures are a means of grace whereby we can encounter the living God. In the modern era, many preachers were enamored with their own reasoning ability. Many sermons, especially in mainline churches, only briefly touched on the Scripture de jour. In the postmodern era, this will not be tolerated. Postmodern people want the real thing, not some preacher’s essay on life. They crave to encounter the living God through the Scriptures.”⁷
 - b. **Relevancy**
 - c. **Holistic servants as leaders**—postmodernists see no dichotomy between social action and spirituality. For them, both are just different aspects of loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

Cultural pluralism—postmodernism is most concerned about the uniqueness of Christ without being intolerant toward others.

- d. **Global evangelism**—in *Postmodern Pilgrims*, Leonard Sweet says, “The challenge for Postmodern Pilgrims is to give the world a witness. Any church that does otherwise is a product of this evil age. The crisis of evangelism in a postmodern world is this:
 - A culture of Bible-believing churches filled with people who don’t read the Bible
 - A culture of soul-saving church exists filled with people who never personally get involved in soul-saving
 - A culture where the last six US presidents (Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush) all describe themselves as born-again Christians
 - A culture where consumerism is the number one religion
 - A culture where Oprah, Dr. Phil, and Jesse Jackson are more authoritative voices than Moses, Jesus, or even Mohammed
 - A culture where the Bible no longer provides the spectacles through which people gaze.”

The postmodern wants more than anything to save the world and the people that are living there. One phrase from a fifteenth century priest that resonates the thought of this philosophy is “when doing evangelism it is important to preach the gospel of Christ, and if it is necessary use words.”

De-modernize the Christian worldview that has been influenced by modernism.

DANGERS OF THE JOURNEY

There are obvious challenging days ahead for the fundamentalist. How do we currently operate holding a worldview that is contrary to the people we desire to reach?

1. Deny its existence
2. Attempt to become what we are not
3. Criticize when we are misinformed or lack understanding
4. Embrace a postmodern worldview
5. Adapt to postmodernism as the generation that has adapted to the “seeker”
6. Remove the Scriptures from the dialogue

Notes

1. Tony Jones, “Foreword,” in *Postmodern* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 10.
2. *Ibid.*, 12.
3. David Lehman, *The Answering Stranger, Operation Memory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 20.
4. Mark Poster, “Postmodern Virtualities,” in *Second Media Age* (La Vergne, TN: Lightning Source Inc., 1995).
5. Charles Colson, “The Postmodern Crackup,” *Christianity Today*. December 2003, 72. (Online at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/012/24.72.html>)
6. Brian McLaren, “An Open Letter to Chuck Colson from Brian McLaren,” *Youthworker Journal*, http://www.youthspecialties.com/articles/topics/postmodernism/open_letter.php.
7. DP Teague, “Welcome to the Postmodern World,” <http://www.postmodernpreaching.net>, Copyright © D.P. Teague. Used with permission.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Leonard Sweet, “Foreword,” in *Postmodern Pilgrims* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000), xxii.

THEOLOGY OF EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

THEOLOGY

“I want deliberately to encourage this mighty longing after God. The lack of it has brought us to our present low estate. The stiff and wooden quality about our religious lives is a result of our lack of holy desire. Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us He waits so long, so very long, in vain.”¹ Evangelism as the Bible defines it, reaching the lost for Christ, can only effectively be brought about if the above statement is heeded. Far too long has the average Christian neglected the fundamental understanding of evangelism, their own spiritual condition with the Lord. Mark offers us a glimpse of what is required first to be effective in the evangelistic efforts we are called to have. *Mark 3:13-15* records that “*he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.*” One important factor that resulted in tremendous success was the initial instruction that Jesus gave. We read that Jesus called them to “be with Him.” Being with Him must be a passionate and deliberate part of evangelism. Before there could be a time of sharing there had to be a time of preparing. Evangelism that is accompanied with a desire to know God is filled with authenticity and fruit.

Evangelism can be a difficult thing to do. A natural byproduct of spending quality time with the Lord is the second important factor. Being with Jesus leads one to a place of obedience. These men were called to preach the gospel; however, this responsibility would not have been as well received if these men had not spent time with the Lord. These men were “sent out” with a mission. This mission was an overwhelming task. The effort of preaching, casting out demons and seeing the world know of their Savior was a daunting task. This could only be accomplished if these men died to self. “It is no different for the church. Jesus reminds us that unless a seed first dies, it cannot produce life.”² This leads to the obvious question: Were these men successful in doing what they were called to do?

The theological answer to this question lies in the text in Mark. The constant struggle of one being successful or one failing has little to do with what is at times used to measure success. The success of these men was not found in the result that each individual saw as a result of his own personal ministry. Some saw thousands saved at one time while others quietly served with little impact in comparison. The success factor came at the point when these men trusted their Savior and were able to overcome personal obstacles to accomplish what they had been called to do. The preaching of the gospel came as a result of their faith in God. Success is not equated to impact but rather obedience. These men were called to preach the gospel. Is this something that all believers are called to as well or was this a moment in time that we read of historically? I believe this call to preach is a call to those who will passionately follow Jesus. Again, it is a natural byproduct of the one who is closely enjoying his Savior.

Scripture leads us to understand that there certainly is an importance and urgency with evangelism and discipleship. Seemingly there is a strong connection between the two principles. Often times there can be an imbalance in ministry focus concerning their relationship. Some ministries tend to focus primarily on the evangelism aspect while completely neglecting follow up and mentoring of a new believer. Other ministries can spend much effort on teaching and developing disciples while neglecting new life and new people to bring into the kingdom. Why is evangelism such an important factor in the believer’s life? There are many Scriptures that present an argument to support this philosophy. The fact that our God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, texts revealing to us the desire of believers that others would be saved, and the fact that Jesus commissioned His followers to teach the gospel to the whole world

offer us ample evidence to be involved personally. There is however, one illustration that speaks to the heart of the issue. God, in His greatness, does not need humankind to develop and harvest souls for Himself. He does allow believers to be a part of the program and plan of His desire to draw mankind unto Himself. John 11 reveals to us the account of Lazarus being dead four days. We read that Jesus wept at this occurrence but then raised Lazarus from the dead. The next action Jesus takes is to allow ordinary men to be involved in this miracle of new life. Jesus asks the men to take off the grave clothes of Lazarus so that he might see and be free. Jesus just raised this man from the dead; He certainly did not need the help of others to complete this miracle. He simply chose to involve people in the miraculous plan of resurrection. We are also given that same opportunity as we bring men and women, students and children to the feet of Jesus; and as He changes them, we take off the old grave clothes.

How can believers truly be successful and make an eternal impact for the Lord? At the heart of Christianity is the natural desire to please the Lord and do as He has asked us to do. However, when we speak of evangelism and discipleship, it seems as though many do not understand the theology behind their faith and practice. James offers us a look at a theological model for evangelism that has the potential to impact and create disciples as a result of our belief system being lived out. *James 2:14-17* states, “*What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*” This thought offers a dilemma when it is taking on its own merit. However, comparing Scripture with Scripture, we see that it is not works that result in salvation but that works a result of salvation. *Romans 3:27-28* offers Paul’s theology concerning works and salvation. “*Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*”

Looking at James’ theology in light of what the church was practicing, we see that James is speaking of a faith that is existent but knows how to behave. This behavior is a key aspect in being successful at evangelism and discipleship in the world we live in. How could a rather insignificant number of people make a difference that would impact culture and change the world as they knew it? “God has given us this same grace but He has not given us this grace that we would serve self, but that we would serve others.”³ Paul states in *Galatians 5:25*, “*If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*” We are being taught that it is extremely important that we become the people who we say we are to the lost world. Impacting the world comes as result of our faith being real to us. James asks what good will it be if we have a great belief system but never use that to meet people at their point of need. Our belief system, if not lived out, will cause others to spend eternity in hell. James clarifies this point to this group of people in three main thoughts.

1. **A belief system alone will not be enough to impact culture** (James 2:19). There are literally millions of people in this country that hold to our same belief system, but is our culture any better than off because of that fact? The easy way to live life is to keep our beliefs suppressed and not let them change culture. There is a way to reach your generation; it is by doing something that Christ would do for them. “What would Christ do for this person?” must become a question we ask of everyone with whom we cross paths. “You cannot wash the feet of a dirty world if you refuse to touch it.”⁴ If we think that hiding our belief system without putting any action to it is right, we are exactly whom James is talking to.
2. **A belief system launches one into a life of action** (verses 20-22). Making an impact in this generation is only possible through action. Yet, action is what many believers don’t want any part of. Church has become all about being “FED.” The imbalance takes place when we are too much about our being fed and not enough about our exercising what we have been fed. The greatest hindrance to eternally impacting this generation is that many Christians have not truly experienced God. The post-modern generation desires to see action that proves belief. In other words, without action your faith is not genuine to them. It’s just something that our parents forced us to believe; therefore, we can’t impact, because we can’t

even make up our own minds. Our belief in God should launch us into action that reveals the reality of our relationship with God.

3. **A belief system without action is dead** (verse 26). If a body is dead, there is still evidence of a body. However, the body has no life. Life is what will impact culture. It is said to be true that the best atheists are children of the church. This is due to the diminishing influence the church has had on society, and now society causes the church to yield to it. Fewer people are being impacted by our belief system because of the diminishing influence it has in our own lives. Our faith may be without life, but it is still faith (not losing faith). Your faith will have little or no impact on this generation, and life will not be successful. Success has everything to do with obediently, vibrantly living out the faith that we experience.

TARGET

The target of this philosophy in evangelism and discipleship will be the youth of an inner city/county area in central Orange County. The student ministry I minister to is comprised of multiple ethnic cultures and diverse backgrounds. Our student ministry consists of many different breakdowns that are unique to us.

1. **Breakdown 1: Schools.** Currently we have a large percentage of our students attending Christian schools. Almost 40% attend a Christian school, approximately 30% of our students are home schooled, while an additional 30% of our students represent eight different high schools and junior highs.
2. **Breakdown 2: Demographics.** We are uniquely located in the edge of Little Saigon. Our Christian day school is comprised currently of just fewer than 80% Vietnamese. We are also one block west of a large Hispanic population that is actively being reached by our ministry. In our student ministry, we have an even balance between Caucasian, Vietnamese, and Latino students. This presents to us a wonderful opportunity practice worldwide evangelism right at home. The Lord has been so good to bring the mission field to us.

TECHNIQUE

Objective 1: In-reach

“We are working with students who are bombarded with the message of Jesus at rallies, on TV, by us and their parents, and at church on Sunday morning—and it’s almost exclusively with words. Instead, let’s invite kids into the body of Christ, into a community that lives out the moral imperatives of Scripture. In that way we’ll be evangelizing post moderns in a postmodern way.”⁵ In-reach is a crucial first step in evangelism because it creates a foundation for students to build on as they share their faith with others. “Jesus expected these men He was with to obey Him. They were not required to smart, but they had to be loyal. This became the distinguishing mark by which they were known.”⁶ Maturity being developed within a student will reach further into the lives of people and create a deeper impact in the culture that is lived in. “No one can tell a person into maturity.”⁷ One mistake I often made in early ministry while attending seminars, reading books and magazine articles, or even attending seminary was attempting to implement a carbon copy program from someone else’s ministry. In theory the program should have worked, but in reality it failed miserably. Why does this seem to happen more often than we might admit? Ministry is not meant to be copied or mimicked unless it is ministry that is unique to the Scriptures. Much of what has worked for someone else is a result of personal experience for a particular group of people. This experience probably will not be as effective to the students I work with. Where is the balance?

Effective and successful student ministry cannot be measured in days or even years. It is measured in decades. How tempting it is to view ourselves as successful simply because we had a large number or super exciting activity. Some of my greatest failures in ministry have been exciting program ideas. “This is one reason it is critical to seize every divine moment. You can never know at the onset all that God intends to do through your simple act of obedience.”⁸ In order for the impact that is necessary to occur within our student

ministries, personal attention to each student is needed. The personal philosophy of our student ministry is one of personally tailoring a mentoring program for each student. It is through the maturation of my personal ministry that we have identified ineffective discipleship that has taken place too long. My philosophy is one of mentoring young men and young women within our student ministry to grow into the adults that God wants them to be. This is most effective when it is done in very small groups, but even more effective when we are able to be one-on-one. There are two factors that motivate our discipleship/mentoring ministry.

This simple outline shows the desire of our ministry to develop mature students.

1. Identifying with God—it is our desire that students identify with God through a personal relationship as a result of meeting Jesus Christ.
2. Connecting with God—the desire of the student will be to grow in the knowledge of God through a mentoring program designed for the individual. “In time, obedient followers invariably take on the character of their leader.”⁹ We anticipate growth therefore we plan for the student to be trained in the Scriptures.
3. Deciding to develop personal passion for God—the student in this stage of development is being challenged to develop personal habits of passion for his Savior. There is a challenge offered to pursue a life that is lived in the will of God. “The student is identifying with a fully surrendered life that seeks to exalt Christ.”¹⁰
4. Transforming life—we acknowledge that a transformed life does not come naturally or easily. We allow for the student to grow at the rate the Holy Spirit is growing them.
5. Owning one’s faith (fruit that bears more fruit)—it is in this stage that the student will begin to prove ownership by mentoring other students and owning the desire to see others grow. As we begin to encounter this developmental stage, the Lord is working mightily through us. We begin to develop His fruit.

Objective 2: Outreach

It is our desire to provide ample opportunities for each student to acquire the desire to reach other students in our community. “Community matters. As our lungs require air, so our soul requires what only community provides. The future of the church depends on whether it develops true community.”¹¹ The following outline shows the approach we are currently using.

1. Quarterly events—Super Bowl party, spring break all-nighter, back to school party
2. Monthly events—service projects, student outreach (surveys), low-income housing visitation (bus route)
3. Weekly events—worship services, Bible studies, sports/coffee shops/public schools
4. Daily events—individual students living out belief system in culture

Youth ministry is a great tool to evangelize and educate young people in our world today. Youth ministry is not above evaluation and certainly should be scrutinized in light of Scripture often. God expects successful ministry, but how can we be successful if we do not operate the way He has designed for us. This paper has been presented as a result of work and methodology that is being practiced. The students that will be reached as a result of this model are only reached because of the goodness of God to use our students to accompany His plan.

Notes

1. AW Tozer.
2. Erwin Raphael McManus, *An Unstoppable Force* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2001), 22.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 23.
5. Tony Jones, *Postmodern Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 118.
6. Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 51.
7. Richard R. Dunn, *Shaping the Spiritual Lives of Students* (Downers Grove: Inter-varsity, 2001), 19.
8. Erwin Raphael McManus, *Seizing Your Divine Moment* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 216.
9. Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 51.
10. Walt Brock, "The Spiritual Ladder," Article from Ironwood Christian Camp.
11. Robert Frazee, "Foreword," by Larry Crab in *The Connecting Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000).

PRESENTING TRUTH TO THE NEXT GENERATION

We are seeing a trend away from distaste for things spiritual. They are not looked poorly upon until they seem to infringe upon someone else's belief system. Backlash comes when those statements are presented in an exclusive way. The days of showing boldness or risking "persecution" by carrying your Bible to school with you seem to be a thing of the past. These days, it's cool that you can find something that works for you.

American culture can be characterized as being concerned with what works before it considers what's right. The primary test to show if something is true is based upon whether or not it works. How do we present truth to an emerging generation that wonders about the existence of absolute truth, is leery of absolute truth claims—especially when they emerge from sources that don't work for many people, and views exclusive claims about truth as arrogant, biased, and intolerant?

I am not advocating an adjustment to truth. Absolute truth is, by its very nature, exclusive. Since absolute truth does exist, its very presence dictates that there are other claims that are not true. Let us be clear; we are attempting to analyze and adjust our methodology. Let's not be distracted from this analysis by some cliché about "God never changes, so I won't either."

In the mind of a person who denies that absolute truth is nonexistent, debate to prove that truth does exist is silly. If we enter into debate about the existence of truth, God, etc.; we, for many people, enter into debate over something that was never meant to be proven. No place in Scripture do we find people, apostles, or prophets making a case for the existence of God. The existence of God is assumed. If we enter into debate over the existence, we force ourselves to begin with a difficult premise: "God may or may not exist. Let me lay out the proofs that God does."

1. Replace debate over the existence of God and truth for what the Bible does. The Bible contends for who God is.
 - a. Genesis 1:1—God is Creator.
 - b. Leviticus 11:44; 1 Peter 1:16—God is holy.
 - c. Deuteronomy 6—God is One.
 - d. 1 John 1:5—God is light.
 - e. 1 John 4:8—God is love.
2. Replace a method that deconstructs others' belief systems for a tone that affirms the truth that we see in the lives of those who are seeking—1 Corinthians 3.
3. Replace a justification model of the Gospel with a more balanced, biblical view.

This sort of emphasis on Scripture will find us emphasizing the story of the Gospel the same way the Bible portrays the story. The Bible emphasizes reconciliation and justification, not merely justification.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF YOUTH WORK

FOUNDATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

WHAT IS *PHILOSOPHY*?

According to Noah Webster's 1828 *The American Dictionary of the English Language*, *philosophy* is "literally, the love of wisdom. But in modern acceptation, philosophy is a general term denoting an explanation of the reasons of things." Philosophy is basically a study of the underlying reasons for our actions—why are we doing what we are doing?

When we speak of the philosophy of our youth ministry, we are speaking of the biblical reasons for our existence and the underlying foundation for all we do—the truth of Scripture wisely applied to our ministry. Those wise applications then become the governing principles of the youth ministry, the basis of all our decision making, and the basis for our actions. The following pyramid illustrates this truth; each level must build upon the previous level.

ACTIONS

BASIC PRINCIPLES

YOUTH WORK PHILOSOPHY

CHURCH MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY

BIBLICAL TRUTH (DOCTRINE) FROM SCRIPTURES

Correctly Interpreted and Wisely Applied

What are some of the key buildings blocks of the youth ministry?

1. A Youth Leader's Love and Work Ethic

a. Love covers a multitude of sins—1 Peter 4:8.

1) If the young people know that you love them, they give you space to be less than perfect. If they know you don't love them, they give you NO space to be less than perfect.

2) Preaching of the Word is hollow without love—1 Corinthians 13.

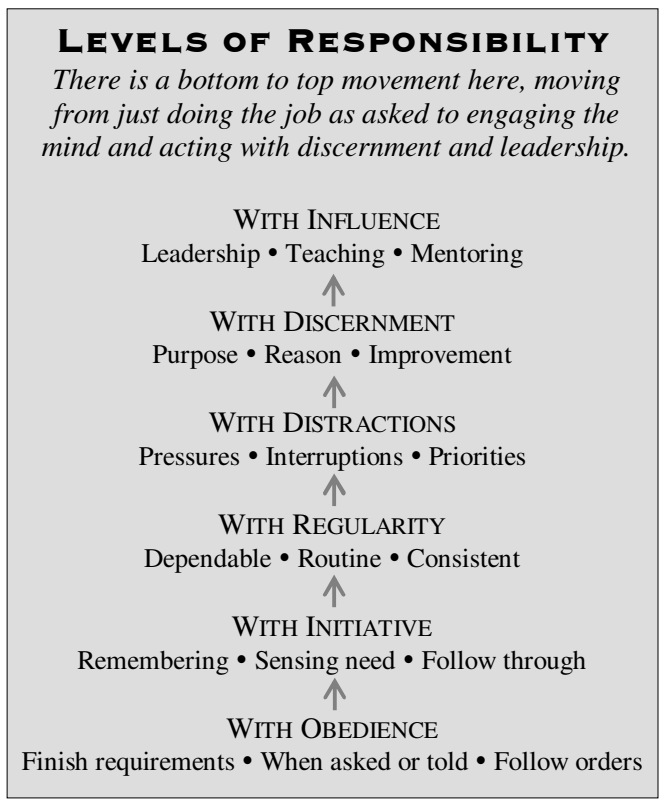
3) There is a cost to love—John 3:16.

2 Corinthians 12:15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

b. Examples are powerful.

- 1) In the home
- 2) In the church
- 3) Biblical examples
 - a) Christ—Ephesians 5:1-2
 - b) Paul—1 Corinthians 4:11; 11:1; Philippians 3:7
 - c) Others who have endured through faith—Hebrews 6:12
 - d) Ezra—Ezra 7:10 (Authority to teach others is based on adherence to preparing heart, seeking the Word, and doing what it teaches.)
- c. Youth work is just that—WORK!
 - 1) The work ethic of Paul—*1 Thessalonians 2:9 For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.*
 - a) Labor—to toil as reducing one’s strength through the weariness of labor
 - b) Travail—painful toil
 - c) Laboring—totally engaged and committed to labor and minister
 - d) Night and day—literal days and nights; a 24/7 ministry
 - 2) You can’t do it all yourself, but pride will drive you to try.
 - 3) Endurance in the ministry is essential. Don’t quit or allow yourself to burn out with activity (1 Corinthians 15:58). Pace yourself, because there is a seven-year cycle with youth (grades 7–12). (See “The Danger of Burnout in the Youth Ministry” on page 4-13.)

2. A Youth Leader’s Faithfulness, Dependability, Responsibility, and Consistency
 - a. Failures at this point will undermine the block of TRUST on which this one sits.
 - b. Dr. Bob Jones Sr. always said, “The best ability is dependability!”
 - c. A youth leader should be fulfilling all the levels of responsibility and be living at the highest level. (See box to right.)
3. Principles, Methodology Choices, and an Organized Plan of Ministry



- a. Use a variety of methods. While this is not a doctrinal foundation, we see God using a great variety of methods to get people to listen to His message. (See *“How to Build a Youth Group”* on page 6-1 of *The Brain for Youth Leaders, vol. 2*, and *“How to Plan Effective Activities”* on page 6-3.)
 - b. Christ asked questions, used object lessons, preached sermons, used silence, gave responsibility, answered questions, traveled with them, ate with them, went to gatherings of people, met needs as He came across them, and, of course, told many parables.
 - c. Christ also took His group on extended trips for a change of pace, rest, and ministry opportunities (much like our modern day camping ministries). (See *“What Is It about a Camp Program That Is Biblically Effective?”* on page 1-29 of *The Brain for Youth Leaders, vol. 1*.)
Mark 6:31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.
 - d. Read, ask questions, think, and work hard at developing principles to base your actions on. (See *“How to Build a Youth Group”* on page 6-1 of *The Brain for Youth Leaders, vol. 2*.)
4. Trust of Pastor, Parents, and Young People
- a. Honesty is not only the best policy, it is the right policy! We are speaking here of an honest, understandable presentation of the Word of God. Since we believe in the priesthood of the believer and that all believers are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit who illumines them as to the meaning and intent of the Word of God, we must conclude that the common-man believer can understand the Word and “get it.” Even if they do not agree with it, they see it as coming from God’s Word and not man’s made-up opinion.
 - b. Preaching the Word to youth has been defined using the acronym APT. (I heard this first from Bill Rice; the definitions are paraphrased with some of my words mixed in.)

A—authority of the Word of God. The speaker’s opinion is not the basis for the message.

P—persuasive. The speaker must attempt to urge young people to decide for themselves (this is what separates preaching from teaching).

T—teaching. The right information upon which youth are called to make decisions must be accurately and completely presented. All good preaching will contain good teaching, but not all teaching will contain the persuasive element of preaching. The speaker must know when to use which.
5. Youth Work Philosophy and Purpose Developed and Used
- a. Remember, they are youth.
 - 1) They are not adults and do not have adult maturity.
 - 2) They have many questions even if they don’t ask them.
 - 3) They change from year to year, from stage to stage.
 - a) Do you know the characteristics of pre-puberty children?
 - b) Do you know the characteristics of post-puberty youth?
 - c) Do you know the personality styles of each and what that means in regards to their learning and responding patterns?

- d) What do surveys say about youth?
 - e) Do you know the value of good youth activities? (*See How to Plan Effective Activities*” on page 6-3 of *The Brain for Youth Leaders, vol. 2.*)
- b. Faith is an absolute essential to living the Christian life.
- 1) Faith is not logical.
 - 2) Faith is not automatic to church attendees.
 - 3) Faith is developed by three areas working in concert.
 - a) Knowledge—You must teach them the Word so they have a basis for their faith to develop.
 - b) Acceptance or agreement—You must be careful to not give them an excuse to doubt (inconsistency of example). In the end, they must decide to agree with God; give them controlled opportunities to choose.
 - c) Obedience, the “proof of the pudding”—Obedience takes our faith out of the realm of intellectualism and places it in the crucible of life.
- c. Work at writing a statement of purpose for your youth ministry. Do this annually until you are satisfied the statement concisely identifies your target goals.
6. A Youth Leader with a Heart for Ministry and a Willingness to Sacrifice for God and People
- a. Youth work is a ministry with people—young people, parents, volunteers, and helpers in the church. If the youth leader does not have a desire and heart for people, everything he does will become a drudgery. He must love those whom Christ loved.
 - b. Sacrifice means giving up something you really cherish for the benefit of another. Are you willing?
 - c. Do you have a handle on your priorities?
7. A Youth Leader Who Is Willing and Qualified to Serve
- a. The youth pastorate should be a decision, not a default, although God can use circumstances to move us into positions of being able to respond to His call.
Act 11:25–26 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.
 - b. Church leadership qualifications stated in 1 Timothy and Titus.
 - c. Other considerations.
 - 1) Age—not too close in age to the young people that they think of the youth leader as one of them.
 - 2) Experience in teaching a Sunday school class or serving in some other ministry.
 - 3) Any past habits, hidden sins, or propensities and weaknesses toward sexual sins should be a red-light warning to avoid this area of service.

8. Confident in Being Called of God for This Ministry

a. Called by the Holy Spirit

Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

- b. Not called by self-interests that sound like fun, easy to do, or within one's comfort zone.
- c. Not called by others such as parents, the young people in the youth group, or by church leadership.
- d. One might do the job or fill in temporarily at the request of a pastor.
- e. One should listen to the advice and opinions of others, especially long-time mentors, but in the end it is each individual's responsibility to heed the call of God.

9. Church Ministry Philosophy Followed and Applied to Youth Ministry

a. People are people . . . are people . . . are people!

1) All are created in God's image and have not evolved or changed in makeup since creation. Each new generation is basically the same as the last generation.

2) Weaknesses and spiritual problems are not new—1 Corinthians 10:13.

3) All have the following, plus more.

- a) A sin nature
- b) Free will
- c) Salvation only through faith
- d) Indwelling by the Holy Spirit
- e) A new creation, yet still the flesh to contend with
- f) Root sins of pride, greed, and sensualism

4) All youth have age-related characteristics.

- a) Current needs in learning and growth
- b) Time-sensitive windows of opportunity
- c) Pre-puberty vs. post-puberty issues

5) All have a peculiar God-given "body stamp." (*See pages 1-24 through 25.*)

6) All are individually accountable to God for their own decisions in life. There is no such thing as parental, cultural, environmental, situational, or up-bringing determinism.

b. God established the following four institutions. (Webster defines *institution* as "establishment; that which is appointed, prescribed or founded by authority, and intended to be permanent.")

1) The individual

2 Corinthians 5:10 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Romans 14:12 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

2) The family

Ephesians 6:1–4 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

3) The government

Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

4) The local church

Romans 12:5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Ephesians 4:11–12 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

First, this doctrinal truth tells us we can help, guide, and instruct individuals, but we cannot determine or control their personal choices and life decisions. This Baptist distinctive of individual soul liberty means that while each institution has some responsibility—for which they will give an accounting—in relation to the individual, in the end at the Judgment Seat each individual must give account to Christ for his own decisions and actions and not for the deeds of others. We call this “the free will of man,” and this is the way God created us and why we need a Savior. Such free will applies to salvation, sanctification, God’s will and call for that individual, and daily life choices. (See “Three Key Principles for Discipling Youth Today” on page 1-25 of *The Brain for Youth Leaders*, vol. 1 and “How to Teach Convictions to Your Teens” on page 6-11.)

Second, this doctrinal truth tells us we cannot do it alone. The responsibility for the youth in our group is not ours alone. Parents are responsible, pastors are responsible, other members of the body of Christ are responsible, and even the government carries some responsibility. They are responsible to perform their individual duties in relation to the youth, but they are not held accountable for the free will choices of the youth. This means that we love, teach, discipline, admonish, discuss, answer questions, provide wholesome environments, give responsibility, and be patient with them; it does not mean that we can control their individual, free-will choices in life.

Third, this doctrinal truth tells us that we must lead as we follow. We must follow the other God-given institutions as they perform their responsibilities in relation to the youth as we perform our leadership of the youth.

- 1) Ask parents their concerns and, as much as one can righteously do so, respond properly. Involve them in your plans and communicate with them regularly.
- 2) Ask church leadership to endorse or define your goals with the youth.
- 3) Develop your youth program within the “culture” of the church. (See “Integrating the Youth Group with the Educational Philosophy of Your Church” on page 1-1.)
- 4) Develop a group of volunteer mentors and helpers for the group.

- 5) Never preach or teach standards or rules unless,
 - a) The pastor has preached them (establishing their biblical basis) from the pulpit.
 - b) Eighty percent of the parents agree with them and are practicing them. (If 80% do not agree with the preaching, the pastor needs to be more persuasive. Don't usurp his responsibility.)
 - c) Consistency throughout the entire church is essential to young people receiving these truths and developing their own Bible-based convictions. (One of your key jobs is to help them develop Bible-based convictions. See "*How to Teach Convictions to Your Teens*" on page 6-11 of *The Brain for Youth Leaders, vol. 1. Ironwood's Ezra Retreat is aimed at this goal.*) *Philippians 4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

10. Biblical Discernment, a Wise Application of Biblical Truth

- a. The Word of God is timeless and effectual, but it must be skillfully and maturely used. *Hebrews 5:11–14 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillfull in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*
 - 1) Dull of hearing
 - 2) First principles
 - 3) Reason of use
 - 4) Senses exercised
 - 5) Discern both good and evil
- b. Nothing new under the sun
 - 1) Postmodernism—the answer to this error is an authentic Christian who knows what he believes and lives what he believes.
 - 2) Humanism—a fancy word for “Well, my opinion is”
 - 3) “Ismism”—the man-made attempt to classify man’s attempt to think contrary to God’s revealed truth in the Word of God.
 - 4) Know the truth—you may spend a little time figuring out how the world thinks, but waste precious little time on it. The answers to all of life’s issues are in the Word, even if people do not believe it. Zero in on the supernatural and the eternal; you cannot win a temporally-based debate regarding issues without the spiritual and eternal reality of the Word.

11. Doctrinal Foundation, a Right Interpretation of God’s Truth

The church’s doctrinal statement and accompanying documents form the basis of this building block. Besides the regular or standard doctrines usually listed, the following doctrines are particularly appropriate for the youth ministry and should be understood enough to use in teaching, mentoring, and counseling of young people.

- a. Salvation—how a person places their faith in the Lord. This will address the doubts of youth.
- b. Sanctification—how a person grows and makes progress toward the image of Jesus Christ. Every youth leader should have a biblical formula as to how people change that is consistent with your church's doctrinal position.
- c. Some of the Baptist distinctives are particularly appropriate for youth work.
 - 1) Autonomy of the local church—this will help you deal with apparent differences between churches in the areas of standards and methodologies.
 - 2) Individual soul liberty—each person will individually be held accountable for their sins and not for the sins of anyone else.
 - 3) Priesthood of the believer—there is no difference between the clergy and the laity in the matters of access to God, indwelling of the Holy Spirit, understandability of the Word, or personal worth and value to God.
- d. Family roles and responsibilities.
- e. God's will.
- f. Separation.
- g. Forgiveness, guilt, and bitterness issues.
- h. Faith and grace.
- i. Spiritual warfare.

WHAT GOD GIVES EVERY CHRISTIAN

BODY

S

T

A

M

P

GRACE

GOD'S BODY STAMP

This is an illustration of what God has given to, or created without exception within every believer. First, we see that God has created everyone with a physical body—male or female, normal or abnormal, tall or short, and so on. Next, we see that God gives to all the grace to handle and deal with every life situation. Nothing short of God's grace would enable us to react properly to the trials and issues of our lives, but with His grace we can “do all things through Christ” who strengthens and enables us. Between our physical limitations and the enablement of God's grace, we have five gifts or “stamps” upon us that together make each of us a unique creation of God the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual gifts are given to each believer by the Holy Spirit; each believer is responsible to use them to glorify Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:11, 24–25 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

Romans 12:6–8 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Talents—not our abilities—are opportunities or responsibilities to use our abilities and other God-given traits for God's intended purposes.

Matthew 25:15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

Abilities are our natural, learned and developed skills and abilities, such as sports, music, art, and mechanical aptitude.

Mentality, our natural intelligence or IQ, coupled with our learning opportunities form our responsibility to use our brain power to glorify Him.

Personality, each of the four basic personality styles having numerous sub-styles, gives us each a unique way of social interaction with others. Personalities are God-given and are never to be used as an excuse or crutch for acting and reacting improperly. Certainly we can see in Christ's choice of the twelve apostles a myriad of personality styles, all unique yet each needing to respond to Him and others in a God-glorifying way.

Grace is given to us by God so that we can respond to whatever situations we may find ourselves in a way that will glorify Him.

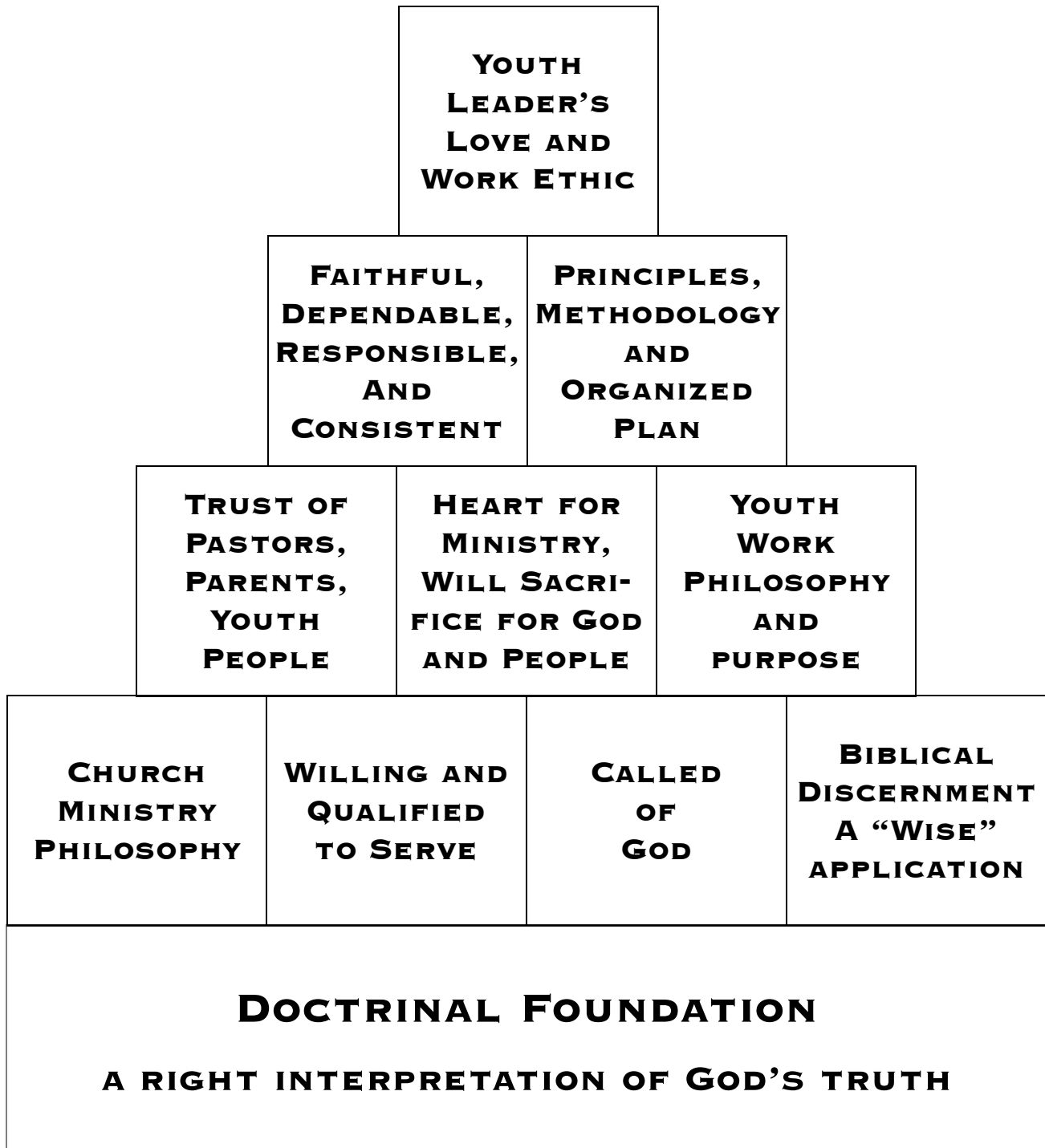
2 Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH ALL OF THIS?

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE YOUTH MINISTRY



HEALTHY COMPETITION

DEFINITIONS

Competition—from the Latin *com* and *petere* which means “to seek.” Webster defines competition as “emulous contest; rivalry” (*emulous* means “ambitious to equal another”).¹ The American Heritage Dictionary adds “to strive with another.”²

Healthy—“indicative of sound rational thinking or frame of mind” is one of the definitions given by the American Heritage Dictionary.³ Webster says that health is a “state of being hale or sound in body, mind, or soul, esp. freedom from physical disease or pain.”⁴

Healthy competition should then be an ambitious contest against a rival that keeps the competitors sound in their bodies, minds, and souls. The rival could take many different forms. It could be another person, another group of people, the clock, your own personal best, or a goal that has been set. Marty Heron, former director of Northland Camp and Conference Center, has often said that “competition is a tool, and a tool that is used incorrectly can become a weapon.” A tool that has been used as a weapon is not a bad tool. It shouldn’t be eliminated from the toolbox, but the person who is misusing it should be redirected! For a tool to be properly used for the job it is intended, procedures should be set and training should take place. Let’s explore the purpose, procedures, and training needed for the tool of competition.

PURPOSE

Competition is a tool that can be used for various purposes. It can unite a group, challenge individual growth, foster teamwork, encourage creative problem solving, and provide opportunities for learning good communication. It can teach integrity, fun, fairness, grace under pressure, sharing of resources, risk taking, courage, and stewardship.

It has been said that “play is a child’s work.” *Luke 2:52* suggests that just as Christ “*increased in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man*” we should work to develop those aspects during the maturing of our children.

1. Children grow in wisdom as they learn the values of relationships, adjust to their environment, solve problems, use their imagination, and become effective communicators. They mature in their physical skills through a variety of play activities, both fine motor skills and large motor skills.
2. They need to be taught that they can grow in favor with God by bringing glory to Him in their play.
3. They need to be taught to grow in favor with others as they share and think of others in their play. They learn the consequences of words and actions, strategy for diffusing tensions, and resolving conflicts. As they grow older, children become competitive in their play, boys more so than girls. Girls especially enjoy the emphasis on interpersonal relationships; boys enjoy the emphasis on strategy and individual challenge to excellence. Adults play an important role in teaching a proper view of competition. Creating a proper balance between cooperation and competition is a key ingredient to healthy competition. Competition makes cooperation meaningful and significant.

As a child matures, the opportunity to teach far-reaching life skills increases through the use of healthy competition. Competition enhances the value of relationships by cultivating the best from each person. Life is full of competition. It is a daily part of our lives, is constant, and is unavoidable. We need to teach young people to win and lose with grace and poise. One cannot deny the destructive potential of competition, but the possible advantages make the tool of competition irreplaceable. In an article on competition, Ray Duseau notes that we prepare children for future challenges when competition is gauged and balanced against the standard of growth. In the adult arena the risks are higher: jobs, relationships, careers, advancement are

all on the line. A healthy attitude that accommodates both winning and losing with measured acceptance and grace is essential. Losing still stings; but when it is appreciated in the context of genuine growth opportunities, it will not destroy them.⁵

PROCEDURES

Consider some biblical examples of competition, both good and bad. There was competition between Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, and to some extent we could say that God allowed competition between Himself and Satan for the loyalty of Job and for the love of the nation of Israel. There was an organized contest between David and Goliath, Elijah and the prophets of Baal, and the list goes on. In the New Testament, Jesus told parables that address competition. Luke 16 (the parable of the unjust steward), and Luke 19 (the parable of the stewards whose master went on a long journey) are both interesting in the context of competition. Paul uses competition in many contexts to explain the Christian's walk. Consider for example 1 Corinthians 9:24–26, Philippians 2:14–16 and 3:12–14, Hebrews 12:1, 2 Timothy 2:5 and 4:7, and Galatians 2:2 and 5:7.

Good competition has an aim for a worthy goal with integrity and courage. God calls each person to live out his full potential, and He challenges him to keep improving his personal best (Philippians 3:12). God does not measure an individual in comparison with other individuals. In fact, we're taught that it is foolish to do so (2 Corinthians 10:12). Consider the parable in Matthew 13 of the seed that brings forth varying amounts of fruit or the parables in Matthew 25 and Luke 16 of the stewards' rewards .

As adults we need to model healthy attitudes towards competition, encourage effort and improvement over winning, teach that talent is a gift from the Lord, go individual, cherish diversity, teach goal-setting, take advantage of the fundamentals as object lessons to talk about growth (physically, socially, and spiritually), never measure individual worth by comparison, view mistakes as opportunities, encourage reasonable risk-taking, and do all to the glory of God.⁵

A Christian's view of competition is different from the world's view, but it doesn't preclude being a champion. An excellent article by Steve Watters suggests that a Christian has a different concept of the scoreboard, a different attitude towards opponents, and a different perception of the prize.⁶

TRAINING NEEDED

Have a plan. Adults can set up competition to be healthy or unhealthy by how they set up the game. Rules need to be fair, participation should be high, play should be safe, the goal should be clear, and play should be fun. In order for play to be fun, the score will be close, the rules will be simple, the game will look big, the game will move fast, and the game will end with them wanting more.⁷

Have a goal. If you don't have a specific goal that you want to accomplish by using the tool, you might be slowing the progress of individuals and your group towards your ultimate goal. There are hundreds of viable goals for your competition. Among them are physical health, selflessness, excellence, unity, individual growth, teamwork, integrity, etc. It is not enough to just compete because you've always done it.

Know the tool. It is often misused. If the only way for an individual to win is for the rival to fail, it won't drive them to excellence; it will cause them to hope for weak opponents. If the competition glorifies self, it violates God's laws (1 Corinthians 10:31). Competition that is not structured, with no rules that govern behavior and no agreed-upon outcome will result in a destructive scramble. If winning is valued over participation and growth, anything less is failure. When the risk of failure is too great, willingness to try new things and take creative risks will be inhibited. When the pressure to win is too intense, it hinders interpersonal skills, narrows the community, and results in self-aggrandizing. Carried into our society this results in a loss of acts of kindness and trust, impatience, and even aggression in places like the highway or in lines for seasonal sales. The idea that an opponent is not the enemy, and the real competition is to excel as a steward

of your talents is one that is not natural. It must be taught. If competition can be aggressive without individuals becoming aggressors, competitors could truly thank the Lord together for the opportunity to bring Him glory through the game.

Living by Christian principles isn't a handicap, it should in fact be the factor that frees us to excel. The phrase "it's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game" isn't just a consolation for losers, it is truth! God's scoreboard is eternal; every word, every action, in every setting of our entire life will be judged by His higher law and the ultimate goal of the game is to bring Him glory.⁸ Use competition as a precious tool, it has a God-given purpose and a God-prepared place in each individual's life!

Notes

1. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.vv. "Competition," "Emulous."
2. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed., s.v. "Compete."
3. *Ibid.*, s.v. "Healthy."
4. *Webster's*, s.v. "Health."
5. Ray L Dusseau, "The Battle with Competition," Northwestern Publishing House (2006), <http://online.nph.net/cgi-bin/site.pl?10210&articleID=417>.
6. Steve Watters, "Can Christians be Winners?" Boundless Webzine (2003), http://www.boundless.org/2002_2003/features/a0000715.html.
7. Mike Ames, "Philosophy Can Be Fun," *The Brain for Youth Leaders 1* (2002): Right Brain-3.
8. Steve Watters, "Can Christians be Winners?" Boundless Webzine (2003), http://www.boundless.org/2002_2003/features/a0000715.html.

Other Resources

1. Robert Banks and R. Paul Stevens, "Competition," *Complete Book of Everyday Christianity* (Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1997), <http://www.ivmdl.org/cbec.cfm?study=40>.
2. Robin Klay and Christopher Gryzen, "Six Economic Myths Heard from the Pulpit," *Christian Century*, February 22, 1995, 204-208, <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=328>.

PUTTING THE *PASTOR* BACK IN YOUTH PASTOR

RE-APPROACHING YOUTH MINISTRY

What is missing in our day and age of contemporary, twenty-first century youth ministry? Youth ministry has certainly come a long way from its bold beginnings in the late nineteenth century to present day. We have seen a lot in the way of methods, programs, and models. Today, we have graduate and post-graduate degrees in youth ministry. Seminars, conventions, and youth worker retreats are available and useful. We have books, websites, blogs—everything under the sun. Yet often there is a missing element. We know that it is not a new method, or even a renewed emphasis on “relational” ministry. Often, what really ought to change is not our method, our philosophy, or even our theology. What ought to change is us—the youth pastors.

Perhaps what is needed is a return to a basic understanding of our Biblical calling. The calling to pastor –to shepherd – is a high calling indeed. Pastoring adults, pre-adults, or children is still pastoring. The subjects, or as we may say, the sheep we pastor doesn’t make our work any less significant or valid, just different – and maybe not as different as we have assumed.

What we are talking about here is our approach. How we view the ministry, ourselves, and those to whom we seek to minister is at the very core of our success or failure.

What Youth Pastoring Is Not (Yet often Becomes)

Drill Instructor—beat down and bust up, discipline without love

Probation officer—make sure they don’t get in trouble, expect the worst

Entertainment/Activity Director—give ‘em a good time, whatever you do to get them you must continue doing to keep them

“Big Brother” Volunteer—be a buddy, love without discipline

REVISITING THE BIBLICAL ROLE OF THE (YOUTH) PASTOR

1. What terms does the Bible use to describe (youth) pastors and their work? The following biblical terms describe and define the (youth) pastorate—
 - a. Pastor/teacher—Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 4:11, 13, 16
 - b. Elder—Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Peter 5:1
 - c. Shepherd—1 Peter 5:2–4
 - d. Overseers—1 Timothy 3:1–7
 - e. Minister/servant—2 Corinthians 4:5; Colossians 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:24

How does meditation on these terms help to reshape our conception of your ministry to youth?

How do these terms help to define your role more clearly?

Which terms are you incarnating in your ministry? Which ones need incarnation?

2. What does the Bible give as the scope of pastoral (youth) work? The scope of pastoral (youth) work (based on Matthew 28:18–20, Ephesians 4:11–16 and 1 Thessalonians 1:5–2:14) is equipping maturing disciples for ministry so that the church will likewise be growing and healthy and moving forward in the plan God has for it so that God may be glorified.
 - a. Evangelism
 - b. Initial Discipleship
 - c. Ministry Training/Instruction
 - d. Ministry Practice/OJT
 - e. Ministry Modeling/Mentoring

In which of these areas does the programming of your local church's youth ministry meet these needs?

Which can be met within the program and which can be met outside of it?

How can you evaluate the effectiveness of the program in relation to these areas?

RE-EVALUATING YOUR PASTORAL WORK

The biblical encouragement to view your ministry to young people as shepherding them will provide abundant insight into your work.

1. Faithful shepherds know their sheep—not merely as subjects of academic study and research but as tender creatures that they long to know and love.
2. Faithful shepherds know where to find food and shelter for the sheep. They are patient, purposeful, and consistent in leading their sheep so that they are fed and protected.
3. Faithful shepherds know and watch for dangers. They are protective and proactive when it comes to the flock. They never test things out on their sheep, nor do they take unnecessary risks with them. They are always willing to do whatever necessary to protect and defend the helpless sheep.
4. Faithful shepherds know how to lead. They don't drive and push them for they know that sheep follow. They know their sheep individually, and lovingly they direct and guide them as they lead the way forward.
5. Faithful shepherds aren't in their positions for anything other reasons but for the sake of the flock. Further career advances, money, fame, self-satisfaction, and power hold no attraction to the true shepherd. Love is the motivating factor behind their continual presence.

Things to Remember

1. Results are rarely immediate, seldom seen, but promised to be.
2. The small things really do matter.

- a. Negatively—careless words, minor criticisms, misunderstood glances/expressions, avoided questions, unattended events
 - b. Positively—notes of encouragement, phone calls, e-mails, home visits, grabbing a bite to eat, running an errand together, words of praise, humorous memories, nicknames
3. Faithfulness and consistency go a long way, especially in this dysfunctional-family era.

Areas of Discernment

1. Know when to be a prod (admonisher-motivator) and when to be a pillow (listener-sympathizer).
2. Every story has more than one side (incredible disparity between a parent and a teen describing the same event).
3. If good help is hard to find; then godly, compassionate help is even more difficult to find. But it is worth the effort!
4. Never ASSUME, SUPPOSE, or GUESS—always COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE!

Books that Will Encourage You in Your Pastoral Work

1. *The Minister as Shepherd* by Charles Jefferson. Christian Literature Crusade, 158 pages, \$8.99 (ISBN 0875087744).
2. *The Training of the Twelve* by Alexander B. Bruce. McGraw-Hill © 1979, \$6.95 (ISBN 0879832061).
3. *They Call Me Pastor* by HB London and Neil B. Wiseman. Gospel Light © 2000, 279 pages, \$14.99, (ISBN 0830723900).
4. *The Reformed Pastor* by Richard Baxter and Richard C. Halverson, ed. James M. Houston. Regent College © 2001, 184 pages, \$24.95, (ISBN 1573832014).

SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

The Pastor's Job Description

Ephesians 4:11–16 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

1. Pastoring is a God-given calling (v. 11).
2. Pastoring has for it God-ordained goals (vv. 12–13).
3. Pastoring will produce God-glorifying results (vv. 14–16).

The Heart of the Shepherd

1 Peter 5:1–4 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among

you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

The youth pastor must serve willingly (v. 2).

The youth pastor must serve eagerly (v. 2).

The youth pastor must serve attractively (v. 3).

The Self-discipleship of the Pastor

1 Timothy 4: 6, 11–16 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1. The youth pastor must feed himself before he can feed others (v. 6).
2. The youth pastor must discipline himself before he can properly teach discipline to others (vv. 7–8).
3. The youth pastor must offer himself (vv. 9–14).
4. The youth pastor must examine himself (vv. 15–16).

TIPS FOR BUSY MOMS

Although we are different in our personalities, backgrounds, families, responsibilities, and even values, we as servants of the Lord are alike in many of our goals for our families.

1. We desire our homes to be a place that our families want to dwell.

Proverbs 14:1 Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

2. We desire homes of peace with a testimony of Christlikeness.

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

3. We desire to glorify God in our homes and in our mothering.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

4. We realize that people, not things, matter.

Matthew 6:20-21 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

5. And, we realize that the work of biblical mothering and homemaking can only be done through God's power—Proverbs 3:5-6; John 15:5.

We spend time and energy on what we value, and what is of great value to one person may be seen as something to discard by another person. Listed below are some tips for busy mothers, some of a survival nature and some of a more practical nature. In defining the real value of some of these ideas, we may use the formula:

$$\text{VALUE} = \text{BENEFIT} \div \text{COST}$$

Value equals benefit divided by cost. In using that formula I have concluded that some of the tips listed below may cost something and require hard work, but the benefits far outweigh the cost and work. Some of the “tips” are truly essential to success and survival in the process of building our homes. Others are ideas you may or may not want to adopt; they are simply ideas.

SURVIVAL TIP #1

Recognize and discard the greatest robbers of energy and productivity.

1. Worry versus trust—Proverbs 3:5-6
2. Critical spirit versus thankful spirit—Philippians 4:6-7
3. Guilt versus clear conscience—John 7:17

Beware of too many activities; make proactive decisions. Learn to say no. Pray before you make decisions, wait on the Lord, then make the decisions according to His leading and sound counsel. If there is sin in your life, repent. Your body was not made for carrying guilt.

Micah 6:8 He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

How?

1. Have a consistent quiet time with the Lord—Psalm 37:4-5.
2. Establish open communication with your husband about your schedule, his and your expectations, and family concerns. Work for balance. Keep life simple—Titus 2:4-5, the workings of companionship with spouse.
3. Practice praying without ceasing—1 Thessalonians 5:17.

SURVIVAL TIP #2

Eat together as a family. Take time for things that matter.

1. Learn to cook healthy and economically.
2. Learn to cook simply with staple goods.

How?

1. Make grocery lists by the order of the store on paper or your PDA.
2. Make a list by categories of what you know how to cook; make a list of a few goals of learning new recipes or methods.
3. Keep an inventory of staple goods in your pantry.
4. Keep a leftover container for soup in freezer.
5. Double up on some recipes and freeze the extra portion.
6. Check out Make-a-Mix cookbooks.
7. Buy meat only when on sale, and learn to use different cuts of meat.
8. Buy a good, basic cookbook—Betty Crocker, Fanny Farmer, or Better Homes.

SURVIVAL TIP #3

Make bedtime and rising time regular, established, calm, and hassle free.

1. Regular bedtime routines benefit everyone—your child, yourself, and your marriage.
2. Hassle-free getting up starts the day out right.
3. Have a plan and follow the plan, especially with younger children.
4. “Planned” flexibility can be part of your plan; un-routine situations are good teaching tools.

How?

1. Establish the normal bedtime for each child—different times for different ages.
2. Work backwards as to when other routines (baths, homework, etc.) need to be finished.
3. Teach children the routine for “prepare for bed.”
4. If they take longer than the allotted time, start earlier the next evening.

5. Buy personal alarm clocks for each child; give bonuses for getting up on time.
6. If ten minutes late in morning, go to bed earlier.

SURVIVAL TIP #4

Learn organizational skills.

1. Curb the clutter. Clutter and disorganization are some of the chief causes of family fights. Getting organized as a family is one of the best things you can do to maintain peace. Lost bills, homework assignments, tests to be signed, college applications, etc., are the causes of much tension and stress in the family.
 - a. Clutter patrol—ten minutes every night for the whole family. If children are not cooperating, take away television or other activity. Set a timer; if everything is done by the time timer sounds, give small prizes (choose afternoon video, bake cookies with Mom, etc.).
 - b. Paper box lid—emergency de-clutter tool.
 - c. Command central—designated place for papers, books, permission slips, homework, and receipts. Use folders, in-boxes or stacking trays for each member of the family. Have a three-ring binder with a double-sided pocket folder for each family member—to-do (such as paper on competition or field trip) on one side and reference papers (such as lunch menus, class lists or schedules) on the other side.
2. Make lists.
 - a. Numbers list—size of table, vacuum cleaner model number, razor model, mop head replacement, paint on particular projects, bobbins and needles for sewing machine, cosmetic colors and numbers, ink cartridge, etc.
 - b. Gift (wish) lists for family and friends.
 - c. Size and preference list for family and friends.
 - d. Leave-house checklist.
 - e. Babysitter list.
 - f. Travel checklist.
3. Use one calendar with everything on it—church, work, guests, birthdays, vacation, family business, school activities, etc.
4. Prepare for next use.
 - a. Think—not just putting away, but setting up for the next use: backpacks, lunch pails, diaper bags, keys, purse, briefcase, etc.
 - b. Night before preparation—clothes, including underwear and socks; backpacks packed with all necessary papers, permission slips, books, pencils, etc.; lunches made and waiting in refrigerator.
 - c. Keep cleaning products where you use them.
5. Don't be afraid of using technology for organizing.

- a. Keep good backups.
 - b. Reminders for regular household maintenance—oil change for car; check smoke detector batteries.
 - c. Address and phone books.
 - d. Project list with needed items listed.
 - e. Medical history of each family member.
 - f. Special days list—birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
 - g. Idea list—teaching subjects, hospitality ideas, word pictures for teaching, menus, shortcuts.
 - h. Recommended book list.
6. Make it easy for husband and children to put things in place.
- a. Coats—on a peg-type hanger close to the door.
 - b. Shoes—in bins or racks close to the door.
 - c. Towels—on peg-type hanger rather than bar.
 - d. Hanging shoe bag for small items—gloves, hats, scarves.
 - e. Backpack—peg-type hanger.
 - f. Credit card receipts—one place, easy to access.
 - g. Put it where you use it—bills, receipts, back packs, arts and craft supplies, shoes, stapler, calculator.
7. Make the most of minutes.
- a. If you have small children that need supervision during bath time, clean the bathroom when they are in the tub.
 - b. Do grocery shopping while waiting for kids at practices, piano lessons, etc.
 - c. Write notes while waiting at the doctor or at the school.
 - d. Clip coupons while watching news.
8. Learn to use the timer.
- a. Showers and baths.
 - b. Five-minute tasks—de-clutter one room or area, clean a glass door, shake rugs, remove old food from refrigerator, wipe down microwave, clean computer and television screens.
 - c. Clean for thirty minutes in this room—no more.
 - d. Piano practice.
 - e. Homework.

- f. Getting ready for school.
 - g. Time different activities (play outside, play in their room, play on the computer, etc.) and set the timer for each activity. Alternate activities every thirty minutes, so that they stay interested and busy.
 - h. Split up kids at least thirty minutes a day and have them play independently of each other (in room, outside, in living room, etc.). Allowing them some time alone helps to eliminate bickering.
 - i. Bedtime—can whisper or read until timer goes off.
9. Make travel time count.
- a. Keep activities and music in the car; memorize Scripture.
 - b. Have a plan for who sits where to cut down on the bickering. Rotate daily or weekly.
 - c. Leave the car clean—every time. Remove trash, personal items, toys, food, and books.
10. Make laundry a family chore.
- a. Make placing dirty clothes in hamper easy. Every little bit helps.
 - b. Teach everyone to place items in dirty clothes turned right side out with empty pockets.
 - c. Make separating socks easier by washing in laundry bags, buying different colors or different stripes, or mark with laundry marker. Do the same with underwear.
 - d. Teach children to fold own clothes and put away.
 - e. Plan so you can take laundry out of the dryer immediately so it will not need a lot of ironing.

SURVIVAL TIP #5

Teach children organizational skills and how to work.

1. Understand the readiness factor—hopefully . . . eventually, the child will learn to do the tasks; the parent must proceed with teaching even when learning does not seem to be taking place.
2. Understand the multiplication factor—hopefully . . . eventually, you and your children doing work together will multiply the work getting done. Only at first does the subtraction factor come into play.
3. Use variety in your methods of teaching, accountability, and praising.

How?

1. Teach your children how to take care of what they have and how to get rid of what they do not need. Each child will be different about this delicate process. Do every step and complete them in order.
 - a. **Sort and Purge**—go through all possessions, grouping similar items. Get rid of the duplicates, excess, undesirable, and irrelevant. Keep what they really use and love; get rid of the rest.
 - b. **Assign a home**—decide where each item they are keeping will live. Use bins, baskets, and cubbies to organize and facilitate cleanup.
 - c. **Maintain and update** your plan to keep up with changing interests and needs. If you have a child who keeps everything, help them to organize in containers that can be put aside in storage. Help them to organize memorabilia, photos, and collections so they do not become clutter.

2. Task box—chores listed such as “fold clothes” on 3x5 cards; each child draw equal number of cards; may swap chores. Reward yourself at the end of the week. Chores for younger children on a different color card.
3. Chore list—rather than verbally giving chores to children, make lists. Lists have an end and can be marked off. For some children, just marking off is motivation.
4. Inspector Dad—set up Dad to be the inspector of chores. Make him an inspection list and clue him in on some of your goals with the children. Report the results of chore charts to him each week.
5. Accountability for chores—decide and communicate ahead of time which chores are done because a child is part of the family and which chores may receive pay, the consequence of not doing the chore, which tasks are optional, etc. Rewards for doing a good job are good motivations, but they can be over-used; a verbal “good job” goes a long way. Rewards do not need to be communicated ahead of time; let some of them be surprises.

Resources

Help Wanted for Busy Moms by Barbara Mang

Making Your Home a Haven by Cyndy Salzmann

Neat Mom, Messie Kids by Sandra Felton

Parenting with Purpose by Margaret Buchanan

Teaching Children Responsibility by Walt Brock

WORKING WITH PARENTS OF REBELLIOUS TEENS

Before we start—as you approach this topic, keep in mind the focus of The Youth Leader's Brain and the Youth Leaders' Retreat is to aid and assist lay youth leaders who do the job of a youth leader without the pay, time, and sometimes the education. This is not going to be directed for fulltime staff who have had college ministry training and opportunities for counseling classes and personal mentoring.

Imagine yourself sitting in a restaurant. A child begins choking on what is presumably food; and the mother, being hysterical, is clearly immobile. In looking around, there seems to be no one else to help; now the child is not breathing. What will you do? You could call 911, and the paramedics will arrive . . . but not soon enough. You step in, do the Heimlich, and dislodge a chicken nugget, restoring air flow. As emergency CPR classes have made the difference in countless lives, in the same sense God may have placed you to bring needed crisis assistance in another's life through biblical counsel—no matter how much you might wish it were someone else—if for only a short time.

Common fears and excuses which keep people from giving good counsel—

1. I must be confident in counseling.
2. I must have all the answers, and I don't know where I'd begin.
3. I must have everything together without any present struggles.
4. I can only help if I have gone through the same problem.
5. I must have a counseling education in order to be an effective counselor.
6. If I cannot give a definitive answer right now, I cannot help.
7. I would rather not counsel than risk a mistake.

What you need—

1. Compassion to be willing to respond to a need.
2. An attitude of humility knowing that you can make mistakes but in His grace God can use you.
3. An understanding that God has all the answers, but that it may take a while for you to find them in His Word.
4. Willingness to say, "I am not sure how to handle this, but I will find out or find someone else who can help."
5. Total confidence in the Word of God's ability to solve man's problems.
6. Faithfulness in increasing your knowledge of the Word of God.
7. Patience with those you are helping.
8. Willingness to allow God to grow you in this area.

CPR classes are for ordinary people who are not doctors to receive training to help in an emergency situation long enough for the professionals to arrive. In many cases, a person not confident in handling crisis situa-

tions can act on a few trained steps to save a life. For example, to aid a person choking or a person who is not breathing. In some cases, the assistance may completely solve the problem; in another, it may only buy more time. Sometimes nothing can be done to save the individual, but the steps are taken to discover that.

This workshop is intended to be like a CPR class. You can take a few key and important steps to begin to help someone in a problem situation who is looking to you for help. Remember that people do not expect you to have all the answers, but they would like some good advice from someone they trust.

A PLACE TO BEGIN

Here is a helpful model of counseling used at Ironwood which will give you a place to start in addressing an issue and steps to get you to a solution.

1. Understand the problem
2. Give hope
3. Present a decision
4. Make a plan

DEALING WITH THE CRISIS

Usually a person will not come for help until he is at the end of his rope, and the problem is full blown and doing great damage. This is a difficult place to start. As you realize the starting place, do not get impatient with the time it may take to properly address a problem that may have been building for years. A person cannot *talk* himself out of a situation he *acted* himself into. Solutions take time. Rebellion is very devastating to those who are involved. The solution includes everyone working together to rebuild the relationship to what God intends; they may be slow to believe they can rebuild it.

DIAGNOSING REBELLION

In diagnosing rebellion, we can see several traits identified as rebellion by the Scriptures. A study of the lives of Israel, Saul, and Absalom will paint a clear picture of rebellion from the perspective of brother, king, father, and son. (For further study, study the life of Cain.)

Deuteronomy 31:27 For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?

1. Consistent even disciplined in refusal to do right.
2. Boldness in disobedience.

1 Samuel 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

3. Rejection of the clear commands of God.
4. Blames others rather than accepting personal responsibility—1 Samuel 15:21.
5. Justifies the action rather than repenting from the wrong.
6. Self-serving and self-seeking even after great loss.
7. Interested in maintaining image even when the reality is gone—1 Samuel 15:30.
8. Jealous of the righteous.

Nehemiah 9:17 And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.

9. Forgetful of goodness received.
10. Seeks to remove and replace God-ordained leadership.

Jeremiah 29:32 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; because he hath taught rebellion against the LORD.

11. Enlists others in his way.
12. Tends to play the role of the biblical fool—he lives as if there is no God. Over time, the rebellion can manifest all the characteristics of the fool. Saul's last days are a horrible example of the end of a rebel, fighting the wrong enemy and so uncertain in his direction that he seeks a witch for help.

Parents and authorities should be very careful when making a statement that someone is a rebel or rebellious. Often childishness, youthful immaturity, and rebellion can look similar in at first glance. Rebellion has with it the idea of a set and purposeful act, often with defiance. If you label a teen that acted without thought as a rebel, you may wound a spirit and plant the seeds of rebellion.

CONTRIBUTORS TO REBELLION

Scripture records in 2 Samuel 13-19 the making of a rebel. Since our focus is helping parents with rebellious teens, we will look at mistakes a father made in parenting. Parents should be aware of the fact that their choices may be highly instrumental in their children's choices in life.

Actions that opened the door wide to rebellion—

1. A bad example—sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah. This prior sin seemed to limit David's action, because his previous guilt resulted in the inability to act against sin in ways he would have before his sin. This created a paralysis in parenting that set horrible things in action.
2. A lack of proper response to Amnon's sin.
3. A lack of personal involvement in his family.
4. Sorrow without communication.
5. Removal of relationship and no opportunity for restoration.

Thoughts for parents to consider when dealing with a rebellious teen—

1. Be willing to examine one's life for areas he has provoked a child to wrath.
2. Be willing to seek forgiveness of all sin toward the teen.
3. Be more focused on a solution than on making a case against the teen.
4. Correct without wrath.
5. Be willing to listen to the teen without defensiveness.
6. Be long in praise and short in rebuke. Expound on the behavior that is praiseworthy, and deal with the sin efficiently and concisely.

7. Recognize the relationship between sinful attitudes and sinful actions.
8. Love consistently, even when love is not reciprocated. Love as God loves.
9. Be willing to forgive and be gracious when forgiveness is sought.
10. Initiate the restoration process when sin has been confessed.
11. Encourage the next step without making the act difficult.
12. Be principled in decision.
13. Be fervent in prayer.
14. The more time spent in correcting a teen for disobedience the greater the need to notice and praise when he has done the right things.
15. Be quick to praise.
16. Be approachable and accessible not distant.
17. Invest in the relationship with time and money.
18. Be faithful to obeying God rather than pleasing the teen.
19. Expect God to work.
20. Be realistic in expectations.
21. Be a model and mentor.
22. Carefully eliminate contributing factors to the teen's rebellion.
23. Increase relationship when the teen withdraws.
24. Be proactive not reactive.

THE PORTRAIT OF A GOD-HONORING TEEN

Parents should be encouraged to ask, "What would my teen look like walking with God? What appropriate expectations should I have of my teen?" In his book *Age of Opportunity*, Paul Tripp describes an attainable goal for children: "Our goal is to raise children who live very aware of the spiritual world. We want to be used of God to produce young adults who understand the spiritual implications of everything they do. Our goal is to produce children who exist in the world of the seen, but who live for what cannot be seen, touched or tasted." He then describes five qualities of a spiritual warrior.

1. He will have a heartfelt, internalized fear of God. "He does what he does because God is, and He has spoken," Paul Tripp.
2. He will have a submission to authority.
3. He will be separated from the wicked.
4. He must be more than a person who has acquired biblical knowledge; he needs to be a person who approaches life with biblical wisdom.

5. He is biblically self-aware. “We want to produce teens who examine themselves regularly in the perfect mirror of God’s Word and who can humbly accept what is revealed there,” Paul Tripp.

If this is the end product of what is possible through God’s grace, careful instruction with acceptance, correct cooperation of God (in a sense), parent, and child each doing their part and allowing the others to have their part, what will this teen “look” like at age fifteen, ten, five, etc.? What should you look like to get this picture of the possibility of this across?

PLACING THE MODEL IN THE MOMENT

Let’s now take a moment to flesh out what counseling may look like. There are no magic formulas or perfect recipe.

Victory is dependent on the people involved applying biblical principles in every situation until the relationship is restored.

This involves breaking old habits and learning new ones.

- **Pray!** Implore God for His wisdom and instruction.
- **Listen** without immediate comment.
- **Ask** enough specific questions to begin to grasp and understanding of the problem. It may take more than one meeting to grasp the root problem, but there may be smaller problems that must be dealt with before addressing the root problem.
- **Wait** to give advice until you have heard the whole story. This may mean you will have to talk with someone else who is not there before you go on. Don’t allow the time to go too long. Establish a time limit before the meeting begins.
- **Encourage.** Apply biblical insights, instruction, or promises to the immediate issue. This may be done through asking open-ended questions and allowing the people to discover the answer themselves from Scripture. Encourage them with the truth that with God problems can be resolved. Victory can be had.
- **Review.** Sum up what has just happened. Let them know where they are in the process. Counseling may take a session or two just to understand the root problem. For each party involved, present some steps that need to happen in the process of solving this problem of rebellion.
- **Develop a plan.** Everyone needs to have a plan of action—even the counselor. Give each person something to work on concerning getting to the solution. Work patiently one step at a time.
- **Continue until the problem is resolved.**

As God uses you to bring assistance by asking questions and assisting people in seeking God’s principles and applying them to their situation, you will find that God’s Word properly used and applied works and can work through you. This will bring more opportunities; therefore, seek, learn, and grow in this area from good counselors, good counseling classes, and well-written books. In this area I would encourage reading *The Heart of Anger* by Lou Priolo, *Shepherding a Child’s Heart* by Ted Tripp, *Becoming an Effective Christian Counselor* by Walter Fremont, and *Handbook on Counseling Youth* by Josh McDowell and Bob Hostetler.

CONNECTING TO PARENTS

As a young youth pastor, I was told that one of the greatest obstacles in ministry would be the parents of the young people in my youth group. This statement has always created an unsettled feeling in my heart. Unfortunately, this statement may represent an underlying attitude in youth ministry today. As I set out to find material that was helpful in reaching the parents of the students to whom I minister, I found that there was a lack of information that would encourage me to connect to parents. As I set out to build relationships with the parents represented in my ministry, I found that these relationships are among the most important relationships I could build. In graduate school I sat with prominent youth workers in the contemporary evangelical church as well as leaders in popular, para-church organizations and found that many of these leaders had no plan for connecting to the parents of the students they served. Connecting to parents in many youth ministries happens by accident and lacks the relationship and sharing of information that is necessary to serve the family of the twenty-first century.

A later meeting with another youth pastor brought a different piece of advice to me about this relationship: this friend told me that parents are in fact the people for whom I work. This made sense to me and has caused me to create habits in my ministry that will strengthen the relationships I have with parents. The following are proven habits that have enabled our ministry to bridge a gap that previously existed.

HABIT #1—BE INFORMATIVE

A weakness in my personal ministry seemed to be in the area of communicating the calendar and events of the youth ministry to the parents. I found that the attendance during an activity, a service, or even a camp suffered greatly when I neglected to inform the parents about what was happening. When parents were properly informed, students were more likely to attend. I find that making calendars for parents, sending e-mails, or even putting the announcement before the entire church increases the attendance at youth events.

Following are easy ways to connect to parents and inform them of the events taking place in your ministry:

1. Face-to-face conversation before or after services and activities—I find that parents want to know what is taking place and appreciate the youth leader taking time to talk with them personally.
2. Writing notes—Take a moment to write a simple note of encouragement or write a note that will serve as a reminder in order to help the parents be on top of things.
3. Cards—Simple cards and an enclosed a calendar, a note of thanks, or even a compliment are always a welcome gift from the youth leader.
4. E-mails—This is a simple way to keep parents in the loop. Create an address list with all your parents' e-mail addresses. You can write one note and send it to all of the addressees. If this is beyond your technical abilities, ask one of your students to assist you with this. It really is easy and a great way to save you time.

HABIT #2—BE KNOWLEDGEABLE

Another great way to connect to parents is by being knowledgeable concerning contemporary events that impact the life of their teen. A popular area to be informative about is the myspace.com phenomenon. Naïveness in this area and other similar areas will only lead to an ignorance that may harm the students. General areas that I have found myself to be researching are used to educate parents about these issues.

1. My Space
2. Internet issues and protection

3. CCM (Contemporary Christian Music)
4. Eating disorders
5. Culture
6. Impact of divorce on the teen
7. Dating
8. Self-image issues

The above list might seem too difficult to acquire information or knowledge about; but if you will keep your eyes open to articles, e-mails, books, etc., it will be easier than you might think. I usually try to keep some books on each of these topics in my office so that parents can borrow the books to educate themselves. My goal is to be a resource for parents so that their time is best used in teaching their child biblical values.

HABIT #3—BE ACCOUNTABLE

Don't be afraid to ask the parents in your ministry how you are doing. The parents want you to succeed because you are succeeding with their children. Find time to allow parents to evaluate every area of your ministry. Create forms that will allow the parents an outlet to offer suggestions. Every youth leader should allow himself to be held accountable by parents. Trust will increase when you are open with what you are doing and when parents feel that they have a part in the youth ministry. Tell parents that they are allowed to ask you the difficult questions. When the difficult questions come, don't be offended or surprised. As a youth leader, I am playing a huge role in the life of someone else's child. Realizing my role is a support role will take the edge off the offense we might feel.

HABIT #4—BE COMPLIMENTARY

Parents have an abundance of opportunities to hear what their child has done wrong. Make it a habit to praise the students in your ministry to the parents. No parent will refuse the adulation we give toward his child. This must be done with discretion and with the right motive: complimenting in order to gain the favor of a parent is manipulative and does not honor the integrity of good praise. Praising students should come from leaders who are genuinely interested in building strong relationships with parents. One reason we might find this difficult to do is our inability to see the good in our students. Make mental notes as well as written notes that remind you to encourage and praise for behavior, choices, and leadership qualities that are worthy of praise.

HABIT #5—BE AVAILABLE

This can be a two-edged sword. Availability requires discretion; you must have limits to the time, energy, and things you can offer. Being available in this respect is more about showing parents that you have made the effort to avail yourself to the needs of the student as well as the parent. You can show this quality in many great ways to the parents you serve. I believe one of the greatest ways a youth leader can practice this habit is to attempt to not isolate your ministry to the child. Neglecting this habit can be among the most damaging things a youth leader can do. Nurture this habit so that there is a level of trust that only availability can accomplish. Whether it is on Sunday during services or after an activity, make a conscious effort to prove to parents that you are there for them as well as their children. Here are some helpful ways to avail oneself to parents—

1. Meet for breakfast before going to work.
2. Go out after evening service for ice cream.
3. Offer helpful tips for connecting to their children.

4. Seek out parents at church.
5. Find common interests with parents.
6. Entertain families at the youth leaders home.
7. Invite parents to youth leaders' meetings.
8. Assign youth staff different parents to seek out so that all parents sense the ministry's availability to them.

HABIT #6—BE TEACHABLE

This can be one of the most powerful and resourceful tools a youth leader can utilize. A teachable youth leader will secure a place of ministry for years. Parents are a deep source of knowledge and experience that the youth leader should find beneficial to his ministry. Being teachable will show the parents that the youth leader is not a source of knowledge within himself. Parents are likely to be a little nervous entrusting their children to youth leaders that do not seek counsel or wisdom from the people to whom they are accountable. Allow parents to offer advice, counsel, and criticism about the ministry in which their children are involved. Understand that not all parents will fully agree with everything that is done in the youth ministry, but that does not mean the parents will not respect you and the ministry.

Every year we hold an all-night activity. One family does not agree with all-night activities, because they are concerned about their children being away from home at that time. I respectfully listen, heed, and cautiously enter the activity. There is awareness on our part that this can be a concern for some, but the same parents that are not in favor of this activity fully support the ministry in other areas. As a result of this habit, I have learned far more than I could have possibly imagined. This habit has also saved me from doing things that may have cost me the trust of the ones I am serving.

In youth ministry today there is a need to do ministry right, but there is also a lack of time to do some of these things. The above habits are easy to implement and practice even in a ministry that is without resources, money, staff, and time. The most effective youth leaders are those who make a diligent effort to connect to the parents of the students to whom they minister. In addition to this being a positive for youth ministry, it can also serve as a way to reach parents who are not believers. Look for ways to connect to all your parents, not just those you see on Sunday.

MODEL FOR EVANGELISM

Key Thoughts:

1. Understanding that evangelism and discipleship are inseparable.
2. It is necessary to train students to be aware of their own spiritual condition and the condition of those around them.
3. The world will know we are followers of Christ if we have love for one another.

OBJECTIVE ONE: SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. Identifying with God
2. Connecting with God
3. Deciding to develop a personal passion for God
4. Transforming life
5. Owning one's faith—fruit that bears more fruit

OBJECTIVE TWO: STUDENT MINISTRY GROWTH

1. Outreach
 - a. Quarterly events
 - 1) Super Bowl party
 - 2) Spring break all-nighter
 - 3) Back to school party
 - b. Monthly events
 - 1) Service projects
 - 2) Student outreach—surveys
 - 3) Low-income housing visitation—bus route
 - c. Weekly events
 - 1) Worship services
 - 2) Bible studies
 - 3) Sports, coffee shops, public schools
 - d. Daily events—individual students living out belief system in culture
2. In-reach
 - a. Levels of discipleship

- b. Moving students to where God desires them to be
- c. Reaching fringe students

OBJECTIVE THREE: EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP EVALUATION

Youth ministry is a great tool to evangelize and educate young people in our world today. Youth ministry is not above evaluation and certainly should be scrutinized in light of Scripture often. God expects successful ministry, but how can we be successful if we do not operate the way He has designed for us?

MODEL FOR MAKING IMPACT

Theology of Evangelism

Conflict of the concepts of Paul and the concepts of James—

1. Romans 3:28 states that your faith is alive without deeds.
2. James says the exact opposite.

The difference is the work that is being talked about is different. The faith is the same. Paul speaks of works being done in obedience to the Law of Moses, and *before* man's embracing the faith of the Gospel; James speaks of works being done in obedience *after* the Gospel has been received. What is James stressing to us?

James 2:14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works?

Live your life beyond what you believe.

1. Your belief system *alone* will not be enough to impact this generation—James 2:19.
2. Your belief system should *launch* you into action—verses 20-22.

Two examples James refers to—

- a. Abraham—verse 23.
 - b. Rahab—be willing to be taken out of your comfort zone to prove your faith—verse 25.
3. A belief system without *action* is dead—verse 26.

How can you make your mark for eternity right now? Live beyond what you believe and put action to your faith.

May we never be a church that is no longer on a mission and only supports missions. Erwin McManus

SMALL GROUP RETREATS

When was the last time you have seen teens choose to study their Bible over playing a game? Which of your teens purposely, recently chose to override their habits in order to begin a key spiritual habit? When have you last challenged your teens to attempt something they were not sure they could do, or would like to do only to discover they loved it? When have you seen teens in your group who do not “hang” with each other develop an unexpected friendship? When was the last time you could teach in the morning, at noon, and in the evening on one topic which you were able to build on? When was the last time you were able to plan food, games, and teaching to make one point? When have you prayed for an hour with your teens without it being difficult for them? These are things you might accomplish at one small group retreat.

WHY HAVE A YOUTH RETREAT?

1. To develop relationships
 - a. Youth leader and adult leadership
 - b. Youth leadership and teens
 - c. Peer relationships in the youth group
2. To teach
3. To encourage and reward participation
4. To serve
5. To challenge teens for growth
6. To unify the youth group
7. To extend the time spent with teens
8. To schedule to address times of spiritual need
9. To include and/or add new personalities in specific areas of ministry
10. To determine who your core leaders are
11. To impact any size group
12. To have a good tool for outreach and service

VALUES OF A RETREAT

1. Control of schedule
2. Training of leaders in specific areas
3. Opportunities to build and reveal creativity of youth
4. Opportunity to use a variety of people in their areas of strength

KEY ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE RETREAT

1. A time away from the norms of everyday living

2. A place where you can limit distractions
3. Adventure
4. Fun
5. A time to focus on God
6. A focus on communication
7. New experiences
8. Teaching that can build on the previous lesson
9. A limitation of bad influences
10. Time to focus on fellowship
11. A time to purposefully stretch teens

RETREAT IDEAS

1. Campouts
2. Backpack trips
3. Overnight rewards
4. Work retreat
5. Spiritual leadership retreat
6. Winter retreat
7. Father-son retreat
8. Church family campout
9. Singles' retreat

SETTING UP A SMALL GROUP RETREAT

1. Choose the purpose for the retreat.
 - a. Why are you doing this?
 - b. What are you trying to accomplish?
2. Choose the location.
 - a. What are the strengths?
 - b. What are the limitations?
 - c. What do you want to do?
 - d. What is the cost?

- e. How far is it?
- f. Does it need an additional insurance rider?
3. Choose the date.
 - a. When is the right time of year for this event?
 - b. What is the best date for teens?
 - c. What is the best date for sponsors?
 - d. What is the best date for families?
 - e. Where does it fit on the church calendar?
4. Evaluate your limitations and particular needs.
 - a. What are the sleeping arrangements like?
 - b. Are sleeping bags necessary?
 - c. What is the size of your group?
 - d. Will you limit the number of attendees?
5. Recruit your adult sponsors.
 - a. How many leaders are necessary?
 - b. How many can you include?
 - c. What is the breakdown between guys and girls?
 - d. Is anyone medically certified?
6. Estimate cost and set the price of the event.
 - a. How many are coming?
 - b. Are the leaders paying?
 - c. What is the cost of supplies?
 - d. What is the charge of the location?
 - e. What is the cost of meals?
 - f. Are there any activities that will require extra funds?
 - g. What kind of a budget do you have to work with?
7. Plan for transportation.
 - a. How many vehicles are needed?

- b. How many qualified drivers are coming?
- c. Who covers the cost of the gas?
8. Plan your meals.
 - a. What are the cooking arrangements?
 - b. What are the needed supplies?
 - c. How many meals? Which meals?
 - d. When do the meals fit in the schedule?
 - e. What are the expectations?
 - f. How much is the budget for meals?
9. Plan your message and spiritual emphasis.
 - a. What do you want to accomplish spiritually?
 - b. How will you do devotions?
 - c. What unique ways will you demonstrate spiritual truths?
 - d. Will you have a booklet for them to use?
 - e. Will you do a prayer walk or campfire testimonies?
10. Develop your schedule.
 - a. When do teens arrive?
 - b. When will the group leave?
 - c. When will the group return?
 - d. Will you need daylight in arriving?
 - e. How much time do you have to spend on the whole retreat?
 - f. How much time needs to be allotted for sleeping?
 - g. How can you best use your time to accomplish your goals?
11. Purchase Supplies
 - a. Meal
 - b. Recreational
 - c. Medical
12. Develop your information flyer with permission slip and medical release.

- a. How much time do parents need to know the specifics before the event?
- b. Present cost, time, focus, and location.

13. Delegate responsibilities

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

1. **Distance:** You must consider the balance of the right distance away. It should be far enough for adventure, but not so far that the majority of the time is spent in travel.
2. **Meals:** Will the teens brown bag the first meal? Will they participate in cooking or bring their own meals? What and where will you cook?
3. **Messages:** Who will you have speak at the retreat? Who will do the teaching—you, another youth leader, a parent, or a blend of people including one of the youth? You will have to plan for the type of decision you are presenting, and you will have to challenge the teens to grow with prayer and thought. Teens do not just make spiritual decisions. Make a place and a time to seek God. Give God your attention throughout the retreat. How will you expand them? What will you introduce spiritually? What special focus will you give to God?
4. **Theme:** Will you choose a theme for the leaders to work around and for the teens to focus on? Even small themes can add to your retreat: these can be spiritual or adventure. For example, “Having a Can-do Spirit,” “Being Content with My Circumstances,” or doing a mystery theme and continuing to add to or unravel the mystery during the retreat. It is amazing how things work out to prove those themes.
5. **Participation:** Giving people the opportunity to have impact on the retreat is a important thing to remember. Use parents, youth adult sponsors, and teens. Rotate jobs and blend people groups throughout the retreat. Have a “cooler crew” to locate, prepare, and at the end clean out the coolers that are always forgotten (great junior high job). Have a team for music even at a campout, a story crew, or a game group. You will have to plan far enough in advance to give away tasks with enough lead time for participants to do a good job.
6. **Adventure:** Will you use the outdoors or create a game time with adventure? Will you have night games, campfire stories, or hikes to count the bats in the old powerhouse? It is good to have some things that you do year after year for tradition. What traditions will you make? Again, use the teens attending to give you some ideas.
7. **Behavior:** Be clear on your expectations. Do not be afraid to set rules for the retreat; however, make them clear, concise, and easy to remember. Be prepared to enforce any rule you set. Address your expectation on guy-girl interaction and the limitation there. Set the tone by giving the purpose of the retreat and what you would like the teens to get out of the retreat.

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT

1. Opportunities to communicate and target certain teens.
2. Some conflict which will allow for teaching.
3. God to work though His Word with the teens.
4. Things to go wrong—accept them as opportunities.
5. Teens to grow and fail in their responsibilities.

6. Leaders to struggle at times and excel at others.
7. A great retreat without exactly being able to explain why.
8. Work—late nights and some early mornings.
9. Times of sweet prayer and answers to those prayers.
10. The rules to be tested, especially in early retreats.
11. Them to get better each time and more creative.
12. To be surprised by relationships built and unity developed—you can focus on that in the retreat.
13. Unique challenges.
14. Close fellowship of the adult leaders.
15. Your adult sponsors and parents to grow and make decisions.

You get out of a retreat what you put into it. The process of the retreat is often as beneficial as the retreat itself. Each retreat will differ; some will be highly scheduled while others will have only the hint of a schedule. Each retreat is a learning experience, and each will have its unique points as you plan.

TEEN IDENTITY CRISIS

Finding out who you are is a quest you have all been on at one time in your life. People everywhere struggle with self-esteem, self-worth, and significance. They long for someone to take an interest in them. They want to know how they fit into this world. One's identity is an important issue in life. Today, young people desiring to fit in and feel wanted are endeavoring to find out who they are. However, many individuals search for their identity and self-worth in things and places that leave them feeling empty. Should our development of self-esteem and self-worth be the same as the world's?

1. From the world's point of view identity is found in—
 - a. physical beauty and attractiveness.
 - b. successes in life (material wealth, possessions, etc.).
 - c. friendships (who you know).
 - d. abilities and talents.
 - e. acceptance by others (parents, peers, coaches, teachers, bosses, etc.).
2. From a biblical point of view identity is found in—
 - a. Christ.
 - b. God's Word.

Young people should not feel that they have to *do* all the right things to be accepted and approved by God. If they know Christ, they are accepted already. If they do not know Christ, then we have the privilege and opportunity to show how they can be set free from the unsuccessful cycle of attempting to please everyone and help them discover that God love them and accepts them. As a person, they are important to God.

1. Genesis 1:26-27
God created man in His own image
2. Psalm 139
 - a. God knows us—verses 1–6.
 - b. We are fearfully and wonderfully made—verse 14.
 - c. God continues to think positively about us—verse 17.

We are precious to God and have the opportunity to bring Him great pleasure.

Why do we struggle so much with our identity?

1. Sin
2. Self-worth (value)

3. Parental influences
4. Unrealistic expectations
5. Blame
6. Condemnation
7. Guilt
8. Confusion
9. Loneliness
10. Frustration
11. Abuse (physical, mental, verbal, neglect)
12. Overprotection
13. Self-perception (how we see ourselves; how we think others see us)
14. Improper thinking
15. Improper theology

Many times we believe and live as though we have to achieve some great thing on our own, apart from God. When we fail, we feel miserable. We then determine to make changes and we try again. When we fail, we determine to make more changes and try even harder. But is this really what discovering our identity is all about?

See Romans 7:4-6, Galatians 2:20-21, and Romans 9:30-10:4.

We are the righteousness of God equally. It is the result of the work He has done in us.

How can we help people understand their true identity? See John 8:32

1. Share the Good News of what Christ has done.
 - a. God's action on our behalf.
 - b. Christ's willingness to be our substitute.
 - c. The opportunity we have to possess a relationship with God.
2. Show them how to get out of the performance trap.
 - a. Feeling that I have to do certain things to feel good about myself.
 - b. Feeling like a loser because I have failed to reach certain goals.
 - c. 2 Corinthians 5:21.
 - d. Reveal to them that they are totally accepted.
 - 1) Romans 5:1—Christ's love for us has nothing to do with our actions.

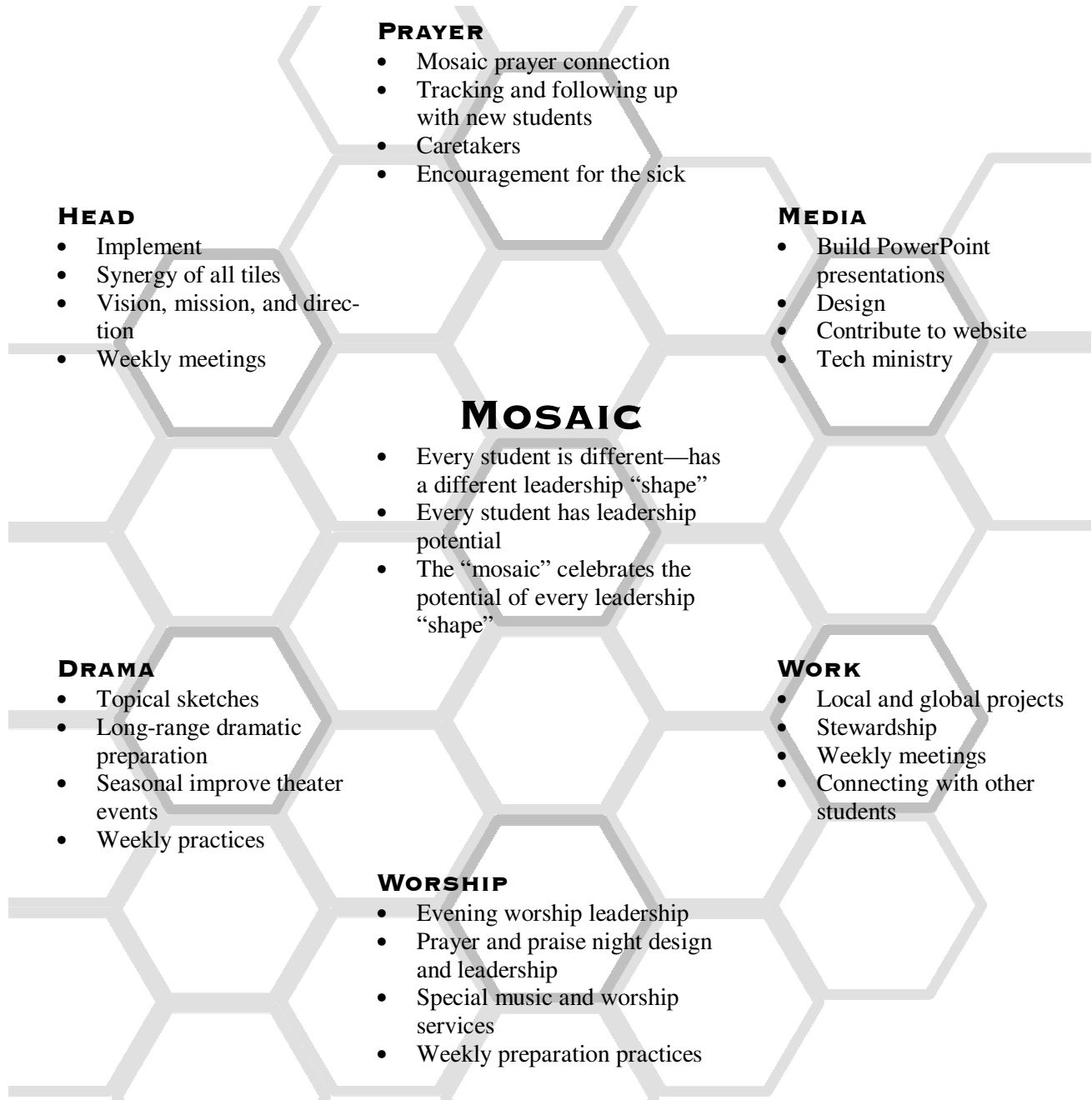
- 2) 2 Corinthians 5:21—we are right with God, because He has given us His righteousness.
 - 3) Colossians 1:21-22—we are pure and righteous and pleasing to God.
 - 4) Hebrews 10:17—we do not have to dwell on our past sins or present-day failures.
3. Show them that they do not have to live in fear of God.
 - a. God accepts anyone who comes to Him.
 - b. Illustration of Zacchaeus—Luke 19:1-10.
 - c. God has reconciled us to Himself; our sins are forgiven and forgotten.
 4. Show them that they have a choice.
 - a. Believe Satan's lies.
 - b. Believe God's truth.
 5. Show them that God's view of them will not change.

WHO AM I?

Psalm 23; 100	I am one of God's sheep and He takes care of all my needs.
Matthew 5:13	I am the salt of the earth.
Matthew 5:14	I am the light of the world.
John 1:12	I am a child of God.
John 15:1-5	I am part of the true vine.
John 15:15	I am Christ's friend.
John 15:16	I am chosen by God.
Acts 1:8	I am a witness for Christ.
Romans 6:18	I am a servant of righteousness.
Romans 6:22	I am a servant to God.
Romans 8:14-15	I am a son of God.
Romans 8:17	I am a joint heir with Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:16	I am God's temple.
1 Corinthians 6:17	I am joined unto the Lord and am one spirit with Him.
1 Corinthians 12:27	I am a member of the body of Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:17	I am a new creation.
2 Corinthians 5:18-19	I am reconciled to God by Jesus Christ.
Galatians 3:26, 28	I am a child of God and am made one in Christ.
Galatians 4:6-7	I am a son and an heir of God.
Ephesians 1:1	I am a saint.
Ephesians 2:10	I created by Christ Jesus in Christ Jesus.
Ephesians 2:19	I am a fellow citizen with other saints.
Ephesians 3:1; 4:1	I am a prisoner of Christ.
Ephesians 4:24	I am righteous and holy.
Colossians 3:3	I am hidden with Christ.
Colossians 3:12	I am holy, part of the elect of God.
1 Thessalonians 5:5	I am a child of light.
Hebrews 3:14	I am a partaker of Christ.
1 Peter 2:9-10	I am chosen by God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.
1 Peter 2:11	I am a stranger and a pilgrim in this land.
1 Peter 5:8	I am an adversary of the devil.
1 John 3:1-2	I am called a son of God and I will be like Him when He comes for me.
1 John 5:18	I am born of God.

MOSAIC

REDISCOVERING STUDENT LEADERSHIP



GETTING STARTED

1. The significance—It is important for believers to know and use their spiritual gift in the body of Christ.
2. Mosaic: What it is—Mosaic is a student ministry that enables each student to find their best way of connecting to God and then being plugged into a group with others.

3. Mosaic: How it works—Mosaic is powered by “tiles” that are built around giftedness and serving opportunities that are centered around the uniqueness of each group.

GETTING THERE

One of the most important elements in the first century church was centered on the spiritual gifts that each believer possessed. Many of the gifts have long passed; however, there are gifts that are very relevant in the church today. Helping students connect to those gifts at an early age will accomplish the following—

1. Spiritual maturity
2. Spiritual gift understanding
3. Connection to the body of Christ that will last longer than the youth group years
4. Learn the uniqueness of each believer
5. Learn that each believer is necessary in the body of Christ

Be honest with yourself and your ministry. Are you currently training students in the area of leadership? The following are a list of questions that will prepare you for a new student leadership model.

1. Is your current leadership model worn out?
2. Are you driven by programs or by relationships?
3. Are you living inside the “rule of three”?
4. Is your ministry to your staff, to your parents, and to your students separate?

THE MOSAIC—WHAT IT IS

Mosaic is built on three realities:

1. Every student is different and therefore has a different leadership shape.
2. Every student has leadership potential.
3. The Mosaic celebrates the potential of every leadership shape.

Mosaic is a student ministry that enables each student to find their best way of connecting to God and then being plugged in to a group with others.

How we connect students to God—We have “tiles” that are made up of students. The spirituality wheel—an exercise that helps us understand interests, giftedness, and areas of expertise—determines where each student will be.

1. Head Spirituality—focuses on students who connect to God through knowledge, reading His Word, and Bible studies
2. Relational Spirituality—focuses on students who connect to God through fellow believers; small groups, focus groups, and personal discipleship
3. Contemplative Spirituality—focuses on students who connect to God through spiritual exercises and quiet times of meditation

4. Kingdom Spirituality—focuses on students who connect to God through service projects, missions, and hands-on work

THE MOSAIC—HOW IT WORKS

The key to moving in the Mosaic direction is move slowly. Don't do anything for six months. Plan, prepare and begin to envision what God will do through this ministry.

Leadership Tiles:

1. Navigation tile (year one)
2. Worship tile (year one)
3. Drama tile (year one)
4. Arts (year three)
5. Prayer tile (year two)
6. Get over yourself tile (year one)
7. Media tile (year three)

A Look at Each Leadership Tile:

1. Navigation—holds all tiles together; head tile—responsibilities include planning, preparing for, and promoting activities
2. Worship—leadership through preparing for singing; worship tile responsibilities include learning new music, teaching new music, practicing instruments, and shaping the song service for youth meetings
3. Drama—leadership through laughter and drama; drama tile responsibilities include preparing dramas and skits for services, messages, missions conference, and choir musicals
4. Arts—leadership through the talent of art; art tile responsibilities include design of youth fliers, painting artwork for youth room, and painting artwork that can be used in relating spiritual truths to others
5. Prayer—leadership through prayer; prayer tile responsibilities include spending quality time in prayer, collecting prayer requests from other tiles, publishing those requests throughout the youth ministry, and meeting needs
6. Get over yourself—leadership through service; work tile responsibilities include cleaning youth room, cleaning church property, picking up trash, and assisting in any area that is in need of service
7. Media—leadership through technology; media tile responsibilities include building PowerPoint shows, designing flyers with the program Photoshop, helping develop youth website, and running technical ministry in services

MEETING TIMES

Yearly—The two entry points are September through December and February through June. Summers are off in order to respect the travel schedule of families and the increased movement in the student ministry with camps, retreats, and mission trips.

Weekly—Wednesdays

1. Entire Mosaic—dinner at 6:00 p.m., service from 6:40 p.m. to 7:40 p.m.
 - a. Issue Night—laying the foundation for God's Word in the context of a contemporary issue
 - b. Roundtable—follow night with interaction and discussion of the above issue
 - c. Gathering—preaching and teaching

- d. Prayer and Praise—singing, praying, and preaching
 - e. Story Night—personal testimony from an older, mature believer in the church
2. Individual tiles—7:40 to 8:15 p.m.

SPIRITUALITY WHEEL

WHERE DO I FIT IN?

Each statement below corresponds to one of the four quadrants of the Spirituality Wheel. Select which statement best defines you.

Order of Worship

1. A carefully planned and orderly service is important and glorifies God.
2. Freedom to respond during a service is important.
3. Simplicity, silence and time for meditation, is important to me during worship.
4. It is not the worship service, but serving God that is most important.

Time

1. Stick to the exact times of a service
2. It is important to extend worship if one feels led to do so.
3. Worship time should contain a sense of timelessness, which is a taste of heaven.
4. All worship should equip us for our task in the world.

Prayer

1. It is important in prayer to praise, intercede and seek God's will for our lives.
2. Prayer is about expressing our thoughts and feelings to God. Praying out loud and in groups is important.
3. Prayer is about becoming quiet inside so I can simply be in the presence of God.
4. My best prayers are my work for God.

Music

1. Music should have clear and understandable lyrics, which express praise to God and belief about God. I like hymns that express great theological truths.
2. Singing praise choruses is a way we express love to God. It also unites us as a community.
3. Music that quiets the soul leads to a sense of union with God.
4. Songs can mobilize and inspire to greater effort and dedication.

Preaching

1. The Word of God, rightly proclaimed, is the centerpiece of worship.
2. The Gospel movingly preached has the power to change lives.
3. The message is heard best when the Spirit of God speaks to the inward man.
4. The preachers message comes out in how he lives more than in what he says.

Emphasis

1. Growth is about understanding the faith.
2. We grow as we learn to walk and respond to the Lord both individually and in community.
3. The purpose of growth is union with Christ.
4. Obeying and doing the will of God measures growth.

Criticism

1. Sometimes I am too intellectual, analytical, dogmatic and dry.
2. Sometimes I am too emotional, dogmatic and anti-intellectual.
3. Sometimes I am not realistic and tend to escape from the world.
4. Sometimes I am too judgmental, one-issue oriented and have tunnel vision.

Dominating Themes

1. Doctrine, discipline, knowledge, order, and discipleship.
2. Love, conversion, witness body of Christ, and fruits of the Spirit.
3. Humility, needs, wisdom, letting go, and becoming one with Jesus.
4. Simplicity, justice, action, political involvement, and obedience.

Concept of God

1. God is revealed in Scripture and in Jesus Christ and His cross.
2. I can know that God is real and that Christ lives in my heart. I know God better through the relationships in my life.
3. God is mysterious and can be known truly but not fully.
4. We participate in knowing God when we work to bring in His kingdom in the world.

TOP ISSUES FACING TEENS

		How big of an issue is this to teens in general?	How big of an issue is this in your life?	Choose ten issues that you think ought to be discussed and rate them from 1 to 10.
	TEEN ISSUE	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1	Abortion			
2	Abuse			
3	Bullying			
4	Cheating and Integrity			
5	Dating			
6	Decision-making			
7	Depression and Suicide			
8	Eating Disorders			
9	Entertainment			
10	Failure and Success			
11	Forgiveness			
12	Friendships			
13	Homelessness			
14	Internet			
15	Marriage and Divorce			
16	Money and Materialism			
17	Moral Absolutes			
18	Parents			
19	Peer Pressure			
20	Popularity			
21	Pregnancy and Child-rearing			
22	Priorities			
23	Religion			
24	Respect			
25	Rules and Authority			
26	Self-Perception			
27	Siblings			
28	Stress			
29	Substance Abuse			
30	Teen Crime			
31	Teen Sexuality			
32	Teen Violence			
33	Temptation			
34				
35				
36				

HELPING TEENS WITH REBELLIOUS PARENTS

One of the truly difficult parts of working with teens is the fact that at times one of the greatest obstacles that some growing teenagers face is their parent(s) personal response to God and His way. If you work just a short while with youth, you will find that even in a small group you will have teens with parents whose attitude toward their spiritual growth will range from encouraging and enabling to indifferent and even antagonistic.

When dealing with a parent with a rebellious *teen*, the parent has the God-given authority—the opportunity to set the tone and make the rules. But a teen who has a *parent* who does not walk with God does not have these advantages; rather these may all be working against them. So how do you counsel and encourage a teen whose parents do not understand his spiritual choices and may even be intimidated by their child's constant desire to go to church?

1. How do you encourage a teenager to live for God when his parents do not?
2. What responsibilities does a saved teenager have to an unsaved parent?
3. How do you counsel a teen who has been forbidden to come back to church?
4. What is the proper response to a teen who believes she should go to Bible college but her parents see it as a bad career move?
5. How do you encourage purity when a teen's father or mother encourages the opposite as a normal rite of passage?

Consider the ramifications of the situation.

It is important to broaden the perspective to see the whole scope of the situation including the parents as well as the teen. Then step farther back and see the truths Scripture presents about man and about God's plan. Once you've seen the broader view, focus in on the teen—put yourself in his place and build your understanding so that you might have knowledge for discernment.

1. Consider the differences between the Christian and the non-Christian from a biblical perspective.
 - a. Proverbs describes those who do not follow God in many verses, but they can be divided into three main areas.
 - 1) The Simple—This person is described as lacking true understanding and wisdom; they are deceived and ignorant in a certain areas of life (Proverbs 12:15–16, 14:15, 14:18, 18:2, 22:3).
 - 2) The Foolish—A person who lives in a manner that does not consider God, one who wants to live life in the manner he desires (Psalm 53:1, 19:7; Proverbs 1:22, 1:32, 10:8, 13:16, 14:16).
 - 3) The Scorer—A person who purposefully works against God's way and is not satisfied to merely live as he believes but must convince others to do the same (Proverbs 10:23, 11:29, 17:10).

You may find that you are dealing with parents from all of these categories depending on how many teens your are reaching from the community. Remember that it was the fruit of a lost soul that created this situation. A proper understanding of these passages prepares a person with knowledge to handle difficult situations. A person who is prepared for something difficult responds and reacts

much better than one who is surprised. It may be a great surprise to a teen to have a parent misunderstand and be harsh to him for his beliefs. Being salt and light assumes a reaction and a cost. A faithful youth worker will prepare a teen for these reactions.

- b. The Apostle Paul gives a comparison between the believer and the unbeliever (2 Corinthians 6:14-16).

	UNBELIEVER	BELEIVER
Destiny	Eternal Judgment	Eternal Life
Source of Power	The Flesh	The Holy Spirit
Source of Control	Satan	The Godhead
Status	Darkness	Light
Condition	Dead in Sin	Alive in God

Josh McDowell and Bob Hostetler, *Handbook on Counseling Youth* (Dallas: Word Pub, 1996), 188.

- 2. Consider the opportunity—salvation through Christ is the solution and the teen’s faith is a bridge between the home and the church.
 - a. Take the opportunity to meet with the parents and present the Gospel of Christ.
 - b. Seek to create opportunities to build a relationship with the family as well as their teen.
 - c. Approach them on their home turf as well as at church or in an activity setting.
 - d. Communicate important information to the family .

Provide support and regular (even scheduled) encouragement to the teen.

- 1. Provide a platform for the teen to have access to good counsel.
 - a. In a youth group setting—Provide opportunities for the teen to establish friendship with teens who are good examples.
 - b. In a church setting—Connect the teen to other church families and adults who will also provide help and encouragement. Share the ministry with others who can help with discipleship.
 - c. In a home setting—Sometimes it is very important for a teen from an unsaved family or fractured family to see a good example in a normal home setting. This can be done in your home and in other faithful members in your church.
 - d. In a counseling setting—Take the time to ask questions that periodically give input on his struggles and the place he needs help in his Christian growth.
- 2. Prepare teaching topics for the teens which are focused their situation. This specific teaching may be done in a youth group setting, specialized class, or counseling setting.
 - a. Lessons from the life of Jonathan.
 - 1) Contrast the choices of Saul and Jonathan—1 Samuel 16.
 - 2) Having boldness for God—1 Samuel 13.

- 3) Defending what is right—1 Samuel 20:30.
 - 4) Influencing parents—1 Samuel 19:5–6.
- b. How to respond to authority (saved and unsaved).
 - c. When to obey God rather than men—Acts 5:16–42.
 - d. The costs and rewards of discipleship—Matthew 10:21, 26, 35–40.
 - e. Ways to present one's loyalty to Christ in different ways than words—1 Peter 3:1.
 - f. Becoming a catalyst for righteousness from the life of Gideon—Judges 6:27–32.
 - g. God's response to the parable about "sour grapes"—Ezekiel 18.

Many of the questions that will be asked have to be answered with a previously laid foundation. If one tries to answer this larger questions without a foundation, the teen will not have a principled foundation for him to know how to respond when anything happens outside the instruction given. Thus, he is only helped as far as the specific question that was asked and the limited scope of the answer involved. It should be the goal of a counselor to put down principles and a way of asking questions and thinking through issues so that the teen can come up with the answer and properly react to forks in the road without being easily sidetracked.

3. Plug the teen in with other Christians who have had similar situations to overcome.
4. Plan for questions that will come. It is important that you provide a foundation to build on so that you can handle some decisions that may be very difficult for the teen in the days to come.

Over time, the best influence on unsaved, rebellious parents comes from transformed children who walk with God. A youth worker's efforts to keep a teen growing, taught, optimistic, and encouraged is never wasted. Counseling for long hours, shedding tears, and agonizing in prayer are what it takes to have fruit that remains.

A parent who is not walking with God will be a discouragement to God's work in his or her child's life.

TEEN EXIT STRATEGY

Some of the most important decisions are made between the ages of seventeen and twenty-seven—college, career, spouse, and church. Our teens have had structure, accountability, fellowship, and spiritual impact. How can we as youth leaders prepare our teens to continue in these things on their own? Today's mighty oak is yesterday's nut that held its ground. What can we do so that we don't lose our seniors after they graduate from high school?

IDEAS TO HELP YOUR SENIORS TRANSITION

1. Senior Mentor Program—seniors are paired with a junior high student.
 - a. Write or e-mail an encouraging note on a monthly basis.
 - b. Call to remind them of upcoming events and activities.
 - c. Soul winning partners.
 - d. Help with parts of discipleship.
2. Exit Strategy Interview
 - a. Beginning of senior year set up goals to reach by graduation.
 - 1) Spiritual Goals
 - a) Devotions.
 - b) Read through the Bible.
 - c) Memorize verses.
 - d) Know verses to help defend their faith.
 - 2) Personal Goals
 - a) Get involved in a ministry.
 - b) Lead someone to Christ.
 - c) Apply to colleges.
 - d) Get a job.
 - 3) Spiritual Report Card
 - b. End of senior year.
 - 1) Help them understand their strengths and weaknesses.
 - 2) Have them take a spiritual gifts test.
 - 3) Find an accountability partner.
 - 4) Warn them of first year dangers.

3. Take juniors and seniors on trips to colleges—Use three-day weekends, holidays, and when they have days of school off to take short weekend trips to nearby Bible colleges; give them a taste of what it will be like. This will help spark interest and excitement, especially when done in small groups.
4. Take them on a senior trip.
5. Work with the young adult class (college and career).
 - a. Seniors sit in on the young adult class every few months.
 - b. Involve them in college class activities.
 - c. Once a quarter, have the young adult class teacher teach the high school youth group.
6. Summer interim for seniors—Use Sunday or Wednesday nights to have a class just for seniors. Topic ideas:
 - a. God's will for your life
 - b. How to defend your faith
 - c. Practical ideas on getting a job, interview skills, etiquette
 - d. Godly dating

HELPING PARENTS WITH THE TRANSITION

1. Invite individual senior families over for dinner.
 - a. Get the parents and teen on the same page regarding the teen's future.
 - b. Encourage communication between the teen and parents.
 - c. Provide helpful resources for both parents and teen—e.g., books, college materials, and websites.
 - 1) *Discover your Destiny* by Cary Schmidt. Striving Together Publications © 2003, 280 pages, \$14.95 (ISBN 0965285928). You can buy this book at www.strivingtogether.com.
 - 2) *Hook Line, and Sinker* by Cary Schmidt. Striving Together Publications © 2003, 288 pages, \$14.95. You can buy this book at www.strivingtogether.com.
2. Encourage parents to help their teen with the practical aspects of adulthood.
 - a. Fill out applications, make a résumé, or pursue a job—Many seniors are clueless when it comes to this.
 - b. How to make a good first impression—dress, attitude, presence, etiquette, etc.
 - c. Paying bills, keep a checkbook, organize important information, and memorize social security number.

IDEAS TO STAY CONNECTED

1. Don't think of them as gone—Pray for them, encourage them, remember them. Just like the first time you take the training wheels off a bike, run with them for a while.
2. E-mail or write them on a regular basis.

3. Send packages from the youth pastor and youth group.
 - a. Wednesday night activity—Plan ahead to have teens bring fun items for care packages, write notes, and decorate the boxes that will be sent in the mail. Every college student loves receiving embarrassing packages!
 - b. Fun items to pack are post cards with stamps on them, quarters for laundry, Top Ramen noodles (breakfast of champions), popcorn, and Little Debbie's, snacks, toothpaste, deodorant, razors, fast food gift certificates, and silly pictures of the youth group.
4. Keep them involved when they come home during vacations. Using your discretion, have them help with—
 - a. Youth Group
 - b. Vacation Bible School
 - c. Summer Camps
 - d. Outreach Projects

TEENS IN WORSHIP

We are living in a day where many people sincerely desire to connect with something greater than them, often resulting in a deeper relationship with the living, true God. From the emerging centers for worship to the countless numbers of worship songs being published, it is evident that people are attempting to fill a void they have discovered in their life. Some attempt to fill this void through legitimate means—turning to God; others attempt to find satisfaction in work, personal relationships, hobbies, or sports. It should be our desire as believers to truly seek the face of God as we live for Him from day to day.

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

When one hears the word *worship*, several things may come to mind—praying, singing, preaching, fellowshiping, crying, lifting one's hands before a holy God, and giving. But what is true worship? Does it include this list of things? Is it confined to this list? How are we to worship? Where are we to worship? When are we to worship?

Wikipedia defines worship as “specific acts of religious praise, honor, or devotion, typically directed to a supernatural being such as a god or goddess.”¹

Warren Wiersbe writes that “worship is the believer’s response of all that he is—mind, emotions, will, and body—to all that God is and says and does. This response has its mystical side in subjective experience, and its practical side in objective obedience to God’s revealed truth. It is a loving response that is balanced by the fear of the Lord, and it is a deepening response as the believer comes to know God better.”²

In his book *For All God’s Worth*, NT Wright says that “worship is worth-ship; it means giving God all He’s worth.”³ Practically, this means that worship includes our recognizing God for who He is as well as what He has done and continues to do for us. It is something that is not shallow or cheap, but rather comes from the very depths of a man’s soul and life. Wright also says, “Worship is not an optional extra for the Christian, a self-indulgent religious activity. It is the basic Christian stance, and indeed (so Christians claim) the truly human stance.”⁴ This statement gives us the idea that worship is not something that is confined to the church house on Sunday morning: rather true worship involves a lifestyle of appreciation and love for the Almighty. This is something that we engage in daily.

“Worship is nothing more or less than love on its knees before the Beloved”⁵ This position before God demands that we humble ourselves before Him. It is not an activity to bring satisfaction, attention, or praise to us as an individual; but it is a lifestyle in which we recognize God alone. Worship comes as a response to God’s deep, passionate, unconditional, unending love for us as His creation. Our focus must be on Christ, not us! “If Jesus is to be the lens through which you glimpse the beauty of God, you will discover what it means to worship, because you will discover what it means to be loved.”⁶ As we grow in our understanding and knowledge of God, we will see Him for who He is. As we see Him for who He is, we will understand God’s love for us and, as a result, worship Him.

Worship is an idea used several times in Scriptures. Here are a few from *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.⁷

1. Hebrew

- a. 7812 *shachah*—prostrate, bow (self) down, fall down (flat), make to stoop—Exodus 34:14; Deuteronomy 26:10; Psalm 29:2, 85:6
- b. 5457 *cegid*—to prostrate oneself in homage; fall down—Daniel 3:10, 12

2. Greek

- a. 4352 *proskuneo*—to fawn or crouch, to prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore)—Matthew 2:2, 8; 4:9; John 4:24 (kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand)
- b. 4151 *pneuma* (Spirit)—current of air, breath; soul
- c. 225 *aletheia* (truth)—true, verity
- d. 3000 *latreno*—to minister to God; serve—Acts 7:42
- e. 2151 *eusebeo*—show piety, reverence—Acts 17:23
- f. 4576 *sebomai*—to revere, to adore: devout religious worship—Acts 18:13
- g. 1479 *ethelothreskeia*—voluntary (arbitrary and unwarranted) piety; sanctimony: will worship—Colossians 2:23

HOW CAN WE PERSONALLY ENGAGE IN WORSHIP?

In his book *Putting an End to Worship Wars*, Elmer Towns gives six styles of worship used in America.⁸

- 1. Evangelistic—winning the lost
- 2. Expository—teaching the Word
- 3. Renewal—excitement, revival, “touching God”
- 4. Body Life—fellowship, relationships, and small groups
- 5. Liturgical—serving and glorifying God through liturgy
- 6. Congregational—worship expressed by the laity

As previously mentioned, true worship is not confined to a particular church service on a particular day with a particular method. Worship has been defined, but how does one personally engage in worship? A closer look of the concept of worship can be seen in John 4:24: “*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*” This verse reveals to us how we are to worship God—in spirit and in truth.

“*In spirit* refers to the human spirit—the immaterial, inner being in each person, the God-breathed entity that corresponds to the nature of God himself, who is Spirit”⁹ Simply put, worship requires that we allow who we are in Christ to be involved in our worship—our heart, soul, will, and mind. Worship without spirit is dry and lifeless.

In truth gives the idea that this worship is genuine, not pretending, not self-righteous, not a sense of habit.¹⁰ We are to worship truthfully. NT Wright writes, “What matters isn’t so much our knowledge of God as God’s knowledge of us; not, as it were, the god we want but the God who wants us.”¹¹ With this statement we understand that God already knows us (everything about us), yet He desires to be in fellowship with us. What a motivation for authentic worship!

WHAT IS AUTHENTICITY IN WORSHIP?

So often our worship to God is mechanical and dry. It becomes routine and lacks freshness. This does a great disservice to our love and relationship with God. Our worship ought to be authentic! This means that the mode of worship may have some variations. A sensitivity to the Spirit’s leading is crucial. We must

exercise caution as we worship; we should not do it the same way because it's the way we have always done it, nor should we seek to jump on a bandwagon and worship in a new way just because others do it that way. On an individual, personal level, our worship to God is an expression of what He is doing in our life; therefore, it ought to be genuine and heartfelt. (See Isaiah 1:12–17 for a description of how God views some worship.)

What are some ideas for both personal and corporate worship?

1. Music
2. Specials
3. Art
4. Poetry
5. Photography
6. Scripture reading
7. Prayer
8. Testimonies
9. Sensory lessons (involving sight, sound, touch, taste, smell)
10. Devotionals
11. Giving
12. Preaching
13. Silence
14. Biblical meditation

HOW CAN WE UTILIZE TEENS IN WORSHIP?

1. Teach that worship is a lifestyle, not just something that takes place Sunday morning.
2. Encourage students to have a personal relationship with God that is consistently growing. We ought to seek to point people to an intimacy in their relationship with the living God.
3. As you teach about worship, teach that God must be the center of worship. He must be the focus! It's not about us—our talents, abilities, gifts—it is all about Him.
4. Understand that every individual has something to contribute. We are all part of the body of Christ, and He has given us all different gifts. Help students determine their God-given talents, abilities, and gifts and let them use them in worship (see 1 Corinthians 12:12–31).
5. Be careful not to cheapen worship. It should not be a put on, mechanical, or phony. We must be real and authentic.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

Too often our worship becomes cheap and lifeless. We must be careful that this does not take place in our life. As we engage and participate in worship on a daily basis, we must understand that we are in the pres-

ence of a living God. Worship can include praise, adoration, thanksgiving, confession, and a sincere desire to learn more. In reality, it is our meeting with God.

Everyone worships. The question is whom or what are we worshiping and whom or what are we teaching our teens to worship? As we teach truth and endeavor to have young people participate in worship (personal and corporate), lives will be challenged, changed, and strengthened.

Where is it that we learn to stand in fear before God? In worship.¹²

Wonder

Ownership

Relationship

Service

Honor

Intimacy

Praise

Notes

1. *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Worship," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worship> (accessed April 27, 2006).
2. Warren Wiersbe, *Real Worship: It Will Transform Your Life* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986), 27.
3. NT Wright, *For All God's Worth* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 1.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, 9.
6. *Ibid.*, 10.
7. *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), s.vv. "shachah," "cegid," "proskuneo," "pneuma," "aletheia," "latreno," "eusebeo," "sebomai," "ethelothreskeia."
8. Elmer Towns, *Putting an End to Worship Wars* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997).
9. "John," *Life Application Bible Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993) 86.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Wright, *For All God's Worth*, 25.
12. *Ibid.*, 73.

CALLED OF GOD

HOW CAN I KNOW FOR SURE?

The Calling of Paul

1. To be an apostle—the vocational call to full time service
 - a. *Romans 1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.*
 - b. *1 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God.*

2. To be a missionary—a specific type of full-time service

Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3. To take the gospel to Macedonia—call to a specific place

Acts 16:9-10 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

WHAT IS THE CALL OF GOD?

1. Being sent by God
 - a. *Romans 10:14-15 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*
 - b. *Matthew 9:37-38 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

2. An activity of the Holy Spirit

a. *Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*

b. Acts 20:23

3. A process of God giving gifts to the church

Ephesians 4:11-12 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

THE CALL OF GOD CONFIRMED

1. You have a strong internal desire—Psalm 37:3-5.
 - a. Start down one of the roads to full-time service.

- b. Take that road as far as you can.
 - c. Prepare and train.
 - d. Teach, preach, and serve at every opportunity.
 - e. Make some opportunities if possible to use your gifts and calling.
2. The call is confirmed scripturally.
 - a. You meet the qualifications of Scripture.
 - b. You are not disqualified by Scripture—1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9.
 - c. The fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit are evident.
 3. The Holy Spirit is leading you—through much prayer, fasting, Bible study, and meditation.
 - a. *Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*
 - b. Romans 8:15-16, 27-28; 1 Corinthians 2:9-13, 16.
 4. The call becomes irresistible.
 - a. *1 Corinthians 9:16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!*
 - b. *Jeremiah 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.*
 5. The peace of God comes into your soul and spirit.

Philippians 4:6-7 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
 6. The call is confirmed by the approval of the body of Christ—Acts 13 :1-3.

1 Timothy 4:12-16 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.
 7. Your call becomes a settled conviction in your heart; you know it for sure, no doubts—1 Timothy 1:12-17.

What can be, should be, ought to be, will be, is—by the grace of God and for His glory!

MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR THE YOUTH LEADER

Have you ever found yourself in a position of leadership in which you at first succeeded, but then began to flounder? That is not an unusual situation, but it can become terminal if you do not learn to grow beyond the abilities that brought you to the plate. In order for ministry growth to occur, your natural ability in the area of leadership must be augmented.

Management ability is a learned ability.

Natural ability alone will serve you well for a while, but sooner or later you will come upon a situation or face a challenge that will create some major difficulties for you. When this time comes, there are three roads to choose from. The first is the dead-end choice: since I no longer enjoy the youth ministry, I'll quit. The second road is the road to nowhere: I said I'd do this ministry, even if it has turned into a real pain of a job, and I will! I'll just hang in there, doing the same ol', same ol'. The last road is the road to change through growth: I'll learn how to do this ministry in an ever-excelling way ("always abounding" 1 Corinthians 15:58). If the third road is for you, the rest of this material is for you.

In any given ministry with people, there should be at least two types of work being done at any one time. Humanly speaking, the success of a ministry is largely dependent upon the skill levels found in the ministry for these two types of work. Since most of us find it very difficult to excel in all the areas necessary, it is incumbent upon us to seek to put together a team that will possess them all. [This is the essence of the teaching on the church as a "body" of believers, dependent upon one another (1 Corinthians 12).] What are the two types of work?

FUNCTIONAL WORK

This is where most of us start. It can be anything from being an usher, to singing a special. It is the actual ministry being done, preaching, teaching, counseling, cleaning, cooking, driving, etc.—all the practical, efficient, serviceable areas of work necessary to carry out the successful operation of a ministry.

MANAGEMENT WORK

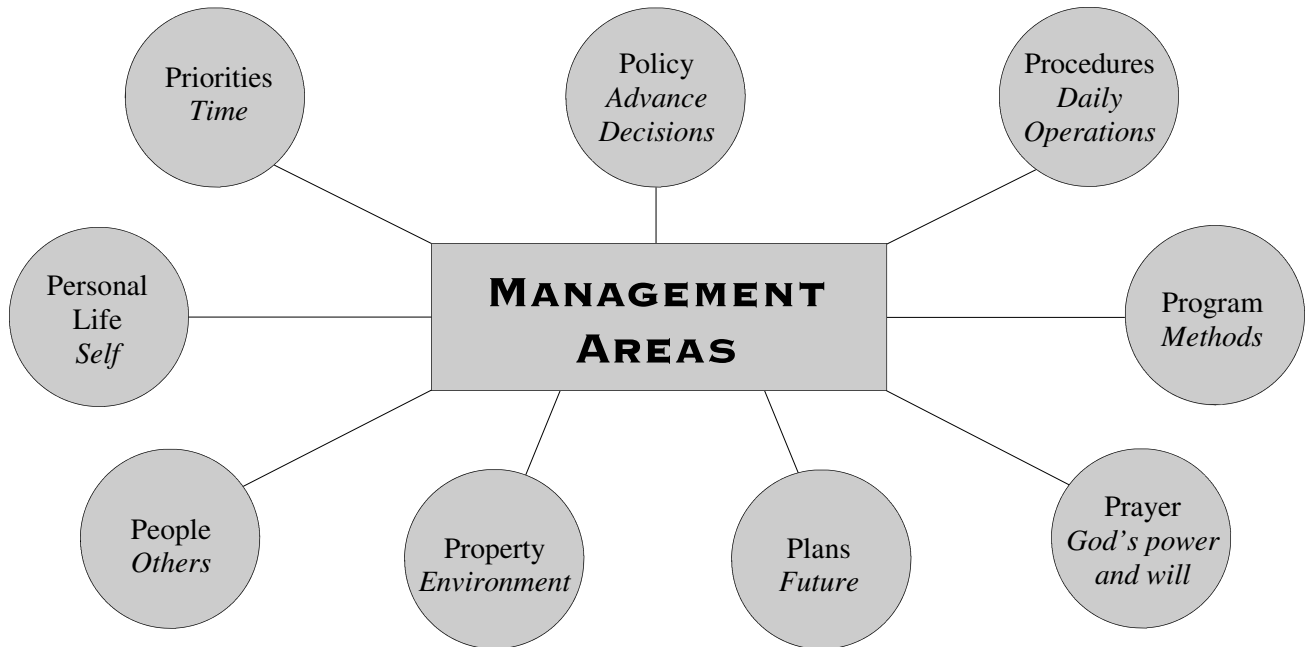
This is different than leadership, but management needs leadership to keep it pointed in the right direction, with the right emphasis. (See "I'm a Leaner" in Volume 1, Issue 1 of *The Manager in Ministry*.) Management has been well defined by Myron Rush as "meeting the needs of people as they go about doing their jobs." Louis Allen in his book *The Management Profession* divided management work up into four key functions. He further divided these key functions in eighteen management activities. Each of these activities is a learned skill. It is an interesting self study to figure out one's ability in each of these activities. The four key functions and eighteen activities are listed on the following page.

It takes a while for it to sink in that much of one's ministry with people involves management work. It must be seen as "real" work, hard work, and worthy of all the time and energy you need to put into it. Understanding and believing this is a crucial step toward a God-honoring ministry with and for others. Remember, management work is a learned ability. Access your ability in this key skill and determine to grow.

MANAGEMENT WORK

1. Planning
 - a. Forecasting
 - b. Objectives
 - c. Programs and schedules
 - d. Budgeting
 - e. Procedures
 - f. Policies
2. Organizing
 - a. A Structure
 - b. Delegation
 - c. Relationships
3. Leading
 - a. Decision-making
 - b. Motivating people
 - c. Communicating
 - d. Selecting people
 - e. Developing people
4. Controlling
 - a. Performance standards
 - b. Performance measuring
 - c. Performance evaluating
 - d. Performance correcting

MANAGEMENT AREAS



God has given you responsibility in the following relationships:

1. To God
2. To self
3. To church
4. To neighbors
5. To family
6. To employers

How do you show your love for God? By obeying Him in regards to each relationship. To ask which relationship is most important is to ask which command of God is more important, or which one will I obey?

John 14:15, 21-24; John 15:10, 1 John 5:3

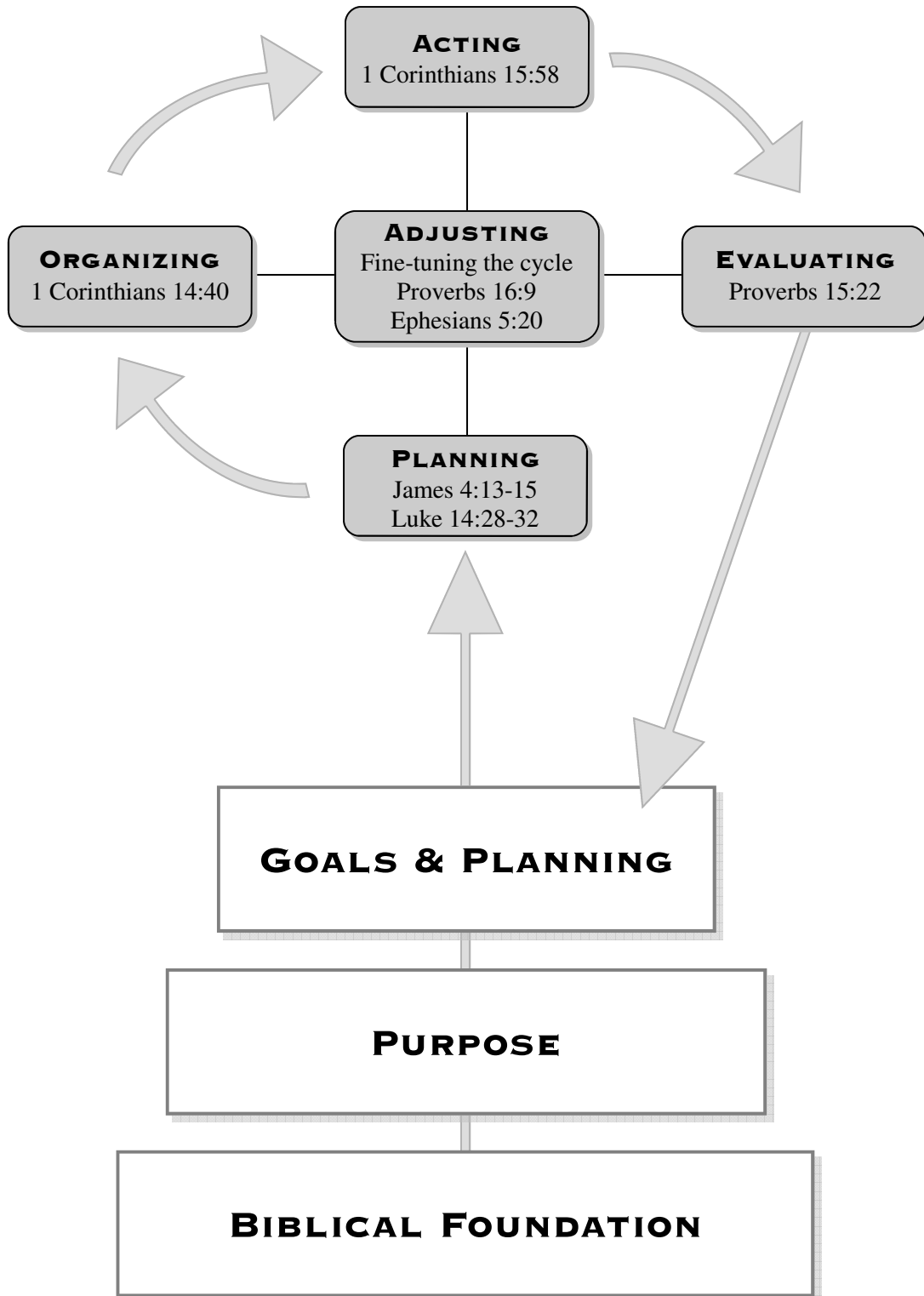
MANAGEMENT AREAS

1. Priorities (time)—Proverbs 6:6-11; John 9:4; 17:4; Ephesians 5:15-16
 - a. Time cannot be saved or stored.
 - b. Plan time offensively, differentiating between the urgent and the important.
 - c. Allow time for interruptions and the unexpected.
 - d. Don't procrastinate.
 - e. Be accountable for your time.
 - f. Make a report.
 - g. We all have the same amount of time.
 - h. Our time is limited, so expectations must be limited.
 - i. Know what time it is—James 4:14.
2. Personal life (self)—Proverbs 4:23
 - a. You cannot be one dimensional.
 - b. Keep your attitude positive.
 - c. Learn to make decisions and solve problems.
 - d. Organize yourself.
 - e. Fulfill your responsibilities—1 Corinthians 4:2.
 - f. Seek performance evaluations and welcome accountability—Matthew 25:14-19.
3. People (others)
 - a. Set up a youth ministry team—Ecclesiastes 4:9-13; Mark 6:7-13.
 - b. Do not say yes to everyone.
 - c. Delegate properly.
 - 1) Right people.
 - 2) Right way.
 - 3) Right items.
 - d. If you don't have enough ideas, you are not using people correctly; people are creative.
 - e. People require maintenance. Relationships, conflicts, etc., need to be handled. Be confrontative—Romans 12:9-12; Matthew 5:38-42. (“Pay me now or pay me later.”)

- f. Know people (personality styles).
 - 1) Teens
 - 2) Parents
 - 3) Youth ministry team
 - 4) Co-workers
 - 5) Your family—Ephesians 5:21-6:4
4. Property (environment)—Proverbs 24:30-34
 - a. Your home and possessions
 - b. Your work area (office, desk, storeroom)
 - c. Youth meeting room, before and after an event
 - d. Where you take youth on activities—you must be able to control the environment where you take youth on activities. For example, if you are taking your youth group to an amusement park, call ahead and make sure there is no rock concert-type entertainment scheduled. Re-schedule if there is.
 - e. The atmosphere you create when you are in a room
 - 1) Trust versus distrust
 - 2) Love versus tolerance
 - 3) Acceptance versus rejection
 - 4) Cheerful versus gloomy
 - 5) Positive versus negative
5. Planning (future)—James 4:14-15; Jeremiah 1:5
 - a. Plans must be built on your purpose and aim toward your goals.
 - b. Follow planning with the action cycle.
 - c. God is a planner—Psalm 32:8; Proverbs 16:9.
 - d. Vision is necessary—Nehemiah 2:12; Matthew 28:18-20.
 - e. Plan for growth—Psalm 32:8.
 - 1) Of yourself
 - 2) Of your ministry
6. Prayer (for God's power and discernment of His "thelemic" will)
 - a. The source of our power—Philippians 4:13; Colossians 1:28-29.

- b. Don't neglect prayer for God's blessing—John 16:24.
- 7. Program management
 - a. Methodology to accomplish your purpose
 - b. Methodology to implement your plan
 - c. Customized program to fit your goals and your youth
 - d. Problems to guard against:
 - 1) The program is not an end in itself, but only the means to the end.
 - 2) Underestimating the time and effort necessary.
 - 3) Failure to delegate responsibility correctly.
 - 4) Failure to think through the long term goals.
 - a) What is important
 - b) What is urgent
- 8. Policy and procedure (use of prudence and wisdom in the management of responsibilities)
 - a. Policy—definitive guidelines established in advance that govern present and future actions, reactions, and decisions
 - b. Procedures—establishing a process or sequence that governs daily operations and create expectations

NEHEMIAH'S ACTION CYCLE



PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

1. Make a list of the natural leadership qualities God has given you.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

2. How do you react when you are criticized? _____

3. Number the following in order from 1 (easiest for you to do) to 8 (hardest for you to do).

Quality	Optional Comment
a. _____ Self-control	_____
b. _____ Putting others first	_____
c. _____ Being responsible	_____
d. _____ Tactful speech	_____
e. _____ Positive attitude	_____
f. _____ Influencing others	_____
g. _____ Willing to forgive	_____
h. _____ Thankful in all things	_____

4. My life purpose is (2 Timothy 3:10) . . . _____

5. In order to accomplish this purpose, my personal goals for youth ministry are . . . _____

6. Finish these statements.

My youth ministry will be successful if . . . _____

I would really like to learn how to . . . _____

7. In order to accomplish my life purpose, my goals for the next year are . . . _____

8. In order to accomplish my life purpose, my goals for the next five years are . . . _____

9. What are my management activity strengths? (See page 4-6.) _____

I must be aware of pride.

10. What are my management activity weaknesses? (See page 4-6.) _____

I must seek to grow them into a strength.

THE DANGER OF BURNOUT IN THE YOUTH MINISTRY

The term burnout is almost always perceived in a negative fashion, connoting an unintentional or involuntary extinguishing of a flame. Maybe the flame was used too long, was used improperly, or burned too brightly and was damaged or destroyed. A light bulb is a good example of this. A porch light left on all night, every night, will have to be replaced long before a light that is used for just an hour or two each night. A light bulb's life expectancy will also be cut short if it is constantly being flipped on and off, but the light bulb that has the shortest life span is the one that is connected to too much voltage. It may burn bright, but not for long. Plugging in a 120-volt floodlight to a 220-volt receptacle makes a bright light . . . for about thirty seconds!

Christian workers must learn to conduct their lives and their work for the Lord so that burnout will not occur. With too few in ministry already, we cannot afford to lose any of God's servants through unwise practices, which were not intended by the Manufacturer (Creator-God).

Some ministry workers decide to voluntarily turn off the light and call this desire to alter their lifestyle or leave the ministry burnout. If they have found themselves in full-time ministry without God's call and power, leaving the ministry is understandable and even desirable. If, on the other hand, they are looking for an excuse to not fulfill God's call, they are setting up themselves and their families for chastisement and heartache. They need to honestly face the true reason for their struggles and their decisions.

The world's misconceptions of causes of burnout often create some challenges for the Christian in dealing biblically with burnout. Our society would say that burnout has to do with the type of work we do (e.g., the youth ministry is a high stress occupation) or with one's age (mid-life crisis). Some types of compulsive behavior, such as perfectionism or workaholic lifestyles, are also seen as causes rather than symptoms. These scripturally inaccurate views lead to uses of the light bulb in ways God never intended, thus exacerbating the problem, rather than helping. If we as the ministers of Christ are going to solve this problem as it begins or even before it begins, we must do so scripturally, using the tools and methods given to us by our Creator and Lord. This is often extremely difficult, for we live in this world and its philosophy permeates everything. Our challenge is to learn to "walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7).

LESSONS I'VE LEARNED

Having been in the ministry now for almost four decades and still excited about serving Him and others, I've learned a few things about longevity in the ministry that might be helpful to others in the ministry as well. God's Word has a solution for every malady of life. It is one thing to say that; it is quite another to live by it.

1 HAVE ENOUGH FAITH TO LET GOD DO THE HEAVY LIFTING.

Until I learned to take God's Word at face value, believe what it says, and trust God, there was no peace, and there was no rest for my laboring body and mind. It was hard to take Him at His Word when He said in *Matthew 11:28-30*, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The yoke He is speaking of here is an old-fashioned, wooden harness used to connect two beasts of burden so that they can work in tandem. The picture here is God and man yoked together doing the work together. I've watched too many teams of horses pulling a load together to not know that, in reality, the stronger of the two is always doing more of the work than the weaker. The true picture here is that when we voluntarily get

into the yolk with Christ, we must learn to rely upon His strength to pull the load, His direction in which to pull it, and His pace in the effort. In the end, we must come to the conclusion that He meant it when He said in John 15:5, “for without me ye can do nothing.”

2 REALIZE THAT YOU CAN'T DO EVERYTHING, AND GOD NEVER INTENDED FOR YOU TO.

This deals with my priority arrangements in life. What comes first? Family, self, God, work, or church? Everyone who believes he has this all figured out has their reasons, and they all sound good. The book that really helped me on this issue was J. Grant Howard's book *Balancing the Demands of Life*. The author was able to get through my thick skull that the way I put God first in my life is through finding out what He commanded in each area of responsibility in life and then obeying what He said about what I should be doing in each area. Howard did not list priorities in a sequential list with God at the top, but rather illustrated them in a circle with God in the middle. This illustration helped me to see how all my responsibilities fit together and related to one another.

One other helpful thought was that God created me with limitations, never intending me to do it all. Logic would prove this: God created me with the need to sleep, rest, and recuperate. He also created me with a limited lifespan; therefore, my duty is to find out what He wants me to do in each area of responsibility and simply to do what I can, with His help, in each area. If God wanted me to do more, He could have created me with more ability, less need for rest, and a 200-year lifespan. But He didn't, so I must be content to diligently do what I can with what He has given me.

3 APPLY THE SABBATH-DAY PRINCIPLE.

Take your day off; use it and your vacations to recuperate, not to wear yourself out more. The Sabbath-day principle should be applied in spirit, if not in the letter of the law.

4 AVOID THE “COOKIE CUTTER” SYNDROME OF LEADERSHIP.

This is thinking everything has to be done your way or no way. You must get help; you must delegate. But when you do, don't try to control it all to the point that it is all done just like you would have done it. Control-type perfectionists have a tendency toward burnout, because perfection is an impossible goal. God created us to work within a relationship model, in the home, at work, and in the church; don't resist this by believing you have to do things yourself if they are going to be done right. Right relationships will do more than anything else to rejuvenate your emotional energy.

Proper communication, the number-one need in relationships, will replace expended emotional energy. The Bible give us the following guidelines:

1. It will build others up.

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that, which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

2. It will add health.

Proverbs 12:18 There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.

3. It will make one glad.

Proverbs 12:25 Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.

4. It will renew joy.

Proverbs 15:23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

5. It will improve attitudes and views of circumstances.

Proverbs 15:30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.

6. It will provide life's dessert.

Proverbs 16:24 Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

7. It will help us put everything in the proper perspective.

Proverbs 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

8. It will help us have a love for life and a positive attitude.

1 Peter 3:8-10 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.

5 BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR CALL.

Avoid the temptation to quit; that is what is at stake when we start talking about burnout. It is really quit simple once you've gotten over the hurdle of self-absorbed, humanistic doubt.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

6 DO NOT NEGLECT YOUR TIME WITH THE LORD.

Spiritual rejuvenation is as important, or more so than physical or emotional rejuvenation; therefore, do not neglect your time with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

7 RELY CONSTANTLY ON THE SMELLING SALTS OF GOD.

See pages 4-17 through 4-18.

Further Helps and Information on Burnout

We are inserting with permission a copy of Dr. Greg Huffman's second chapter of his doctrinal dissertation. It is otherwise copywrited, so please do not copy it for use beyond this notebook. Please let us know if you would be interested in seeing his whole dissertation in print.

Another source for some biblical, very practical thoughts on how to counsel those struggling with this challenge is a chapter in Debi Pryde's *Women Counseling Women Specifics Nine* from January 2005, entitled "Helping Burned Out Servants of God." The tapes of the two sessions and outlines are available through Uncle Wally's, Ironwood's bookstore.

PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR BEATING BURNOUT IN THE MINISTRY

1. Control the phone.
 - a. Turn off at key times.
 - b. Have answering machine without message capability with weekly details on it. They call it, not you, for questions about events.
 - c. Use a different number for youth and for home.
 - d. Don't return thirty calls; maybe discontinue voice mail.
2. Limit involvement by your youth leadership team to one or two extra functions per month. Don't chase off your help.
3. Take your family with you on some youth activities; add fees for you and them to pool fee.
4. Do some things with your family without any youth present.
5. Does the youth ministry fit you now? Is your interest level still high? Consider your changing family needs and make needed adjustments.
6. Avoid the bigger, better, and more syndromes. Just do some things over and over; people will provide their own variety.
7. How old were you when you felt the "call" to the youth ministry? Some have gone into the youth ministry because it was the glory position to them at the time of their call. Be confident in God's call. Fulfilling your call should be enjoyable.
8. Set attention limits—no total attention to youth ministry. There is more to life, even for the single youth leader. Do some "church" without youth motivation.
9. Control the calendar; don't let it get too full. Never plan two big activities that require a lot of your labor and time back to back. (There should a ministry-wide calendar policy established).
10. Learn to say no without guilt.
11. Have a hobby completely unrelated to the youth group; refuse to mingle it with youth group activities.
12. Establish and foster adult friendships apart from the youth group.
13. Refuse to allow yourself to yield to the temptation to become the kids' "Messiah." Christ is their Savior, not you. You can't save, rescue, or determine anyone's destiny. You can help and be God's servant, but salvation is a work of God, not of man—Ephesians 2:8-9.
14. Avoid the "Holy Spirit" complex. You do not know God's specific will for them; you are not the one to "convict them of sin, righteousness, and judgment." They must eventually decide for themselves what their convictions and standards are; help them to look to the Bible and the Lord.
15. Know what you are responsible and accountable for; don't assume duties not given to you or burdens God didn't intend for you to carry.
16. Work within the context of your God-given "body stamp" and pace yourself physically.
17. Don't spin your wheels; spend most of your time on your core group—Christ's example.
18. Follow David's example of encouragement "in the Lord his God"—1 Samuel 30:6.
19. Avoid wrong thinking patterns.
 - a. Nobody likes me; they won't like me if . . .
 - b. Greener pasture.
 - c. No one appreciates me.
 - d. This is a duty.
 - e. I have to be just like the kids.
 - f. If it is going to get done right, I have to do it myself.
 - g. You don't have enough time.
 - h. Time is the enemy.
20. Set your expectations in the Lord, not in methods and others—Psalm 62:5.

THE SMELLING SALTS OF GOD

Psalm 27:13-14 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Fainted = to quit, to cave in, to give up, to relax effort, to stop trying

We all face difficulties in life (money, health, work, home, accidents, etc.), how do we handle them?

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Feeling faint is no reason to faint.

Judges 8:4 And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing them.

2. Only the weak faint; therefore, we must “be strong in the Lord and the power of His might,” Ephesians 6:10.

Proverbs 24:10 If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

THE SMELLING SALTS OF GOD

1. The smelling salt of **THE CAUSE**.

1 Samuel 17:29 And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

2 Corinthians 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

2. The smelling salt of **PRAYER**—Hebrews 4:16; James 5:16; Romans 8:26-28; John 16:24.

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

3. The smelling salt of **THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST**.

Hebrews 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Mental attitudes = self-pity, self-protection, self-powered

4. The smelling salt of **REMEMBRANCE**.

Motivation = His love for me

Hebrews 12:5-6 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

5. The smelling salt of **PATIENCE**.

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

6. The smelling salt of **PROPERLY PLACED EXPECTATIONS**.

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Psalms 62:5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

Mind set: Revelation 2:10—be thou faithful unto death; 1 Corinthians 15:57—victory.

7. The smelling salt of **BELIEF**.

Psalms 27:13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

BURNOUT SYMPTOMS AND DEVELOPMENT

MINISTER'S EXPERIENCE

Jim Burns¹ was twenty-three years old when he graduated from seminary with a degree in Christian education. He felt that this degree, along with his undergraduate degree in Bible, would enable him to be a good assistant pastor in any local church. He was thrilled with the opportunity to serve in his first church position just a week after his seminary graduation.

The job description that was presented to him during the initial interview looked quite different from the expanding job description he soon experienced. It was not long before he was assigned the task of being the youth director, bus director, Christian education director, and the music director for the choir and congregation. He also assumed the responsibility of writing Sunday school curriculum, and training and supervising Sunday school teachers. In addition, he served as the hospital visitation director and church visitation director, which involved making seventy-five face-to-face visits each week. Also, he was often asked to substitute in the Christian school.

These many responsibilities caused him to have very little time at home. This, however, did not appear to be a problem, since the senior pastor put a tremendous amount of pressure on Jim's wife to be actively involved in the church and school as an unpaid staff member.

Mrs. Burns, although expecting her first child in two months, was expected to begin teaching fifth grade in the Christian school since the pastor had been unable to find a full-time teacher that year. In addition, on one occasion Mrs. Burns was asked, on Saturday at eleven o'clock in the evening, to organize a children's church for 300 children.

The church seemed to boom under the leadership of the pastor and the new assistant pastor. Jim was excited as the church grew from 200 to 600 in just six months. This growth was a result of his leadership, as the bus attendance increased from 100 to 400. After six months of stress-filled activities, however, a very dark day appeared for Jim. The senior pastor spent two hours reprimanding him for all of the weaknesses and inadequacies that he had seen during Jim's first six months at the church. As a result of this session, the desire to quit the work and quit the ministry was very strong. It was only after a significant amount of time alone with the Lord that Jim was determined that God had sent him to this ministry for a specific purpose, and he was not about to quit before God was finished with him.

After a year and a half, a feeling of emptiness began to permeate Jim's soul. Jim's pastor counseled him to consider the pastorate. A study of the Word and a time of prayer confirmed God's leadership for Jim to start a church.

The excitement of starting a new work was a tremendous motivation for Pastor and Mrs. Burns. They moved to a growing city with a population of 100,000. It was Jim's desire, and his wife's, to see that a church be founded, grow, and prosper in that city. Mrs. Burns, however, was unable to spend as much time as she wanted in the ministry since she now had two sons, a one-month-old and a fifteen-month-old. Caring for the children required much of her time at home, while Jim took their only car out on visitation for twelve to fourteen hours a day.

Six weeks after their arrival in the new city, the first service was held with thirty-nine in attendance. Three months after the first Sunday, 103 attended the Sunday morning service. Nine months after the first Sunday, 230 attended the Sunday morning church service. Everybody was excited about what God was doing, but

Huffman, Greg. "Ministerial Burnout in Fundamental Pastors." PhD diss., Bob Jones University, 1991. Used with permission from Dr. Huffman. Please do not copy.

the pressure was increasing rapidly. It was at this time that Mrs. Burns confronted Jim about his schedule, her needs, and the incompatibility of the two. He could see that although he was doing a great work for God—visiting new converts in their homes, discipling on a week-to-week basis, and making many new contacts each week—he was not the father and husband that God wanted him to be.

After a few months, Jim established teacher standards for the new Sunday school teachers. Potential teachers were offended because they felt he had established standards to eliminate them. Several secret meetings were held by the offended ones, and even prayers were offered that God would kill the pastor if he did not change. A silent rebellion entered the growing church, and the spirit was wounded.

Growth continued, however. There were two military bases located in the city, and numbers of servicemen and their families were attending the church. Several bus routes were begun by these servicemen. Children of other nationalities were invited and brought to the church. The idea of integration in the church was not readily accepted.

Seven years after the church's beginning, 530 people attended "Friend Day." Approximately fifty black parents and children were present for this special day. Several white families were offended and walked out in anger. It was not long after when three offended leaders of the church asked for Jim's resignation on some false charges concerning his leadership and financial responsibility. The following week, Jim asked for a vote of confidence, which he received by a slim margin. A majority voted that he should stay, yet he wanted to leave both the city and the ministry. During the following months, those that left widely criticized him in the city, which gravely hurt the church's reputation.

At this point, the vision of any pastor is greatly dimmed. The excitement and joy of the ministry can no longer be felt. Every story is different, yet symptoms and circumstances are much the same.

Dr. Herbert J. Freudenberger, an expert on burnout, wrote the following: "The more I studied, the more I came to realize that burnout was robbing our society of what it could least afford to lose: high achievers, the men and women of action and purpose to whom the rest of us looked for leadership and inspiration. These were not failure-oriented or habitually self-destructive people. On the contrary, they are the ones most likely to succeed."²

It is vitally important that the principle contained in *Hebrews 12:3* be considered. "*For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*"

The second principle to be remembered at this point is found in *Hebrews 6:10*, which states that "*God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*"

BURNOUT DEFINITIONS

Confusion may exist concerning the actual meaning of the term burnout. Is it simply a nervous breakdown or a psychological term used in an effort to excuse sin? Is it simply a peculiar condition that affects those involved in "helping professions"? These questions must be answered before proper treatment can be administered.

Webster defines the term *burnout* as being a term borrowed from rocketry in that a lack of energy causes the rocket to fall back to the earth after the fuel has been expended.³ The technical psychological word burnout is credited to Dr. Herbert J. Freudenberger, as he offered this definition: "Burnout: to deplete oneself, to exhaust one's physical and mental resources. To wear oneself out by excessively striving to reach some unrealistic expectation yet opposed by oneself or by the values of society."⁴

Minirth and others have defined the characteristics of burnout in three major areas:

- Mental: the feeling of disillusionment, bitterness, cynicism, irritability, or false guilt in trying to be superhuman in achievement.
- Physical: the symptoms of bodily pain, inability to sleep, digestive problems, even strokes or heart attacks in extreme cases.
- Spiritual: hatred for life, hatred for work, emptiness of spirit, futility of long-lasting achievements, and inability to rest at night (Ecclesiastes 2:17-23).⁵

Willimon believes that burnout arises “from a lack of meaning rather than from a lack of energy.”⁶ Psychologist Gary Collins carries this idea further as he divides stressors into three categories: frustrations, conflicts, and pressures. Frustrations are described as obstacles hindering a person from reaching his goals. Conflicts are described as two or more goals being considered, both with negative and positive aspects. Pressures are defined as internal or external forces bearing upon the individual which tend to exact certain behavioral patterns.⁷

Brooks Faulkner quotes Louis McBurney as he identifies burnout from his viewpoint: “McBurney identifies this malady as ‘emotional self-sufficiency and invulnerability.’ He goes on to point out the fact that it is folly. In accepting the challenge to be superman, he must leap tall buildings without the capacity to fly. He must dodge bullets without emotionally bulletproof vests. In reality, he is not a superman.”⁸

BURNOUT SYMPTOMS

External Symptoms

The external symptoms of burnout are evident early in the preparation years of the prospective pastor. Symptoms vary in each individual and may include some or all of the following: physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion, obesity, sexual dysfunction, psychosomatic illnesses, social withdrawal, and personality or work-style changes. In the survey conducted for this research, physical exhaustion was listed as a problem in 60 percent of the cases during preparation years. Emotional exhaustion ranked almost as high with a 56 percent rating (moderate-to-severe on the scale). The difficult schedule of classes and work caused most of the men to be unable to have any type of regular exercise program during college years. This condition did not significantly change even after they finished college and entered the ministry. Brooks Faulkner states that the pastors who become obese in their physical condition simply “come out of the closet and into the kitchen.” They determine to take out their burnout frustrations through their eating habits.⁹ It was not uncommon even during preparatory years for the prospective pastor to experience some sexual dysfunction, which caused great concern in his marital relationship.

Physical fatigue is one of the first major symptoms seen by others. The survey respondents stated that despite their extreme fatigue, 34 percent of them experienced moderate-to-severe difficulty sleeping at night. Often, headaches and backaches were prevalent psychosomatic complaints. Archibald D. Hart has shown a relationship between physical fatigue, burnout, and depression. He states that there are two factors involved.

- The physiological protective systems of the individual begin to break down under the prolonged stresses of unsatisfactory working conditions. Under continual pressure, protective and regulatory mechanisms become disturbed, and the emergency system of the body uses up its reserves.
- Much of what is happening is experienced by the individual as loss or deprivation. Perception becomes warped so that even normal and happy events come to seem negative.¹⁰

Even during the preparatory years, withdrawal from friends seemed to be developing in 34 percent of the survey respondents. The statistics indicated a moderate-to-severe problem in this area. Often a change in work style would occur at this time. Either the pastor would withdraw from decisive leadership, or he would

begin to compensate for varying conflicts by becoming more tyrannical, demanding his way in an inflexible manner.

Ted Engstrom identified five groups of workaholics in his book *The Work Trap*. The “It Has to Be Done Right” workaholic is a perfectionist who does not believe that anyone else is as capable as he is. He is extremely qualified yet unrealistic in his commitment to his work. He is unable to trust anyone else. The “I Must Succeed” workaholic is an egotistical individual who does everything for the sake of getting attention for himself. The “I Need Their Approval” workaholic fears failure as the result of low self-esteem. The “I Have to Better My Lot in Life” workaholic is driven by greed. His main motivation is simply to be better off than those around him. The “I Have to Get Away from It All” workaholic is one who uses his work as an escape from undesirable stressful conditions at home.¹¹

Internal Symptoms

The internal symptoms can be described as a loss of options for solving everyday problems. The loss of a positive attitude toward God’s call can be seen even during those preparatory years. Of those aspiring ministers, 29 percent stated that the development of cynicism was a moderate-to-severe problem for them. Psychologist Paul Martin reported in 1984 that older pastors seemed to have a greater problem with the development of cynicism. He stated that 17 percent of the 41- to 65-year-old group felt this development of cynicism, compared to only 4 percent of the 20- to 40-year-old ministers. These statistics were taken from a nationwide survey among fundamental Baptist ministers.¹² The survey for this study, however, shows an increase of cynicism at an earlier age, which is quite significant.

Cynicism is also described in James 3:14-16: the anger toward another turns into jealousy, a result of one individual comparing himself with another. Faulkner states that preachers live in a world of production. Feelings of cynicism can begin when pastors see their friends being called to the larger churches.¹³ He also describes burnout as anger turned inward, thus leading to depression. If this anger is ignored, several steps toward depression will begin, such as “exhaustion, detachment, cynicism, irritability, and suspicion.”¹⁴

BURNOUT DEVELOPMENT

Susan Littwin believes that burnout may begin many years before the young man actually enters the ministry. She states that we are living in the “postponed generation.” The symptoms found in a burnout victim can often go back to his early childhood.

Many of today’s young adults were reared by parents who sheltered their children from the hard facts of life, cushioning their every fall. Their parents convinced them that they were special and entitled to the best of life without work, risk, or sacrifice, and led them to believe that happiness was their natural right. Now, as young adults, these twenty- and thirty-year-old “children” refuse to grow up, postpone confrontation with reality, and wait for the world to hand everything to them for nothing, much as their hard-working parents handed it to them.¹⁵

Jose A. Fuentes believes that the development of burnout can be depicted in a cycle. He states that a minister becomes pastor of a church when he is highly motivated and filled with excitement and great enthusiasm for the work. Seven stages, however, often bring a pastor to the point of burnout.

- Stage One: Overburdened pastors continually accept more responsibilities and refuse to delegate authority. First love begins to wane. During this time, idealism is lost. The pastor often begins to spend more time at work; therefore, his wife takes over the spiritual responsibilities at home.
- Stage Two: The pastor faces a never-ending list of emotional needs from his congregation with no sense of accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion begins to replace his first love as he simply runs out of energy. His family is required to take over his responsibility further at home and begin to complain that they never see him.

- Stage Three: Jobs are only half completed and visitation and preaching responsibilities become a drudgery.
- Stage Four: Physical depletion becomes obvious and depression enters. There is a sense of loss of direction in the ministry. At this stage the pastor is usually confronted by his wife with hostility to which he responds with anger and withdrawal. The public image of the family continues to remain good simply to protect the image.
- Stage Five: The sense of purpose in the ministry is now being lost. The pastor begins to lose control of church activities and organizations, and major problems are mounting at home. The home is beginning to publicly become unraveled.
- Stage Six: The lack of enthusiasm can now be seen in all areas. The sermons lack content and zeal, and absenteeism from church activities is now prevalent. The impact at home is often seen in problems related to his children.
- Stage Seven: Negative attitude is now firmly in place, and the pastor begins to wonder about his call to the ministry.¹⁶

The survey in this study indicated that 39 percent of the respondents declared an increasing desire to day-dream of other occupations during their local church ministry.

Minirth and others believe that there is a burnout prone personality, the obsessive-compulsive. This term refers to a personality which experiences particular repeated thoughts. Obsessive thoughts usually result in the repetition of similar actions known as compulsions. The more commonly understood term for this personality pattern is a perfectionist. This person usually has a list of things to accomplish with him at all times and tends to punish himself if everything on that list is not accomplished each day. It is interesting to note that perfectionists are often firstborn children.¹⁷

Below are some of the personality traits of this individual:

- Obedience to authorities of utmost importance
- Hard worker
- Strict conscience
- Tendency toward extremely successful activities
- Desire to gain and maintain control¹⁸

A battery of tests was recently given to Baptist pastors to discover the ability of persons to manage. One of the instruments measured “verbal ascendancy.” Verbal ascendancy is simply the need to talk or the desire to control the pattern of communication. It was discovered in this test that most Baptist pastors were satisfied with the communication only if they were in control of the communication at least 91 percent of the time, thus allowing only 9 percent of the time to be given to others.¹⁹ A recent survey of the faculty of a large Christian college also indicated that 80 percent of the teachers considered themselves to be primarily obsessive-compulsive.²⁰

A further study of this personality would show a driving compulsion to uphold truth. A perfectionist also tends to expect perfection from others—in marriage and work relationships. He is project-oriented rather than people-focused and analyzes facts rather than feelings. It is difficult for an obsessive-compulsive individual to relate to emotional feelings or responses since he is so strong in his mental capacities.²¹

The thinking patterns of the perfectionists are typical of the high achiever in the ministry. Quantity of output is usually considered to be more important than quality. Competition and winning are a reflection of his self-worth; therefore, he sees himself only as good as his achievements. It is understood that non-achievement-oriented activities are simply a waste of time.²²

Minirth identifies emotions of the perfectionist as follows:

- Anger: fosters defiance toward dominant authorities
- Fear: leads to perfectionistic traits
- Dependence: prefers relationships where he is constantly in control and others are dependent upon him
- Guilt: results from strict parentage or self-imposed inhibitions. These emotions seen in Numbers 20: Moses' anger with the Israelites, fear of losing control, and guilt when God confronted him
- Intellectualization: uses a good vocabulary in an attempt to make good impressions upon others
- Phariseism: maintains a list of dos and don'ts²³

Minirth believes that the development of perfectionism often goes back to the parents of the individual, who often spend much time lecturing their children but very little time listening. These lectures tend to be critical in nature and reveal an expectancy for perfection at an early age. If the parents emphasize the letter of the law, then the children grow up becoming very concerned about each detail of expectation.²⁴

BIBLICAL BURNOUTS

The Apostle Paul reports that Epaphroditus became sick in the ministry and was very close to death. His condition was caused "because of the work of Christ." It appears that Epaphroditus so sacrificially gave of himself to meet the needs of others that he forgot his own needs.²⁵

In the Old Testament the prophet Elijah also experienced burnout in the ministry. First Kings 19 illustrated this problem vividly. After calling fire down from heaven, Elijah's high expectations of revival were not immediately fulfilled. It is impossible to say whether or not Elijah concealed a desire to receive praise from others as a boost to his own ego. Immediately after the event, however, Elijah began to burn out emotionally as a result of Jezebel's threats. Spiritually, he exchanged his usual dependence upon God for his weakening physical strength. Socially, he felt terribly alone with no close associate to encourage him. Consequently, the burnout symptoms were seen. "Egotism, bitterness, paranoia, self-pity, and anger toward God" were all evidenced in Elijah.²⁶

Moses was indeed a burnout victim in Numbers 11:11-15. The following observations were made by Myron Rush concerning Moses and burnout:

- People-helpers are prone to burnout (Exodus 2:11-14).
- High-achievers risk burnout (Exodus 18:13-18).
- Many people suffer from one person's burnout (Exodus 18:18).
- When burnout occurs, daily problems are unable to be handled (Numbers 11:14-15).
- Spiritual fellowship between the believer and God always suffers (Numbers 11:11).
- A desire for suicide or death is often experienced (Numbers 11:15).²⁷

BURNOUT AND SIN

Charles Perry states that he believes burnout is simply another symptom of our fallen nature, which can be seen in the symptoms of anger, self-pity, and bitterness. Therefore, unless the root of the problem is dealt with correctly, the fruit will never change.²⁸

Dr. Frank Minirth concurs with Perry's conclusion. Opposition toward God is often expressed in wrong attitudes. God labeled murmuring as an evidence of unbelief in Numbers 14:11. "As fever indicates the presence of infection, murmuring can show the underlying presence of bitterness."²⁹ Consequently, the hidden root of bitterness must be addressed before burnout can be cured.

Archibald Hart believes that sin can be involved in burnout if the cause of burnout is a violation of a scriptural principle. Unbiblical comparisons of ourselves or our ministries to others lead to depression. Depression can also be sinful if a pastor refuses to change his attitudes or philosophies to overcome the depression. A pastor should arise from depression's pit and look to the Saviour.³⁰

Notes

1. Jim Burns is a fictional name used to relate a true experience in the life of a minister.
2. Herbert J. Freudenberger, *Burnout: How to Beat the High Cost of Success* (New York: Bantam Books, 1980), xvii.
3. *Webster's New World Dictionary*, rev. ed. (1975), s.v. "Burnout."
4. Freudenberger, 17.
5. Frank Minirth, *How to Beat Burnout* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 19.
6. William H. Willimon, *Clergy and Laity Burnout* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 25.
7. Charles Perry, Jr., *Why Christians Burn Out* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), 57, citing Gary Collins, *Man in Transition* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1971), 154-60.
8. Brooks R. Faulkner, *Burnout in Ministry* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981), 13, citing Louis McBurney, *Every Pastor Needs A Pastor* (Waco: Word Books, 1977), 45.
9. *Ibid.*, 15.
10. Archibald D. Hart, *Coping With Depression In The Ministry And Other Helping Professions* (Waco, Texas: Word Publishers, 1984), 114.
11. Ted W. Engstrom, *The Work Trap* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1979), 58-68.
12. Paul E. Martin, "Ministerial Burnout in Fundamentalism" (Chattanooga, Tennessee: unpublished, 1984), 9.
13. Faulkner, 91.
14. *Ibid.*, 89.
15. Willimon, 23-24, citing Susan Littwin, *The Postponed Generation*.
16. Jose A. Fuentes, "The Burnout Cycle in a Pastor," *Ministry* 60, no. 7 (July 1987), 16-17.
17. Frank Minirth, *Before Burnout* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1990), 23.
18. *Ibid.*, 28-29.
19. Faulkner, 96-97.
20. Minirth, *Before Burnout*, 29.
21. *Ibid.*, 28-32.
22. *Ibid.*, 39-43.
23. *Ibid.*, 48-55.
24. *Ibid.*, 63-65.
25. Philippians 2:2, 30.
26. Minirth, *Beat Burnout*, 43-44.
27. Myron Rush, *Burnout* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1989), 19.
28. Perry, 126.
29. Minirth, *Beat Burnout*, 51.
30. Hart, 25.

WHAT IS A MENTORING MINISTRY?

1. We are following Christ—John 21:19-21.

Mark.8:34 Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me.

THIS PRINCIPLE DICTATES OUR DIRECTION.

2. We have an others mentality!

The Lord says, Peter do you love me? Okay then feed my sheep!—John 21:15-17

Ministry is a faithful endeavor to meet the spiritual needs of others all to the glory of God.

THIS PRINCIPLE DICTATES OUR DISPOSITION.

3. We are fit to be followed—Titus 2:1-7.

- a. *Titus 2:7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good work: in doctrine, shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned.*

- 1) Doctrine: implies that we are teachers—know the subject matter.
- 2) Gravity: implies that we are respectable—we practice what we teach.
- 3) Sincerity: implies that we are genuine—this is not just put on.
- 4) Sound speech: implies that we are wholesome—we are actually helping people.

- b. Magnifying glass principle.

Philippians 1:20-21 So now also Christ shall be magnified in my body . . . For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

- 1) Our lives are a magnifying glass.
- 2) People see what we are truly following.
- 3) The closer people get the more they see.

- c. Application: Am I fit to be followed? How well do I know the subject matter? Do I practice what I teach? Am I genuine? Is the way I am living helping those around me grow or causing them to stumble?

- d. Some things a magnifying glass may reveal.

- 1) How we handle stress
- 2) What gives us joy
- 3) What we love

THIS PRINCIPLE DICTATES OUR DESCRIPTION.

4. We are urging others to also follow Christ.
 - a. Application: The thing that should be seen most in the life of a mentor is this: **IT IS WORTH IT TO FOLLOW CHRIST!!** We should be urging those we come into contact with to also follow Christ.
 - b. Challenge: Pick three!
 - 1) Christ ministered to the multitudes
 - 2) Christ chose a select few with whom He spent extra individual time.
 - 3) How do I know whom to choose?

Reach the reachable; teach the teachable.

- c. Illustration: The straight and narrow way and the broad way.

This principle dictates our day to day way of life!

QUESTIONS IN YOUR FIRST YEAR

Key

- These questions you must ask of *yourself*.
- ☐ These questions ought to be asked of *others* and answered.

PERSONAL

- Is youth ministry my calling? Do I view this as my life's work or as a stepping stone to "bigger and better" ministry positions?
- What is my gifting? What am I good at doing? What do I struggle with doing well? What motivates me?
- What is my philosophy of ministry? What is my vision for my ministry?
- How does my wife view my ministry? How involved does she want to be in this ministry?
- What tools do I have to help me in planning, organizing, and administering this ministry?
- What obstacles do I expect to encounter? What benefits do I expect to enjoy?
- How do I view my time? Am I a workaholic? Do I leave enough "margin" in my life for my family and my personal spiritual walk?

PROFESSIONAL

- What is the church's mission/vision?
- ☐ What are the core values of the church? (written and/or otherwise)
- ☐ Is there a job description for this position?
- ☐ What is the gifting of the senior pastor?
- ☐ What is the senior pastor's view of youth ministry?
- ☐ What is the senior pastor's work ethic?
- ☐ What is the senior pastor's administrative style?
- ☐ What expectations does the senior pastor have for me in my first three months? Six months? Year?
- ☐ What is the role of the deacon board in this church (advisory, supervisory, financial, administrative, etc.)?
- ☐ How will the congregation/deacons/pastor measure success in youth ministry?
- ☐ Why did the church/deacons/pastor pick me?
- ☐ What is the salary/compensation package for my position? How does it compare with the average?
- ☐ How much vacation time/sick time is allotted to me and how often is it granted?
- ☐ Is compensation available for graduate studies? Is time off available for graduate work?

- How does the church leadership view my wife's role as being?
- In addition to youth work, what else is expected of my position (song leading, church activity planning, hospital calling, visitation, etc.)?
- Who handles the church finances? What is the church's fiscal year?
- What is my budget? How do I make expenditures (via checks, credit cards, petty cash, etc.)? What am I budgeted to bring in (fundraisers, donations, fees, etc.)?

YOUTH MINISTRY

- What is my philosophy of ministry for youth work?
- What other youth pastors/workers are there in my area with whom I can network?
- Where are the local high schools/middle schools?
- Where do the teens go to school (home, public, Christian, private, etc.)?
- Who else, if anyone, before has been youth pastor/director? In what ways were they successful? What were their shortcomings? Is the congregation still fond of any of them or do they harbor anger, bitterness, or resentment towards any of them?
- What traditions does the youth ministry have?
- What hobbies do the teens of the church enjoy most?
- What activities (camping, fishing, biking, picnics, etc.) do the parents of teens most enjoy?
- What youth activities, if any, in the past were they most successful? Why?
- What youth activities, if any, in the past were they most successful? Why?
- Which youth activities, if any, in the past bombed? Why?
- In what ministries (junior church, children's clubs, Sunday school, nursery, etc.) are the teens currently involved?
- How many teens are employed? What kind of work (fast food, yard, babysitting, etc.) do they do?
- As far as scheduling youth activities goes, how much is too much (once a month, twice a month, once a quarter, etc.)?
- What Christian camps/campgrounds/retreat centers does the church use? Where have the teens gone to camp? Why was that camp chosen? What practical tools do the families of teens in the church want/need (price, location, emphasis, values, etc.)?
- Does the church have its own transportation? What are the policies and procedures?
- What does the church's insurance cover? How does it affect youth activities/events, trips, camps, etc.? Does the church have medical release forms/permission slips? Are they up-to-date?
- Is there a Christian school? If not, is the church planning to start a Christian school? What are my responsibilities/duties related to the school? What is the philosophy of the Christian school in relation to the youth ministry? How might the Christian school calendar conflict with the church youth ministry calendar?

CHURCH LIFE/CULTURE

- What has most contributed to the church's growth over the last three years?
- What has most hindered the church's growth over the last three years?
- What are the demographics of the congregation (number of children, adults, families, seniors, women, men, teens, etc.)?
- What is unique about the community (mountains, sports, inner city, rural, beach, cultural, etc.) where our church is located?
- What are the major problems (gangs, drugs, vandalism, rape, abortion, poverty, homelessness, prostitution, gambling, divorce, etc.) that plague the community?
- What traditions does the church have?
- What type of ministry is the church ("classroom" church = education oriented, "soul-winning" church = evangelistic oriented, "family-reunion" church = family connected, etc.)?
- How does the church communicate with itself (pulpit announcements, bulletin announcements, bulletin board announcements, mail, telephone, electronic, "grapevine," etc.)?
- What Bible colleges/universities does the church associate itself with and/or support?
- What mission boards/agencies does the church associate itself with and/or support?
- What part of the year is the church's "down-time" (summer, holidays, spring, etc.)?
- What has the highest/lowest attendance been over the last year? What dates were they?

HELPFUL HINTS

1. Get a list of teen parents and all who have volunteered in the youth ministry.
2. Keep an eye out for potential parent sponsors and youth staff.
3. Get a copy of all church policies and procedures.
4. Get a copy of the church calendar.
5. "Get in the door in four" rule—spend time in the home of every youth family in the church within the first four months.
6. Identify the teens, regardless of how many, who are most receptive towards spiritual growth—focus your ministry here. (Don't make the mistake of building your entire ministry around the kids who don't want to be there!)
7. Compile a roster of all teens—junior and senior high—of regular attending families and church members. Also, compile a list of all up-and-coming teens (5th-6th grades).
8. Make a reference list of nearby (within two to three hours) campgrounds, retreat centers, and Christian camps.
9. Be patient! Ten-year rule—it takes ten years to really get to know a church.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD PASTORAL COUNSELOR

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES

1. Personal experience of spiritual formation.
2. Growing spiritually.
3. Guided by biblical values.
4. Compassion as heart and skill.
 - a. Skill—the ability to show compassion.
Letting them know they are understood.
 - b. Compassion—the ability to suffer with.
5. Spiritual insight and discernment.
6. Others-centered—yes, a spiritual quality because it defines agape love.
You cannot truly love another if you do not want what is best for him.
7. Interpret and apply Scripture—clearly spelled out and those that are a general reference.
8. Well thought-out theology of evil, pain, and suffering (theodicy).
 - a. “God will work it out.”
 - b. “Don’t worry about.”
 - c. “Just pray about it.”

PSYCHOLOGICAL QUALITIES

1. Free of major wounds, dysfunctions, and addictions.
This does not mean that you haven’t experienced it but have obtained healing and victory.
2. High degree of reflective personal awareness.
3. Comfortable in dealing with negative emotions—anger, hurt, crying, etc.
4. Open and accepting of others—everyone is on this journey; don’t be a judge.

RELATIONAL QUALITIES

1. Open and expressive in communications—not thinking about what you want to say next as someone is talking to you, practicing the “ministry of presence.”
2. Understand the nature of feelings and thoughts—difference between the two.
3. Clear understanding of emotional and physical boundaries.
4. Can enter into reciprocal, intimate adult relationships—mutual caring and sharing.

PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

1. Training in counseling.
2. A thoughtful theoretical orientation—what theory will you practice.
3. Sound theology—we must care about what God is.
4. A track record of success—look internally and be honest.
5. Reputation in community—what do people think of you? Are you valued or trusted?
6. Integrity in personal and professional life.

PASTORAL COUNSELING MODEL

PASTORAL COUNSELING MODEL

Pastoral counseling as a ministry has been done in the context of the church for some time. Understanding the responsibility and privilege of counseling can be one of the most difficult areas of ministry in the life of a pastoral counselor. In this paper, I will design a model that outlines a biblical philosophy of pastoral counseling; defines a spiritual community and the need people have to be a part of it, discover spiritual community with the counselee, develop that spiritual community into a trusting relationship that is safe and promotes true growth, and dedicate the counselee to other spiritual communities in order to foster healthy relationships.

It is thought by many that pastoral counseling is a modern trend. While in its official context that may be true, I believe Scripture bears witness that pastoral and Christian counseling have been taking place since the beginning of the church and through the ministry of Jesus Christ. David Benner refers to soul care as carrying the idea of both care and cure. “Care refers to actions designed to support the well-being of something or someone. Cure refers to actions designed to restore well-being that has been lost.”¹ Benner goes on to say that the church historically has understood its responsibility to do both. Is this true? I believe it to be true. If one looks to the New Testament, there is ample evidence of pastoral counseling taking place. Paul addressing the Corinthian church of behavior that was sinful, Paul writing to Timothy—his son in the faith—and instructing him to be an example to the believers, Jesus Christ offering hope and comfort to grieving family members of Lazarus, Peter using his letters to encourage those who has been weakened by tremendous persecution for their religious beliefs, and other passages allude to the philosophy that pastoral counseling has its place in the church and in the role of a pastor’s ministry.

The following is a model devised to assist the pastoral counselor in a short-term setting. This model integrates other models as well as a personal model so that this model will be able to be used along side a contemporary counseling model.

The first stage of this pastoral counseling model is defining spiritual community.

In his article “The Ministry of Reconciliation,” Dr. Stephen Peisner defines a spiritual community as “a community distinctly organized and experienced in light of the death and resurrection of Christ.” He goes on to say, “It is a place where people can be broken before each other; where people experience other-centeredness, forgiveness, empowering and true intimacy in their relationships.”² The importance of defining this spiritual community is for the benefit of the counselee. A counselee will be able to experience growth on a new level if a true spiritual community can be created. Larry Crabb believes that “spiritual togetherness, connecting, creates movement: togetherness in Christ encourages movement toward Christ.”³ The idea of defining this community is to allow the counselee to feel within the first session a safe place to exist without having to conform to a standard set by the counselor. It is important that the counselee feel comfortable so that true community has an opportunity to be fostered. If the goal of pastoral counseling is to heal and bring restoration, then this spiritual community is of the greatest importance to the counselee.

In the first session of this counseling model, I would seek to be open with the counselee about my intentions of helping him in this safe environment. I would welcome all communication and seek to informally find out some of the issues that need addressing. The skills I would use in this stage of the model would be to seek behavior, seek thoughts, and find out feelings. This communication skill is for the purpose of assessment. The questions or the process are not meant to be invasive or problem solving but rather serve as a springboard in later sessions. After hearing behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, it is important that I use another communication skill known as compassionate reflection. Compassionate reflection is restating the behavior or thought with feelings (reflecting back). This is important because it can help correct what has been said or even clear up things that were misstated. This communication skill ensures the counselee that you understand him and that he knows you understand him. It is a form of affirmation. This is not an affir-

mation stating that you affirm behavior, thoughts, or feelings but serves as a statement that you understand but not that you agree.

In this stage it is important to set parameters in the relationship such as times of meeting, length of those meetings, and how long the counseling will proceed. The first session will also integrate a personal diagnosis. Applying insight from the communication skills combined with information from the intake form, the pastoral counselor can begin to assess the problem and begin to design a plan to bring restoration and healing in a spiritual context. Throughout this process it is important that the pastoral counselor reflect a trusting relationship that will connect the counselee to the counselor.

The second stage of this pastoral counseling model is discovering spiritual community.

This stage is spent mostly encountering the felt problem, studying current strategies, and furthering the trust relationship that has been created in the first stage. This stage would involve the second and third counseling sessions respectively. I believe it is important to note that this spiritual community that is being created and fostered is not something that can be manufactured. I like what Larry Crabb states as a foundational thought for building spiritual community, “spiritual community is the work of the Holy Spirit.”⁴ Crabb believes and holds to the belief that behavioral sciences and the professionalized aspect of counseling has pushed the Holy Spirit to the side and been replaced by secularism. Spiritual community can only take place where it is discovered not manufactured. Benner reflects on the New Testament idea of the *paraklesis* relationship of the Holy Spirit’s work in the life of a believer to describe the pastor’s role in the life of a counselee.

In this second stage of the model, the counselor will explore what has been said in the first session during the communication skills exercise. It is important during this stage to engage in discussion about behavior, thoughts, and feelings. Once these behaviors, thoughts, or feelings are addressed and owned, the counselee will be in a better place to understand and respond to counsel. Throughout this process, it should be the goal of the pastoral counselor to introduce new strategies that will encourage growth and change.

The second stage of the counseling model examines current strategies that the counselee is using to cope and handle the behavior, thoughts, or feelings. Benner states that “it is important that the pastor resist the temptation simply to tell the parishioner what needs to be changed. This is a main difference between counseling and preaching.”⁵ The need for change to be accepted is more important in this stage than actually stating what should be changed. Lasting change in the counselee’s life will be experienced if it is acknowledged as being necessary. Much of this stage is spent connecting with the counselee on a deeper level allowing trust to be experienced.

Deepening the trust level is important to this stage because this is the time to examine the counselee’s image of himself and his view of God. Honesty will be critical and can only take place in the safe environment of a spiritual community. If the counselee believes that forgiveness and healing are byproducts of revealing current strategies, view of self, and his view of God, conflict can be addressed. The goal of this stage is to discover a safe spiritual community so that the counselee can be confronted but not feel threatened and refuse change.

The third stage in this pastoral counseling model is developing spiritual community.

This stage is problem centered and seeks to deal with new strategies to develop, find root issues, and biblical issues that are areas of needed change. Challenging growth, discovering areas that can experience renewal, examining disconnects, and experiencing more fully a spiritual community will be critical aspects of this stage in the model.

One example of facilitating this change is through teaching. It is not traditional teaching that takes place but a “gentle persuasion of new ideas and an encouragement of the adoption of a new frame of reference.”⁶ This gentle persuasion will expose areas that are in need of change and growth. It is important at this stage to

establish plans for new strategies to be implemented by the pastor in the counselee's life. Homework will be given to advance the progress of the counselee. Any task that is chosen should be done so with wisdom, biblical direction, and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's movement. In this stage it is important to establish the importance of restoring the counselee to his intended place in God. Collins refers to this as sanctification. "Sanctification is intended to restore God's image by reproducing God's character in His children."⁷ This stage is motivated by change and conformity, not to a standard set by culture (within the church or without) but a standard set by Scripture and the Holy Spirit. The point of involving the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit is to add depth and truth to the community that is being experienced.

Areas that will need attention and addressing are any irrational beliefs and any internal conflicts that have been exposed in earlier meetings. It might be difficult to begin this process but as Benner states, "I pray that I will see something of what God is doing in the person's life and thereby be better able to discern the primary areas that require change."⁸ Reexamining the counselee's view of himself and his view of God will be necessary to reshape and conform to a biblical understanding of God, His grace, and His desire to be fully connected to His children.

Crabb describes this stage of counseling as an "upper room" experience. Crabb states that there is a choice every community makes as to where it will reside. In the context of a spiritual community (upper room), root issues, biblical issues, irrational beliefs, rebellion, and idolatry can be best addressed in a safe environment. According to Crabb, when a community experiences true spiritual community, people participate in dialogue and share their problems without fear of being manipulated. The counselee knows he is connecting on a deeper level and is aware of the hope that exists as a result of this. Exploration and correction of behavior, thoughts, and feelings will be in the context of this stage. The counselee will experience growth and be challenged to continue to grow in the problem areas. Benner believes, "rather than assuming that change will be easy, a pastor should assume that the one seeking help is getting something out of his or her own present behavior. If this is true, the chance of change occurring will be greatly enhanced if the person counts the costs associated with giving up behavior rather than ignoring those costs."⁹ It is important that the counselee understand a proper motive for change. It is also equally important that when something is removed from the life of a counselee the counselor is prepared to add something in its place. Behavior will be easier to change if the behavior can be replaced with something healthy and building in the person's life. Paul addresses this issue when he calls for the believers at Ephesus to "*put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*" (Ephesians 4:22–24). Paul further states that no matter one is putting away we are members of one body, again affirming the need for spiritual community in the life of any parson.

It is important for the pastoral counselor to acknowledge his dependence on God, particularly in this stage. When offering biblical counseling, more than mere advice, it is necessary to trust God for the direction of the session and not one's own self.

The fourth stage of this pastoral counseling model is dedicating to other spiritual communities (burden bearing).

The fourth and final stage of the counseling model is a form of release between the counselee and the counselor. This stage is generally a one-session stage that disengages the relationship as it has been thus far. The counseling may need to continue for a longer period of time, but this model closes with this stage. The goal of this level is to develop a newfound level of trust while deepening a level of intimacy and dependence on God and others. The goal also includes the involvement of others who are able to enter into a spiritual community to help bear the burdens of the counselee. This philosophy is based on Galatians 6. In this Scripture passage, Paul urges those who are of a spiritually mature mind to engage others with the intention of bearing their burdens with them. Paul is calling for spiritual community to take place on a level in which all can be involved. The importance of this stage is based on the understanding that once the counselee has experi-

enced spiritual community it is necessary to connect this person to another spiritual community. This is a dynamic that the counselee will hopefully desire to be a part of his life.

The obvious place for this spiritual community to take place is the church. The final stage in this pastoral counseling model is heavily dependent on the church and its ability to assist in the counseling process. Collins states, "The church is the place where Christians already belong. God adopts us into His family forever, so that we become part of a community where we fit and where we can feel wanted."¹⁰ The importance of the church is crucial to the continued success of the counselee. The church, however, must be a safe place where the counselee can continue to grow and experience relationships with trusted people.

Another important aspect of this stage is evaluating the growth that has taken place in the life of the counselee. While it is possible to measure that growth, it is equally important to point out any remaining concerns in this session. The pastoral counseling model that is being developed is brief and can be limited in its scope and its ability to address serious problems; therefore, the counselee must understand that he is leaving the counseling relationship with some work still to do. This is a place for spiritual community to assist in the counseling process unless the counseled problem is in need of a referral.

Some practical concepts are important in this stage. The counselee should recognize new goals and a new understanding of missional agenda living. This is the idea that there is hope as a result of connecting to God and a spiritual community. The missional agenda is a direct result of the new concepts of grace and adjusted view of God. It is the desire of this pastoral counselor that the counselee understands new direction and accepts his expressed feelings, moving toward a deeper relational level with God and others. The value of this deepening trust of God and others defines the need for spiritual community. "Our need is for a different kind of community experience. Distinctly spiritual community is organized and experienced in light of the death and resurrection of Christ. It is life in the Spirit and in the context of Christian spiritual reality. It is a safe place where people view, evaluate, and relate to each other according to a distinctly Christian worldview and spiritually informed values. It is a place where people can be broken before each other; where people experience other-centeredness, forgiveness, empowering, and true intimacy in their relationships."¹¹ This community defined will be critical to the advancement of the counselee's relationship with God and others in the church.

If the connection can be made between the counselee and a spiritual community outside of you, the release of the counseling will be very easy. Ideally, the counselee ought to be able to continue growing in trusted relationships that foster trust in God. If, however, a connection cannot be made to a spiritual community, there is still a need to end the counseling sessions. There is room for exceptions; for example, if a crisis occurs toward the end of the counseling model, there may be a need for a few more counseling sessions.

Overall, the experience of this final session is to help the counselee to develop a newfound level of trust and hope while developing a level of intimacy and dependence on God that has not previously been experienced.

The pastoral counseling model that has been presented will be helpful in my counseling ministry. The organization and direction it dictates will cause greater impact to be accomplished in the counseling process. I trust that the experience by the counselee will be greater as well due to the concept of spiritual community being introduced. Through the development of this model, I have discovered the importance of a community that is qualified as spiritual to be a part of the life of every believer, including myself. As I seek to introduce the concept to the counselee and others in my ministry, I pray that people will be able to experience community in a new and biblical way.

Notes

1. David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Baker House, 2003), 14.
2. Stephen Peisner, "The Ministry of Reconciliation: Biblical Foundations of Spiritual Community," (lecture, Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, CA, September 2000).
3. Larry Crabb, *The Safest Place on Earth* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1999), 22.
4. *Ibid.*, 124.
5. David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Baker House, 2003), 94.
6. *Ibid.*, 93.
7. Gary R. Collins, *The Biblical Basis for Christian Counseling for People Helpers* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2003), 158.
8. David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Baker House, 2003), 95.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Gary R. Collins, *The Biblical Basis for Christian Counseling for People Helpers* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2003), 199.
11. Stephen Peisner, "The Ministry of Reconciliation: Biblical Foundations of Spiritual Community," (lecture, Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, CA, September 2000).

VOLUNTEER YOUTH STAFF INFORMATION

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____ Birthday _____

Occupation _____ Marital Status _____

Spouse's Name _____ Spouse's Occupation _____

Children's Names and Ages _____

Will your spouse and family be supportive of your involvement in this ministry?

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

High School _____ Year Graduated _____

College _____ Date Completed _____

Degree _____

List other degrees pursuing or completed.

Present Employer _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Type of work/job title _____

List types of work experience on this job _____

CHURCH BACKGROUND

Are you a member of this church? For how long?

List current responsibilities you have at church.

Describe your personal relationship with Christ.

Have you led someone to Christ? Briefly explain.

MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT

Why do you want to work in the youth group?

What are the three greatest strengths that you bring to this ministry?

What are the three greatest weaknesses in this area of ministry?

What training have you had, other than what has already been mentioned, in this area of youth ministry or counseling?

Will you agree to find three individuals that will commit to pray for you and your ministry with our students?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

To the best of my ability, I have answered each of these questions truthfully and honestly.

Signature _____ Date _____

TIME AND ORGANIZATION

A BOX OF CREATIVITY¹

Some of my most memorable boxes came on Christmas morning. My parents would try to hide the contents of our gifts by putting the much asked for pocket knife in a huge box with a rock in it. The big, heavy box allowed me to imagine all sorts of possible gifts. As a child, I became an expert on what gifts could fit in a certain size box. As managers, it is our responsibility to give each of our workers a box of creativity.

Importance of the box. The box represents the limits or expectations that we can expect. Without limits it is impossible to be creative. Our workers may indicate a desire to have no limits, but their creativity is dependent on our box.

PURPOSE	
PEOPLE	<p>Purpose—The first side of your box of creativity is purpose. Define the purpose of what you are trying to accomplish. If you do not define the purpose, others may define it for you. Common purposes that may be harmful include, “Let’s get this done as fast as possible,” or “Whatever works . . . I guess that’s okay.” Every activity should have a reason. Many times the purpose is key to connecting temporal work with eternal possibilities.</p>
	<p>Time—The second side of your box is the realization that there is a time deadline. Unfortunately, we are not given any time-outs in the constant procession of time. Without a deadline, your team begins wasting time and goofing off, waiting for you to share what the deadline is going to be.</p>
	<p>People—The third side of your box should be a clear understanding of who will be involved in getting the job done. Each person provides a different background and unique skills that affect the creativity.</p>
	<p>Money/Resources—The last side of your box of creativity must include what we can spend or use to do the job. To create out of nothing is not an ability that we have. Many times we communicate this through the use of a budget.</p>
MONEY/RESOURCES	

When all four sides of the box of creativity have been defined, we are ready to be creative. Think about a specific area in your ministry, such as your website. Is the purpose clear? How much time and money do you want to spend on it? Is there a deadline? Two things happen when there is no box of creativity. First, our staff assume they can spend, use, or work on the project as much as they want. We find ourselves trying to get a handle on something that has grown way out of proportion. Second, staff who do not want to step on any toes, spend too much energy, or spend too much money, will wait and wait and . . . wait. The project does not get off the ground, because nobody has a clear idea of what to do and how to do it.

Our job . . . giving them a box of creativity! We are to remind them that even though we may have limits, we serve a God who is infinite. Our limits magnify God’s power.

THE NEXT MOST IMPORTANT THING

Psalm 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Our time on earth is limited. We may not know exactly what our expiration date is, but without a doubt we have one for our life here on earth. Calendar and time management is not just about getting control of your time, but rather being a good steward of the time you have been given. Since we do not know how much time we have been given, we must live each moment doing the next most important thing.

A few practical suggestions—

1. Multi-tasking is a myth.
2. Beware of the bareness of busyness.
3. Pleasing God will guarantee you will not please everybody.
4. No is more important than yes.
5. Be content with your limitations.

ORGANIZATION CANNOT BE DELEGATED²

Face it—your disorganization is a personal problem! No amount of money, electronic tools, paper forms, or added secretaries can make you become organized. Until you believe that the time it takes to be organized will save you more time and effort than it takes to be disorganized, you will continue to enjoy the fruit of disorganization. The fruit of forgetfulness, the black hole, the could-you-remind-me-again, and the massive piles everywhere are a sure sign that your disorganization is in full bloom. Listed below are a few ideas that must be done personally.

1 One way of looking at organization: Think of self-organization as a kind of office hygiene . . . kind of like brushing your teeth and putting on deodorant . . . do it everyday!

2 Two prerequisite beliefs:

- a. Believe that organization takes time now so that you can be efficient later.
- b. Believe that disorganization is a nice way of saying, “I am lazy.”

3 Three areas of organization:

- a. Time—the most valuable thing that you spend . . . also the hardest hit area when you are disorganized.
- b. Information—paper, electronic, and verbal; this one is all about retrieval—finding a bit of information quickly in a few days, weeks, or months.
- c. Space—the areas around you and how you set up your tools, supplies, and storage.

4 Four ways to avoid the “pile method” of filing: When filing, make sure that your goal is not just getting it off your desk but rather putting it where you can find it at a later date. The “pile method” is the fastest known way to get your filing done now and the longest known method for retrieving a specific item later. The following list of four is simple; doing all four things is hard.

- a. Only keep what is necessary
 - 1) Information that cannot be found elsewhere.
 - 2) Information that is essential—toss the extra envelopes and advertisements
- b. Have a flexible filing plan
 - 1) Know that the plan you have now will need to change very soon. Keep extra file folders on hand for new projects and subjects.

- 2) Split files into multiple categories when a topic gets too large.
- c. Cull and archive.
 - 1) Cull—occasionally look through your files for items that are out of date or no longer useful; sometimes you will even remove folders that are no longer needed.
 - 2) Archive—put files that were once useful into storage; archived folders are valuable for history and reference.
- d. Locate by daily, weekly, and yearly.
 - 1) The folders that you use on a daily basis can be kept in a vertical file on your desk. I have sixteen plastic folders that I am in and out of constantly.
 - 2) The folders that you use weekly should be in your desk. If the desk you use does not have a filing drawer, buy a two-drawer filing cabinet and put it close to your desk.
 - 3) Files you access yearly should be considered storage. If your office is small, don't use it as a storage area. If you have a large office, the storage part of your office should be placed where you would have to get up from your desk to get to it.

PRIORITIZED FLEXIBILITY

Prioritized flexibility = willingness to change to do the most important thing

Negatives

- Change direction
- Deadline delayed
- Decreased efficiency
- Driven by loud guy
- Hard to plan ahead
- Massive crew
- Not focused
- Pet project
- Project abandoned
- Quality control
- Transition

Positives

- Ability to adjust
- Accomplishment
- Be a part
- Camaraderie
- Change direction
- Focused work
- Fun with people
- Important = done
- Massive crew
- New enthusiasm
- See the big picture
- Variety

Nehemiah 4:16-18 And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which built on the wall, and they that bore burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so built. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

- 1. Sam Brock, "A Box of Creativity," *The Manager in Ministry*, no. 6 (2005), 5-6.
- 2. Sam Brock, "Organization Cannot Be Delegated," *The Manager in Ministry*, no. 7 (2006), 6-7.

Area of Responsibility

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

Area of Responsibility

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

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7 _____

Area of Responsibility

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Area of Responsibility

1 _____

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4 _____

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6 _____

7 _____

IDEA SHARE: NURSERY

Keep sight of mindset: nursery is a ministry.

Changing Table

1. Have a plastic changing pad that can be easily sprayed/wiped with disinfectant.
2. Post rules for changing diapers.
3. Parents may be responsible to change their own children's diapers at a small church.

Cleaning Toys

Bleach/water mixture in spray bottle, spread out toys on towel, spray, roll, and leave overnight.

Communication with Parents during Services

1. Ushers check in periodically
2. Pagers handed out
3. Key tag on diaper bag and with parent
4. Posted number in service
5. Parents tell nursery worker where they will be sitting in church
6. Parents with children sit in section in back.

Modesty

1. Nursing with modesty curtain attached to ceiling
2. An empty room designated as nursing room
3. Chairs in ladies restroom

Point system

1. Four children under age two per adult
2. Six children per adult over age two
3. Potty trained children need extra adults

Rooms

1. Divide children by age group—have two to three Sunday school/children's church.
2. Use children's gates to divide a large room or block off part of a room to make it safe.
3. If building a new facility, ask the building committee about the size of the room.

Safety

1. Chemicals and bottle warmer out of reach
2. Magnetic cupboard latches
3. Outlet covers childproof—cord won't pull out

4. Door handles
5. Fear of child abuse
6. Discipline
7. Pagers

Supplies

1. Diapers
2. Gloves
3. Wipes (baby wipes and disinfectant wipes—Lysol)
4. Spray disinfectant (hospital disinfectant)
5. Who belongs to which bag, tags, tape, clip board, white board

Workers

1. Schedule all moms
2. Three ladies in charge—one each for Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening
3. Nursery sign up form—pass form around adult Sunday school classes; have volunteers write name, phone number, how often to be scheduled/used as a substitute
4. Make parents feel safe—greet them and present yourself professionally
5. Some considerations
 - a. Young, new couples need to be in services
 - b. Background checks for nursery workers
 - c. Six months of active participation in church before any ministry, including nursery
 - d. Two people in nursery at all times
 - e. Minimum age junior high
 - f. Pairs—mom/daughter, husband/wife, new Christian/mature Christian
 - g. List of alternates—use teens

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

START TO FINISH

An annual Vacation Bible School (VBS) is an excellent tool to reach out to your community with the gospel of Christ. It also enables you to teach and train your faithful children in areas that they need to be challenged as they continue to grow in their relationship with Christ.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Purpose
 - a. Fun
 - b. Entertainment
 - c. Outreach
 - d. Evangelism
 - e. Community service
 - f. Build relationships
2. Prayer
3. Planning
 - a. Suggestion—begin planning at least ten months in advance,
 - b. Why? Know and understand why you want to have your VBS.
 - 1) Tradition—we've always had it.
 - 2) It is expected.
 - 3) Everyone else has a VBS.
 - 4) This is what God wants us to do.
 - c. Who?
 - 1) Who will be the go-to person?
 - 2) What age group?
 - 3) Who will advertise and promote?
 - 4) Who will decorate?
 - 5) Who will teach?
 - 6) Who will preach?
 - 7) Who will tell stories?

- 8) Who will give object lessons?
 - 9) Who will lead songs?
 - 10) Who will sit with the kids?
 - 11) Who will prepare snacks?
 - 12) Who will be involved with the puppets?
 - 13) Who will be in charge of crafts?
 - 14) Who will set up and take down each day?
 - 15) Who will clean up each day?
 - 16) Who will register the kids when they come each day?
 - 17) Who will deal with the kids when they want to make spiritual decisions?
 - 18) Who will follow up?
 - 19) Who will evaluate the VBS?
- d. What will your VBS include?
- 1) Crafts
 - 2) Games
 - 3) Service projects
 - 4) Skits
 - 5) Hands-on learning centers
 - 6) Songs
 - 7) Puppets
 - 8) Stories
 - 9) Object lessons
 - 10) Bible memorization
 - 11) Prizes
- e. When?
- 1) Morning, afternoon, night
 - 2) Early in summer, middle of summer, end of summer
 - 3) Two days, three days, five days, six days

- f. Where?
 - 1) Gym
 - 2) Auditorium
 - 3) Outside
 - 4) Tent
 - 5) Community center
 - 6) School
 - 7) Park
 - 8) A home
- g. Theme
 - 1) It should be fun.
 - 2) It should be creative.
 - 3) It should be bring excitement.
 - 4) Theme ideas
 - a) Jungle—Jungle Jamboree
 - b) Olympic—Dare To Run
 - c) Pirate—Shipwrecked
 - d) Western—Wild Western Adventure
 - e) Time Machine—Time Travelers
 - f) Medieval—The King's Court
 - g) Australian—Aussie Excursion
 - h) Circus—Circus of Light
 - i) Military—Be All God Wants You to Be
 - j) Island—Discovery Island
 - k) Fort—Fort Freedom
- h. Various ways of running VBS
 - 1) Grade levels—K4–K5, 1st–2nd, 3rd–4th, 5th–6th
 - 2) Younger and older—K4–3rd, 4th–6th

- 3) Teacher and classes
 - 4) Large group dynamic—everyone together all the time
 - 5) Family VBS
 - 6) Children, teens, and adults
 - 7) Put kids on teams for the entire week
- i. Prizes—will prizes play any part in your VBS?
- 1) Oriental Trading Company Inc., 800.228.2199, www.orientaltrading.com
 - 2) Rhode Island Novelty Importers, 800.528.5599, www.rinovelty.com
 - 3) The School Authority, 888.431.1722, www.Geddes-Schools.com
 - 4) US Toy Company, 800.255.6124, www.ustoy.com
 - 5) S & S Worldwide, 800.243.9232, www.ssw.com/christian
 - 6) Little People's School Supply, 800.874.3325, www.everythingearlychildhood.com
 - 7) Guildcraft Arts and Crafts, 800.345.5563, www.Guildcraftinc.com

4. Program

- a. What kind of a program will you run?
- 1) Published curriculum
 - 2) Write your own
 - 3) Use other people's ideas
- b. Ideas to teach
- 1) Stories
 - 2) Object lessons
 - 3) Preaching
 - 4) Puppets
 - 5) Video
 - 6) Songs
 - 7) Skits
 - 8) Pantomimes
 - 9) Interactive learning centers

- 10) Gospel illusions
- c. Curriculum publishers
 - 1) Child Evangelism Fellowship Inc., 800.748.7710, www.cefpress.com
 - 2) Concordia Supply Company, 800.521.0751, www.concordiasupply.com
 - 3) Cook Communications Ministries, 800.323.7543, www.cookministries.com
 - 4) Great Commission Publications, 800.695.3387, www.gcp.org
 - 5) Gospel Light, 800.4.GOSPEL, www.gospellight.com
 - 6) Group Publishing Inc., 800.747.6060, www.groupvbs.com
 - 7) LifeWay Church Resources, 800.458.2772, www.lifeway.com
 - 8) Regular Baptist Press, 800.366.8004, www.regularbaptistpress.org
 - 9) Standard Publishing, 800.543.1353, www.standardpub.com
 - 10) VBS Express—Quality Speech Material, 864.862.7640, www.qualityspeech.com
 - 11) WordAction Publishing Company, 800.877.0700, www.wordaction.com
5. Promotion
 - a. Word of mouth
 - b. Church bulletin
 - c. Neighborhood flyers
 - d. Local schools
 - e. Banners
 - f. Radio
 - g. TV—local channels often offer free advertisement
6. Participation
 - a. Involvement from several church members: **OWNERSHIP**
 - b. Get kids actively involved: **PARTICIPATION**
 - c. Be excited and enthusiastic: **ENTHUSIASM**
7. Productivity
 - a. How can you have the greatest impact for Christ upon your community?
 - b. How do you measure success? True success is not measured by quantity.

- c. Be faithful despite small crowds or few decisions.
- d. Allow God to do His work through you!
- e. Finish well.
- f. Follow up on the kids who attended your VBS.

VBS PLANNING SHEET

Dates _____ Time _____

Purpose _____

Goals _____

Theme _____

How many days? _____ What days? _____

Who will head up the following areas?

1. VBS Coordinator:

2. Decorations:

3. Advertisement:

4. Set up and clean up:

5. Registration:

6. Preaching:

7. Teaching:

8. Object lessons:

9. Songs:

10. Stories:

11. Skits:

12. Snacks:

13. Crafts:

14. Puppets:

15. Counselors:

16. Follow up:

17. Other:

SAMPLE FIVE-DAY VBS LESSON PLAN

MONDAY

Theme: Survivor Bay—Salvation

Motto: You Can't Do It Alone

Verse: Acts 4:12b

Character: Blind Man

Passage: John 9:1-41

TUESDAY

Theme: Treasure Cove—God's Word

Motto: Keep Searching for Treasure

Verse: Psalm 119:16

Character: David

Passage: Psalm 19:10

WEDNESDAY

Theme: Temptation Reef—Sin

Motto: You Can Say No

Verse: Matthew 6:13a

Character: Cain

Passage: John 8:36

THURSDAY

Theme: Delta of Discernment—Choices

Motto: Make the Right Choice

Verse: 1 Kings 3:9

Character: Solomon

Passage: 1 Kings 3

FRIDAY

Theme: Paradise Harbor—Heaven

Motto: Salvation in No Other than Jesus

Verse: Luke 23:42

Character: Thief on the Cross

Passage: Luke 23

VBS LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

Fill out one worksheet for each day.

Daily Theme:

Motto:

Verse:

Character:

Passage:

Craft or Service Project:

Snack:

Game:

Skit:

Story:

Continued Story:

Puppet Script Title:

Puppet Song Title:

Object Lesson #1:

Object Lesson #2

Prize:

Special Activity (interview with Bible character, character quality, who is God, etc.):

Songs:

SAMPLE DAILY VBS SCHEDULE

9:30–9:40	Welcome, pledges, and prayer	Vanessa
	Song: “The Lord’s Army”	Vanessa and Eden
	Offering	Pastor Shawn
9:40–9:50	Introduction of Theme: Survivor Bay—Salvation	Pastor Shawn
	Review Questions	Justin and Manuel
	Song: “Wiggle Worm”	Vanessa and Eden
9:50–10:00	Verse and Character: Acts 4:12b—Blind Man	Sarah
	Object Lesson #1: God’s Forgiveness	Daniel
	Song: “1, 2, 3 Jesus Loves Me”	Vanessa and Eden
10:00-10:10	Pantomime: The Blind Man Sees	Latosha
10:10-10:20	Story: Finding Grace	Lynette
	Puppet Special Music: “God So Loved The World”	Joel, Amy, Victor, Justin, Eden, Maricar, Sarah, and Manuel
10:20-11:10	Snack Break and Game Time: Whiffle Ball	Joel
11:10-11:20	Words of Wisdom: Salvation in No Other	Victor and Pastor Shawn
	Object Lesson #2: Eternity	RJ
11:20-11:30	Song: “If You Believe”	Vanessa and Eden
	Puppets: I Can Do It	Karen, R J, and Daniel
	Song: “The Steadfast Love”	Vanessa and Eden
11:30-11:45	Preaching: Salvation in Christ Alone	Pastor Shawn
	Stretch	Pastor Shawn
11:45-11:55	Continued Story: John Paton	Ruth
	Song: “All That I Need”	Vanessa and Eden
11:55-12:00	Prize Distribution	Pastor Shawn

DAILY VBS SCHEDULE WORKSHEET

_____ – _____	Welcome, pledges, and prayer	_____
	Song: _____	_____
	Offering	_____
_____ – _____	Introduction of Theme: _____	_____
	Review Questions	_____
	Song: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Verse and Character: _____	_____
	Object Lesson #1: _____	_____
	Song: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Pantomime: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Story: _____	_____
	Puppet Special Music: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Snack Break and Game Time: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Words of Wisdom: _____	_____
	Object Lesson #2: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Song: _____	_____
	Puppets: _____	_____
	Song: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Preaching: _____	_____
	Stretch	_____
_____ – _____	Continued Story: _____	_____
	Song: _____	_____
_____ – _____	Prize Distribution	_____

VBS EVALUATION

1. What was the theme for the week?
2. How did the kids respond to the theme throughout the week?
3. Would you use this theme again in the future? Why or why not?
4. How did the kids respond to the activities, lessons, and stories throughout the week?
5. What activities would you like to see changed for next year?
6. What were some of the good things that took place?
7. What were some things that need improvement for next year?
8. How can the staff be more effective next year?
9. What do you want to incorporate in next year's VBS?
10. Overall, did we fulfill our purpose and meet our goals? If so, how? If not, why not?

20 OR SO THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN RUNNING A VBS

1. Don't forget for whom you are doing VBS.
2. Don't underestimate the power of prayer.
3. Be well prepared.
4. Have your schedule flow smoothly from one activity to another.
5. Have smaller children sit up front so they will be able to see.
6. Have adult or teen workers sit among the kids to assist with crowd dynamic.
7. Don't try to teach several new songs in one day; by Thursday all the songs should be familiar to the kids.
8. When you do teach a new song, have your leaders sing it first.
9. Wherever you decide to hold your VBS, make yourself aware of potential distractions; determine what you will do if something does happen.
10. When speaking, make sure everyone can hear you; talk slowly and clearly.
11. Avoid meaningless movement when you are telling a story, preaching, or giving an object lesson.
12. Make sure you look at the audience when you are speaking; avoid looking at the floor or the ceiling.
13. Review your stories, object lessons, etc., often; there is always room for improvement.
14. When using puppets, the puppeteer must become the puppet character; work diligently on hand and mouth coordination.
15. Use a lot of action with the puppets; don't have them just standing there. Make them come alive.
16. BE ENERGETIC . . . even when you don't feel like it.
17. When not involved in what is going on in front, sit among the kids and be interested in what is happening.
18. Inform the children that they should use the bathroom during the break or before the program begins, not during VBS.
19. Don't chew gum during the program; it can be distracting as you tell a story or present a lesson.
20. Center your program around the preaching; let it be the main focus of everything you do each day.
21. As you preach, cover both the positive and negative aspects of your theme.
22. Make sure your preaching is clear and easy for kids to understand; remember that there may be some kids or parents there who know nothing of the Bible.
23. If you choose to have an invitation, be very clear about what you are asking.

- 24. Playing soft music during the invitation helps the kids stay calm and focused.
- 25. Stress the seriousness of the invitation.
- 26. FINISH ON TIME!
- 27. After each day, get together as a group and discuss what went well and what could use some improvement.

VBS REGISTRATION

Name _____
Address _____

Grade Entering _____ Age _____
Phone Number (____) _____
Parent's Name _____
Do You Attend Church Regularly? Yes No
If Yes, Where? _____
Attendance Record: M T W T F
Visitors' Names and Day Brought—

DECISION CARD

Name _____
Date _____
Day _____
Decision:

Counselor _____
Comments:

LESSONS FROM CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Psalm 4:8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

Psalm 33:16–22 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

Psalm 62:5–8 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defense; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Proverbs 11:14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

Proverbs 21:30–31 There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD. The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.

Proverbs 24:5–6 A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.

Proverbs 18:10–11 The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

Proverbs 29:25–26 The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD.

Psalm 91 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

SAFETY IS OF THE LORD

By Walt Brock

Proverbs 21:31 The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.

Psalms 33:17 A horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.

Upon the occasion of a break in to our offices and the theft of \$20 in cash and a few minor items, we had a meeting of our staff team to share with them what we knew, establish different procedures and precautions, and to remind them of our real safety source.

There is an interesting dynamic found throughout Scripture that is echoed in these verses. God has given us work to do and a stewardship to fulfill, yet in the end He desires us to look to Him for power, strength, guidance, provision, and security. The danger for us is to get all caught up in the work we are doing and the responsibility we are given to fulfill and then to begin thinking it is our abilities and strength that is doing the work. Colossians 1:29 illustrates this dynamic for us. We find in verse 28 that we are given the a task to perform, to teach and preach and warn all men for the purpose of bringing them to “perfection.” We are then told in verse 29 to work hard at accomplishing that task, yet we are to strive according (by the means of) to His mighty working in, around and through me.

Colossians 1:28–29 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

In the matter of safety we also find this dynamic, there is and always will be a tension between protecting ourselves and trusting God to protect us. It is by faith we put our ultimate trust in God, for His protection.

The believer must follow good stewardship principles in protecting himself, those he is responsible for, and the material items placed in his care (prepare his horse for battle), but in the end he must realize that the only real security in this world rests in the protection of God (safety is of the Lord). By faith we resolve the tension between doing what we can as a wise steward to protect ourselves, and being able to lie down at night and peacefully leave ourselves in God’s hands.

As believers we must always look for a spiritual solution to a physical challenge. It is not that we ignore the physical side of a challenge, but that is not all there is too it. Every event in the believer’s life has a spiritual side. Whether the event is perceived as good or bad, we are still supposed to thank the Lord for “all things,” and the only way we can do that is to view the challenge from a spiritual perspective. How can we do this?

Looking for a spiritual solution to a physical challenge by doing the following:

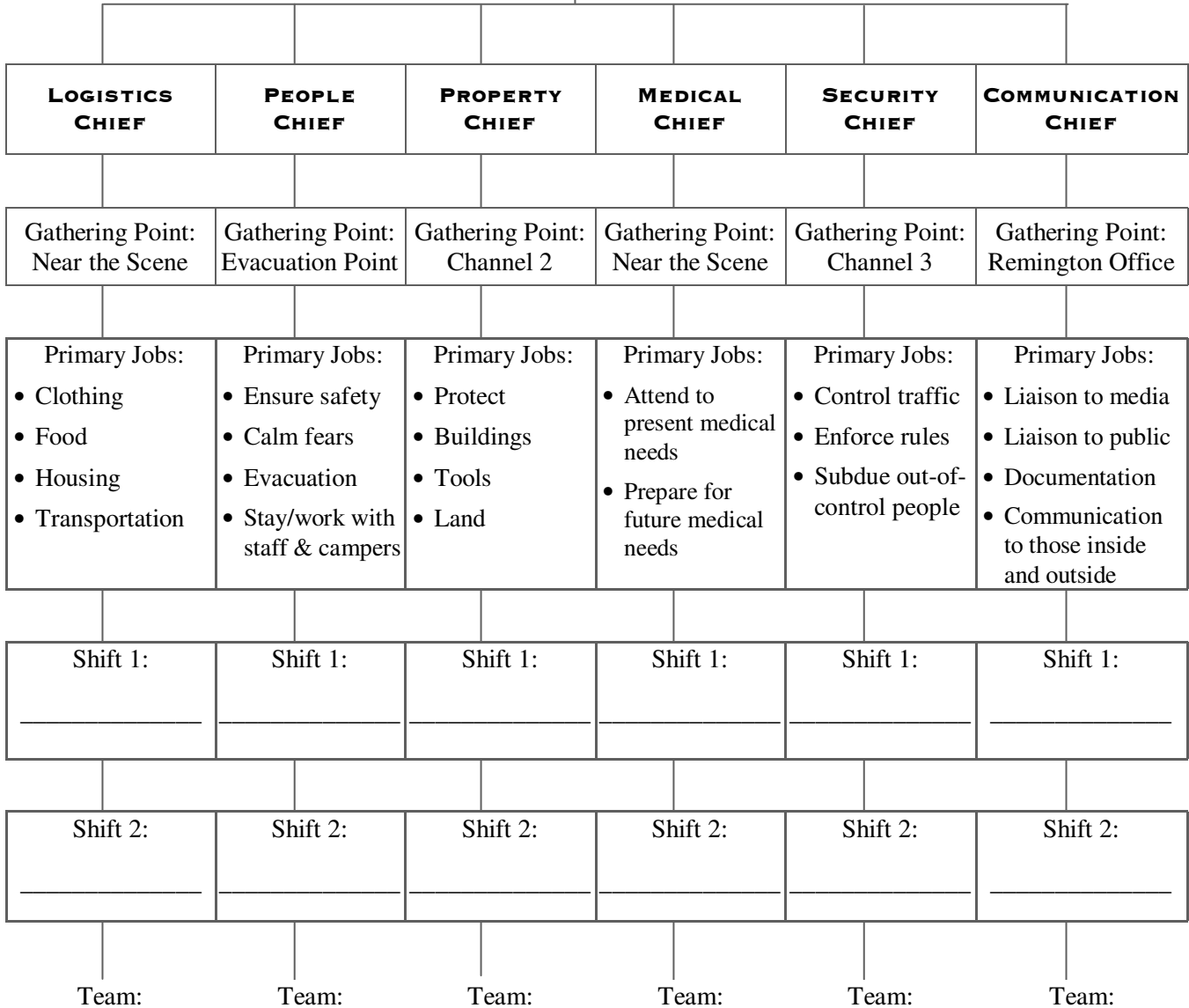
1. Do not worry, but pray for safety and God’s protection.
Philippians 4:6–7 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
2. Trust in the Lord to settle accounts.
Proverbs 22:23 For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them. (Also 1 Samuel.15:2 and Romans 12:19)
3. Exercise prudent (wise) preparation and be good stewards of God’s material and items that He has placed in your care. Don’t be careless or neglectful with this great responsibility.
Proverbs 22:3 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

4. Realize that it is literally impossible to protect your self from all danger and outside threats, no matter how strong or wealthy you are.
Psalm 33:16 There is no king saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.
5. Remember real safety is in God's hands, not ours.
Psalm 4:8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.
6. Use events such as this break in and theft as reminders of the eternal nature of our ministry and lives, and of where our real wealth is.
Matthew 6:19–21 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS

1. Be organized—the ability to quickly retrieve basic information is a key element in a crisis.
 - a. Phone numbers of parents and church staff
 - b. Medical forms
 - c. Directions
2. Anything unsupervised is unsafe.
3. Don't be afraid to only answer what you know.
4. List the crises that you have been through and the crises that you are likely to go through in your lifetime.
5. Always speak the truth.
6. Be willing to say no to your teens. Some things are fun and safe; some things are fun and unsafe. Fun should not determine whether or not you do something.
7. Managed risk—everything carries with it some level of risk; the procedures you implement will manage those risks.
8. Accidents do happen—no person is perfect.
9. Dealing with perception—it is reality for many people.

INCIDENT COMMANDER



THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH TOOL KIT

Whether you are woodworking, painting landscaping, or working in the kitchen, having the right tool for the right job makes all the difference in the world. I worked my way through Bible college as a painter (houses and apartments, not the artistic kind). As a painter, I had my basic tool kit. It included everything I needed to quickly and efficiently paint an apartment or house. Some tools were workhorses that I used everyday. Others were specialty tools that I had never heard of before painting, but they certainly made my job much easier. I had other tools that looked really cool, but they sat in my truck and were never used. Using the analogy of a toolkit, we want to look at what a basic Children's Church toolkit should look like. My goal for this is to be a kind of show and tell. I would like to show you what I use and how I use it.

TABLE SAW—VISUALS

The table saw is the workhorse and backbone of the woodshop. A good set of visuals are essential for Children's Church.

1. Flash-A-Card—A Beka (www.abeka.com)
2. Flannel graph—Betty Lukens (www.bettylukens.com)
3. Flannel board and easel (www.cefonline.com/store)
4. PowerPoint
5. Whiteboard

ORBITAL SANDER/BELT SANDER—MUSIC AND MUSIC VISUALS

Just like great sanding equipment can help bring real beauty to your wood work, music and music visuals will aid in a fantastic time of beautiful praise and worship to God.

1. Music CD's—Patch Sing Along
2. When to use or not use a pianist
3. PowerPoint
4. Overhead transparencies
5. Music programs

BAND SAW—EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP, AND OUTREACH MATERIALS

The band saw is another workshop essential; it is basic, but you can't live without it. Evangelism and discipleship materials are essential to your ministry.

1. Wordless book (www.cefonline.com/store)
2. Gospel Flipper Flapper (GF2)
3. Training videos and DVDs
4. Tracts
5. Welcome to the Family (www.rbpstore.org)

LATHE—PUPPETS

Just like a lathe can turn out some really cool, attention-getting designs, puppets are awesome for getting the attention of children and are a great tool to use to enhance several different parts of your church time. A lathe and puppets are just fun to use.

1. Puppets (www.childrensministrytoday.com/cgi-bin/cart/cp-app.cgi)
2. Skits
3. CDs
4. Going solo
5. Stages

ROUTER—STORIES AND OBJECT LESSONS

The router is another bread-and-butter tool that every workshop needs and can add some real zing to your projects. Good stories, illustrations, and object lessons are essential to your service. Where can you find good ones?

1. Keys for Kids (cbh.gospelcom.net/keys)
2. Children's Ministry Today Inspiration Vault (www.childrensministrytoday.com/the_vault)
3. Kidology (www.kidology.org)
4. CEF Press (www.cefonline.com/store)
5. Gospel Light (www.gospellight.com)

WOOD—SUPPLIES

Crayons, glue, and scissors, crafts and activities, candy and prizes, Treasure Chest

1. Oriental Trading (www.orientaltrading.com)
2. S & S Worldwide (www.ssw.com)
3. Rhode Island Novelty (www.rinovelty.com)
4. Rebecca's (www.rebeccas.com)
5. KIPP Brothers (www.kippbro.com)
6. T. Myers Magic (www.tmyers.com)
7. Penguin Magic (www.penguinmagic.com)

COMPOUND MITER SAW WITH LASER GUIDE—INTERNET RESOURCES

This is an old tool with a new twist. Here are some places where you can find some "old tools" on the internet.

1. E-Sword (www.e-sword.net)
2. ChildrensMinistry.net (www.childrensministry.net)
3. Children's Ministry Today (www.childrensministry.org; www.childrensministrytoday.com)

4. Group's Children's Ministry.com (www.childrensministry.com)
5. Kidology (www.kidology.org)
6. Children's Ministry Today Inspiration Vault (www.childrensministrytoday.com/the_vault)
7. Keys for Kids (cbh.gospelcom.net/keys)
8. CEF Press (www.cefonline.com/store)
9. Gospel Light (www.gospellight.com)
10. Regular Baptist Press (www.rbpstore.org)
11. Christian Book Distributors (www.christianbook.com)
12. Children's Ministry Today Outlet Mall (www.childrensministrytoday.com/cgi-bin/cart/cp-app.cgi)
13. Professor Wonder's Wonder Factory (www.professorwonder.com)
14. Peacemaker Ministries Young Peacemaker (www.peacemaker.net/site/c.aqKFLTOBIpH/b.958199/k.AFBE/Young_Peacemaker.htm—*if you don't feel like typing that long URL, go to www.peacemaker.net, click on "Resources," and choose "Young Peacemaker" from the drop-down menu.*)
15. Anchor Church Resources (www.anchorchurchresources.com)

DUCT TAPE—BALLOONS

Cheap, easy, and have many uses. Books, videos, and supplies are available at the following:

1. Balloon HQ (www.balloonhq.com)
2. Professor Wonder's Wonder Factory (www.professorwonder.com/balloon.htm)
3. T. Myers Magic (www.tmyers.com)
4. Penguin Magic (www.penguinmagic.com)
5. Multi Hobbies (www.multihobbies.com/balloons/simple.htm)
6. MBD2.com (www.mbd2.com/online/store)
7. Kids Stuff (www.mbd2.com/kidsstuff.htm)
8. Balloon HQ Sculpture Instructions (www.balloonhq.com/faq/SculptureNames.html—*URL is case sensitive*)

BUYING A CHEAP PARTICLE BOARD TABLE AT WAL-MART—VIDEOS

Sometimes okay, but never your best choice. There are some good times and some bad times to use videos. What are they?

HIGH PRICED RADIAL ARM SAW—GOSPEL ILLUSIONS

Great tool if you can afford it. Gospel illusions can be great object lessons. However, you have to be careful—they can be expensive and time consuming; they can be great, but know what you are getting before going in.

1. Professor Wonder's Magic Index (www.professorwonder.com/magicndx.htm)
2. T. Myers Magic (www.tmyers.com)
3. Penguin Magic (www.penguinmagic.com)
4. Children's Ministry Today (www.childrensministrytoday.com/cgi-bin/cart/cp-app.cgi)
5. Dock Haley Gospel Magic (www.gospelmagic.com)
6. The Magic Warehouse (www.themagicwarehouse.com)

JIGS—GAMES

A jig can be something you make up or buy. It helps to guide or do repetitive tasks. Games can help you review content from previous weeks and build excitement, but be careful not to spend too much time building the jig.

LARGE GROUP DISCIPLINE

For the purposes of this article, I will be limiting my scope to discipline in a children's church type of environment. By this I mean a medium to large group (fifteen to one hundred plus) where there may be singing, puppets, skits, stories, etc., but a Bible message is the primary focus. We might see these types of groups in Children's Church, AWANA counsel times, Vacation Bible School, evangelistic meetings, or a chapel time at a Christian day school. The focus is limited to this type of group because the purpose of discipline here really is different. When I discipline my children in the home, the purpose of the discipline is training. I don't want to avoid the problem: I want to stop everything and address the heart issue of my child; I want to model, teach, and correct to the standard. Moral training is the goal in this instance. Even in a small group at church, as in a Sunday school class, or an AWANA team group, my goal may be the same. The primary purpose is not to avoid the problem but to use it as a teachable moment to address a heart issue.

However, once you get to a larger group, your purpose changes. The primary purpose of these settings is usually corporate worship or preaching from God's Word. In this case, the goal is not to stop and address the individual's heart attitude, but to avoid misbehavior and distractions so that the Word of God can be clearly preached and heard without interruption. The individual can be addressed later, but the primary purpose is what the group receives from the Word of God. In this setting you want to avoid issues and distractions or divert attention away from it. If you have to deal with a discipline issue in this setting, many times you have already failed; in the process of dealing with it, you have lost the attention and focus of everyone else and have distracted from the gospel message.

When attempting to crate train/potty train my dog, I read several articles on the web on how to do this. One of the articles offered this advice when the dog has an accident in the house: "Find a newspaper and roll it up tightly. Take it in your right hand and with a firm even swing hit YOURSELF over the head and say, 'Bad trainer.' Repeat this three times." When I first read this, my initial reaction was that this was some liberal-animal-worshipping-tree-hugging-card-carrying-PETA-nut trying to pawn off new age animal care advice on unsuspecting pet owners. But the more I trained my dog, the more I realized that her behavior was directly related to how well I trained her.

Now, the children in your children's ministry are not dogs, and I am certainly not proposing a child-centered, conflict avoidance, never-say-no-to-a-child, the-teacher-is-always-wrong approach to discipline. However, from my experience in leading groups of children and training and observing others doing the same, I can confidently say that the MAJORITY of all discipline and distraction issues that arise are directly related to the way the leader leads the group. Often by the way we lead songs, transition from one thing to the next, tell stories, or play games, we are begging the children to misbehave. To put this in spiritual terms, many times we inadvertently lay stumbling blocks before our children, then pounce on them when they fall. Often the problem is us.

The number one thing you can do to avoid misbehavior and discipline issues is to have a purposefully planned, preeminently prepared, passionately presented, perfectly paced, properly prayed for, service populated proportionately with a plethora of post-adolescent people (preferably parents) perpetually proclaiming a puny pronouncement of plain, precise, precepts. (Phew! I'm perplexed as to whether that was a potently powerful proclamation or a pretentious pile of puffed-up pontification. Okay, okay, I'll stop now.)

PURPOSEFULLY PLANNED

Consider the following situation:

"Boys and girls, wasn't that a great story from our puppet friends? Let's say goodbye to Larry and Lenny. Okay . . . let me see . . . why don't we sing a song next . . . let me just look one up in our song book here . . . this will just take a minute . . . ooh, that's a good one, but I don't think you know it

yet . . . hmmm . . . how about . . . Johnny, what are you doing standing on that chair? You know that you are supposed to sit still and listen . . . Lisa, put your purse away. You know that you aren't supposed to play with things during church time . . . What's that Sue? . . . No, we cannot sing the Barney song . . . Sam, take your hands off your brother . . . boy, we have a lot of problems this morning . . . maybe we need to review the rules and the consequences."

Does this sound familiar? Has this ever happened to you? Solution: The teacher above should take a rolled-up newspaper and hit herself on the head three times while saying "Bad teacher! I failed to plan."

Children, like blood-hounds, can sniff out indecision and lack of focus. When this happens, their minds wander, their bodies fidget, and you lose their attention. Their attention span is short to begin with; when we have gaps and lulls in our program, we are inviting distractions. These "distraction gaps" often show up in times of transition, when we are moving from one part of the service to another.

You must plan every detail of your service. What is my theme? What songs will we sing? How should I order them? When will we have a bathroom or snack break? What decision do I want the children to make? If you work with several other people, having an order of service is helpful so that all the leaders are on the same page and know what is happening next. Everything should flow like a well oiled machine. One part of the service should flow right into the next without a gap. If necessary, meet with your workers before the service to go over the plan for the day.

Music can be a great aid in the flow of your service, yet it tends to be the most under-planned and sometimes unplanned aspect of our ministry. One of my pet peeves is when I hear a leader ask if the children have a favorite song they would like to sing. This screams of lack of planning.

Here are some questions to consider when choosing songs. Take all these things into account when planning your service.

1. What is the content of the song?
2. What is this song's message?
3. What is the focus—Is it making a statement, telling a story, or teaching a truth?
4. What is the purpose—Is it to teach, to worship, to warn, to excite, to encourage, or to inspire?
5. What is the voice—Is it first person or third person?
6. For a worshipful song, is it talking about God or to God?
7. What about tempo and dynamics—Is it fast or slow, loud or soft?
8. What is the emotional content—Is it joyful, happy, worshipful, contemplative, grateful, or jubilant?
9. Are there actions that go with this song?
10. Is this a new song for everyone, or is it one they all know?

Quieter, more contemplative songs like "God Is So Good" tend to quiet the hearts of young people and help them focus their attention. I like to use quieter songs right before a transition to something else; this way I already have their focus and tend not to lose it in the transition. I also like to do "bigger," more active songs toward the beginning of the service and funnel down toward more worshipful songs in preparation toward the message. In other words, a wild rendition of "Father Abraham" right before the message would not be a good idea. If I am doing a game or my skit or puppet show is a little more zany than usual, I will tend to

schedule it early on in the service. One other tip: sometimes after a very active song, rather than attempting to get everyone's attention for the next song, just start leading the next song. You may have a few stragglers at first, but this is much more effective than stopping and trying to settle down the group.

Most of what I have mentioned is common sense. Yet I see people who clearly understand these concepts make these mistakes time and time again. The problem is not that they don't understand; the problem is that they don't take the time to plan this out. When under the gun at the last minute, they make choices that tend to lose the focus and attention of the group.

The title of this section is purposefully planning. In addition to the planning, it is very important to have a clear understanding of what it is that you are trying to accomplish. When you have a crystal clear understanding of where you are, where you are going, and why you are going there, there is a passion and confidence about what you are doing. This passion and confidence helps you to be more readily followed. As I mentioned previously, children can smell insecurity and lack of focus in a leader, and their behavior (or misbehavior) usually reflects it.

Do you know why you are doing each part of the service? Is there a clear reason for its existence (not just as a time filler)? If there is not a good reason, either find a good reason or get rid of that part of the service. Talk to your pastor or youth pastor. What is their vision for this service?

As a side note, let me say what I think our purpose ought to be for children's church. I believe it should truly be a worship service. What is a worship service? Let's think of an adult worship service. We worship through corporate singing; through listening to the choir and agreeing with their words of praise and honor to God; and through testimonies, baptisms, and the Lord's supper. But how do we worship through the preaching of God's Word, the centerpiece of the worship service? As we hear God's man proclaim God's Word, we have a choice to make—will we bend the knee and be obedient to God's Word, or will we be stubborn and reject it. That is how we worship—through the point of decision.

So often, children's church is just another Sunday school. We are teaching in the same way and using the same focus as we did in the Sunday school, just maybe with a different teacher and a different group of children. Unfortunately, most of the curriculum I have reviewed takes this same philosophy. I believe children's church is about worship. I believe everything we do should point toward that moment of decision. Don't just tell a Bible story, apply God's Word and give an opportunity to make a decision about God's Word. Like a preacher uses illustrations to illuminate a point or a passage of Scripture, the children's church worker will use puppets, skits, stories, and object lessons to illuminate the Word of God. Everything points to the moment of decision. Even snacks and bathroom breaks do this by removing distractions that would keep a young one from hearing the Word of God. If a part of the service distracts from the moment of decision, get rid of it.

To avoid misbehavior and “distraction gaps” make sure your service is purposefully planned.

PREEMINENTLY PREPARED

How is preparation different from planning? Planning is ordering and determining what, how, and why. Preparing is getting everything ready to actually do it. The word *prepare* means to make ready ahead of time. While five minutes before your service is technically ahead of time, it does not do the Word of God or the kid's justice. Preeminently preparing is preparing in a manner of preeminence—priority and importance.

Consider the following situation:

“And David shot the stone at Goliath, and defeated him and the rest of the Philistines . . . Jimmy, you haven't been listening this whole time. You have been fidgeting and distracting those around you. What is going on?”

“Mr. Smith, this is sooo boring. I have heard this about 1000 times.”

“Jimmy, how dare you call the Word of God boring. How do you think God feels when you call His Word boring?”

Solution: Mr. Smith should roll up a newspaper and hit himself on the head while saying, “Bad teacher. I failed to prepare. And in so doing, I dared to make the Word of God seem boring.”

Excellent skits, exciting puppet scripts, unforgettable object lessons, and life-changing Bible messages don't just happen. They take time to prepare and that makes it essential to begin your preparations early in the week. When you do this, the previous week's service is still fresh in your mind. You have plenty of time for proper study, and you are able to meditate on the lesson all week. Also, you have time to gather needed materials. I can't tell you how many times I was preparing for a message at the last minute when a great idea would come to me for an object lesson or visual; unfortunately, I didn't have enough time to gather the needed materials. When you prepare early in the week, you have time to get what you need.

The most effective and compelling messages are the ones that speak to us first. Study early in the week and let God's Word permeate your own life. Confess your own sin, and allow God to work in your life through the passage of Scripture. Meditate on it throughout the week and think about it often. When working with children, sometimes it is easy to study the lesson book, story book, or curriculum alone. Remember that it is God's Word that is alive and powerful and able to pierce the heart. Read the passage of Scripture again and again. You will be amazed at what the Holy Spirit reveals to you through the Bible, and that will add a personal excitement and passion as you teach it to others.

What is it that makes the Bible boring to children? Hearing the same story in the same way. A lack of relevance for them and their current situations. Ancient people in ancient times didn't have iPods and didn't know how to blog. Mediocrity and generalizations are boring. When you are not prepared to tell a Bible story, you gloss over details and generalize, which could not be more boring. Can you remember a time when you heard a Bible story that came alive to you in vivid detail? The preacher or evangelist painted a picture for you so precisely that you could almost see it, taste it, smell it, and touch it. It was alive, it was real, and it was powerful.

When you teach, you must pour detail into your message. What did the people look like? How did they dress? What was a normal day like for them? What did they eat? Where did they sleep? What was the historical context? Why did they do what they did? Research as much detail as you can, then vividly paint the picture for the children. Don't ever allow the Word of God to become boring.

E-sword (www.e-sword.net) provides free Bible study software including International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Easton's Bible Dictionary, and numerous commentaries. Books about manners and customs, or Bible encyclopedias have great information if you will take the time to research it. But you must prepare and put a priority on early preparation.

Object lessons and puppet skits take time to prepare. But the payoff is well worth it—not only with the children's immediate behavior but also with their ability to remember and apply the truth. Which of the following do you think would be more compelling?

1. Saying that Goliath was over nine feet tall (because you didn't look up that six cubits and a span was eleven feet four inches) and that his coat of mail was really heavy (also because you didn't look up that it weighed 156 pounds).
2. Cutting a piece of PVC pipe (or rather joining another piece to the standard ten-foot piece) to the exact height of Goliath then placing a Styrofoam head (the kind that display wigs) at the top of it to illustrate

the actual height of Goliath and bringing a 156-pound dumbbell to illustrate the actual weight of one piece of his armor with something the children could touch and see.

Obviously, the second would be much more compelling, last in the children's memory longer, and hold their attention better. However, you cannot put something like that together at the last minute. You have to prepare ahead of time.

PASSIONATELY PRESENTED

Consider the following situation:

James, a nervous children's church worker stands at the front of the room. White knuckles outline two hands that are shaking slightly as they grip each side of the podium. An audible, but uninspired voice steadily plods through the words on the typed page in front of him. The podium is used almost like a shield to protect him from the ferocious power of the children that lay in front of him. His eyes unwaveringly burn into the text in front of him, and he is oblivious to the children who, uninterested in his words, aren't listening to him either. With a deep sigh of relief he finishes the last line and looks up to a room with several young people misbehaving.

Solution: James should roll up a newspaper and hit himself on the head while saying, "Bad teacher! I failed to passionately present my lesson."

When you prepare for your service in the way we discussed in the last point, it will lead you to be able to passionately present your lesson. In his book *How Do I Get These Kids to Listen?* Ed Dunlop states, "When you walk into class on Sunday, your lesson should be so well studied, so 'prayed over,' so well prepared that you can teach it without a single glance at the lesson material. Prepare your lesson so thoroughly that it excites you, overwhelms you, and becomes so compelling that you feel like you will die if you are not allowed to share it with your students."

My very first time working with children was assisting teaching a class of third and fourth grade bus kids. I was in high school at the time and ready to revolutionize this class. I was young, energetic, funny, and had great rapport with the kids. The teacher of the class could not have been more opposite from me. His name was Mr. Friend (what a great name for a Sunday school teacher). He was in his 70's, less than five feet tall, hard of hearing, and had a high pitched voice. In my infinite wisdom, I actually wondered how these raggedy kids from non-Christian homes would ever be able to relate to Mr. Friend. Looking back, I have little doubt that the kids in that class have long forgotten me, but Mr. Friend left a lasting impression. Mr. Friend always had a smile from ear to ear, and truly loved those kids. I, on the other hand, loved myself and my "ability to get through to the kids." The one thing I will never forget about Mr. Friend was his passion for the Word of God. When he taught, zeal radiated from every inch of his tiny frame. When he told a Bible story or read Scripture, he was personally captivated by every part of it. To this day I can still hear his voice saying, "Ah, boys, there is nothing more exciting than the Bible. It has adventure, drama, intrigue, and it will change your life."

The kids you minister to will learn so much more from your personal passion for Scripture than from your telling them how great the Bible is. Many times I have heard teachers ask, "Why aren't you kids listening to this lesson? Don't you realize how important it is?" Don't just tell them the Word of God is important, show them with your own personal passion. If it is really important to you, that zeal will come across as you teach. If it is not important to you, you can't fake it.

Presenting with passion is not just a technique for better public speaking. This is not whipping up a false excitement just for the sake of excitement; it is letting the excitement and passion that you already have come out in your service. If you don't already have it, go get it; but don't whip it up. Kids can sniff out fake excitement rather easily.

After my freshman year in college, I spent a summer traveling with the Arizona Sun Drum and Bugle Corps. Drum corps are 180-piece, all brass and percussion marching bands (we don't need any of those measly woodwinds). I tried out for and made drum major of that corps. Now, you might have the image in your head of a dancing, Q-tip headed, baton wielding leader of the band (thank you Hollywood), but any self-respecting drum major resents that image. My job was to be the field conductor for the band. I stood on a six-foot high podium stationed on the fifty-yard line and conducted the band through our fifteen-minute show. I had a clear understanding in my head of how the music should sound (vision and planning). We had rehearsed the music hundreds of times (I was prepared). With my hands held up, my eyes scanned and made contact with everyone on the field. Every eye was on my hands. With an animated downbeat the music began. When I needed more volume, my hand motions would be larger. I conducted—sometimes faster, sometimes slower, sometimes holding out a hand to quiet, sometimes raising a hand for crescendo, sometimes pointing to one group or another, even jumping into the air and coming down with a huge downbeat. My movements reflected the music I wanted to create.

This is how we should teach. As a passion for God's Word and what He wants us to communicate flows through us, we speak. Sometimes soft, sometimes loud, sometimes fast, sometimes slow—all the while our eyes scan the group making contact with each child, attempting to communicate the wonder and majesty of God's Word to each heart. Use your voice, your eyes, gestures, facial expressions, and accents. Teach dynamically and with enthusiasm.

When you teach, lead songs, and tell stories with passion, you not only communicate the importance of the message to the children, you will captivate their attention. Children misbehave when there is a lack of passion.

PERFECTLY PACED

Consider the following situation:

“Okay, boys and girls, now that we have finished our fifty-sixth chorus of ‘God Is So Good,’ it is time for our 45-minute Bible lecture. Turn to Leviticus Chapter 1. I don't want to hear any more moaning and complaining. This is God's house,” said Ms. Anderson.

Solution: Ms. Anderson should roll up a newspaper, hit herself on the head while saying, “Bad teacher! I failed to precisely pace.”

Your program needs to be fast-paced and energetic. The service should flow seamlessly from one thing to the next. Part of this comes from planning and proper communication between workers. Everyone needs to be ready and thinking about what is coming up next. Nothing creates a distraction gap faster than taking time out to set up for the next part. Puppeteers should be prepared in the segment that precedes that puppet show. If you have a piano player, she should be at the piano ready to go with a list of all the songs.

In addition to flow, pacing includes the timing of each segment. Order segments that naturally flow one to another. As with songs, doing a game right before the message doesn't fit. Also, consider the length of each segment. Even with the most compelling gospel message, you will begin to lose the attention of upper elementary children after twenty-five to thirty minutes and lower elementary children after fifteen to twenty minutes. Don't stretch out any one segment too long. Rather plan additional segments that you can fit in if you need to. The total length of children's church is not usually in your control; it is over when the adult service is over. Take this into consideration—do you have a plan when time is short or long? Always plan more than you think you can use. (See “Bible Teaching Ideas: Chapter Topic Titles” on pages 7-11 and 12 in *The Brain for Youth Leaders, Volume 2. I highly recommend this system.*)

Precise pacing will keep the focus of your kids and will help avoid distractions.

PROPERLY PRAYED FOR

Consider the following situation:

MR. ADAMS. Boys and Girls, I worked very hard this week on some really cool object lessons that I think you will really enjoy.

WICKED SPIRIT 1. This is going to be a walk in the park this week. Not a second spent in prayer.

WICKED SPIRIT 2. Yeah, he is so wrapped up in what he did. He is working completely on his own power. You know what that means.

WICKED SPIRIT 1. Yes, I do. I'll take the boys, you take the girls. and we'll meet in the middle.

MR. ADAMS. I just don't understand what happened today. No matter what I did, the kids just were not listening.

Solution: Mr. Adams should take a baseball bat (we will let him use some soft wood like pine) and hit himself over the head while saying, "Bad teacher! I worked in the flesh because I failed to pray."

Ephesians 6:10–12, 18 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

God constantly reminds me of how inadequate I am to do His work. One of the easiest things to fall into is self-reliance. Shout it out loud with me: "I can't do it!" Shout it again. Now humbly but confidently say, "I can do all things THROUGH CHRIST" (Philippians 4:13; emphasis added). Our moment-by-moment dependence on Him is the only thing that will enable us to be effective ministers for Him. If you want to get to a child's heart, you cannot do it in the flesh.

Sometimes God brings discomfort into our lives to turn us toward Him. Having to deal with discipline issues just may be God's way of getting your attention to turn your dependence completely on Him. Be in a constant attitude of prayer and dependence.

1. Pray while planning, preparing, and presenting.
2. Pray for your children individually—Get to know them so you know better what to pray for. Pray for their salvation and growth.
3. Pray for them as a group—Pray that God will give them a spirit of unity and service and that God will call missionaries, preachers, teachers, and spiritual moms and dads from among them.
4. Pray for your workers—Pray that God will strengthen and protect them and that they will develop a deeper love for God and the children with whom they work.
5. Get together and pray with your workers—Pray for the service and pray that God would remove distractions.
6. Pray early and often—Pray before, during, and after.

Ask others to pray for you. Mr. Friend, whom I mentioned earlier, came back to visit our church several years after moving out of town. I was now the children's pastor at the church, and I was delighted to see him again. As I shook his hand, he drew me in closer and said, "Bryan, I want you to know that I pray for

you every day.” I had to choke back a couple of tears, and I didn’t know what to say other than, “Thank you.” Those few words meant the world to me. To know that a prayer warrior was praying for me on a daily basis was such an encouragement to me. God only knows that problems in my ministry that were taken care of because Mr. Friend was praying for me. Give that gift to others. Pray for them regularly.

In my estimation, it would be far better to go into a children’s service having not spent any time preparing but having thoroughly prayed throughout the week, than to go in fully prepared without prayer. Fortunately, you don’t have to choose—do both.

POPULATED PROPORTIONATELY WITH A PLETHORA OF POST-ADOLESCENT PEOPLE (PREFERABLY PARENTS)

Have a lot of help.

Consider the following situation:

During some special music before his message, the senior pastor of the church felt led to step out of the service for a moment to walk and pray. While outside, he heard some commotion coming from the children’s church room. He peeked through the door to see Mrs. Beasley in a room alone with fifty rowdy children. He did not have time to stay, but made a point to see Mrs. Beasley after the service. Several new couples had recently joined the church and were looking for places to serve. The pastor thanked God for allowing him to see this need. When he approached Mrs. Beasley to let her know that there was help available she replied, “Oh, no need, Pastor. I’ve got it covered.”

Solution: Mrs. Beasley should put herself in a straightjacket and have someone immediately drive her to the nearest mental hospital while she says repeatedly, “Bad teacher! I failed to have a service populated proportionately with a plethora of post-adolescent people (preferably parents).”

I really doubt that I need to encourage you to get more help. Most of us would take all the help we can get, but don’t be afraid to let others know if there is a need. On the other side of the coin, don’t just take every person who volunteers. It is much easier to ask someone who is not ready to work with kids to wait or to spend some time working under someone else in another area than to try removing someone that is not working out.

Have a high standard for your leaders. Make your expectations clear and have them sign a leadership commitment form outlining exactly what you expect. Give them valuable work to do and praise them meaningfully and often. This may sound like a lot, but an ideal number is about one worker for every six to eight kids. Have them sit with the kids. I know this sounds like common sense, but I can’t tell you the number of times I have walked in on services that had all the leaders congregated at the back. This is especially a tendency when you have teen helpers. I like my leaders situated so that every child is within comfortable reach of one of the workers.

Train your leaders and remind them often about what to do during the service. If you are doing everything that I have mentioned up until this point, you will have a compelling, exciting service. What often happens in cases like this is that your leaders get as caught up in the service as the kids do. Now, this is not all bad. I like to consider my leaders when I am preparing a lesson. I appreciate that they have given up a service to be working with me, and I want them to be fed as well. I often make application that includes my workers. However, many times leaders get so caught up in a message, song, or activity that they fail to see a disruption happening right in front of them. The primary purpose of their presence is not to sit and listen; it is to be a leader. Teach them to look around them continually and to quietly and unobtrusively head off potential distractions. A soft touch on the shoulder is often enough to head off a problem, but the leader must be alert to it.

A lot of evenly spread out, well-trained, mature, committed workers can make all the difference in avoiding distractions.

PERPETUALLY PROCLAIMING A PUNY PRONOUNCEMENT OF PLAIN, PRE-CISE, PRECEPTS

Have a small number of simple, clearly defined rules that you review often.

Consider the following situation:

Former Staff Sergeant Stanley Stonewall, who is now children's church director Stanley Stonewall, abruptly stopped the Sunday song service and stated, "Sara, you violated section 172.5 of the children's church code which clearly states, 'When singing "I May Never March in the Infantry" and doing the saluting motion for the "Yes Sir!" part, you may not knowingly or unknowingly hit your neighbor with your saluting hand'."

Solution: Stanley Stonewall should roll up his copy of the children's church code and give himself a military-grade whacking on the head with it while saying, "Bad teacher! I confused and frustrated the children with complicated, inconsistent rules.

How many rules do you have? Does the list get longer every time a child does something he shouldn't? Children in most cases really do want to please you. Help them with that by having simple, clear rules that you repeat often.

Try this one: Sit up straight, silent, and still. (You cannot talk to your neighbor, play with a toy, wiggle and fidget, throw an object, or bang on a chair if you are sitting up straight, silent, and still.)

Kay Sproul, the mother of our senior pastor, Dr. Michael Sproul, is somewhat of a children's ministry icon in our church. She traveled for years with her husband in evangelism and led a children's service every night. She has been a teacher of teachers in our church for a number of years. She has always used three simple rules—no fair walking, no fair talking, and no fair things. She uses the "no fair" to emphasize to the children that when they do these things that they are being unfair to the others who want to listen to God's Word. At the beginning of each message, she clearly describes what each rule means for the children.

Use positive discipline as often as possible. It is so much more effective if you feel the attention waning to say, "Remember, Mrs. Miller is watching for a boy and a girl who are sitting up straight, silent, and still to give a treasure box prize to after the service," than to say, "Kyle, talking to Chris is not being silent and still. Stop that right now."

While it won't take care of every problem, having a purposefully planned, preeminently prepared, passionately presented, perfectly paced, properly prayed for, service populated proportionately with a plethora of post-adolescent people (preferably parents) perpetually proclaiming a puny pronouncement of plain, precise, precepts, will take care of most of them.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT DISCIPLINE DILEMMAS

You can do all the things listed above and you still will face problems from time to time. Here are some tips to help.

Use a consistent method to gain attention.

There will be times when you want to get the attention of the kids. Maybe at the beginning after everyone has come in and sat down, or after a game, or if you have lost their attention for some other reason. In the AWANA program they use the five count. This works well, so for consistency we use this in all our other

children's programs as well. When a leader starts slowly and deliberately counting, by five everyone is sitting up, silent with their eyes on the leader.

Choose your battles.

Remember your goal in most cases is to avoid distraction so that the gospel can be clearly presented. Sometimes it is best to let small things go and to mention something after the service. Remember that when you are up in front of the group, you see far more than anyone else does. Are you the only one that is being distracted by the offence? If it truly is keeping others from hearing the message and one of your workers has not noticed and dealt with it, deal with it quickly, positively, and unobtrusively as possible. Sometimes I will come up with an impromptu illustration with that person that has nothing to do with what he is doing. "Imagine that David here was at home with his sister and . . ." Sometimes the mere mention of the offender's name will bring the his attention back.

Be consistent.

Children have a very strong sense of and a strong desire to have fairness. While life is not always fair, our God is a just God. We should strive to be just and consistent with our application of rules. Don't be heavy handed or inequitable with discipline. Taking away a privilege from the entire group because of the actions of a few is a manipulative use of peer pressure and frustrates those who are trying to do right.

Follow through.

If you say you are going to do something, do it. In other words, don't say something in the first place that you can't, won't, or shouldn't follow through on. Don't promise a game at the end of the service for good behavior then turn around and say you are out of time because your message went long.

Never embarrass or belittle a student.

This is unkind, and there is nothing to be gained from this form of discipline. This comes from our flesh and does not show love or have the child's best interest at heart.

Don't confront the offender in front of the group but deal privately with him.

Don't turn this into a battle of the wills and don't escalate the issue to a standoff. If you do this, you have already lost. Show love, talk with a calm even voice, be firm but not harsh, and use gentle humor (not aimed at the child) or kind words to diffuse a situation. Use the child's name and help him to see your purpose and what you are trying to accomplish.

What about the child with ongoing or drastic behavior issues? Should I kick him out? Should I send him to his parent? What if the parents are unavailable, unresponsive, or blame me for the situation? Over the last few years I have had several young people that have fallen into this category—broken homes, severe emotional problems, very needy and starved for attention, always blaming others for their sins, manipulative with their parents, or act out physically and sometimes violently.

Pray and ask God to change the child's heart. Ask God to change your heart toward him. Sometimes we get frustrated with how a child is frustrating our plans. This frustration often turns into a lack of love. Check yourself—are you consistently showing love to this child at every opportunity you get? Do you look for ways to praise this child?

Visit!!!! I cannot stress this enough. Plan a visit to the home that has nothing to do with the bad behavior. Don't mention it. Just go to see him. Have the child show you his room and favorite toys. Play with him. You will learn so much about him by seeing his home environment, and you will now have a basis of a relationship. During the next class period, you are not the mean teacher that always picks on them but the guy that was at his house that he beat playing a video game.

Dealing with parents can sometimes be a daunting task. Most of the time parents are very supportive and helpful, but be careful. Remember that if you are having ongoing issues with a child, you are probably not

the only one. The parents have probably heard similar things many times, and they might be a little defensive about it. First, try to be positive. Find something to sincerely praise their child about. It is critical to be sincere. If they think you are buttering them up for the punch to come it will be counterproductive. Don't say, "Your kid has some major problems that you need to deal with." Take ownership of the problem and ask them for help. "I was wondering if you could give me some advice? I sometimes feel like I am not doing a very good job of getting through to Tim. Could you share with me some of the things you do to get his attention." Parents are usually glad to share with you when they feel like you are on their side. If you put them on the defensive, you have already lost.

When making a decision about removing a child, do this only as a last resort. Remember the one and ninety-nine principle. Jesus, the Good Shepherd went after the one sheep that was lost. The child with these issues probably needs to be in your service more than anyone else. This child needs you the most, especially if he is not saved. When safety of other children is involved (e.g., violent outbursts), sometimes you have to make hard choices. Pray. Get advice from others. Be willing to sacrifice your own comfort for the betterment of this child, and always leave the door open to return.

God has great things for you in your ministry. You can have a great children's service that is a joy to you and the children. God wants to use you in a mighty way to have a tremendous impact on your children. Will you commit today to doing those things that will make this a reality?

EVERYTHING PUPPETS

Puppets can be a great resource for any children's ministry. They can teach, play, instruct, inform, and even model right attitudes, right actions, and right responses. Just as any other thing used within a ministry setting, understand that puppets are a tool for ministry. The benefits of using puppets are many, some of which will be discussed in this seminar. As authors and puppeteers Dale and Liz Vonseggen put it, "Puppets have caught the attention of audiences down through history, helping people laugh, pretend, dream, empathize, and learn new ideas."¹

1. Developing a Puppet Ministry

a. What does it look like?

- 1) It is more than just getting a stage and a couple of puppets.
- 2) It truly is a ministry that can reach the hearts of young and old alike.
- 3) It involves a team of committed individuals who are willing to work at being effective in their ministry presentation.

b. Know what you are attempting to accomplish.

- 1) Why do you want a puppet ministry?
- 2) Who will be involved in your puppet ministry team?
- 3) What are your goals?
- 4) What is your purpose?

2. Understanding Different Types of Puppets

- a. Shadow puppets
- b. Finger puppets
- c. Sock puppets
- d. Hand puppets
- e. Marionettes
- f. Rod arm puppets
- g. Human hand puppets
- h. Full body or vent puppets

3. Developing a Puppet Team

- a. Who do you want to be involved in this ministry?
- b. Be upfront with your goals, ideas, and expectations.

- c. Set aside some time each week for the team to go over material and work on perfecting their puppetry skills.
 - d. It is good to address the importance of team unity—working together towards one purpose. Continually put your purpose before your team.
4. Developing Uses for Puppets in Ministry
- a. Teach a verse
 - b. Lesson review
 - c. Special music
 - d. Act out a Bible story
 - e. Act out a script
 - f. Teach biblical principles
 - g. Teach a lesson theme
 - h. Drive home a spiritual truth
 - i. Interaction with the audience
 - j. Perform a full-length play production
 - k. Interview with another puppet, a human, or a Bible character
 - l. Students use puppet to say verse, sing, or review lesson
5. Developing Techniques for Puppet Manipulation
- a. Putting the puppet on.
 - b. Entrances and exits—step in as if you were going up or down stairs.
 - c. Proper height—keep the puppet’s “belly button” at the height of the top bar of the puppet stage.
 - d. Walking, running, skating, jumping, etc.
 - e. Mouth movement—
 - 1) Start with the puppet mouth closed.
 - 2) Speak each syllable with the puppet’s mouth.
 - 3) Let the movement fit the message—whispering, yelling, etc.
 - f. Look at the audience with the puppet (eye contact).
 - g. Be careful not to “flip the lid”—work at manipulating the lower jaw of the puppet.
 - h. Make the puppet come alive.

6. Developing Character Voices

- a. Think of the type of personality you want your puppet to have.
- b. Create a voice that goes with the puppet's character.
- c. Will your puppet speak softly or loudly, slowly or quickly, with a high-pitched or low-pitched voice?
- d. Work at perfecting your character voices.

7. Developing Your Material

- a. Where to get puppets?
 - 1) www.onewaystreet.com
 - 2) www.ChildrensMinistry.org
 - 3) www.puppetproductions.com
- b. Where to get scripts?
 - 1) www.puppetresources.com
 - 2) www.geocities.com/puppetscripts/puppet.htm
 - 3) www.fullbodypuppets.com
 - 4) www.thepuppetstore.com
 - 5) www.kindom-karactors.com
- c. Where to get songs?
 - 1) www.puppetshoppe.com
 - 2) Patch the Pirate recordings
- d. Writing your own material to fit your needs
- e. Stage ideas
 - 1) www.puppetgallery.com
 - 2) www.nextag.com
 - 3) www.bright.net
 - 4) www.sagecraft.com
 - 5) www.creativityinstitute.com
 - 6) www.pick-me.com
- f. Props—creating an effective atmosphere

- 1) Appropriate for the audience
 - 2) Appropriate for the scene
 - 3) Mounting and displaying your props
8. Taking Care of Your Puppets
- a. Storage ideas—bags, file boxes, plastic storage bins, storage trunks.
 - b. Be careful not to cram too many puppets into one box.
 - c. Cleaning your puppets.
 - d. Labeling for easy identification.

Notes

1. Dale Vorseggan and Liz Vorseggan, *Puppet Ministry Made Easy* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2003), 7.

HOW TO . . . HAVE A GREAT SONG SERVICE

Imagine if your pastor walked up to the pulpit to preach on Sunday morning and said, “Well folks, what do you think we should talk about today? Does anyone have a favorite passage of Scripture that we could read? What’s that . . . you want to talk about the baseball game? Well, I don’t think we can do that . . . we are in church after all. Let me see . . . we talked about David and Goliath last week, and that went over well, so let’s do that one again . . . you know I say: if it’s not broken, don’t fix it . . . now, let me see. How did that story go again? Well now, that went well, but it is not quite noon, so we need to kill some time . . . so does anyone have another passage we could look at?”

Not only would he completely lose the attention and respect of the people, he probably would not last long as the pastor. Even if a Sunday school teacher or children’s church worker did this with a Bible lesson, we would think this was irresponsible. However, this is the approach that is often taken when coming into a children’s song service. Do you see some of the parallels? Let’s list some ways that song services are sometime like the scenario above.

Very little thought or effort goes into preparing for the song time. Many times we ask for favorite songs because we have not prepared, or we revert back to the same old songs we sing every week. Because of this, our song times lack purpose, lack passion, lack excitement, and don’t produce the results we would like to see. We need to change the way we plan, prepare, and present our song service/worship time.

SONGS ARE POWERFUL

- Give an opportunity for a child to express his faith
- Help to trigger memory
- Can motivate
- Can inspire
- Can draw us closer to God
- Can prepare our hearts for worship/preaching
- Can change the mood

CHARACTERISTICS FOR CATEGORIZING SONGS

- What is the message? Content—what do the words say?
- What is the mood? Lively, jubilant, inspiring, reflective, or somber?
- What is the purpose? Praise, worship, teaching, encouragement, convict, challenge, motivate, or warn?
- What is the voice? First person or third person? Talking to or about God? Telling a story or teaching a concept? Saying something I am going to do?

KNOW YOUR PURPOSE

- Funnel method
- What do you want to do at the beginning?
- With what kind of song do you want to transition?

- What is the last song you want to sing before a message or story?
- What song do you want to sing before a game?
- What is the theme or content of the day's lesson?
- What program are you in? Use different songs in children's church and AWANA?

KNOW THE CONTENT

- Choose songs that children understand.
- Explain any difficult words or phrases.
- Change inappropriate words or phrases when necessary.

ACTIONS AND POSTURE

- Children are very expressive and actions in songs add to depth and understanding.
- Make sure actions fit.
- Clapping.
- Sign language.
- Standing versus sitting.
- Heads bowed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- CDs
- Patch Sing Along 1, 2, 3, and SS
- Salvation Songs
- Growing Songs 1&2
- Desert Praise

VISUALS

- Transparencies—protect them
- Poster board/flip charts
- CEF song visuals
- PowerPoint
- Lyrics Program

HOW TO . . . MAKE A PARTICIPATION-BASED VIDEO

The key to having a good video of your youth group at any camp, retreat, or activity is participation. If you are simply videotaping your activity at the local putt-putt course, the shyest teen in your group might appear on the screen but has had no real part in the video. The more outgoing teens in your group might wave frantically and scream as you pan by them, but even they have had no real level of participation in the video. What you have at the end is a record of your putt-putt activity instead of a keepsake video that your teens will actually want to watch again, or even show their parents and friends. As you can probably imagine, this participation will open doors to your youth group that you never imagined. How do we go about getting teens involved in the video? That is a good question that has a multi-faceted answer. The first thing to remember is a teen just wants to see his face on the screen. He will say or do just about anything to get his few seconds of fame, so be careful!!

With this in mind, the next thing to remember is the more the merrier. Try to get everyone talking to the camera at some point. The best way to do this is by short interviews, asking somewhat silly questions. Some, who are adamant about not being on the tape, can be taped at a medium or long shot of them doing the activity or talking and laughing with their friends. Generally, they won't get angry that you captured them, because it will cause them to remember the good time they had at the activity.

The last thing to remember is that when you are shooting the interviews, be willing to sacrifice good video for good audio responses and extreme close-ups, and even the occasional rough lighting if it provides you a good candid response.

After all these things, edit wisely. When trying to get teens that you might not know very well to respond to some of these questions or trying to get them involved, you might have a kid who pulls a fast one on you and swears during a response, or uses a phrase that you are not sure what it means. Trust me: it will happen. The key is to not overreact and nullify the fact that they have participated, but to edit what you can out of the video. If a teen wonders where his interview went or why you didn't use it, take the opportunity to confront the specific issues at hand.

Ideas: Here are some things that have worked for us as video segments and some things that we have not tried yet. Remember that the goal of these questions is to get as many people talking to the camera as possible.

1. What is your favorite joke?
2. What was your most embarrassing moment?
3. Do you have a stupid human trick? Double-jointed, curling tongue, flipped eyelids, etc.
4. Do you have an awesome talent? Baton-twirling, one-handed pushup, saying the alphabet backwards, etc.
5. Show me your favorite funny face—this works best with juniors, not teenagers.
6. Define—any obscure word in the dictionary will work—probity, postulant, grotto, fractious, colophon, etc. A good working list can be found at <http://www.kokogiak.com/logolepsy>.
7. Riddles, puzzles, best guess—just get the teens talking on topics such as “What is *imitation* crab?” or “What is H-E-A-D-A-C-H-E?”

8. What is your favorite part about (camp, this activity, your school, youth group, etc.)?
9. Testimonies—decisions made at camp, things learned at VBS, etc.
10. What is your best travel story (getting lost, bus breaking down, picking up a hitch-hiker, etc.)?
11. What is a word that your family made up, and what does it mean?
12. Early morning interview—wake up a kid at 2:00 a.m. and ask, “Do you know the muffin man?”
13. What is the worst thing you’ve ever eaten on purpose?
14. What is one thing that you have done that as soon as you did it you said, “I’ll never do that again!”?
15. Would you rather . . . ? Be able to fly or be invisible, eat dirt or eat bugs, have no eyebrows or a uni-brow, etc.
16. “Street Smarts” type trivia—for example, which item is not found in corned beef? A—corn, B—beef, or C—ham?
17. What if (you found out you were adopted, you inherited a million dollars, etc.)? (A good source is the book *What If?* by Les Christie, published by Zondervan.)
18. Unfinished sentences—when I’m feeling overwhelmed, I usually . . . When I need to go somewhere to think, I most often . . . etc. (A good source is Les Christie’s book *450 Tantalizing Unfinished Sentences* published by Zondervan.)
19. What is one odd fear that you have?
20. What is the best way to eat an Oreo cookie? It’s best to give them one and have them demonstrate.
21. If you could invent or design one thing, what would it be?
22. What is your best puke story?
23. Where does your name come from, and what does it mean?
24. What are your pets’ names? Why?
25. What is one piece of information that you could have used sooner?
26. Pose a hypothetical, and then make it “real”—for instance, “How much money would it take for you to sever a finger of your choice?” See how far down you can talk their price. “Would you sever a digit of your choice for \$10,000? How about \$5,000?” Get them to commit to a price. Sometime later, approach them with a fake check and some pruning shears and get their reaction. Aside from a brief departure from sanity, this could open doors for discussions about counting the cost or not fulfilling agreements.

HOW TO . . . USE ILLUSIONS IN YOUTH WORK

Illusions can be a valuable tool in youth if used properly. An illusion is difficult to explain in person, let alone on paper. Below is a list of tricks that have proven to be winners for me. Every person's style is different, so you may find that other illusions suit you better. You can spend a great deal of money on illusions, but this list is inexpensive and designed to be helpful for the beginner.

1. Coin through Handkerchief¹
2. The French Drop²
3. Rope Slice and Dice³
4. Broken and Restored Match⁴
5. The Paddle Move⁵
6. The Impossible Penetration⁶
7. The Impossible Knot⁷
8. Hovering Bottle⁸

After you know how to do a few illusions, you need to learn what to do with the trick. At first, I would begin my trick by saying, "And now I'll show you a trick!" There is a better way to start your presentation. The essence of working with an audience, choosing volunteers, picking a personal style, and the dos and don'ts of a stage are simply explained in the book *The Handbook of Magic*.⁹

Figuring out your purpose for doing illusions is vital to knowing what illusions you may want to learn, how much time to invest, and how much money to spend. When you do learn a new illusion, find a way to show others. There are few things better than practicing in front of five-year-olds.

Notes

1. Mark Wilson, *Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic* (Philadelphia: Running Press Book Publishers, 1988), 178-179.
2. *Ibid.*, 186-187.
3. *Ibid.*, 258-260.
4. *Ibid.*, 285-286.
5. *Ibid.*, 312-314.
6. *Ibid.*, 339.
7. *Ibid.*, 340.
8. *Ibid.*, 347-348.
9. Marvin Kaye, *The Handbook of Magic* (New York: Dorset Press, 1973).

Another valuable resource:

Harry Blackstone, *Blackstone's Tricks Anyone Can Do* (New York: Carol Publishing, 1989).

SEVEN THINGS MIND READING

Place seven, unique objects in front of the audience. Line the objects up with the largest object in the center of the line. You will need an accomplice who knows the “secret,” which is explained below. Send your accomplice from the room. While he is out of the room, have the audience choose one of the seven items. Have the accomplice return and read your mind to correctly choose the object selected by the audience. Ask your accomplice yes or no questions to identify the object. Ask yes or no questions until the accomplice picks the object that the audience chose. The fun of this event is letting the audience try to guess how you are doing it. If you use good misdirection, you can go a couple of hours doing this over and over without being caught.

The Secret

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Mentally number the items three different ways.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
4	3	2	1	2	3	4	

If any one of the three numbers for the object coincides with the number of times you have asked, “Is it this one?” then the answer is yes. If the number of times you’ve asked a question does not coincide with one of the three assigned numbers, then the answer is no. For example, the *first* time you ask your accomplice “Is it this one?” and point to an object, he should answer yes if one of the object’s assigned numbers is *one*. In the above illustration, objects A, D, and G would be a yes for the *first* question. Several misdirections are listed below to help throw off the audience.

Misdirections

1. Ask “Is it this one?” for all the no’s and “How about this one?” for the yes’s.
2. Rub your hands before the yes.
3. Snap your fingers the number of times you plan to ask.
4. Stomp your foot in all kinds of random ways.
5. Before each question, ask your assistant what channel he is on.
6. Clear your throat in unusual ways and times.
7. Point to all the no’s and touch the yes’s.
8. Nod your head when it is time for the yes.
9. The easiest way to figure this one out is if you ask them the first time and it coincides with a one, especially the middle one. Use a yes answer the first time sparingly and use the fives and sixes on occasion. You really have to pay attention when you have asked four or five times.
10. Don’t tell everyone how it is done. You can use this for years if you don’t share the secret.

An Example

MASTERMIND. Ladies and Gentlemen, I will now read my assistant's mind. We have been working on this for years, and we have perfected yes and no. Of course, with this ability we are looking forward to reading entire thoughts, but for now we just have yes and no. I'll set seven items out here in front and send my assistant outside. *Assistant leaves the room.* Pick an item, then we'll invite my assistant back in. *Audience volunteer chooses Object F.* Now let's bring back my assistant. *Assistant returns to the room.* *Mastermind points to Object B.* Is it this one?

ASSISTANT. No. *It is the first question, and Object B coincides with 2, 6, and 3.*

MASTERMIND, *pointing to Object F.* Is it this one?

ASSISTANT. Yes. *It is the second question and Object F coincides with 6, 2, and 3.*

Repeat the process as many times as you wish. The audience will probably tell you to stop doing one of the misdirections. Just move on to another misdirection.

HOW TO . . . MAKE SLIME FROM HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

This recipe makes a polymer slime. That is, it contains the qualities of both a liquid and a solid. Polymer molecules link themselves in a way that feels flexible but stays solid. When not using your slime, keep it sealed up in a plastic bag. Don't let your kids eat it.

To make about a five-ounce batch of slime, gather the following materials—

1. Any brand of white craft glue
2. Two cups that you won't mind throwing away
3. Water
4. A box of Borax (It's like laundry detergent.)
5. Wax paper
6. A plastic utensil
7. A tablespoon

Mix together one cup of water with a teaspoon of Borax. Stir until mostly dissolved. Fill your cup with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of glue. Add to the glue three tablespoons of water and stir well. Add two tablespoons of the Borax solution and stir well. Spoon out the mixture onto wax paper and allow it to set for one minute.

Start playing!

Increase the recipe amounts according to your needs. For an additional flair, stir in your choice of food coloring to the glue solution before combining the Borax solution.

HOW TO . . . BUILD CAMARADERIE

Camaraderie is “goodwill and lighthearted rapport between or among friends; comradeship.”¹

THROUGH FUN

THROUGH HARDSHIP

THROUGH LEARNING

THROUGH A COMMON CAUSE

THROUGH RESPONDING WITH LOVE

THROUGH KNOWING I AM A PART

1. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed., s.v. “Camaraderie.”

INTRODUCTION TO PREACHING

Give the teen guys in your youth group an introduction to preaching and give them opportunities to speak.

SCRIPTURE CHALLENGES

During a retreat or an activity, assign a teen to give a Scripture challenge. The challenge should last three to five minutes and include at least one verse with a key point, which the speaker should challenge the other teens to live.

MINUTE MESSAGES

In preparing your teen guys to begin the process of sharing God's Word, give them a minute to present a truth from a chosen selection of the Bible. They must read it, then prepare for a minute to present the truth, then speak for one minute. The shortness of time takes some of the pressure off, yet it gives them an opportunity to share a truth from God's Word.

A SIMPLE MESSAGE OUTLINE

1. **Introduction**—an opening story, illustration, or question which introduces the point of the message. Tell the audience where you are going.
2. **Passage**—the place in the Scripture from which you are presenting a biblical truth.
3. **Timeless truth or proposition**—this is the truth you are presenting from the Scripture. (For example, you must respond to the love of God. You must see that God's Word must be obeyed.)
4. **Interrogative**—how, why, and when? (For example, why must I see that God's Word is important?)
5. **Main points proving the timeless truth**—it is the part of the message that proves the timeless truth.
6. **Conclusion**—the conclusion tells the audience where they have been and directs how they should respond.

HOMEGROWN SKITS THAT TEACH

Skits can be a great way to get the teens to participate in making a point of something important. Divide the group into groups of three to six and give them a truth to present in a skit form. Give them some guidelines for appropriateness if necessary.

You may choose to demonstrate how teens can be unkind to others in a youth group. You may give them a specific situation to act out, or you may let them come up with the situation. We used skits to demonstrate the purpose statement of our youth group.

- Win the lost
- Walk in truth and obedience to God's Word
- Welcome teens to Christian fellowship
- Worship the Lord
- Work for the Lord

We had our teens illustrate how not to accomplish our goals. You may choose to illustrate the positives.

SUCCEEDING IN DAILY QUIET TIME

LISTENING: BE STILL

Psalm 46

INTRODUCTION

Success in daily quiet time comes when we will simply listen to what God tells us through His Word. The key to effective quiet time is that word “quiet.” When was the last time you just listened to the voice of God in your life? Life is so busy that we find opportunities and excuses to push God out of our lives. Many times this happens even in the name of ministry. Are we keeping the ministry about God, or has it come back to just being about us? Every Christ follower must recognize that successful devotion to God comes only by listening to His voice.

QUESTION

Why is silence so hard to deal with?

God is—

1. Our refuge—Psalm 46:1, 7, 11
2. Our strength—verse 1
3. Our help—verses 1, 5
4. Our God is with us—verses 5, 7, 11

God's works—

1. The earth melts—Psalm 46:6
2. He makes wars to cease—verse 9
3. He breaks the bow/cuts the spear—verse 9
4. He burns the chariot—verse 9

Psalm 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God.

We are able to recognize the works of God only when we are still (silent) enough to see that He is God!

God calls His servants in the silence—

1. Jesus' disciples—Matthew 4:18–22

2. Moses—Exodus 3:7–11
3. Samuel—1 Samuel 3:1–11
4. Amos—Amos 7:14–15
5. Isaiah—Isaiah 6:1–8
6. Elijah—1 Kings 19:9–13

We need to be willing to let God speak to us in the silence.

The “still, small voice”—1 Kings 19:12

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

Violence, disease, injustice—that is not how the world is supposed to be. God created a wonderful place with great things to be enjoyed, but how can these things be enjoyed in a world with so much evil and pain?

Genesis 1:26–27—Why were we created? To be a picture of who God is. What kind of picture are you?

The book of Genesis marks the beginning of God's creation. It is the book of "origins" or "beginnings." God created Adam and Eve, and they lived in the Garden of Eden, which was a perfect place. God gave them significant work as they partnered with God to care for the garden. There was peace and harmony with the animals and with God.

God has created us in a certain way—"in His image." God, however, lets us live however we choose to live. In essence, we can live how we want! It's our choice. God will never force Himself on any of us. This is the beginning of the story.

At the end of the Bible is the book of Revelation, or "last things," where Christ states: "I am making all things new." There will be a healing of the nations, participation with God in the new heaven and new earth, peace with God and others, etc.

The reality of life is that it is simply a blip on the radar screen of eternity. We are here, and then we are gone. What is your life? What is the purpose of your life?

James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

What happens when I die? Am I just hanging out hoping that I will be okay until then? Somehow I will just start over with a clean slate?

John 14:1–6 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

I need a God who is now. One who helps me understand how to live today. We live in a world drenched by God. We ask the question: where is God? Maybe, a better question is, "Where isn't God?" It is His world with our fingerprints all over it. He is everywhere. Why would God hide Himself from His creation? Why would He make it hard to get to know Him?

Jeremiah 29:13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Some see faith as a ticket. If you do all the right things, say all the right prayers, and follow all the right traditions, you will have your insurance that nothing bad will happen to you someday. What good is this faith that has nothing to do with how we live now? Today?

Ephesians 2:8–9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

A follower of Jesus is someone who is living and they are never going to stop living!! Are you a follower of Jesus?

1. Trust Jesus when He says death has been taken care of and that your penalty has been paid.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. Trust Jesus that you can spend an eternity with Him in heaven—John 14:6.
3. Trust Jesus that you can be a part of restoring this broken, hurting world—and help to make it the place God intended it to be “in His image.”

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HOLINESS IS FOR YOU

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Romans 6:14

INTRODUCTION

To live a holy life is to live a life in conformity to the moral precepts of the Bible and in contrast to the sinful ways of the world. It is to live a life characterized by “[putting] off . . . the old man, which is corrupt” and “[putting] on . . . the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:22, 24).

Questions: If holiness is so basic to the Christian life, why do we not experience it more in daily living? Why do so many Christians feel constantly defeated in their struggle with sin? Why does the Church of Jesus Christ so often seem to be more conformed to the world around it than to God? (16)

THREE KEY PROBLEMS EXIST

1. Our attitude toward sin is more self-centered than God-centered.
 - a. We are more concerned with our own victory than we are about the fact that our sins grieve the heart of God.
 - b. God wants us to walk in obedience (17).
 - c. As we concentrate on living an obedient, holy life, we will certainly experience the joy of victory over sin.
2. We have misunderstood “living by faith” (Galatians 2:20) to mean that no effort at holiness is required on our part.

We must face the fact that we have a personal responsibility for our walk of holiness (18).

3. We do not take some sin seriously.
 - a. We have mentally categorized sins into that which is unacceptable and that which may be tolerated a bit.
 - b. The principle in this matter of obedience versus disobedience is namely this:
 - 1) Is the Lord to be obeyed in all things whatsoever He commands (19)?
 - 2) Is He a holy lawgiver?
 - 3) Are His creatures bound to obey His will?
 - c. Are we willing to call sin “sin” not because it is big or little but because God’s law forbids it? We cannot categorize sin if we are to live a life of holiness.

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CONCLUSION

Will you begin to look at sin as an offense against a holy God? Will you begin to take personal responsibility for your sin, realizing you must depend on the grace of God? Will you decide to obey God in all areas of life, however insignificant the issue may be? Examine your heart to see if you truly desire to pursue holiness (20).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

THE HOLINESS OF GOD

*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;
Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. 1 Peter 1:15–16*

INTRODUCTION

God has called every Christian to a holy life. There are no exceptions to this call. It is not a call only to pastors, missionaries, and a few dedicated Sunday school teachers. Every Christian of every nation, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, influential or totally unknown, is called to be holy. The Christian plumber and the Christian banker, the unsung homemaker and the powerful head of state are all alike called to be holy (22).

KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE HOLINESS OF GOD

1. This call to a holy life is based on the fact that God Himself is holy.
 - a. Because God is holy, He requires that we be holy.
 - b. He has called us to be like Himself. Holiness is nothing less than conformity to the character of God.
 - c. Holiness describes the majesty of God and the purity of His nature.
 - 1) Holiness is God's greatest attribute.
 - 2) Holiness is an essential part of the nature of God (who God is).
 - d. God knows and does only what is right (23).
 - 1) Even though we may know what is right, we do not always do it.
 - 2) God's holiness is perfect freedom from all sin—1 John 1:5.
 - e. This is the standard of holiness that God has called us to when He says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy."
2. The absolute holiness of God should be of great comfort and assurance to us (24).
 - a. If God is perfectly holy, then we can be confident that His actions toward us are always perfect and right.
 - b. God cannot be unfair! Because He is holy, all of His actions are holy.
3. We must accept by faith the fact that God is holy, even when trying circumstances make it appear otherwise.
 - a. To complain against God is in effect to deny His holiness.
 - b. Stephen Charnock said, "It is less injury to Him to deny His being, than to deny the purity of it; the one makes Him no God, the other a deformed, unlovely, and a detestable God . . . he that saith God is not holy speaks much worse than he that saith there is no God at all."
4. Acknowledging His holiness is one of the ways we are to praise God—Revelation 4:8; Isaiah 6:3; Exodus 15:11 (25).

- a. Holiness is the perfection of all His other attributes:
 - 1) His power is holy power.
 - 2) His mercy is holy mercy.
 - 3) His wisdom is holy wisdom.
 - 4) His love is holy love.
 - b. It is His holiness more than any other attribute that makes God worthy of our praise.
5. God demands even more than just acknowledging His holiness (26).

1 Peter 1:16 Be ye holy; for I am holy

- a. God rightfully demands perfect holiness from all His creatures.
- b. He cannot for one moment relax His perfect standard of holiness, so He says be holy in *all* you do!
 - 1) Because God is holy, He can never excuse or overlook any sin we commit (Hebrews 12:14).
 - 2) Because God is holy, He can never tempt us to sin—James 1:13.
 - 3) Because God is holy, He hates sin—Zechariah 8:17 (28).
 - a) Every time we sin, we are doing something that God hates.
 - b) As we grow in holiness, we grow in hatred of sin.
 - c) We need to cultivate in our hearts the same hatred of sin God has (Genesis 39:9).

CONCLUSION

The love of God to us through Jesus Christ should be our primary motivation to holiness. But a motivation prompted by God's hatred of sin and His consequent judgment on it is just as biblical.

The holiness of God is an exceedingly high standard, a perfect standard. But it is one that He holds us to. He cannot do less. While it is true that He accepts us through Christ, God's standard for our character, our attitudes, affections, and actions is, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." We must take this seriously if we are to grow in holiness (30).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HOLINESS IS NOT AN OPTION

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14

INTRODUCTION

Just what do these words, “without [holiness] no man shall see the Lord” actually mean? Does our salvation in the final analysis depend to some degree on our attaining some level of personal holiness (32)? Scripture is clear on two points:

1. The best Christians can never in themselves deserve salvation through their own personal holiness—Isaiah 64:6.
2. Scripture repeatedly refers to the obedience and righteousness of Christ on our behalf—Romans 5:19; 1 Peter 3:18.

Our holiness before God depends entirely on the work of Jesus Christ for us, by God’s will—Hebrews 10:10 (33).

Question: Does Hebrews 12:14 refer then to this holiness, which we have in Christ?

No, for at this point the writer speaks of a holiness which we are to strive after; we are to “make every effort . . . to be holy.” And without this holiness, the writer says, no one will see the Lord.

Clarification: Scripture speaks of both a holiness, which we have in Christ before God, and a holiness, which we are to strive after. These two aspects of holiness complement one another, for our salvation is a salvation to holiness: “*For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness,*” 1 Thessalonians 4:7. We are through Christ made holy in our standing before God, and called to be holy in our daily lives. The writer of Hebrews is calling us to take seriously the necessity of personal, practical holiness.

Key Point: When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives at our salvation, He comes to make us holy in practice. If there is not a desire in our hearts to live a holy life pleasing to God, we need to seriously question whether our faith in Christ is genuine. True salvation brings with it a desire to be made holy.

Purpose: The whole purpose of our salvation is that we be “holy and without blame before him” (Ephesians 1:4) (34).

ELEMENTS OF HOLINESS—WHY HOLINESS?

1. Holiness is not necessary in order to receive salvation, but as a part of salvation that is received by faith in Christ.
 - a. The Holy Spirit saves, and He also creates within us a desire for holiness in the sight of God.
 - b. The same grace of God that brings salvation teaches us not to live ungodly—Titus 2:11–12 (35).
 - c. God’s nature demands holiness in the life of the Christian.

1 John 1:5 God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

2. Holiness is required for fellowship with God—Psalm 15:1.
 - a. How can we fellowship with God?

- b. How do we fall out of fellowship with God?

God does not require a perfect, sinless life to have fellowship with Him, but He does require that we be serious about holiness, that we grieve over sin in our lives instead of justifying it, and that we earnestly pursue holiness as a way of life (36).

3. Holiness is required for our own well being.

- a. *Hebrews 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.*

- b. God is serious about holiness in the lives of His people, and He will discipline us to attain it.

4. Holiness is necessary for effective service to God—2 Timothy 2:21 (37).

- a. Holiness and usefulness are linked together: we must be clean to be used!

- b. When we are unholy, the Spirit of God is grieved and will not prosper our service—Ephesians 4:30.

5. Holiness is necessary for our assurance of salvation.

- a. True faith will always show itself by its fruits—2 Corinthians 5:17.

- b. The only safe evidence that we are in Christ is a holy life—1 John 3:3; Romans 8:14 (38).

- c. If we know nothing of holiness, we may flatter ourselves that we are Christians but we do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION

Everyone who professes to be a Christian should ask himself: Is there evidence of practical holiness in my life? Do I desire and strive after holiness? Do I grieve over my lack of it and earnestly seek the help of God to be holy?

It is not those who profess to know Christ who will enter heaven, but those whose lives are holy.

Matthew 7:21–23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

THE HOLINESS OF CHRIST

*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;
that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

INTRODUCTION

As we continue to study fully the statement “*Be ye holy; for I am holy,*” we will see more of our own sinfulness. We will see the wickedness and deceitfulness of our hearts, and how far we miss the mark of God’s perfect holiness. As this happens the true Christian will in his heart run for refuge in Christ. It is important that we understand the righteousness of Christ, and the fact that His righteousness is credited to us (42).

1. Jesus lived a perfect life!
 - a. Without sin—Hebrews 4:15
 - b. Committed no sin—1 Peter 2:22
 - c. Knew no sin—2 Corinthians 5:21
 - d. In Him is no sin—1 John 3:5
 - e. Righteous servant—Isaiah 53:11
 - f. Loved righteousness and hated wickedness—Psalm 45:7
 - g. Jesus own testimony: can any of you prove me guilty of sin?—John 8:46
2. The holiness of Jesus was the absence of sin but also the perfect conformity to the will of His Father. This is the definition of holiness. It is true then that Jesus Christ is the definition and perfect example of holiness (43).
3. Jesus’ holiness was not just evident in His actions but in His motives and thoughts as well. Holiness has to do with more than just acting right; our motives and thoughts must be holy also.

Purpose: A serious view of the holiness of God will leave us seeing with utter dismay our own lack of holiness, therefore, it is important that we receive this assurance from God in *Isaiah 6:7*: “*Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged,*” (44). (See also 2 Corinthians 5:21.)

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST’S HOLINESS ON OUR BEHALF?

1. Our acceptance by God is based only on the righteousness of Christ.
 - a. We need to dwell on this in order to fight against Satan’s attacks.
 - b. Satan will attempt to discourage you into thinking that you are not a genuine Christian because you continue to sin—e.g., “Christians don’t do that.”
 - c. Remember the words by Charlotte Elliott—

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

- d. If you diligently pursue holiness, you will need to run to the Rock of your salvation to receive the assurance that you are saved through the righteousness of Christ alone (45).
2. Christ's life is meant to be an example of holiness for us (46).
 - a. Peter told us that Christ left an example for us to follow in His steps—1 Peter 2:21.
 - b. Christ said in *John 6:38*, “*For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*” That is the example that He left for us to follow.

APPLICATION

Do we dare take that as our personal goal in life? Are we truly willing to evaluate all our activities, all our goals and plans, and all of our actions, thoughts and motives according to this statement: I am doing this to please God?

CONCLUSION

Holiness does not mean following a list of dos and don'ts. When Christ came into the world, He said, “*I come . . . to do thy will, O God*” (*Hebrews 10:7*). This is the example we are to follow. In all our thoughts, and actions, in every part of our character, the guiding principle that ought to motivate us should be the desire to follow Christ in doing the will of the Father. This is the high standard of the pursuit of holiness for every Christian (47).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

“YOU ARE FREE”

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Romans 6:6–7

INTRODUCTION

Many Christians have a basic desire to live a holy life but have come to the conclusion that they simply cannot do it because it is too hard for them. They have struggled for years over many different kinds of sin in their lives. Therefore, the commands in Scripture to live a holy life only frustrate them. In our search for answers, one troubling question arises: What should I look to God for and what am I responsible for myself? When we first start to live the Christian life, we confidently assume we will simply discover from the Bible what God wants us to do and start doing it. We fail to take care of the sin that has been a part of our lives from the moment we were born until the time we get saved (50).

Purpose: God has made a provision for us to live a holy life, but He also has given us definite responsibilities.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AND GOD'S PROVISION

1. Our responsibility

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

- a. The first thing we should notice in this passage is that the pursuit of holiness, not allowing sin to reign, is something *we* have to do (52).
 - 1) This is something for which we are responsible.
 - 2) The experience of holiness is something that we are clearly told to work at.
- b. The second thing to note is that this statement is based on something Paul has just said—the word *therefore*. “In view of what I have just said, do not let sin reign” We are to pursue holiness because certain facts are true. Look back at Romans 6:1–2. The fact is that we died to sin!

2. God's provision

- a. Our dying to sin is a result of our union with Christ—Romans 6:2–11.
 - 1) Because Christ died to sin, we died to sin.
 - 2) Our dying to sin is not something we do, but something Christ has done (53).
- b. Our dying to sin is a fact whether we realize it or not.
 - 1) Just because we have died to sin because of Christ's death does not mean that sin cannot touch us.
 - 2) We are to *reckon*—count or consider—ourselves dead to sin, but our reckoning does not make it true—Romans 6:11–12.
 - 3) Because we are dead to sin through our union with Christ, we are not to let sin control our bodies.

Question: What does Paul mean by his expression “died to sin”? He means we died to the dominion of sin, or to the reign of sin. Before we trusted Jesus Christ for salvation we were under the power of Satan (Acts 26:18). Every person who has ever lived has been born a slave to the power and kingdom of Satan. But through our union with Christ we have been “set free” from sin, rescued from the kingdom of Satan, and turned to God (54).

Question: If we have been delivered from this power of sin, why do we still sin (55)?

1. Though we have been rescued, we still have our sinful nature living in us.
2. Christians tend to sin out of habit (56).
 - a. We look out for ourselves instead of others.
 - b. We retaliate when injured in some way.
 - c. We indulge the appetites of our bodies.
3. When we become Christians we do not put all this off overnight. We will spend the rest of our lives putting off sin, and putting on habits of holiness.

APPLICATION

Though we are Christians and “set free”—God’s responsibility, sin will constantly try to get at us. Paul warns that you must be on guard so as not to let sin take over your life—our responsibility (57).

CONCLUSION

We need to be reminded that we are no longer slaves to sin. We can now stand up to sin and say no to it. Before we had no choice, but now we have been given one through Christ. We sin because we choose to sin! Through Christ He has delivered us from sin’s reign so that we now can resist sin. But the responsibility for resisting is ours!

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

THE BATTLE FOR HOLINESS

I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. Romans 7:21

INTRODUCTION

Through our union with Christ in His death, we are delivered from the dominion (power) of sin. But we still find sin struggling to gain control of our lives, as Paul showed in Romans 7:21. But though believers still have this indwelling tendency to sin, the Holy Spirit maintains within us a prevailing desire for holiness (1 John 3:9). Sin, even though it may have been overthrown and weakened by Christ, has not changed. Sin is still hostile to God and cannot submit to His law (Romans 8:7) (60).

Purpose: If we are to wage a successful war against this enemy within, it is important that we know something of sin's nature and tactics (61).

SIN'S NATURE AND TACTICS

1. Scripture indicates that the seat of indwelling sin is the heart—Mark 7:21–23; Genesis 6:5; Luke 6:45.
 - a. John Owen said, “The whole soul of man and all its faculties as they all work together in doing good or evil. The mind as it reasons, discerns and judges; the emotions as they like or dislike; the conscience as it determines and warns; and the will as it chooses or refuses—are all together called the heart.”
 - b. The Bible tells us that the heart is deceitful and unsearchable to any but God alone—Jeremiah 17:9–10.
 - c. We need to ask God daily to search our hearts for sin that we cannot or will not see—Psalm 139:23–24 (62).
 - d. God's primary way of searching our hearts is through His Word—Hebrews 4:12.
2. We should realize that indwelling sin works largely through our desires—Hebrews 11:25 (63).
 - a. Not all desire is evil. Paul speaks of his desire to know Christ—Philippians 3:10.
 - b. We are speaking here of evil desires that lead us into sin. James said we are tempted when we are dragged away and enticed by our own evil desires—James 1:14.
 - c. If we are to win the battle for holiness, we must realize that the basic problem lies within us. It is *our own* desires that lead us into temptation.
 - d. “We must make sure our desires are directed toward glorifying God, and not satisfying the lusts of our bodies,” John Owen (64).
3. The third thing we must understand about indwelling sin is that it tends to deceive our understanding and our reasoning.
 - a. Satan's great strategy is to deceive our minds—Ephesians 4:22.
 - b. We are first drawn away from watchfulness (1 Peter 5:8) then from obedience (65).
 - c. We refuse to obey any longer because we think we can sin all we want and then receive the forgiveness promised in 1 John 1:9—we abuse God's grace.

- d. We also resist obedience when we begin to question what God says in His Word. Satan first used this tactic in the garden with Eve—Genesis 3:1–5.

CONCLUSION

Though sin no longer has power and control over us, it wages war against us. If left unchecked, it will defeat us! We must never consider that our fight against sin is over (66). Jesus said in *Matthew 26:41*, “*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*” In *Proverbs 4:23* Solomon warned us, “*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*”

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

OBEDIENCE—NOT VICTORY

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Romans 8:13

INTRODUCTION

God's provision for us consists in delivering us from the reign of sin, uniting us with Christ, and giving us the Holy Spirit to reveal sin, create a desire for holiness, and to strengthen us in our pursuit of holiness. Through the power of the Holy Spirit and according to the new nature He gives, we are to put to death the misdeeds of the body (Romans 8:13) (78).

WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY?

1. It is clear from Romans 8:13 that God puts responsibility for living a holy life on us. We are to *do* something.
2. Frequently in the epistles we are commanded to assume our responsibility for a holy walk.
 - a. Colossians 3:5—Paul exhorted to put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature. This is something we are told to do.
 - b. Hebrews 12:1—the writer of Hebrews says we are to throw off the sin and run the race with patience (79).
 - c. James 4:7—James said that we are to submit to God and resist the devil.
 - d. 2 Peter 3:14—Peter said that we ought to make every effort to be found without sin.
3. God makes provision for our holiness, but He gives us the responsibility of using those provisions (80).
4. We must rely on the Spirit in our putting to death the deeds of the body. We should not have the idea “I can't do it,” but “*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,*” *Philippians 4:13*.

APPLICATION

It is time for us Christians to face up to our responsibility for holiness. Too often we say we are defeated by this or that sin. No, we are not defeated; we are simply disobedient! Rather than saying we are defeated or victorious Christians, we ought to say we are disobedient or obedient Christians. When I say I am defeated, I am simply denying my responsibility that sin is simply my own disobedience. We may be living a defeated Christian life, but the reason is that we have chosen to be disobedient (81).

CONCLUSION

We are responsible for our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. We need to consider the fact that we have died to sin's reign, that sin no longer has control of us, that God has united us with Christ in all His power, and that God has given us the Holy Spirit to work in us. Only as we accept our responsibility and take God's provisions will we make any progress in our pursuit of holiness.

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

PUTTING SIN TO DEATH

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Colossians 3:5

INTRODUCTION

The New Testament leaves no doubt that holiness is our responsibility. If we are to pursue holiness, we must take some decisive action. The action we are to take is to put to death the deeds of the body (Romans 8:13). “*Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth,*” *Colossians 3:5*. According to the dictionary, mortify means “to destroy the strength, vitality, or functioning of; to subdue or deaden.” To put to death the deeds of the body, then, is to destroy the strength and vitality of sin as it tries to reign in our bodies. This deadening of the body must be done by the strength and under the direction of the Holy Spirit (84).

HOW DO WE DESTROY THE STRENGTH AND VITALITY OF SIN?

1. Conviction (85)

Conviction—“a fixed or strong belief” (*The American Heritage Dictionary*); “the state of being convinced or convicted; a strong persuasion or belief; especially, the state of being convicted of sin, or by one’s conscience” (*Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*).

- a. We must be convinced that “*without [holiness] no man will see the Lord*”—*Hebrews 12:14*.
- b. We must develop convictions in specific areas of obedience.
- c. Convictions are developed through exposure to the Word of God.
- d. Obedience is the pathway to holiness. It is only as we have His commands that we can obey them. God’s Word must be so strongly fixed in our minds that it becomes the dominant influence in our thoughts, our attitudes, and our actions (86).
- e. We develop convictions by bringing God’s Word to light on specific situations that arise in our lives and determining God’s will in that situation from the Word (87).
- f. Formula: How to know right from wrong (88).
- g. The question we must ask in a serious pursuit of holiness is this: am I willing to develop convictions from the Scriptures and to live by these convictions (91)?

2. Commitment

Luke 14:33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

- a. We must honestly face the question: am I willing to give up certain practices or habits that are keeping me from holiness?
- b. We have the “just one more time” syndrome. We have become “after the commercial” or “when my game is over” Christians. We will take just one more lustful look, eat just one more rich dessert before starting our diet, and watch just one more TV program before sitting down to our Bible study. In all of these, we are postponing our commitment to the Lord, the day when we say to sin, “That is enough!” (92).

- c. The Apostle John said in *1 John 2:1*, “*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.*” The whole purpose of John’s letter, he says, is that we NOT sin.
- d. “Make it your aim not to sin.” We have the idea that we will try not to sin *very much*. Imagine a soldier trying not to get hit *very much*. How long will he last in the battle? His aim is not to get hit at all! This ought to be our aim as God’s children.

APPLICATION

Jonathan Edwards, one of the great preachers of early American history, used to make resolutions. One of his was, “Resolved, never to do anything which I would be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.” Dare we twenty-first century Christians make such a resolution? Are we willing to commit ourselves to the practice of holiness without exceptions? There is no point in praying for victory over temptation if we are not willing to make a commitment to say no to it (93).

CONCLUSION

It is only by learning to deny temptation that we will ever put to death the deeds of the body. Learning this is usually a slow and painful process, filled with much failure. Our old desires and our sinful habits are not easily overcome. To break the habit requires persistence, often in the face of little success. But this is the path we must take, no matter what the cost!

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

THE PLACE OF PERSONAL DISCIPLINE

But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. 1 Timothy 4:7

INTRODUCTION

It is possible to establish convictions regarding a life of holiness, and even make a definite commitment to that end, yet fail to achieve the goal. Life is filled with broken resolutions. We may determine by God's grace to stop a particular sinful habit only to find so often that we do not succeed. Jay Adams, in his book *Godliness Through Discipline*, puts his finger on the problem when he says, "You may have sought and tried to obtain *instant* godliness. There is no such thing . . . We want somebody to give us three easy steps to godliness, and we'll take them next Friday and be godly. The trouble is, godliness doesn't come that way." Adams goes on to show that the way to obtain godliness (holiness) is through personal discipline (96).

IF WE ARE TO LIVE GODLY, WE MUST TRAIN OURSELVES TO BE GODLY.

Discipline = "training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character." This is what we must do if we want to pursue holiness: We must correct, mold, and train our moral character (97).

1. Discipline toward holiness begins with the Word of God.
 - a. Jay Adams says, "It is by willing, prayerful, and persistent obedience to the requirements of the Scriptures that godly patterns are developed and come to be a part of us."
 - b. Our cooperation with the Holy Spirit is very clear—
 - 1) The Spirit wrote the Scripture.
 - 2) We learn the Scripture.
 - 3) The Spirit brings to our mind what we learn.
 - 4) We apply what He brings to mind.
2. Discipline toward holiness commands a planned time each day for reading or studying the Bible (98).
 - a. Every Christian who makes progress in holiness is a person who has disciplined his life so that he spends regular time in the Bible. There is no other way!
 - b. We must discipline ourselves to provide this time in our daily schedules.
3. Discipline toward holiness involves a planned method for reading or studying the Bible (99).
 - a. If we are to pursue holiness with discipline, we must meditate on God's Word.
 - b. The objective (purpose) of our meditation is application—obedience to the Scriptures (100).
 - c. Discipline means "structured, planned training." Just as you need a plan for regular Bible reading or study, you need a plan for applying the Word of God to your life (101).
 - d. As you read or study the Scriptures and meditate on them during the day, ask yourself these three questions:
 - 1) What does this passage teach concerning God's will for a holy life?

- 2) How does my life measure up to that Scripture; specifically where and how do I fall short? (Be specific; don't generalize.)
 - 3) What definite steps of action do I need to take to obey?
 - e. The most important part of this process is the specific application of the Scripture to specific life situations.
4. Discipline toward holiness is a lifelong process and demands perseverance (102).
- a. In the face of failure, notice *Proverbs 24:16* says, "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again."
 - b. The person who is disciplining himself toward holiness falls many times, but he doesn't quit. After each failure, he gets up and continues the struggle (103).

CONCLUSION

As we progress in holiness, we come to hate sin and to delight in God's law. We see the perfection of God's law and the rightness of all He requires of us. We agree that His commands are holy, righteous, and good (104). But during all this time, we also see our own inner corruption and our frequent falls into sin. We ought to cry out as Paul did in *Romans 7:24*, "O wretched man that I am!" Often we may want to give up, but we dare not do so. If we want to succeed in our pursuit of holiness, we must persevere in spite of failure (105).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HOLINESS IN BODY

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. 1 Corinthians 9:27

INTRODUCTION

True holiness includes control over our physical bodies and appetites. If we are to pursue holiness, we must recognize that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and that we are to glorify God with them. Earlier Christians, for example, regarded gluttony and laziness, as sin. Today we may look on these as weaknesses of the will but certainly not sin. We even joke about our overeating and other indulgences instead of crying out to God in confession and repentance. Our physical bodies and natural appetites were created by God and are not sinful in themselves. Nevertheless, if left uncontrolled, we will find our bodies becoming “instruments of unrighteousness” rather than “instruments of righteousness” (Romans 6:13) (108).

The Apostle Paul emphasized the need to keep our natural appetites and desires under control (109).

1. He spoke of his body as his adversary, as the instrument through which appetites and lusts, if left unchecked, would war against the soul—1 Corinthians 9:27).
2. Paul further urged us to present our bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, and to not be conformed to this world—Romans 12:1–2.

WE MUST KEEP OUR NATURAL APPETITES AND DESIRES UNDER CONTROL BY PRESENTING OUR BODIES AS HOLY UNTO THE LORD.

1. We should examine ourselves as to whether we eat and drink to the glory of God, recognizing that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit—1 Corinthians 10:31.
2. We must closely govern our indulgence of food and drink; if not, we will find it harder to put to death other sinful deeds of the body (110).
 - a. If we cannot say no to our appetite, we will be hard pressed to say no to lustful thoughts.
 - b. There must be an attitude of diligent obedience in every area if we are to succeed in putting sin to death.
3. Along with such sins of the body as sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires, Paul also mentions greed—Colossians 3:5.
 - a. While greed is often seen in “the love of money for money’s sake,” it is more often seen in materialism.
 - b. Materialism wars against our soul in two ways—
 - 1) It makes us discontent and envious of others (111).
 - 2) It leads us to pamper and indulge our bodies so that we become soft and lazy.
 - c. We tend to do not what we *should* do, but what we *want* to do, as we follow the craving of our sinful nature.

- d. There is no place for laziness and indulgence of the body in a disciplined pursuit of holiness. We have to learn to say no to the body.
- e. We must take control of our bodies and make them our servants instead of our masters.

APPLICATION

2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Proverbs 27:12 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.

CONCLUSION

God expects us to assume our responsibilities for keeping the sinful desires of the body under control. It is true we cannot do this in our own strength. But though we cannot do it by ourselves, we can do it! As we set ourselves to the task in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, we will see Him at work in us. We will fail many times, but as we persevere, we will be able to say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13) (113).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HOLINESS IN SPIRIT

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Corinthians 7:1

INTRODUCTION

Our thoughts are just as important to God as our actions, and are known to God as clearly as our actions (Psalm 139:1–4, 1 Samuel 16:7). Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount that God's commands are intended not only to regulate outward conduct, but inner attitude as well. Just as we must learn to bring the appetites of our bodies under control, so we must also learn to bring our thought lives under obedience to Jesus Christ. It is possible to make things look good on the outside and be completely defiled inwardly. The Bible teaches that our thought lives ultimately determine our character (Proverbs 23:7) (116). An old well-known saying puts it this way:

Sow a thought, Reap an act;
Sow an act, Reap a habit;
Sow a habit, Reap a character;
Sow a character, Reap a destiny.

It is because of the importance of our thought lives that Paul said in *Philippians 4:8*, “*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things*” (117)

HOLINESS BEGINS IN OUR MINDS AND WORKS OUT TO OUR ACTIONS.

This being true, what we allow to enter our minds is critically important.

1. We must be alert for what our eyes see.
 - a. The television programs we watch
 - b. The movies we see
 - c. The books and magazines we read
 - d. The music we listen to
 - e. The conversations we have
2. We must be alert for sins that defile our spirit (119).
 - a. Envy and jealousy—its cure is to find our contentment in God—Psalm 73 (120).
 - b. Bitterness—its cure is to trust in the sovereign rule of God in our lives.
 - c. Spirit of retaliation—its cure is to entrust ourselves to Him who judges justly and said in *Romans 12:19*, “*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord*” (121).
 - d. Critical spirit—its cure is to see our sin as pride and confess our faults to the Lord instead of being so eager to point out others' faults (122).

CONCLUSION

All of these attitudes defile us and keep us from being holy before God. They are just as evil as immorality and the sins of the flesh. We must work diligently at rooting out these sinful attitudes from our minds. We need to pray daily for humility and honesty to see these sinful attitudes for what they really are, and then for the grace and discipline to root them out of our minds and replace them with thoughts pleasing to God.

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HOLINESS AND OUR WILLS

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Philippians 2:13

INTRODUCTION

In all that has been said so far about our responsibility for holiness—the necessity of conviction and commitment, perseverance and discipline, and of holiness in body and spirit—the activity of our wills is always implied. It is the will that ultimately makes each individual choice of whether we will sin or obey. It is the will that chooses to yield to temptation, or to say no. Our wills, then, ultimately determine our morality, whether we will be holy or unholy in our character and conduct. This being true, it is critically important that we understand how our wills function—what causes them to turn in one direction or the other, why they make the choices they do (124).

Understanding how our wills function: the word *heart* as used in the Bible generally denotes all the faculties of the soul as they work together in doing good or evil—the mind, the emotions, the conscience, and the will. We are told to renew our minds (Romans 12:1–2), to set our affections on things above (Colossians 3:1), and to submit our wills to God (James 4:7) (125).

Purpose: We must learn how to bring our wills into submission and obedience to the will of God, on a practical, daily, hour-by-hour basis.

We must guard what enters our minds and what influences our emotions—Proverbs 4:23; Philippians 2:12–13.

HOW DO WE GUARD OUR MINDS AND EMOTIONS?

1. To guard our minds, we must give priority to the Bible in our lives (126)

Psalm 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

- a. David guarded his way with the Word of God.
- b. The Bible speaks to us primarily through our reasoning.
- c. The Bible gives us spiritual information and daily application for our everyday lives.

2. We must also guard our emotions (127).

- a. Realize that while God most often appeals to our wills, sin and Satan usually appeal to our desires.
- b. Watch over our desires diligently and bring the Word of God into every aspect of our lives.
- c. Guarding our desires takes action—
 - 1) Paul directs us to set our hearts on things above—Colossians 3:1.
 - 2) The psalmist encourages us to delight ourselves in the law of God—Psalm 1:2.
 - 3) It was prophetically said of Jesus in *Psalm 40:8*, “*I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*”

d. We must work at directing our desires toward God’s will.

APPLICATION

The basic idea is to have a plan—a disciplined approach—that will enable us to stay motivated to holiness (129).

CONCLUSION

In the final analysis, it is God who works in us to will and to act according to His good purpose. But we are expressly told by Paul to work at this ourselves (Philippians 2:12). Our responsibility regarding our wills is to guard our minds and emotions, being aware of what influences our minds and stimulates our desires. As we do our part, we will see the Spirit of God do His part in making us more holy.

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HABITS OF HOLINESS

*I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh:
for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity;
even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. Romans 6:19*

INTRODUCTION

The more we sin, the more we are inclined to sin. Every sin we commit reinforces the habit of sinning and makes it easier to sin. In the previous lesson we discussed the importance of guarding our minds and emotions, since these are the channels through which various compelling forces will reach our wills. But it is important that we understand how our habits influence our wills (132).

Habit is defined as the “prevailing disposition or character of a person’s thoughts and feelings” (*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*). Habits are the thought and emotional patterns engraved on our minds.

As unbelievers, we formerly gave ourselves to developing habits of unholiness—what Paul called “ever-increasing wickedness” (Romans 6:19). Every time we sinned we were developing habits of sin that made us slaves to sin. But now, Paul declared, just as we used to give ourselves as slaves of wickedness, so we are to give ourselves to developing habits of holiness—and become slaves to righteousness (Romans 6:19). We are to put off the old self—our sinful habits and character—and put on the new self—with its character and habits of holiness (133).

Purpose: We must train ourselves unto godliness by disciplining and structuring our lives so that we develop godly habits.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES:

1. Habits are developed and reinforced by *frequent repetition*.
 - a. This is the principle underlying the fact that the more we sin, the more we are inclined to sin.
 - b. But the opposite is also true: the more we say no to sin, the more we will be inclined to say no to sin.
 - c. We must, relying on the help of the Holy Spirit, work at developing the habit of saying no to those sins that so easily entangle us—Hebrews 12:1.
 - d. The more we succeed in saying no to sin, the easier it will become.
 - e. We can at the same time begin developing positive habits of holiness—
 - 1) Think thoughts that are pure, true, and good.
 - 2) Develop habits of prayer and meditating on Scripture.
2. Never let an exception occur (134).
 - a. We must watch the “just this once” type of thinking.
 - b. We must be willing to pay the price in saying no to our desires so that tomorrow will be different.
3. Diligence in all areas is required to ensure success in one area.

- a. “Without a sincere and diligent effort in every area of obedience, there will be no successful mortification [putting to death] of any one besetting sin,” John Owen.
 - b. Continually giving in to that habit weakens our wills in other areas of temptation.
 - c. To overcome, we must develop habits of self-control.
4. Don't be discouraged by failure.
- a. There is a huge difference between failing and becoming a failure.
 - b. We become a failure when we give up and stop trying. But as long as we are working on those sinful habits, regardless of how often we fail, we have not become a failure.

CONCLUSION

It is pointless to guard our minds and emotions against those attacks from the outside if we are not at the same time dealing with our own habits of sin from within. The battle for holiness must be fought on two fronts—without and within. Only then will we see progress toward holiness (135).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HOLINESS AND FAITH

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. Hebrews 11:8

INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of holiness Christians are often called on to perform duties that appear unreasonable and even absurd to an unbelieving world. Though we often think of holiness in a more narrow sense of separation from sin and evil, in its broader sense holiness is obedience to the will of God in whatever God directs. It is saying with Jesus, “*Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God,*” *Hebrews 10:7*. No one can pursue holiness who is not prepared to obey God in every area of his life. The holiness described in the Bible calls us to do more than separate ourselves from the moral pollution of the world around us. It calls us to obey God even though that obedience may be costly and require deliberate sacrifice (138).

Purpose: Since obedience is the pathway to holiness—a holy life being essentially an obedient life—we must understand that no one will become holy apart from a life of faith (139).

1. Faith is not only necessary to salvation, it is also necessary to live a life pleasing to God.
2. Faith enables us to claim the promises of God—but also enables us to obey the commands of God.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

The Hall of Faith—Hebrews 11 (140)

1. By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain did, and through this—
 - a. received God’s approval—verse 4.
 - b. believed what God said.
 - c. believed, even though he may not have understood.
2. Noah’s life is an example of this kind of faith—verse 7 (141).
 - a. By faith Noah believed God’s warning.
 - b. Noah had conviction about things not yet seen based solely upon the revealed Word of God.
3. Abraham’s life also illustrates the obedience element of faith—verse 8.
 - a. The call of Abraham consisted of two parts—a command and a promise.
 - b. The command was to leave his father’s house and go to a land God would show him.
 - c. The promise was that God would make of him a great nation, and through him bless all the families of the earth.

APPLICATION

1. If we do not have *conviction* in the necessity of obeying the revealed will of God as well as *confidence* in the promises of God, we will never persevere in this pursuit (142).

2. We must have *conviction* that it is God's will that we seek holiness.
3. We must be *confident* that the pursuit of holiness results in God's approval and blessing, even when difficult circumstances arise.

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

- a. The command is to seek God's kingdom first (143).
- b. The promise is that as we do, God will provide for our temporal needs.

CONCLUSION

If we do not have a firm conviction that “*without [holiness] no man will see the Lord*” (*Hebrews 12:14*), we will not seriously pursue holiness as a priority in our lives. Faith and holiness are linked. Obeying the commands of God usually involves believing the promises of God. One definition of faith might be “obeying the revealed will of God and trusting Him for the results.” “*Without faith it is impossible to please [God]*,” *Hebrews 11:6*. If we are going to pursue holiness we must have faith to obey the will of God revealed in Scripture and faith to believe that the promises of God will then be ours (144).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

HOLINESS IN AN UNHOLY WORLD

*I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world,
but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. John 17:15*

INTRODUCTION

All believers must live their Christian lives in the context of an unholy world. Some face extraordinary temptation as they live in the midst of a sinful atmosphere at home, school, and work. James said that part of true religion consists in keeping ourselves “*unspotted from the world,*” *James 1:27*, and Paul urged us in *2 Corinthians 6:17* to “*come out from among them, and be ye separate,*” (146).

Purpose: The Christian must be prepared for such evil assaults on his mind and heart, or he will have great difficulty maintaining personal holiness.

Question: How should the believer respond when he finds himself surrounded on every hand by the unremitting pressures of a sinful world?

STRATEGIES OF HOLINESS IN AN UNHOLY WORLD

1. Defensive: God does not intend for us to withdraw from contact with the world of non-Christians—*John 17:15*. We must strive to resist its influence by—
 - a. resolving to live by the convictions God has given us from His Word (147).
 - b. identifying ourselves with Christ openly.
 - c. using the Bible as our best defense against its pollution—*Psalm 119:9* (148).
2. Offensive: We must be concerned not only for our own purity of mind and heart, but also for the eternal destiny of those who would pollute us (149).

Matthew 5:13–14 *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.*

- a. God has called us to be the “salt of the earth.” Christians are to be a preserving power, an antiseptic, and an agent to prevent decay.
- b. God has called us to be the “light of the world.” Christians are to be bearers of the Good News of salvation.

Despite all the attempts defensively and offensively in our Christian walk, there may be a time when the corrupt environment becomes intolerable, and we should prayerfully consider the need to leave that ungodly situation (150).

CONCLUSION

Maintaining personal holiness in an unholy world is admittedly difficult. Above all, we must look to Jesus who Himself was “*holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens,*” *Hebrews 7:26*. We must claim the promise that “*there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it,*” *1 Corinthians 10:13* (151).

THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

THE JOY OF HOLINESS

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans 14:17

INTRODUCTION

God intends the Christian life to be a life of joy—not drudgery. However, only those who walk in holiness experience true joy. Jesus said, “*If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full,*” *John 15:10–11*. True joy is a result of true obedience (154).

Purpose: Only those who are obedient—who are pursuing holiness as a way of life—will know the joy that comes from God.

IN WHAT WAYS DOES HOLINESS PRODUCE JOY?

1. There is the joy of *fellowship with God*—Psalm 16:11.
 - a. True joy comes only from God and He shares this joy with those who walk in fellowship with Him.
 - 1) God’s love for us should create in us a desire to obey Him.
 - 2) Joy comes when we know we are obeying God—that we are no longer resisting Him in some area of our lives (155).
 - b. A life of disobedience cannot be a life of joy!
2. There is the joy of *anticipated reward*—Hebrews 12:1–2.
 - a. Jesus was motivated to endure by anticipating the joy of His reward. No amount of hardship and struggle could deprive Him of that anticipation.
 - b. In the parable of the talents, the Lord said to the two servants who used their talents, “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant. . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord,*” *Matthew 25:21, 23*.
 - c. One of the talents God has given to each one of us is the ability to walk in holiness, being free from the bondage of sin.

APPLICATION

In order to experience this joy, we must make some choices. We must choose to forsake sin, not only because it can defeat us, but also because it grieves the heart of God. We must choose to count on the fact that we are dead to sin, and we can now actually say no to sin. We must choose to accept our responsibility to discipline our lives for obedience (156).

CONCLUSION

God has provided all we need for our pursuit of holiness. He has delivered us from the reign of sin and given us His indwelling Holy Spirit. He has revealed His will for holy living in His Word, and He works in us to will and to act according to His good purpose. He has sent pastors and teachers to exhort and encourage us in the path of holiness; and He answers our prayers when we cry to Him for strength against temptation.

INVITATION

The choice is yours. What will you choose? Will you accept your responsibility and discipline yourself to live in obedience to the will of God? Will you persevere in the face of frequent failure, resolving never to give up? Will you decide that personal holiness is worth the price of saying no to our body's demands to indulge its appetites? Will you do your part and allow God to work His awesome power in your life? If we are to attain any measure of holiness we must be willing to accept the command God has clearly given. "*Be ye holy; for I am holy.*" God promises to give us the strength, but the responsibility to be holy is ours. If you make that decision, you will experience the fullness of joy, which Christ has promised to those who walk in obedience to Him (157).

HELPING TEENS OVERCOME THE GRASSHOPPER COMPLEX—NUMBERS 13

THE BUG	THE VENOM	THE ANTIDOTE
G	Grumbles about circumstances	“Good” Principle Psalm 84:11; Romans 8:28; Psalm 69:16 Jeremiah 29:11; Psalm 63:3
R	Rationalizes desires into “needs”	Daily Bread Principle Matthew 6:8–13, 25–34; Philippians 4
A	Appropriates blame	Beam-in-eye Principle Matthew 7:3–5; Matthew 6:14–15 Example of Job’s Friends (Job 42:7) If left unattended, bitterness begins to destroy.
S	Steps out on common sense more than faith	God Principle Psalm 127:1–2; Hebrews 11; Isaiah 41:10 Isaiah 43:1–3
S	Surrenders to the immediate and jeopardizes the permanent	Temptation Principle 1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 11:24–27 Proverbs 19:11
H	Hasty in decision making	Proverbs Principle Proverbs 8:32–36, 12:1, 16:20, 23:23, 24:3, 25:8 bad decision making usually is the result of hasty reactions (example of Peter)
O	Obstinate to change	Spiritual Growth Principle Isaiah 43:1–3; James 1:2–4; Romans 5:1–5 2 Peter 3:18, 1:5–9
P	Persistent with demands	R & R Principle My Rights versus My Redemption 1 Corinthians 6:19–20, 3:16–17; Galatians 2:20
P	Protects self-image	Fear Principle Whom do I fear ? Whom do I love? Isaiah 8:13; Proverbs 1:7, 3:5–7, 14:26, 28:14, 23:17; Acts 5:29; Matthew 10:28
E	Expects life to be easy for a Christian	Creation Principle Curse is a part of everyone’s life Free will is used by everyone Psalm 34:19; Psalm 73; 1 Peter 4:12–16; Matthew 6 and 10
R	Reasons like a pessimist	Heaven Principle “What is the worst thing that could happen to me?” 2 Corinthians 4:16–18; Hebrews 11:13–16

PAUL'S METHOD OF MOTIVATION

1 CORINTHIANS 15:58

Applied to youth workers and teenagers

DE-MOTIVATION	PAUL'S EXAMPLE	MOTIVATION
Fails to see the eternal value of working with teens; uses people instead of grows people	<i>Therefore, my beloved</i> So that, my dearly loved	Teaches the “therefore” and then shows honor by loving (agape)
Fails to recognize that the Christian body members are co-laborers together; would rather work as a one-man team	<i>brethren</i> literally or figuratively a brother	Emphasizes connection by calling them “brothers”; does not isolate or set himself on a pedestal
Fails to see the importance faith plays in the hearts of teens; most likely does not pray for his youth group	<i>be ye steadfast</i> to sit; to be settled Ephesians 4:14; Acts 11:23 Colossians 1:23—“settled”	Exhorts his brothers to be settled in their faith; builds confidence by sharing hope
Makes teens feel guilty if they are discouraged or tired while trying to do what is right; lacks compassion	<i>unmovable</i> firm; stable; fixed on our faith Colossians 1:23—“not moved away” Ephesians 3:17–18	Recognizes the human tendency to get discouraged; gives reason for believers to be unmovable (reminds people of the “therefores”)
Fails to challenge his youth group; a pessimist; sees a growing Christian as a threat to his position; stifles creative ideas	<i>always abounding</i> at all times to cause to excel; to cause to be better Romans 15:13; 2 Corinthians 1:5, 8:1–9	Challenges Christians to be constantly excelling and growing; is approachable and positive
Fails to share eternal value and uses guilt to motivate teens to participate; desires people’s praise; sees himself as the “fix-all” person in the church	<i>in the work of the Lord</i> doing and toiling Hebrews 6:10; Matthew 23:5; John 3:21	Gives proper reality check: “It is work, but it’s not my work. It’s the Lord’s work.” Recognizes God’s part in working with people
Fail to ask questions or answer questions; lacks desire to give information; makes teens, parents, or youth workers feel uneasy if they have questions	<i>forasmuch as ye know that</i> to see; to be aware; to consider; to understand Romans 5:3; Hebrews 11:13; Philippians 4:9—“seen”; 2 Timothy 1:12; James 4:17	Ask lots of questions; is willing to answer questions; prepares people; is willing to grow people
Fails to be truthful to his youth group: “The Christian life is easy for us to live!”	<i>your labor</i> weariness; trouble Philippians 2:16; Isaiah 40:28–31	Is truthful about the job ahead and/or the expectations; anticipates weariness
Does not see eternal satisfaction: “You will feel so good about yourself after participating.” The truths of Ecclesiastes have not sunk in.	<i>is not in vain in the Lord</i> Empty 1 Timothy 5:17; Romans 8:18	Ends with the best motivating factor: the reward is sweet and worthy of our effort; it’s not a useless endeavor

IN THE BALANCE

SIX GREAT BALANCES A TEEN MUST RECEIVE AT HOME

Introduction: Charles Blond, a French acrobat, lived from 1824 to 1897. In 1859 he crossed Niagara Falls on a tightrope. He accomplished this marvelous feat several times: once with a blind fold, once with a wheelbarrow, once on stilts, and another time with a man on his back. Even a man as great at balancing as he never achieved perfect balance. Balance is a desired goal that one seems to never fully attain. But if you stop trying, you will utterly fail! Balance is maintained through the journey of correcting to which side you are off balance.

As we raise our children we must provide them with balance in these five crucial areas:

1. Restraint with Reason
 - a. Most of you will find it hard to believe that your teenager wants restraint! They fight it; they buck it; but inside they know they need it. But they want it **WITH** reason!
 - b. Teens won't accept a restraint without a reason.
 - c. Rather than wait until they ask, teach them! Take them on the journey with you.
2. Rules with Relationships
 - a. Rules without relationships breed rebellion! The opposite is also true: relationships without rules breed rebellion.
 - b. Teens in today's society are desperately seeking relationships. They hunger for acceptance, for someone to be interested in them, to notice them, to participate in their lives and understand their needs, concerns, hurts, fears, and feelings. If they don't find that relationship inside the home, they **WILL** seek for it and find it elsewhere!
 - c. Parents, I encourage you to make time in your schedule to build relationships with your teen. Have fun with them. Make memories together!
 - d. Homes are filled with relationship killers—TV, computers, video games, doors, pressures, different interests, busy schedules, fast-paced lives, exhaustion, and anxiety. These things all kill what God desires for you to have—a relationship with your teen!
 - e. How do you get it back? It takes a **PLAN** on your part to **MAKE IT HAPPEN!**
3. Direction with Devotion
 - a. This is especially important with the older teens. They all have dreams and desires. Two extremes—
 - 1) Direction extreme—do what I say!
 - 2) Devotion extreme—whatever you want!
 - b. Teens need both! They need your devotion, unconditional love, and the knowledge that you believe in and support them. But they also desperately need your direction. They are almost adults with very little knowledge or wisdom with which to make the adult decisions that they face!

- c. God gave YOU to them as a gift to direct and guide them! The youth ministry's job is to push them to talk to have a growing relationship with you!
 - d. Their future choices should be guided by your leadership—
 - 1) College
 - 2) Career
 - 3) Dating
 - 4) Marriage
4. Discipline Without Diversion or Digression
- a. Teens today are crying out for loving, consistent discipline. They are crying out for parents who will truly discipline and set boundaries for them rather than debate! They are hungry for parents who will not step into the ring with them and put on verbal “boxing gloves.”
 - b. Teens need discipline from authority, not from a peer. When you debate, you allow your focus to be diverted to the verbal attack, and you become their peer!
 - c. Helpful Hints and Suggestions
 - 1) Refuse to step down from your position as authority.
 - 2) Deal with discipline clearly and predictably.
 - 3) Set the boundaries and enforce them.
 - 4) When infractions occur, respond **BIBLICALLY**.
 - 5) Be willing to apologize if you are wrong.
 - 6) Know when to call time out.
 - 7) Deal consistently, lovingly, and decisively.
 - 8) Stay in control of yourself and the situation.
 - 9) Treat your teens as real people.
 - 10) Be willing and not afraid to discuss the why and how questions of life.
5. Instruction with Influence
- a. Does your instruction match up with the influence of your life that you live every day before your teen? Do you live what you teach?
 - b. Do you practice what you preach? Whatever cliché you desire to throw in there, is it true of your life? If not, you are sure to lose your teen!
 - c. Teens are straight shooters in their minds. They figure people out quickly and correctly.
 - d. If you want your instruction to be heard for a lifetime, you must first live it out and then teach it!

Conclusion: The earlier you start, the better off you are!

COMMUNICATING MY FAITH

How do I communicate my faith?

1. By being an example of the believer—1 Timothy 4:12
 - a. In Word—verbal communication; tame your tongue
 - b. In Conversation—conduct or lifestyle
 - c. In Charity—love, not selfish
 - d. In Spirit—your attitude; are you serious about God?
 - e. In Faith—be persuaded
 - f. In Purity—staying morally pure; keeping your mind and your heart pure
2. By being dependent upon God
 - a. In prayer—1 Corinthians 2:4–5
 - b. In the knowledge of God's Word—1 Peter 3:15
 - c. In recognition of Christ's death on the Cross as your message—1 Corinthians 2:2; 3:4
3. By understanding the background of the lost
 - a. Family/Heritage
 - b. Location
 - c. Culture
 - d. Religion

RECONCILIATION NUTS AND BOLTS OF COMMUNITY

Colossians 1:19–23

INTRODUCTION

1. Community is an easy thing to talk about but draws different reactions.
 - a. Some are encouraged—makes them feel warm and loved
 - b. Some are afraid—do not want others to know who they really are
 - c. Some are confused—they have never experienced it
2. Today, we look at the nuts and bolts of community. How do we exist in community with the people in this youth ministry? To some, this idea is vague or many lack the knowledge of creating community.
3. Colossians
 - a. This is a letter of praise but is laced with concern.
 - b. Consists of general Christian teachings for both the individual and the community of believers.
 - c. A good deal of what is said in this letter could have been written to any similar congregation.
4. Paul begins this challenge to this group of people looking very broadly at some powerful ideas.
 - a. Jesus is the Image of God.
 - b. All things were created by Him; therefore, everything is inferior to Him.
 - c. He has been given the ultimate preeminence.
5. In this letter Paul uses Jesus Christ to oppose a body of strange ideas that had infected the church.
6. The strange ideas in general were an adoption of worldly philosophy—the adoption of practices and beliefs that the lost hold to as their value system.
7. The value system of the believer must stand in direct contrast to the world's value system.
 - a. A superstitious belief and fear
 - b. Individualism vs. faith community
 - c. The treatment of other believers in other social classes (e.g., slaves and women)
8. The issue that seems to stand out is the issue of what holds a community together and what keeps a community together. The key to this togetherness is RECONCILIATION.

THE EXAMPLE OF RECONCILIATION (1:13–22, 2:6)

Verse 20—He begins with this big idea (universal).

1. The idea has to do with everything in the universe being flawed, fractured (out of joint).
2. We respond by asking, “Is this how it is supposed to be?”

3. It is not and has never been the intention of God for anything to be broken.
4. In response to brokenness, God has this incredible plan (idea/dream) of putting it all back together.
5. The plan is for everything to be made right through one event—the event of the cross.
6. Paul uses a very special word—RECONCILED.

Verse 21—Paul brings this giant idea down to a very personal level, one to which everyone can relate.

1. He explains that everyone (you) is out of joint (separated from God).
2. He doesn't really beat around the bush with his words.
3. God has set into motion His plan (reconciled you to Himself).
4. The same plan that God has for the entire universe, He also has for you.
5. Paul keeps using *reconcile* which means to make peace where there is no peace. To bring into relationship where a relationship did not exist.
6. The process by which one is reconciled to God is known as SALVATION.
7. The salvation that Paul describes and that Jesus offers is a holistic salvation (cf. Hebrews 2 “great salvation”).

Verse 22—“all of us”—our heart, emotions, will, mind, past, wounds, failures, worries, bodies, addictions, etc.

1. The story of God (His meta-narrative) is that He wants to put you back together.
2. Once this has occurred through believing in Jesus, God wants your life to be spent doing the same thing (making peace).
3. Everyone of us walk different paths (and I fully believe that that is the plan that God uses); but as we walk different paths, our calling is the same.

THE CALL TO RECONCILIATION (1:23, 2:7)

1. As we all walk different paths, understand that our responsibility as a follower of Christ is that we make reconciliation (make peace and create relationships).
2. There is a radical pattern of living to which Jesus calls us—repent . . . follow (Matthew 7:13–14).
3. Jesus is concluding His greatest public sermon (The Sermon on the Mount, which is a self-portrait painted by Jesus). As Jesus makes some very bold comments, He concludes with words that are meant to guide a follower of Jesus (reconciling may not be done as you think it should be done).
 - a. Don't judge others.
 - b. Don't focus on others' shortcomings.
 - c. Do good to others (12).
4. Jesus makes a unique statement (13–14)—followers must make a choice everyday to walk the path that may be most difficult. What Jesus is stressing is that there are only a few people who walk the way that He walked. How did Jesus walk? (Luke 6:27–36—Jesus gives us His passion and the way He operates.)

- a. Love your enemies.
 - b. Bless (pray) for those that curse you and use you.
 - c. Give to anyone that has a need.
 - d. Be merciful to everyone.
5. As you journey through this life, understand that being like Jesus will cause you to reconcile with others and reconcile others to God

THE HOPE OF RECONCILIATION (1:27-28, 3:1-15)

1. God's passion is that believers in Jesus live, act, and exist in such a way that others cannot help but be reconciled to the One we follow.
2. A huge part of God putting everything back together is your making peace where there is no peace.
3. What we are talking about is the examination of our own lives and world and recognizing the turmoil, the pain, and the suffering and putting an end to it through peace.
4. Walk your path, but walk your path as Jesus would walk your path.

1 CORINTHIANS 13

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus was not the only Christian influence to preach this message of loving others.
2. Paul spent much time developing a plan for loving others—he even goes as far as to say that there are a number of important elements in authentic faith, but the greatest (most important) is love.
3. Paul writes this in 1 Corinthians—a letter to a real group of people struggling with real issues. The people in this church were in danger of letting Christianity become fake.
4. Paul writes this letter and is very honest with them.
5. At the heart of his message to this church is that they would seek a better way of living, “a more excellent way” (1 Corinthians 12:31).
6. Paul knew that there is a better way of living than what most people experience.
7. If you’re facing a destructive lifestyle, there is a better way of living, and you can experience it.
8. Many teens do not understand that their lives do not have to be ordinary and blah; it can be amazing and authentic and enjoyed to the fullest (this is the better way).

THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE

1. Love is more important than anything you can do spiritually (vv. 1–2).
 - a. The Corinthian church was so impressed with what people could do (spiritual gifts). Paul reminds them that the gifts are meaningless without love. Without love, a person may speak with the gift of tongues, but it is as meaningless as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal—it is nothing but empty noise.

People of little religion are always noisy; he who has not the love of God and man filling his heart is like an empty wagon coming violently down a hill: it makes a great noise, because there is nothing in it.

—Josiah Gregory

- b. Have not love—Paul is using the Greek word *agape*. The ancient Greeks had four different words we translate love. It is important to understand the difference between the words and why the apostle Paul chose the Greek word *agape* here.
 - 1) *Eros* describes, as we might guess from the word itself, erotic love. It refers to sexual love.
 - 2) *Storge* refers to family love, the kind of love there is between a parent and child, or between family members in general.
 - 3) *Philia* speaks of a brotherly friendship and affection. It is the love of deep friendship. It might be described as the highest love of which man, without God’s help, is capable.
 - 4) *Agape* is a love that loves without changing. It is a self-giving love that gives without demanding or expecting repayment. It is love so great that it can be given to the unlovable or unappeal-

ing. It is love that loves even when it is rejected. Agape love gives and loves because it wants to—it gives because it loves, not loves in order to receive. It can be defined as a sacrificial, giving, absorbing, love. The word has little to do with emotion, and it has much to do with self-denial for the sake of another.

2. Love is more important than anything you can physically do (v. 3).
 - 1) *Bestow all my goods to feed the poor.*
 - 2) *Though I give my body to be burned*—Even if I lay my life down in dramatic way, apart from love, it is of no profit.
 - 3) *It profiteth me nothing*—Many Christians believe the Christian life is all about sacrifice. Sacrificing your money, your life, for the cause of Jesus Christ. Sacrifice is important, but without love it is useless.

CONCLUSION

Each thing described in 1 Corinthians 13:1–3 is a good thing—tongues, prophecy, knowledge, faith, and sacrifice are all good. But love is so valuable and so important that apart from it every other good thing is useless.

1 CORINTHIANS 13

PART 2

INTRODUCTION

1. Review the importance of love
 - a. Love is more important than anything you could spiritually do.
 - b. Love is more important than anything you could physically do.
2. If this love is so important, how do we know if we are really loving?
3. Paul stresses the importance of love and he begins to define this agape love. At first, we see love is described by action words. Paul is not writing about how love feels; he is writing about how it can be seen in action.
4. Agape love is always demonstrated by action.

WHAT LOVE IS NOT (4B-6)

Love is not envious, proud, arrogant, rude, cliquish, touchy, suspicious, or happy with evil.

1. Love *envieth not*—Envy is one of the most damaging of all sins. It accomplishes nothing, except to hurt. Love keeps its distance from envy and does not resent it when someone else is promoted or blessed. Is envy a small sin?
 - a. Envy murdered Abel (Genesis 4:3-8).
 - b. Envy enslaved Joseph (Genesis 37:11, 28).
 - c. Envy put Jesus on the cross—*For he knew that for envy they had delivered him (Matthew 27:18).*
2. Love *vaunteth not* (does not parade) *itself*—Love in action can work anonymously. It does not have to have the limelight or attention to do a good job or to be satisfied with the result. Love gives because it loves to give, not out of the sense of praise it can have from showing itself off.

Sometimes the people who work the hardest at love are those furthest from it. They do things many would perceive as loving, yet they do them in a manner which would parade itself.

3. Love *is not puffed up*—To be puffed up is to be arrogant and self-focused. It speaks of someone who has a “big head.” Love doesn’t let its head swell; it focuses on the needs of others.

Parading yourself and being puffed up are rooted in pride. Among Christians, the worst pride is spiritual pride.

4. Love *does not behave itself unseemly* (rudely)—Where love is, there will be kindness and good manners.
5. Love *seeketh not her own*—Paul communicates the same idea in giving preference to one another. *Philippians 2:4* carries the same thought: “*Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*” This is being like Jesus in a most basic way—being an others-centered person instead of a self-centered person.

6. Love *is not easily provoked*—We all find it easy to be provoked, to become irritated with those who are just plain annoying. But it is a sin to be provoked, and it isn't loving.
7. Love *thinketh no evil*—Literally, this means “love does not store up the memory of any wrong it has received.” Love will put away the hurts of the past instead of clinging to them.

One writer tells of a tribe in Polynesia, where it was customary for each man to keep some reminders of his hatred for others. These reminders were suspended from the roofs of their huts to keep alive the memory of the wrongs, real or imagined. Most of us do the same.

8. Love *rejoiceth not in iniquity*—It is willing to want the best for others and refuses to think bad things against others. Instead, love rejoices in the truth.

WHAT LOVE IS (4A, 7)

1. Love *suffereth long*—Love will endure a long time. It is the heart shown in God. If God's love is in us, we will be longsuffering to those who annoy us and hurt us.

This is the word used of the man who is wronged and who easily has the power to avenge himself but will not do it out of mercy and patience. Do you avenge yourself as soon as you have the opportunity?

2. Love *is kind*—When we have and show God's love, it will be seen in simple acts of kindness.

*1 Corinthians 13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things,
hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

We must stop and understand “all things”—We might have hoped Paul would have chosen any phrase but this! All things encompass everything! We can all bear some things, we can all believe some things, we can all hope some things, and we can all endure some things; but God calls us further and deeper into love for Him, for one another, and for a perishing world.

3. Love *beareth all things*—The word for *beareth* can also be translated *covers*. Either way, Paul brings an important truth along with *1 Peter 4:8*: “*And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*”

“Love covers; that is, it never proclaims the errors of good men. There are busybodies abroad who never spy out a fault in a brother but they must needs hurry off to their next neighbor with the savory news, and then they run up and down the street as though they had been elected common criers. It is by no means honorable to men or women to set up to be common informers. Yet I know some who are not half so eager to publish the gospel as to publish slander. Love stands in the presence of a fault, with a finger on her lip.” (CH Spurgeon)

4. Love *believeth all things*—We never believe a lie, but we never believe evil unless the facts demand it. We choose to believe the best of others.

“I know some persons who habitually believe everything that is bad, but they are not the people of love. . . . I wish the chatterers would take a turn at exaggerating other people's virtues, and go from house to house trumping up pretty stories of their acquaintances.” (CH Spurgeon)

5. Love *hopeth all things*—Love has a confidence in the future, not a pessimism. When hurt, it does not say, “It will be this way for ever, and even get worse.” It hopes for the best, and it hopes in God.

6. Love *endureth all things*—Most of us can bear all things, believe all things, and hope all things, but only for a while! The greatness of agape love is that it keeps on bearing, believing, and hoping. It doesn't give up. It destroys enemies by turning them into friends.

CONCLUSION

1. The best way to understand each of these is to see them in the life of Jesus. We could replace the word *charity* with the name Jesus and the description would make perfect sense. We can easily say, Jesus suffers long and is kind; Jesus does not envy . . . and make it through the whole chapter.
2. How does this chapter sound when we put our names in the place of the word *charity*?
3. There is a reason why Paul spent so much time developing this definition. Paul wants Christians to understand that giftedness is not the measure of authentic faith; the actions of love are.

ORDINARY CHRISTIAN LIVING

2 TIMOTHY 1:8-9

INTRODUCTION

1. Second Timothy is a letter written by an older Apostle Paul who believes his life is nearing its end.
2. It is a letter that is unlike any of Paul's other letters because of what it lacks—It does not seem to have the instructions on the practical side for a congregation.
3. Paul's writing has a unique transparency in this personal letter to Timothy, who happens to be among the closest people to Paul.
4. Paul writes about an opposition to the church and strongly urges Timothy to be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ. In the world to which Timothy was ministering, it was appealing to succumb to the false teaching and not remain committed to the work that he and Paul had done.
5. In our world, we too must be very aware of the teachings and writings that would appeal to us but in reality are not sound doctrinally.
6. Timothy is being warned against involving himself in the fighting that characterize so many today—stay true and faithful to presenting the TRUTH.
7. The church has always fought against the temptation to tolerate a wide variety of beliefs and patterns of behavior. What Paul is stressing is that Timothy not run after the false teachings and practices that find their way into Christianity.
8. The practical application here is that we must be aware of the practices and even the teachings that are accepted in Christianity as being TRUTH. For example, the postmodern/emergent church movement calls one to go back to a pre-modern era; the call to return to authentic Christianity is not in the pre-modern era but in the apostolic era.

TRANSITION

1. In verse nine of our text, we read a particular phrase that can be helpful to our understanding of Christian practice and living in our world (practical)—*who hath saved us and called us*.
2. Within the movement of evangelical Christianity, there is a belief that there are many levels of the Christian faith. Unknowingly, many people buy into this and proceed to live their lives moving from one level of Christianity to another, hoping to accomplish enough to be right with God.
3. Never in the Scriptures or teachings of the historical church has there been a belief that there are stages in life that a Christian encounters.
4. The Bible actually paints a picture of a journey that involves growth but not levels. Let me illustrate it with the practice of answering multiple calls in our Christian life—
 - a. Salvation
 - b. Lordship
 - c. Service (full or part-time)
 - d. Giving

5. I don't believe that the separate callings are biblical but are rather a part of our modern faith because it describes the way we live (segmented).
6. Paul states that there is ONE calling in your life. That one call involves your laying your life at the feet of Jesus and doing whatever He says.
7. It is a calling that says I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but it is Christ that lives within me. It is a representation of me belonging fully to Christ.
8. The heresy is when we believe that there are levels of surrender in the Christian life—that idea is foreign to biblical Christianity.

THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CALLING (9)

1. Notice that this calling originates from God Himself.
2. It is a calling that involves grace and a summons that must be responded to as it was meant to be responded to—we don't make the rules.
3. The idea of this calling involving grace is very important throughout the writings of Paul.
4. There is no doctrinal concept of the unintentional Christian life.
5. There is no biblical foundation for a Christian to want to be one or not.
6. The grace that Paul eludes to is one of totally enveloping the recipient of that grace—This grace is the grace that describes the kindness and pleasure that God takes in our receiving His calling.
7. Receiving this grace is answering the call—salvation, which entails laying of one's life down in order to experience a new life.
8. This calling, according to Paul, is the only calling in the believer's life (Paul's experience on the road to Damascus). That simply means that at the moment of salvation you have actually received the highest calling or all of the calling, but the ironic thing is that this high point is actually at the most basic entry level.
9. Jesus never said "Believe in me so you can go to heaven." Heaven is the byproduct. Jesus did say, "Follow me; deny yourself; take up your cross."

THE IMPACT OF THIS CALLING (8)

By living within a Christian faith that promotes level-oriented Christianity, we accommodate an apathetic and lazy life. The calling that Paul refers to is a calling to live the absolute best life you can as soon as that life begins. Then why do we settle for failures and settle for mediocrity? Take for example the way we view the Ten Commandments—

1. Most people believe that the Ten Commandments are too high and too lofty for anyone to live by.
2. Often they are viewed as some standard that God put in place to show us how incapable we are to do right—not entirely true.
3. The Ten Commandments are not God's standard of living—the angels don't live by them.
4. They are the standard of being a good human. The Ten Commandments are really the lowest standard of humane living, "Don't kill people; stop stealing from each other; please don't lie to each other."

Choosing to live a life that is below this standard is really choosing to live differently than a human was meant to live. As a Christian who has received this calling (grace), the calling includes a demand to live a life that is ordinary. What is ordinary? Doing exactly what is expected of a Christian.

1. Husbands love your wives (and vice versa).
2. Children honor your parents.
3. Love one another.
4. Forgive those who hurt you.
5. Make disciples of everyone without Christ.
6. Depend on God through His word and a constant prayer life.

Even when you look at the physical life of Jesus Christ, we see a life that can never be lived—unless you believe that this calling has enabled us to live like Jesus. “Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus,” and it has, but we don’t believe such a thing.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CALLING (9B)

1. Paul rooted his belief in human and divine relations within a conviction—that God’s purpose for humanity was one of receiving grace and a being sustained from start to finish by that grace.
2. Many times we’ll look at the men and women in the Bible and place them on incredibly high pedestals, but in reality they were men and women who were just living the ordinary Christian life.
3. The Christian life isn’t meant to be a highlight reel on the sports news. It is rather to be a constant journey of growth each day, and each day our life should look more like the life God intended us to live.
4. Is that your life? Do you live the ordinary Christian life, or do you live a life in need of levels to justify the mediocrity, the apathy, and lack of Christ-likeness?

REALLY FIGHTING TEMPTATION

Adapted from John Piper, *Pierced by the Word*

INTRODUCTION

1. Everyone has a weakness
 - a. Guys usually find it in the area of the visual—they are visual by nature.
 - 1) Are impressed by cars that look good.
 - 2) Are impressed by girls that are pretty.
 - 3) Their eyes can be the greatest enemy that they have.
 - b. Girls usually find it in the area of appearance—what they look like.
 - 1) Seek to impress by looks—beauty or lack of eating.
 - 2) Are impressed by emotion and fantasy.
2. None of what I have mentioned is sin, but all of what I have mentioned has the POTENTIAL to turn into lust; and any lust is sin.
3. It is necessary for us to know what our weaknesses are and how to make war on them. I have found the following strategy to be effective in destroying that which seeks to destroy us. It is in the form of an acronym—ANTHEM.

Avoid as much as possible the things that try to trap us.

1. Sometimes they are sounds, sometimes they are people, sometimes they are places, and sometimes they are websites.
2. It is impossible to escape all temptation—temptation is not the problem. Giving in to temptation is the problem.
3. What we have to understand is that temptations are a result of something that triggers them, and the trigger is what you must avoid—do everything you can to avoid it.

2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

No—just say no.

1. Say no to every temptation that you face as soon as you can—say no within five seconds, or you will find yourself entertaining thoughts that will lead to actions that you will regret.
2. Kill it or it will kill you

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Turn away.

1. You have to force your mind toward Jesus Christ and to think on things that are pure and lovely.
2. Attack sin with Christ.

Ephesians 4:22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

- a. These “*deceitful lusts*” are lies that we believe about the sin in which we involve ourselves.
 - b. “*Former conversation*” is the old life that you lived before you were a Christian.
3. The reason we often cannot do this is because when we turn toward Jesus, there is nothing there—we don’t know Him as we should.

Hold to the promise that real pleasure is in Christ.

1. The lies about the lusts we believe is that they make us happy. If this were true, why are we never satisfied with them?
2. The failure in this system usually takes place in this step, because we give in too soon.
 - a. “I tried to stop that thought, but I couldn’t”—how long did you really try?
 - b. Fix—stop and gaze—your eyes on Jesus Christ
3. Be brutal and take the thought that is ruling your mind with force to Jesus Christ.
4. How long does it take? Remember that your mind is a muscle and it must be flexed and used in order to become strong. At first it may take quite a while; but the more you use this muscle, the easier it will be.

Enjoy a real satisfaction.

1. What you have to begin to believe and practice is that real, genuine, pure pleasure is found in doing things God’s way
 - a. Sex isn’t wrong unless it is done a different way than God’s way.
 - b. Looking good isn’t wrong unless it is for another reason than God’s reasons.
 - c. Having nice stuff isn’t wrong unless the reason you have nice stuff is wrong.
2. Why is Jesus Christ so unappealing to us? Why do we not think that He is capable of making us satisfied?
 - a. Because we believe the lies of the deceitful lusts.
 - b. The greatest pleasure you could ever enjoy was the reason you were created—it was not sex, porn, or looking pretty; it was to enjoy God forever.

Psalms 90:14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Move into a useful activity.

1. Idleness leads to regrettable behavior.

a. Lust grows fast in a life that is not busy.

b. My personal plan of doing work when I am alone.

Romans 12:11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.

2. The easiest way to conquer temptations is to move into having a passion for doing good works.

Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

See handout on next page.

REALLY FIGHTING TEMPTATION

Everyone has a weakness—It is necessary for us to know is what our _____ are and how to make _____ on them.

ANTHEM

A

1. Being tempted is not a sin.
2. What we have to understand is that _____ are a result of something that _____ them. The trigger is what you must _____.

N

Say no within _____ seconds, or you will find yourself entertaining _____ that will lead to _____ that you will regret.

T

1. You have to force your mind toward Jesus Christ.
2. These “_____” are lies that we believe about the sin in which we involve ourselves.
3. “_____” is the old life that you lived before you were a Christian.

H

The _____ in this system usually takes place in this step, because we _____.

E

What you have to begin to _____ and _____ is that real, genuine, pure pleasure is found in doing things God’s way

Why do we not think that He is capable of making us satisfied? Because we believe the lies of the deceitful lusts

M

Idleness leads to regrettable behavior. The easiest way to _____ temptations is to move into having a _____ for doing good works.

REALLY FIGHTING TEMPTATION

EPHESIANS 6:10–18

INTRODUCTION

1. Defeating the devil is not your responsibility; the devil has already been defeated by Jesus Christ. (The devil has been given freedom but one day that freedom will be taken away.)
2. The greatest thing about fighting temptation is the fact that our part is really simple.
3. Paul tells the believers in this book to get all dressed up in this outfit ready to fight a battle (vv. 10–17), but there is an interesting—almost hidden—command in verse 14 that we are to obey: Stand.
 - a. In a battle, standing is dangerous. But you have to remember; in this battle we are not fighting—Jesus is!!
 - b. Our responsibility is to stand. This means that we refuse to give in to temptation and that we refuse to give up on God while He fights the battle for us.
4. Throughout the New Testament, we are given commands of resistance.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

5. One of the things that we have to keep in mind when we are being tempted is that God is not going to ask us to do something that we cannot do.
6. We cannot defeat Satan on our own, but we can stand.

TRANSITION

1. Paul writes this letter to a group of believers that lived in a city that believed false gods had the power to affect their daily lives. There was a fear of a real devil and this fear was causing them to forget to do what was necessary to defeat temptation.
2. Sometimes that is exactly like our lives—we give in to temptation because we forget to do what we are supposed to do.
3. When Paul says “stand,” what does he mean? Are you just a sitting duck, waiting for Satan to tempt you? NO! Look at verse 18—Paul says that you must pray.
4. One of the main reasons so many of us struggle with temptation is simply because we are weak when we are attacked.
5. What did Paul not say to do?
 - a. Memorize
 - b. Go to church
 - c. Read your Bible

All of these are armor for the believer.

6. The strength is in prayer.
 - a. Prayer is the way we relate to God; that is what is most important.
 - b. Prayer is the most real way we experience God.
7. Think back over your times of temptation. Had you spent time in prayer? If prayer was not something you were filled with, you gave in.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DON'T PRAY?

Stage 1—Prayerlessness

Stage 2—Weighed Down

Stage 3—Overwhelmed

Stage 4—Weak

When Paul tells us to pray, he tells us something very important along with this advice. He tells us to pray always. This word *always* means to pray continually and constantly. The word *pray* means to give praises, thanksgiving, and intercession. In other words, there are plenty of things with which we could occupy our prayer time.

OUR PRAYER TIME

Praises—times of acknowledging God for His involvement

Thanksgiving—times of honestly being thankful for God and His goodness

Intercession—times of calling out to God and telling Him specific needs

1. Praying all the time means that we are always aware of God and His presence in our lives.
2. It is an awareness that God is connected to us.
3. Maybe you don't think it's possible to think about God all the time.
4. What is it about God that you don't like? Why is He so unappealing to us?
5. Usually, we can't always think about God because something else is already there, and usually it's something wrong.

HOW I CAN PRAY ALWAYS

1. Begin your prayers by listening—that sounds odd, but why not begin your conversation with God listening to Him speak to you. This happens in a lot of different ways:
 - a. Reading your Bible
 - b. Meditating (be quiet)
 - c. Asking this question, “Lord, what do *You* want me to pray about?”
2. Pray about everything.
 - a. God wants to be a part of everything in your life

- b. You should feel a strong desire to talk with God as often as you can. Do you?
- 3. Pray in the Spirit (v. 18).
 - a. Praying in the Spirit means to pray as though the prayers were spiritual prayers.
 - b. Aren't all prayers spiritual? Not really! In fact, most are not. Spiritual prayers are prayers that are prayed as if we are in total agreement with God
 - c. It means that you don't go to God with an agenda.
 - d. You only want what God wants for you.
 - e. Sometimes what God wants for us is exactly what we are praying against.
- 4. Pray with confidence (not arrogance).
 - a. Praying with confidence means that you believe God hears you and that He answers you.
 - b. The key to this confidence is trust.
 - c. Do you trust God to protect you while you stand?

Saying no to temptation begins by saying yes to God's way.

See handout on next page.

REALLY FIGHTING TEMPTATION

EPHESIANS 6:10–18

Defeating the devil is not your responsibility.

1. In a battle, _____ is dangerous. But you have to remember that in this battle we are not _____—Jesus is!!
2. Our _____ is to stand.
 - a. We refuse to give in to temptation.
 - b. We refuse to give up on God while He fights the battle for us.
3. When we are being tempted, remember that God is not going to ask us to do something that we cannot do.

So what are we to do as we STAND? Paul says that you must pray (Ephesians 6:18).

What happens when we don't pray?

Stage 1—_____

Stage 2—_____

Stage 3—_____

Stage 4—_____

1. He tells us to “_____.”
2. This word *always* means to pray _____ and _____.
3. The word *pray* means to give praises, thanksgiving, and intercession.

Our Prayer Time

1. Praises—times of acknowledging God for His involvement
2. Thanksgiving—times of honestly being thankful for God and His goodness
3. Intercession—times of calling out to God and telling Him your specific need

How can I pray always?

1. Begin your prayers by _____.
2. Pray about _____.
3. Pray in the _____ (Ephesians 6:18).
4. Pray with _____.

Saying no to _____ begins by saying yes to God's _____.

USING CHALK AND MARKERS TO COMMUNICATE TRUTH

A friend once wrote, “If people aren’t listening, who cares what you are saying.” This is a sobering statement and has become a guide of mine through many messages and lessons.

Each teacher must earn the right to be heard in some manner or another. Attention must be arrested and maintained. We have a visual society so using the eyes as a means to capture attention and demonstrate a spoken truth only makes sense. Fear of insufficient talent is usually what prevents a person from attempting to use pictures in combination with words to express truth. Here are a few ways the average person can use chalk/ markers to “draw” their listeners to truth.

SIMPLE VISUAL TOOLS: CHALK TALK STUNTS

Chalk talk stunts involve simple drawing tasks, tricks with letters and numbers, simple silhouettes, or simple pictures that at times mask where the artist is going until the end.

These illustrations are perfect to reinforce a message. Many books can be used to get you started using drawn illustration with messages. These illustrations, some with very clear instruction, can be prepped beforehand, so all you need is enough talent to connect the dots and color.

SOURCES

1. *The Art of Drawing People to Christ* (three volumes available) by Dave Winchell
2. *Dewey’s Easy Gospel Chalk Talks* by Ralph Dewey
3. *Picture Perfect* by Gregory L. Lichi
4. *Picture This! Cartoon Bible Lessons* by Gary and Alisa Linn

These are available at Children’s Ministry Today (www.childrensministry.org)

SUPPLIES

1. Dry erase marker board (turn-able)
2. A pad of large newsprint
3. Poster board
4. Markers or chalk
5. Illustrated picture resource

CHALK TALKS

Chalk talks have been around for years, and there are many sources available. Chalk talks involve more supplies such as easel, lights, large paper, and lecturer chalk. Chalk talks can range from a simple picture to a very detailed picture. Often chalk artists involve songs to be played while the picture is drawn. Lights are an important part of the chalk artist’s presentation using white, colored, and black fluorescent lights allowing the picture to stand out and even alter what the audience sees. Chalk talk evangelists use many different presentation styles of proclaiming.

SOURCES

- Ding Teuling with the help of his two children offers many good resources. You can buy chalk, paper, pictures of the month, and chalk training camps. Ding Teuling has been a chalk evangelist for over fifty years. The Teulings are very helpful and personable people who will spend time on the phone and in e-mails helping those seeking to do a chalk ministry (www.teulingenterprises.com).
- Dan Ondra has a great website for chalk talk helps. There is a photo gallery and chalk artist hall of fame where you can see the various people and styles in chalk ministry. You can also do online chalk modules that help a beginner get a start immediately. Chalk newsletters are another good resource, which you easily download. A directory of chalk supplies and resources is also available (www.danondra.com).

1. Considerations

- a. What are chalk talks?
- b. Where should you start?
- c. What you will need?
- d. How much will it cost?

2. Resources

- a. Websites
- b. Suppliers
- c. Teaching and training available

Simple Visual Tools

Drawing People to Christ

Picture Perfect

Dewey's easy Gospel chalk talks

Chalk Talk

Black Light Chalk

Use the visual to communicate your message!

TOP 20 (OR MORE) OBJECT LESSONS

WHAT MAKES A GREAT OBJECT LESSON?

1. A STRONG tie between the object and the lesson it represents—the symbolism should be obvious, clear, and focused. When we stretch the lesson to fit the object or try to make too many points, the lesson, the most important part, will not be remembered.
2. A STRONG visual and emotional impact (but not too strong)—the goal of the object lesson is to burn the truth into the hearts and minds of the audience. A strong visual and emotional impact will do that. I remember Sam Brock eating (what I thought was) dog food at a Youth Leaders' Retreat. That had an emotional impact on me, and I still remember the lesson years later.

If the visual and emotional impact of an object lesson is too big, it can overshadow and hinder the lesson. Imagine an illusionist doing a ten-minute long Houdini-style escape routine with a huge build up and dramatic escape. At the end he adds the statement, "And just like this, God can help us escape from the temptation to sin." The illusion overshadows the lesson so much, that the lesson will never be remembered.

OBJECT LESSONS WITH EVERYDAY OBJECTS

WORDLESS CRAYONS

Lesson: Salvation

Supplies: Eight standard crayons

Source: Karl Bastian

One of the greatest object lessons is the wordless book. The bright colors and clear symbolism make it one of the best ways to present the gospel to young people. This version uses standard crayons.

Presentation

Black—we all have sinned (Romans 3:23). *Emphasize black represents the spiritual darkness of sin.*

Brown—therefore, Jesus left heaven and came to earth (Philippians 2:6-7). He walked in our shoes!

Red—Jesus died for us—Romans 5:8; John 3:16.

White—if we accept Him, God forgives our sins and makes us brand new, white as snow—Isaiah 1:18.

Purple—we become God's children (1 John 1:12) and part of God's royal family—1 Peter 2:9.

Green—we need to GROW as Christians by reading our Bibles, praying, and going to church.

Blue—someday Jesus will return again to take home those who are His—1 Timothy 6:14-16.

Yellow—heaven will be a wonderful place without any sin or sadness, and Jesus will be there in person—2 Peter 3:13.

SALVATION CUPS

Lesson: Salvation

Supplies: Five clear cups, pitcher of water, and food coloring (red, blue, green, and yellow)

Source: Joe Rodriguez

This is another great way to do the wordless book.

Preparation: Put two drops of yellow food coloring in Cup 1. Put one drop each of blue, red, yellow, and green in Cup 2. Put two drops of red in Cup 3, leave Cup 4 empty, and put two drops of green in Cup 5.

Presentation: Use the story of the wordless book found at http://www.cefonline.com/wordless/wb_howto.php. Instead of showing each page in the wordless book, fill each cup with water from the pitcher. Cup 1 = yellow, Cup 2 = dark/dirty, Cup 3 = red, Cup 4 = clear/pure, and Cup 5 = green.

DRILL AND WOOD BLOCK

Lesson: If you don't take care of sin, it will grow.

Supplies: Drill, wood block (2x4), and four or five drill bits that are progressively larger ($\frac{1}{8}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ ")

Source: Bryan Miller

Presentation: Nobody just wakes up one day and says, "I'm going to murder someone today." When you think of a sin like murder, and probably say, "I could never kill someone." But when you don't take care of sin in your life, it always gets bigger.

Start with the largest drill bit in the drill. (Note: I use metal bits for this object lesson. I don't want the $\frac{1}{2}$ " bit to easily go through the wood. A $\frac{1}{2}$ " wood bit will easily drill through a 2x4, but a metal bit will not "bite" as easily and has a harder time. You only want the $\frac{1}{2}$ " bit to go through easily when there is already a hole.) Try to drill with the $\frac{1}{2}$ " bit. Don't push too hard.

Notice that this big bit does not easily go through the wood. Let's call this big bit a big crime such as murder or armed robbery. Just like it is hard for this big bit to drill into this wood, you might think that you would never commit a crime like that.

Switch drill bits to the smallest one. But you probably would not think twice about using unkind words to a friend or doing something mean to a brother or sister. Let's call this tiny drill bit unkindness. Notice how it goes through the wood with hardly any effort. Drill into the wood; a small bit like a $\frac{1}{8}$ " bit will easily drill into the wood. I like to do this in one quick down and up motion to show how easy it is.

Continue to drill in larger and larger bits, showing how easy it is to drill with the larger when a small hole is already there. You will finally get to the largest bit which had trouble going in at first, but now goes through with little effort. Have a progressively worse sin at each level for the in-between bits. In the murder example, the progression could be unkindness → bitterness → getting in a fistfight → using a knife in a fight → murder. You could do this with stealing or lying; if you are talking with teenagers, you could do this with alcohol, drugs, sex, etc.

If you don't fill the "hole," it is very easy to do the same sin again. You don't even think about smaller sins. When you have a larger hole, put one of the smaller bits in and show that it does not even touch the sides. It is very easy to take the next step; sin always get larger.

RAT TRAP LESSON ONE

Lesson: Don't fall into sin's trap.

Supplies: Mouse or rat trap, cheese, and something to activate the trap (carrot, pencil, hot dog, etc.)

Source: Karl Bastian

Presentation: I am very impressed with this mousetrap. I am sure that it is going to attract many mice. See the beautiful piece of wood that has been used? I am sure that would really impress the mice. They are going to come running when they see the wood and then, SNAP! Look at this absolutely beautiful steel trap. That will also attract the mice. Look at how strong and cleverly made this whole thing is. Wow! I am surely going to catch lots of mice because the trap is so nice looking.

What is that you say? I need cheese to attract the mice? You are right. It is not the trap that attracts the mouse. It is the cheese. *Hold up a small piece of cheese.* This is such a small piece of cheese, not enough to make a sandwich. It is so small that you can hardly see it. But when the mouse comes up to the trap, all he can see is the piece of cheese. He doesn't even see the trap with its fine wood and steel. He is only thinking about the pleasure he is going to get from eating that tiny bit of cheese.

Set the trap. Use the carrot, pencil, hot dog, or another object to set off the trap. Satan wants to trap you with some bait. He wants you to think that there is pleasure in sin. He makes you think it is so good that you do not see the trap he is setting for you. Satan traps you by tempting you. He makes you think it is only a little lie or a small thing and that will give you a lot of pleasure. But that thing is Satan's bait. Don't be trapped.

RAT TRAP LESSON TWO

Lesson: Trusting God

Supplies: Rat trap and a hot dog (or pencil)

Source: Gary R. Linn

Preparation: Locate the pressure spring on the trap. Practice setting the trap and then setting it off. Practice setting the trap while at the same time moving the spring arm off of the metal apparatus so that there is no pressure on the mechanism. Simply lift up on the spring arm and place it down onto the base next to the apparatus. When setting the trap be sure to give the impression that the pressure is still there. Remember, to practice, practice, practice!!! You *cannot* make a mistake with this illustration! The pressure spring must be released when you have a volunteer to assist you.

Presentation: *Slightly lift on the apparatus and allow it to snap back against the wood base while you talk.* How many of you have ever seen a rat? It looks like a large mouse doesn't it? This is a rat trap. It's made so that when a rat is caught in it, it will die. Watch closely as I set the trap. *Set the trap. Don't forget to keep your fingers out of the way! Then pick up the hot dog.* What do you think would happen if I placed this hot dog onto the set trap? *Use the hot dog to set off the trap.* You can see how powerful the trap is. *While you continue, release the spring.* Which of you trusts me? You must really trust me! *Choose someone to help, and set the trap with the pressure spring released.*

I want to assure you that this trap cannot hurt you. Do you believe me? It will not hurt you. I have used two very important words since I've had the trap. I asked, "Who trusts me?" and "Do you believe me?" *Trust* and *believe* are good words, but the best word to describe what we are learning now is *faith*. You have faith in me. You have faith to believe that when I say that the trap will not hurt you, then the trap will not hurt you. You have faith to know that I would not let any harm come to you. This is similar to the faith that we must have in Jesus and His promises to us. Hebrews 11:1 tells us that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." You must be convinced that what I am telling you is the truth. This trap will not hurt you. You saw what it can do to a hot dog, but it will not hurt you. I want you to touch the end of the trap. Can you do that? *Be sure the pressure spring is released!!! Allow the young person to touch the trap. Most will slowly move their hand toward it, slightly touch it, then quickly pull away.*

That's wonderful; you had true faith in me. The trap didn't hurt you, did it? I fixed the trap, so that it would hurt you, though you didn't know that until now. All you knew was that I had told you that you would be alright. You were convinced that what I said was true. We must have that kind of faith in Jesus. Though we cannot see Him right now, we must be convinced that He is the Son of God. Though we cannot see the answers to our prayers yet, we can be absolutely convinced that everything God has said in His Word is true. We can have complete faith in Him and His promises.

THREAD

Lesson: Sin grows rapidly and binds you.

Supplies: Two lengths of thread

Source: Maurice Sweetsur

Presentation: *Have a volunteer come out and hold his arms outstretched. Produce a small length of thread and tie it round the volunteer's wrists. This one twist of thread represents one sin. Imagine that our volunteer told one lie, realized what he had done was wrong, and determined to break free from his sin and give up lying. To volunteer. Break free from this thread. He will easily be able to do this.*

Have the volunteer hold his arms outstretched again, but this time produce a longer length of thread. Begin wrapping it around the volunteer's wrists. Now imagine that our volunteer did not give up his lying, but told another lie to try to cover up the first one, then another, and another. End up with about ten twists and tie the ends together. Eventually our volunteer realized what he was doing and decided to break free from his lies. But what happens this time? No matter how hard he struggles, he is unable to snap the thread and break free.

That is how sin works. John 8:34 says "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant [slave] of sin." Think for a moment what a slave is—someone who cannot do what he wants to do and has to do what he doesn't want to do! If sin becomes a habit in your life—whether it is lying or something else, it will be extremely hard to stop without help, even if you want to. The good news is that if we ask Him, Jesus is able to break the power of sin in our lives and, as John 8:36 says, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." *Produce a pair of scissors and set your volunteer free.*

MERCY AND GRACE

Lesson: Mercy and grace

Supplies: Candy bar, tiny squirt gun, super soaker, and a one-on-one game

Source: Karl Bastian

Presentation: *Play a one-on-one game that you know you will win. (You must win for the lesson.) Do some practice rounds, then offer the ultimate challenge. The winner will get a giant candy bar, and the loser will get squirted. Have a small water gun visible on stage, but do not point to it or refer to it specifically. Play and win the one-on-one game. To the loser. Ready to get squirted? Oh, you thought I meant this gun? No, you get squirted with this! Pull out the hidden, giant super soaker!! The kids will cheer. Extend mercy to the loser by not soaking him, then extend grace to him by giving him the giant candy bar.*

There is another game we have all played and lost—LIFE! God offers the same mercy and grace demonstrated by this game. Mercy is when He gives us what we *do* deserve, and grace is when He gives us what we do *not* deserve.

DOG DOO-DOO OR HORSE MANURE**Lesson:** Gossip**Supplies:** Fake (or real if you are brave) dog doo-doo or horse manure in a paper towel**Source:** Mike Denk

Presentation: I need a volunteer to help me out with this one. *Choose a kid who might be grossed out by this. Choosing a social ham could backfire on you.* Okay, I have something here in the paper towel that I would like to give you. I think you're really going to like it. *Pass the paper towel to the volunteer, let him see what it is, but don't let go of the paper towel.* Here you go, would you like to have this? *The volunteer will most likely say no.* Are you sure you don't want this pile of poop? I picked it up from my doggie this morning. Not interested, huh?

You know, we should treat rumors and gossip in this same way. Just like poop is gross, vile, and can even spread disease to others, gossip can do the same, just in a different way. No one would want to receive poop from someone else. They would give it back or refuse to take it; that's the sensible thing to do! Whenever someone tries to give me poop, I always refuse. It's a no-brainer! Refusing to listen to gossip or rumors should also be a no-brainer. Be a wise person. When someone brings you gossip, hand it back to them and say "no thanks."

SEWER WATER**Lesson:** We become calloused to sin over time.**Supplies:** A cup of water and vanilla extract without the label**Source:** Leo Gibbons

Presentation: When we are thirsty, nothing satisfies like a glass of pure, clear water. We would never want to drink dirty or disgusting water. What if I mixed some of this dirty, sewer water in with our pure water? *Pour some of the vanilla into the water.* Even a little bit would make it disgusting. What if we gave in and drank some anyway? *Really play this up and act like you are drinking something disgusting.*

That was disgusting, but if I took another sip, it might not be as bad as before. Soon I might get to the place where I would not notice it at all. *Continue to add vanilla to the water and drink it until the water you are drinking is almost as dark as the bottle of vanilla.* Sometimes this happens with sin. We let a little bit of it into our lives. At first it is disgusting, but the longer we allow it, the more used to it we get. We become blinded to how bad it really is. Soon we get to the place where we are allowing more and more vile and disgusting things into our lives.

WEIGHTS**Lesson:** Lay aside those things that keep you from God's best**Supplies:** Ankle or wrist weights, boots, and a backpack with several heavy books**Source:** Bryan Miller

Hebrews 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

Presentation: *Show an ankle or wrist weight.* Does anyone know what this is? It is used by athletes to strengthen them during training. What if someone was to wear one in an actual race? That would be foolish. In a race you are trying to remove anything that would hinder you. *Have a young person come up and put on the weights.*

What about these boots? What would you think of a sprinter who came out to race in these instead of light racing shoes? *Have the young person put on the boots.* What about a backpack filled with books? *Have the young person put on the backpack.* *You could have the young person with the weights race another young person across the room.*

None of these weights are bad things in and of themselves. But when you wear them in a race, they hinder you and hold you back from doing your best. There are things in this world that may not be evil in and of themselves, but they will hold you back from the best that God has for you. Lay aside those weights.

ROSE-COLORED GLASSES

Lesson: Worldview—a Christian should look at everything through the filter of God's Word.

Supplies: A pair of tinted sunglasses

Source: Bryan Miller

Presentation: Have you ever heard the statement, "Looking at the world through rose-colored glasses"? This is describing a happy person; everything he sees looks rosy and cheery. *Pass around the tinted sunglasses and have the young people take turns trying them on.* How different do things look when you have on the glasses? Colors are different. Things that you could see well without the glasses may be dimmer or less noticeable, while other things are sharper and brighter.

Everyone looks at the world a little differently. This is why two people can watch the same event, read the same book, or hear the same message and have two totally different perspectives on what they saw or heard. The homes that we grew up in, the education that we have received, and the things that we watch or listen to all affect the way we look at the world and judge different situations. This is called our worldview. As a Christian, we should not let the way we judge things be based on our feelings, what sounds good, the things our friends say, or statements from our favorite sports or movie star. We should judge everything in life by what the Bible says. The Bible should be our rose-colored glasses.

LEMONADE

Lesson: Tell the whole truth.

Supplies: Lemon juice, glass, ice, water, spoon, and salt

Source: Mark Nations

Presentation: *Choose a volunteer to help you make lemonade. Give him the items one at a time, telling the audience what it is. Give your helper the glass and let him put in water and a little lemon juice. Hand your volunteer the salt. To the audience. This is sugar. To the volunteer. Put in a couple of spoonfuls of sugar. Give your volunteer the ice, the final ingredient. To the volunteer. Would you like to taste it? He'll probably make an awful face and spit it back in the glass.*

The audience is wondering what happened. The volunteer tells them it tastes like salt. Well, the sugar is really salt. I told you the truth about everything except the salt. The result is that the final lemonade tastes awful.

Satan did that to Eve in the garden. He told her the truth that the fruit would open her eyes and make her know “good and evil.” He lied when he said that she would not die. You see, if I mix a little lie with the truth, it is all a lie. The addition of salt instead of sugar does not make lemonade. The recipe is a lie!

I fooled my volunteer into thinking the salt was sugar. I said it was sugar; and his eyes told him it was sugar, because it looked like sugar. The fact was that it was salt even if it looked like sugar. Satan tricked Eve by making her look at the fruit and making it sound really good. She was tricked by her eyes.

You cannot trust your eyes all the time. Satan will always make things that are wrong look good. We should not trust what we see and what we think. We should trust what God says. John 17:17 says “Thy word is truth.” Eve should have trusted in the truth of what God said instead of what she saw with her eyes.

ONION

Lesson: Fellowship with the world shows.

Supplies: An onion

Source: Charles Ryrie

Presentation: *Hold the onion behind your back with both hands. I'm not going to show you the object right away. I need a volunteer. Choose someone old enough to know what an onion smells like. Keep the onion behind your back. Hold out one of your hands to the volunteer. What do you smell? It will be obvious that it is onion.*

Show the onion to the audience. This onion represents the things of this world. Just like the smell of this onion came off on my hands when I held it, when you come in contact with the things of this world, those sins will come off on your lives.

SCIENCE EXPERIMENT OBJECT LESSONS

STARVE FIRE OF OXYGEN

Lesson: Cut off the things that feed or lead you to sin.

Supplies: Candle and a small jar not much larger than the candle

Source: Bryan Miller

Presentation: What two things does a fire need to continue burning? *Oxygen and fuel.* If you cut off the oxygen to the fire, it will not burn. *Light a candle, then place the jar over the candle.* Notice what is happening to the flame. Without oxygen to feed on, the flame goes out; it cannot burn. If I was able to reach a match inside this jar, I would not be able to start it; there is no oxygen to feed it.

In the same way, we need to cut off the things that feed our sin. Have you ever found yourself confessing a sin over and over? You make a decision to rid your life of this sin, but it keeps coming back. Many times this is because you have not gotten rid of the things that feed your sin. You let things that tempt you to sin or lead you toward sin remain in your life. If you have a problem with foul language, don't just confess it as sin; get rid of the movies, music, and books that feed your mind with ungodly language. If you are struggling with disrespectful behavior, confess it; but don't stop there. Stop watching TV shows with characters with that kind of attitude, stop defending those shows because they are fun or funny, and stop hanging around with friends who speak in a disrespectful way toward authority. If you struggle with lying, don't just confess it to God; tell the truth. Nothing leads us to lie faster than when we are covering up other lies. Tell the truth. Clean out the lies in your closet. Get rid of what feeds your sin.

Matthew 5:29-30 says that if your eye offends you (leads you to sin), you should pluck it out; if your foot leads you to sin, you should cut it off. An eye or a foot are probably things you would like to keep, but Jesus says that they are not worth having if they are going to lead you to sin. You might like to keep those CDs, books, movies, or friends, but if they are feeding sin in your life they need to be cut off. Just like we cut off the oxygen from the flame, you need to cut off those things in your life that lead you to sin.

WATER IN BALLOON

Lesson: Facing trials

Supplies: Balloons, water, candle, and matches

Source: Maurice Sweetsur

Presentation: Everyone faces trials and troubles at sometime in his life. If we have put our trust in Jesus, He has promised to always be with us and help us through all our troubles. *Light a candle.* This flame represents our trials and troubles. *Produce an inflated balloon.* This represents the person who doesn't have Jesus in his life and is facing the trouble on his own. Let's see what happens when I put the balloon over the flame. BANG!

Produce an inflated balloon about one-third full of water. This represents the person who has Jesus in his life. Let's see what happens when I put this balloon over the flame. *The balloon is unharmed.*

Although both balloons faced the same trial (i.e., the flame), the second one came through unharmed. The water took away the heat before it could do any damage. In much the same way, Jesus is able to see us unharmed through our trials and troubles .

CHEMICAL REACTION—DARK TO CLEAR

Lesson: Salvation

Supplies: Five clear glasses or jars, cross with a hollowed out portion, water (or iodine solution), and the chemicals potassium permanganate and sodium metabisulphite

Source: David Goodwin

Preparation: Wrap two or three grams of sodium metabisulphite in a paper tissue and secure it with a small rubber band. Insert the package into the bottom of the cross; push it down so that it is out of sight. Dissolve a few grains of potassium permanganate in about 250 milliliters of water (or iodine solution). This will produce a maroon colored liquid to represent sin. Half fill your large jar with water, and fill one small glass with your potassium permanganate solution. Half fill the other three small glasses with water, and mark them "Good Works," "Church," and "Money" (or alternatives which some people think will solve our sin problem).

Presentation: *Hold up the large jar.* In the beginning, God created a perfect world, and the best thing He made was people. He made them rather like this glass of water—clean on the outside (representing our bodies) and clean on the inside (representing our hearts or spirits). However, Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and this act brought sin into the world and spoiled it all. *Pour in about half of the "sin" solution.* *The jar contents should now be a fairly deep maroon color.* Now we are all born with a sinful nature. *You could give a few examples here.*

Some people have realized that they have a sin problem and have tried many ways to overcome it. Some have thought the answer may be good works. *Pour in the Good Works jar.* God does want us to be good to each other; but, as you see, that doesn't solve our sin problem.

Some have thought the answer was going to church. *Pour in the Church jar.* It is an excellent idea to go to church, and by doing so you will probably find the answer to your problem. But, as you see, going to church in itself is not the answer. Some have thought, "If I gave half my money away to the poor, surely God will be really pleased with me and take away my sin." *Pour in the Money jar.* God does want us to be generous, especially to those who don't have as much as we do; but, as you see, that still doesn't change us on the inside.

No matter what we try, it is impossible to change ourselves. But the good news is that what we can't do for ourselves, God has already done for us. Jesus died in our place on the cross to take away our sins. *Pick up your cross and place it in the jar. If you have got your concentrations right, the maroon solution will become clear within a few seconds. If not, gentle stirring with the cross should produce the desired effect.*

Conclude the illustration as you think appropriate, but I usually proceed as follows. Some of you may be thinking, "I put my trust in Jesus and what He did on the cross, but then I did something bad (e.g., shouted at my dad, was cheeky to my mom, had a fight with my brother, etc.). Does that mean that I have become dirty on the inside again? Let's see. *Remove the cross from your jar, pick up the remaining potassium permanganate solution, and pour a little at a time into it—repeating the "sins" just mentioned. The maroon color should vanish on making contact with the solution in the jar.* Please don't misunderstand me. If you do something wrong, you need to ask God to forgive you and try not to commit that sin again. But, as you can see, once you have put your trust in Jesus, God sees you as clean through what His Son has done for you.

BABY POWDER CHAIN REACTION

Lesson: Gossip quickly spreads out of control.

Supplies: Candle, newspaper, and powder (baby powder, talcum powder, or corn starch)

Source: Donald DeYoung

James 3:5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

Presentation: It just takes a spark to start a forest fire. This is a chain reaction that grows very rapidly. We can illustrate this type of a chain reaction with a dust explosion. We don't normally think of baby powder as being dangerously flammable, but it can demonstrate for us how a spark can get out of control. A few words of gossip can get out of control just as quickly.

Put down some newspaper (you can wet it slightly) and light a candle. Drop a pinch of powder about two feet above the flame. This will form a dust cloud that will ignite when it hits the flame. One dust particle ignites a few other particles around it, which each in turn ignite a few other particles, quickly creating a chain reaction that explodes in a flash. Negative things you say about others may seem small but can quickly grow, explode, and get out of control.

NEWS PAPER TEAR

Lesson: It is easier to do things God's way.

Supplies: Several sheets of newspaper

Source: Donald DeYoung

Presentation: We are going to have a paper tearing contest. *Select several volunteers and organize them into two teams.* The goal of the contest is to tear as many narrow, straight strips of paper as possible. *Have one group tear down the page (perpendicular to the text) and the other tear across the page (parallel with*

the text). Have some fun with the second group, which will have great difficulty tearing straight strips; the first group should be able to do this with relative ease.

A newspaper has internal wood fibers that are lined up in the direction in which the paper was rolled during manufacturing. The paper tears easily along the aligned direction but is almost impossible to tear in a straight line against the grain. When we do things God's way, He directs our path and makes our way straight (Proverbs 3:6).

CATCHING AN EGG WITH CLOTH

Lesson: A soft answer turns away wrath.

Supplies: An egg and a large cloth (sheet, towel, or tablecloth)

Source: David DeYoung

Presentation: *Select three volunteers. Have two of them loosely hold the cloth vertically and have the third person throw the egg forcefully into the cloth. The cloth has enough give in it so that the egg will not break. Take the egg and crack it on a hard surface to show how fragile the egg is.*

When someone comes to you in anger, the way you handle it will determine the outcome. Proverbs 15:1 says, "A soft answer [the cloth] turneth away wrath: but grievous words [the hard surface] stir up anger [breaks the egg]."

GOSPEL ILLUSIONS

Many very good object lessons can be done with illusions that require little skill. With a little knowledge, a little practice, and some good presentation skills, you can take advantage of some really great object lessons.

WORDLESS SILKS

Lesson: Salvation

Supplies: Change bag; black, red, white, yellow, and green silks

Source: Bryan Miller

A change bag is available at any magic shop. It has two compartments, which you can switch back and forth between to make objects seem to appear or disappear.

Presentation: *Load the yellow and white silks into the one of the compartments. Show the empty compartment to the audience, then add the black silk to the bag. Everyone of us have sin in our lives. God cannot allow sin into heaven with him. As long as we have sin in our lives, we cannot enter heaven. Some people try to add good works to their lives. Add the green silk to the bag. But having a pretty green silk in our bag does not take away the black silk. Even with the green one, the black one is still there. You can try to add good works to your life, but they cannot take away the sin that is already there. Remove the green silk.*

If we have sin in our lives, we can never enter the kingdom of God. But God loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for us. *Show the red silk.* When Jesus shed His blood for us, He paid the penalty for our sins. We cannot ever be good enough to earn salvation, but when we put our complete trust in Christ to save us from our sin, He changes us and makes us new. *Add the red silk to the bag. Switch to the other compartment and pull out the white silk.* When we trust Christ, He makes us new. We become new "creatures," and our sin no longer keeps us from Him. *Pull out the yellow silk and show that the bag is empty.*

CUT AND RESTORED ROPE

Lesson: Sin breaks our fellowship with God, but He can make us new.

Supplies: Rope and scissors

Presentation: This rope represents your life. *Cut the rope.* Cutting the rope is like sin, which breaks our fellowship with God. *Tie the rope back together and point to the knot.* Sin leaves an ugly mark. This rope is no longer perfect. I would not buy this rope in a store because it is not perfect. In the same way, our sin keeps us separated from God. When we put our trust in God, He makes us completely new. *Restore the rope.*

Effect: A rope, which a volunteer can examine before and after the effect, is cut in the center and tied back together. Then the rope is “restored.” This effect can be found in many books on rope illusions, which offer much better descriptions than below.

Summary: When cutting the rope, make it appear as if you are cutting the center, but actually cut four to five inches from the end of the rope. Tie the small piece around the center of the rope; you’ll slip it off later to “restore” the rope. It appears to the audience that you have cut the rope in the center and tied it back together.

Details: Extend both hands out in front of you, hold one end of the rope between your thumb and index finger of your left hand. Slide your right hand down the rope, holding it between your right thumb and index finger. Stop half way down the rope, apparently the place that you are going to cut in the center of the rope. Bring your right hand toward your left. As the right approaches the left, the index finger and middle finger of the right hand grab the rope just below the left thumb. Simultaneously, the right thumb and index finger releases the rope. The right index and middle finger now lift up the rope, forming a loop to be cut. Pick up the scissors and cut this loop. It will appear as if you have cut the rope in the center and have two equal lengths. In actuality, you are holding a five-inch loop, with a long piece of rope looped through the small piece. (See figure to right.) The place where the ropes are looped is concealed by your hands. Tie the short piece of rope around the center of the longer one in such a way that it looks like you tied the two ropes together. Slide the small piece off to “restore” the rope.



PROFESSOR'S NIGHTMARE

Lesson: Man sees the outside, but God sees the heart.

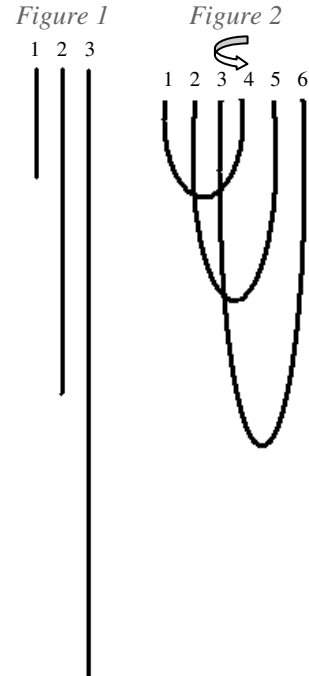
Supplies: Professor's Nightmare ropes

Effect: Three uneven ropes are made even then changed back again.

Secret: The ropes are held in such a way that the long and short ropes when looped together are the same size as the medium and it looks like three equal ropes.

Presentation: *Show the three different sized ropes. Let them be examined.* Here I have three very different ropes. I have a short one, a medium sized one, and a long one. People have many differences too. There are young people, middle-aged people, and elderly people. There are short and tall. There are people from different countries and cultures. There are people that speak and dress differently. Sometimes we judge others by what we see. We think that a person cannot be used by God because they are young or old. Sometimes we even use these differences to make fun of or tease others, but God judges differently. In 1 Samuel 16 God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint a new king. Samuel judged the sons of Jesse by what appeared to him to make a good king. God told him that the Lord does not judge by height or looks, but looks at the heart.

Hold the three ropes in your left hand between your thumb and index finger as shown in Figure 1. One by one, bring the ends of the ropes up into your hand and form two sets of three ends (Figure 2). While doing this, twist the Rope 3 (top of the long rope) in front of Rope 4 (bottom of the short rope). Now gather the ropes in the two sets of three (Ropes 1, 2, and 4 in your left and Ropes 3, 5, and 6 in your right). Pull the two sets of ends apart (hiding the loop on your left hand), and it will appear that you now have three even ropes.



God loves each and every one of us equally. Whether big or small, young or old God loves us individually and sees beyond our outward appearance. Gather the rope back up in a bunch in your left hand with the six ends sticking out. Unfortunately, even Christians allow worldly standards to effect the way we look at ourselves and others. Pull the ropes apart and show the small, medium, and large.

OUT OF SIN—INTO CHRIST

Lesson: Salvation

Supplies: Thumb tip, silk, and a permanent marker

Effect: A silk vanishes from one palm and appears in the other.

Presentation: With a marker, write the word sin on the back of your left hand, then write the word Christ on the back of your right hand. Show the silk. This represents us. Behind the cover of the silk, load the thumb tip into your left fist. Then begin to push the silk into the fist, actually into the thumb tip. Leave some of the silk showing out of the top of your fist. When we are born, we are “in sin.” We can try to do good works, but that does not change the fact that we are in sin. We cannot get out of our sin by anything we do.

Push the silk the rest of the way into the thumb tip, then push your thumb into the tip and extract it (with the silk inside) from your fist. Hold your left fist. We are in sin. However, when we put our trust in Christ, He takes us out of our sin. Show the left hand to be empty. Wrap the fingers of your right hand around your right thumb and unload the thumb tip into your fist. But Jesus does not stop there. He not only takes us out of sin, but He also gives us His nature. 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us, “If any man be in Christ he is a new creature.” Pull the silk out of your right hand.

IN AND OUT

Lesson: What we put into our life will come out.

Supplies: Tube (like a coffee can) of some sort labeled “In” at one end and “Out” on the other and various small objects

Source: Karl Bastian

Presentation: Display magic tube with “In” written on one end and “Out” written on the other. As though doing a great magic trick, demonstrate that whatever you put in one end, magically comes out the other end the SAME! You have to act like you think this is amazing. Use money, small toys, and other objects. Finally, the kids will have had enough and will say, “That is no trick at all!” Why not? Just as it is silly to think that something different would come out the other end, it is foolish to think that if we allow bad things into our life that good will come out! What goes in is what will come out!

DISSOLVING KNOT

Lesson: When we try to deal with problems in the flesh, we often make them worse; when we take them to God, He can deliver us.

Supplies: Rope

Source: Bryan Miller

Presentation: *Tie the ends of the rope in a double knot. The knot represents problems that come up in our lives. When we try to fix the problem on our own, many times we make the problem worse. Pull on the ends of the knot to make it tighter. Now untie the knot to show how tight it was.*

Tie a knot again, but this time tie a fake double knot. Instead of tying two knots, the first knot is just a twist. If you hold the "knot" at the base, it will stay intact. A volunteer can even tighten the knot as long as you don't let go. When we take our problems to God, He will lead us in the way we should go, and can make even the biggest problems disappear. Pull the knot apart.

BALLOON TWISTING

If you wanted to do an object lesson with a large animal like a giraffe, you might not have the resources (or the space) to bring a giraffe to your children's church, but you could twist a balloon giraffe and teach the same lesson. It is easier than you think to make balloon creations. Nothing grabs the attention of kids faster than balloons. Following are some great web links to get you started.

1. All the basic twists
 - a. <http://www.professorwonder.com/twists.htm>
 - b. <http://www.multihobbies.com/balloons/firststeps.htm>
 - c. Step by step instructions for particular shapes
 - d. <http://www.coolest-kid-birthday-parties.com/balloon-animal-instructions.html>
 - e. <http://www.multihobbies.com/balloons/simple.htm>
 - f. <http://www.multihobbies.com/balloons/sculptures/index.htm>
 - g. <http://www.professorwonder.com/gallery.htm>
 - h. <http://www.balloonhq.com/faq/SculptureNames.html>
 - i. <http://www.angelfire.com/oh2/syrianclowns/balloons.html>
2. Articles
 - a. http://www.balloonhq.com/faq/twister_children.html
 - b. <http://www.balloonhq.com/column/indexpast.html>
3. Pictures
<http://www.balloonhq.com/photos/multball.html>
4. Supplies
<http://www.tmyers.com/>

If you are serious about using balloon twisting in your ministry, I would recommend the Quick start package from T-Myers. The video is fantastic, and the pump is easy to use and very durable. You can find this package at <http://www.tmyers.com/pump/pumpindex.html#2>.

FIGHTING DOGS

Lesson: Don't feed the flesh.

Supplies: Two 260 balloons, one white and one black

Instructions for the dog balloon can be found at the following web sites:

1. <http://www.coolest-kid-birthday-parties.com/balloon-animal-instructions.html>
2. <http://www.multihobbies.com/balloons/simple.htm>

Presentation: *Make two balloon dogs—one white and one black.* Inside each of us, there is a battle going on that is like two dogs in a street fight. One dog is our flesh, and the other is our spirit. The dog we feed the most will be the stronger dog and will be winning the conflict (Galatians 6:8). The flesh can be fed by radio, TV, movies, internet, video games, and all the world has to offer, but our spirit is fed by Bible study and by fellowshiping with God and His people.

SWORD

Lesson: The Bible is like a sword.

Supplies: One 260 balloon

Instructions for the sword can be found at the following web site:

<http://www.coolest-kid-birthday-parties.com/balloon-animal-instructions.html>

Presentation: Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Bible is like a sword. As a sword is a powerful weapon, the Word of God is also powerful. Its words have the power to change us and help us to conquer sin. As a sword can pierce deep into the heart, and the Bible pierces the hard hearts of men and changes their lives. Also, it can be used to defend against Satan. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, He responded by quoting Scripture. When we memorize the Word of God, we can use it like a sword to fight off temptation.

GIRAFFE

Lesson: We are happiest when we are doing what we were created to do.

Supplies: One yellow 260 balloon

The giraffe is made with all the same twists as the basic dog found at the following web site: <http://www.multihobbies.com/balloons/simple.htm>. Make the nose, ears, and body smaller and the neck and legs longer.

Presentation: The best leaves a tree has to offer are found on top. This is because the top of the tree gets the most sunlight. God made giraffes with long necks that could reach the tops of trees and get the best leaves. We are happiest when we do what God created us to do. In the same way that God gave the giraffe a long neck, He has a plan for the life of every young person. We are only happy when we are doing what God wants us to do.

PIG

Lesson: Only things done for Christ will last.

Supplies: One pink 260 balloon

Instructions for the pig can be found at the following web site:
<http://www.multihobbies.com/balloons/sculptures/pig.htm>

Presentation: *Tell the story of the three little pigs, making application to 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. Only things built on the foundation of Christ will last for eternity.*

SWAN

Lesson: Don't turn to worldly things.

Supplies: One white 260 balloon

Instructions for the swan can be found at the following web site:
<http://www.coolest-kid-birthday-parties.com/balloon-animal-instructions.html>

Presentation: A beautiful swan alighted on the banks of the water in which a crane was wading about seeking snails. For a few moments the crane viewed the swan in stupid wonder and then inquired, "Where do you come from?"

"I come from heaven!" replied the swan.

"And where is heaven?" asked the crane.

"Heaven!" said the swan, "Heaven! Have you never heard of heaven?" And the beautiful bird went on to describe the grandeur of the Eternal City. She told of streets of gold; of gates and walls made of precious stones; and of the River of Life, pure as crystal, upon whose banks is the Tree of Life whose leaves shall be for the healing of the nations. In eloquent terms the swan sought to describe the hosts who live in the Eternal City, but without arousing the slightest interest on the part of the crane.

Finally the crane asked, "Are there any snails there?"

"Snails!" repeated the swan. "No, of course, there aren't!"

"Then," said the crane, as it continued its search along the slimy banks of the pool, "you can have your heaven. I want snails!"

This fable has a deep truth underlying it. Many times a young person to whom God has granted the advantages of a Christian home has turned his back on it and searched for snails. Many times a man will sacrifice his wife, his family, and his all for the snails of sin! Many times a girl has deliberately turned from the love of parents and home to learn too late that heaven has been forfeited for snails!

BOOKS, ETC.

BURNOUT

Before Burnout by Frank Minirth, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1990).

Burnout by Myron Rush, (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1989).

Burnout: How to Beat the High Cost of Success by Herbert J. Freudenberger, (New York: Bantam Books, 1980).

Burnout in Ministry by Brooks R. Faulkner, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981).

Clergy and Laity Burnout by William H. Willimon, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989).

Coping with Depression in the Ministry and Other Helping Professions by Archibald D. Hart, (Waco, Texas: Word Publishers, 1984).

Every Pastor Needs A Pastor by Louis McBurney, (Waco: Word Books, 1977).

How to Beat Burnout by Frank Minirth, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986).

Man in Transition by Gary Collins, (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1971).

The Postponed Generation by Susan Littwin.

Why Christians Burn Out by Charles Perry, Jr., (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982).

The Work Trap by Ted W. Engstrom, (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1979).

CHALK TALKS

The Art of Drawing People to Christ (three volumes available) by Dave Winchell

Dewey's Easy Gospel Chalk Talks by Ralph Dewey

Picture Perfect by Gregory L. Lichi

Picture This! Cartoon Bible Lessons by Gary and Alisa Linn

FOR MOMS

Help Wanted for Busy Moms by Barbara Mang

Making Your Home a Haven by Cyndy Salzmann

Neat Mom, Messie Kids by Sandra Felton

GAMES

50 Ways to Use your Noodle by Chris Cavert and Sam Sikes

MAGIC

Blackstone's Tricks Anyone Can Do by Harry Blackstone, (New York: Carol Publishing, 1989).

The Handbook of Magic by Marvin Kaye, (New York: Dorset Press, 1973).

Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic by Mark Wilson, (Philadelphia: Running Press Book Publishers, 1988).

MANAGEMENT

The Management Profession by Louis Allen, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964).

MUSIC

Patch Sing Along (multiple volumes)

Salvation Songs

Growing Songs (two volumes)

Desert Praise

PARENTING/COUNSELING

Becoming an Effective Christian Counselor by Walter Fremont

Handbook on Counseling Youth by Josh McDowell and Bob Hostetler

The Heart of Anger by Lou Priolo

Parenting with Purpose by Margaret Buchanan

Shepherding a Child's Heart by Ted Tripp

Teaching Children Responsibility by Walt Brock

POSTMODERNISM

The Answering Stranger, Operation Memory by David Lehman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

An Unstoppable Force by Erwin Raphael McManus, (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2001).

“An Open Letter to Chuck Colson from Brian McLaren,” by Brian McClaren, *Youthworker Journal*, http://www.youthspecialties.com/articles/topics/postmodernism/open_letter.php.

Postmodern by Tony Jones, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001).

“The Postmodern Crackup” by Charles Colson in *Christianity Today*. December 2003, 72. (Online at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/012/24.72.html>)

Postmodern Pilgrims by Leonard Sweet, (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000).

Second Media Age by Mark Poster, (La Vergne, TN: Lightning Source Inc., 1995).

“Welcome to the Postmodern World” by DP Teague, <http://www.postmodernpreaching.net>.

WEB SITES

These websites are recommended, but please use these resources with discretion. Ironwood does not support the views or philosophy of each website.

BOOK SELLERS

www.childrensministry.org—*Children's Ministry Today sells the previously mentioned chalk talk books*

CURRICULUM PUBLISHERS

Child Evangelism Fellowship, Inc., 800.748.7710, www.cefpublish.com

Concordia Supply Co., 800.521.0751, www.concordiasupply.com

Cook Communications Ministries, 800.323.7543, www.cookministries.com

Great Commission Publications, 800.695.3387, www.gcp.org

Gospel Light, 800.4.GOSPEL, www.gospellight.com

Group Publishing, Inc., 800.747.6060, www.groupvbs.com

LifeWay Church Resources, 800.458.2772, www.lifeway.com

Regular Baptist Press, 800.366.8004, www.regularbaptistpress.org

Standard Publishing, 800.543.1353, www.standardpub.com

VBS Express—Quality Speech Material, 864.862.7640, www.qualityspeech.com

WordAction Publishing Company, 800.877.0700, www.wordaction.com

FAMILY RESEARCH

www.heritage.org/Research/Family—*secular but conservative view on the family*

MY FAVORITE THINGS: MATT THOMAS

www.pointmangames.com—*PowerPoint games by the hundreds. This site does charge a membership fee, but it's worth it.*

www.ileadyouth.com—*this offers free resources for many things you will encounter in ministry; has a good games page.*

www.games.org—*a free games site that offers pretty good ideas.*

www.thesource4ym.com—*Jonathon McKee offers some good games; he also has some information sheets that are free to copy and use.*

www.simplyyouthministry.com—*some good resources (not always free) for games and funny photos.*

www.heartlight.org—*a website devoted to giving and selling PowerPoint backgrounds.*

www.edenpics.com—*landscape pictures that are great for building PowerPoint backgrounds.*

www.crosswalk.com—*a broad resource for study. It's FREE!*

RUBBER BRACELETS

www.rubber-bracelets.com—a youth group purchased rubber bracelets to promote their youth group. They gave them out to everyone who attended a particular service. If a teen gave his bracelet away to someone who wasn't there, he could go the youth pastor who would give him a new one for free.

VBS PRIZES

Oriental Trading Company, Inc, 800.228.2199, www.orientaltrading.com

Rhode Island Novelty Importers, 800.528.5599, www.rinovelty.com

The School Authority, 888.431.1722, www.Geddes-Schools.com

US Toy Company, 800.255.6124, www.ustoy.com

S & S Worldwide, 800.243.9232, www.ssw.com/christian

Little People's School Supply, 800.874.3325, www.everythingearlychildhood.com

Guildcraft Arts and Crafts, 800.345.5563, www.Guildcraftinc.com

BOOK REVIEWS

BORED WITH GOD

Reviewer: Shawn Allen

Bored With God by Sean Dunn is an excellent book challenging youth workers, parents, and teachers with practical ways to overcome the apathy that often creeps in to the lives of young people. The author provides some scriptural and practical ideas for preventing this spiritual apathy from settling in among today's teens. As presented in this book, once a young person sees God at work in his life, there is a contagious excitement that follows.

InterVarsity Press © 2004, 105 pages, \$11.00 (ISBN 0830832068).

THE DAVINCI CODE: A QUEST FOR ANSWERS

Reviewer: Shannon Steuerwald

The DaVinci Code: A Quest for Answers by Josh McDowell is designed to refute the skillful blend of Dan Brown's novel of fact and fiction that has been on the best seller list for many months. Knowing that the average Christian has a difficult time deciphering between what is fact and what is fiction and knowing how movies and books shape our beliefs and perceptions, Josh McDowell and a team of researchers have carefully and tastefully separated the fact from the fiction.

This book does not read like a non-fiction apologetics type of book. This refutation reads like a novel, and its main characters are college-age students who want to better understand the background of *The DaVinci Code*. As they begin to research, they began to uncover historical facts that contradict Dan Brown's factual claims.

As youth and college-career workers, we need to be familiar with what is new and popular to know better how to lead discussions and refute error that is being displayed as truth. This book allows us to know the issues of *The DaVinci Code* without necessarily having to read the entire novel, or it allows us to be better prepared mentally and spiritually prior to reading *The DaVinci Code*.

Green Key Books © 2006, 112 pages, not available for individual resale (ISBN 1932587802).

YOUTH MINISTRY FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Reviewer: Shawn Allen

In his book *Youth Ministry from the Inside Out: How Who You Are Shapes What You Do*, Michael Higgs attempt to get the reader to stop and evaluate one's own life and ministry. It is so easy to be caught up in ministry and doing all the right things yet still lose your focus and heart for God. The challenge is for us to keep our priorities in the right order so that we might present Christ to others in the most effective manner possible with the greatest opportunity for lasting impact. The author presents the material in an easy to read and understand format. This book was practical in the presentation of ideas and refreshing in the challenge to keep faithful in our commitment to Christ first of all.

InterVarsity Press © 2003, 157 pages, \$12.00 (ISBN 0830823999).

MY TOP YOUTH MINISTRY RESOURCES

WEBSITES

www.homeward.com

www.cpyu.org

www.youthpastor.com

www.thesource4ym.com

www.simplyyouthministry.com

churchyouthleader.com—*High Impact Teen Ministries*. PO Box 40248, Indianapolis, IN 46240—*publisher of uthMan Magazine (formerly YouthNet Magazine) and High Impact Teen Devotional Journal.*)

www.youthspecialties.com—Youth Specialties. 1224 Greenfield Drive, El Cajon, CA 92021—a *division of Zondervan House Publishing dedicated to teenagers, great and unlimited source of “stuff.”*

www.mikeysfunnies.com

www.ironwood.org

www.partnersinministry.org

www.ileadyouth.com

www.family.org

www.alldirect.com

www.grouppublishing.com—Group Publishing. PO Box 469082, Escondido, CA 92046-9755—*located also in Loveland, CO.*

www.parentministry.org

MAGAZINES

Plugged In by Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO 80995. Published monthly. Cost: \$25 per year—*excellent for information on the media and its influence.*

uthMan: The Magazine for Church Youth Leaders! PO Box 40248, Indianapolis, IN 46240. Published bi-monthly. Cost: \$25 per year—*excellent fundamental view on current youth ministry issues.*

RESOURCES

“Faith Lessons” by Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO, 80995. www.family.org—*stretch your conviction, strengthen your walk, and impact your world by experiencing the Faith Lessons video series, hosted by Ray Vander Laan.*

Grace To You. PO Box 4000, Panorama City, CA 91412-4000. www.gty.org—*ministry of John MacArthur.*

Positive Action for Christ. PO Box 1948, 833 Falls Road, Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1948.
www.positiveaction.org

BOOKS

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—*Youth edition study guide also available.*
- Bridges, Jerry. *The Practice of Godliness*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1996.
—*Study guide also available.*
- Bridges, Jerry. *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988.
—*Study guide also available.*
- Brock, Walt. *Dangerous Parenting Detours*. Newberry Springs, CA: Iron Sharpneth Iron Publications, 2003.
- Burns, Jim. *Tough Problems, Real Solutions*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 2002.
—*A question and answer book for teens.*
- Dobson, James. *Bringing Up Boys*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2001.
- Eims, Leroy. *Be The Leader You Were Meant to Be*. Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications, 1996.
—*Personal and group study guide also available.*
- Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993.
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—*Practical ideas and guidance on leadership for students.*
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—*50 easy tips to help you succeed with kids.*
- Fields, Doug. *Purpose Driven Youth Ministry: Nine Essential Foundations for Healthy Growth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998.
- Fields, Doug. *Would You Rather . . . ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.
—*465 provocative questions to get teenagers talking.*
- Fremont, Walter, Trudy, and Gilbert. *Forming A New Generation*. Greenville, SC: BJU Press, 1990.
—*A practical guide for youth leaders.*
- George, Elizabeth. *A Young Woman After God's Own Heart*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003.
—*A teen girl's guide to friends, faith, family, and the future.*
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- Jones, Tony. *Postmodern Youth Ministry: Exploring Cultural Shift, Cultivating Authentic Community, Creating Holistic Connections*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- MacArthur, John. *The Book on Leadership*. Nashville, TN: Nelson Publishers, 2004.
- MacArthur, John. *Twelve Ordinary Men*. Nashville, TN: W Publishers, 2002.
—*How the Master shaped His disciples for greatness, and what He wants to do with you.*
- McDowell, Josh and Bob Hostetler. *Handbook on Counseling Youth*. Nashville, TN: W Publishers, 1996.
—*A comprehensive guide for equipping youth workers, pastors, teachers, and parents.*

McKee, Jonathan. *Do They Run When They See You Coming?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.
—*Reaching out to unchurched teenagers.*

Ollila, Les. *Foundation for Youth Programs.* Rocky Mount, NC: Positive Action For Christ, 1981.

Olson, Ginny, Diane Elliot, and Mike Work. *Youth Ministry Management Tools.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
—*Includes events, time management, risk management, budgeting, finances, office and personal organization, building a youth ministry team, calendars, scheduling, how to get a job and how to leave a job; plus over 100 forms from the book on CD-ROM.*

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—*Practical help for the prevention and cure of anger in children.*

Sorenson, David. *Training Your Children To Turn Out Right!* Independence, MO: American Association of Christian Schools, 1995.
—*A biblical guide for Christian parents.*

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Tripp, Paul David. *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change.* Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2002.

Tripp, Tedd. *Shepherding a child's heart.* Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995.
—*Written for parents with children of any age, this insightful book provides perspectives and procedures for guiding your child's heart into the path's of life.*

Turner, Ken. *High Impact Teen Spiritual Journal.* Indianapolis, IN: HIT Ministries, 2005.
—*A one-year spiritual journal for teens in grades seven through twelve, includes assigned Scripture passages for teens to read every day, a journal section to record thoughts from personal devotions, prayer journal, sermon notes section, Scripture memory section, and Christian service involvement.*

Williams, Matt. *How To Be A Team Player And Enjoy It!* Independence, MO: American Association of Christian Schools, 2002.
—*A study in staff relationships.*

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Youth Leaders Right Brain

TABLE OF CONTENTS

JUNIOR HIGH ACTIVITIES	3
-------------------------------------	---

GAMES FOR A LARGE GROUP

Idea Share.....	9
An Amazing Race.....	13
Boundary Ball.....	13
Build the Fort.....	14
Bunker Dodge Ball	15
Catch the Dragon’s Tail	15
Chinese Fire Drill Basketball	16
Digital Camera Crazy Team Photo Album	16
The Gauntlet	16
Heads or Tails Kickball.....	17
Knock Out	18
Long Base.....	18
Nerdsville Night Video Scavenger Hunt.....	18
Noodle Games	20
Pairs Tag.....	21
Plumbers Capture the Flag	21
Pumpkin Face-saving Contest	22
Pumpkin Jousting.....	22
Trash Ball	23
Tunnel Out.....	24
War	25
Yuck Activity	25

GAMES FOR A SMALL GROUP

Golf Course Madness.....	27
Hagoo.....	27
Nylon Stuff.....	28

SKITS

Dinner Decisions	29
Doctor’s Office	32
The Dyeing Routine.....	32
Fifty Sayings.....	34
The “Fouled Up” Love Affair	36
Piece of Your Couch.....	38

STUNTS

Joust	41
Strength Test.....	41
Questions Under Fire!.....	41

TEAM BUILDERS

Play-doh Flinger Thingy.....	45
Everybody Up.....	48
Group Pushup.....	49
Group Sit.....	50
Community Jump Rope.....	51
The House.....	52
The Star.....	53
Script Work.....	53
Win As Much As You Can.....	54
Tic Tac Challenge.....	56

THEMES

Christmas.....	59
Glow Stick Games.....	63
Olympic Bedlam.....	63
Play Dough Panorama.....	64

JUNIOR HIGH ACTIVITIES

In the junior high years, teens are often like a Polaroid picture: they do not immediately represent what they will eventually be. Polaroid pictures go through stages of black, gray, and green before finally representing the final picture. People often peer closely, blow on them, and shake them to help them develop faster; but it takes time, and some actions may hurt more than help. If you make your judgment too quickly, you may cast aside as worthless a great picture. So is the junior high age child.

Great activities meet the needs of those who attend them. Often great activities go awry when they do not take into account the specifics of the age group involved. Junior highers give unique challenges to those who work with them.

Rarely can you tell how well you are communicating with a group of junior highers simply by noting the decibel level or by waiting to get positive feedback from the group . . . Learning and growth in junior highers will be taking place even when their behavior seems to indicate otherwise. A junior highers' behavior will often hide more than it reveals, so you can't really depend on positive behavior to measure your success, failure or results (Wayne Rice).

STRUCTURE FOR DEVELOPING GOOD JUNIOR HIGH ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION

1. Enlist a variety of help for activities—parents, college students, teens, and adult sponsors.
2. Give junior high students an opportunity to suggest activity ideas and themes. Using the young people in the planning keeps you in touch with them and encourages teen participation in ministry.

PROMOTION

1. Communicate with parents and teens the date, cost, time, and location of the activity.
2. Distribute at least a week before the activity a sharp, colorful flyer promoting the activity.
3. Help them brainstorm about the people they can invite.
4. Announce and promote the activity with the teens whenever you can.
5. Assign helpers to call all eligible teens for the activity. Some teens will not come without a personal call.
6. Include the teens in a time of prayer for the activity.
7. Plan a time to teach the elements of a good activity and give the teens roles in the success of the activity.
8. Activity-oriented roles—cooler crew, bus clean-up crew, song leader (prepare him ahead of time), greeters, equipment handlers, etc.
9. Guest-oriented roles—welcome and befriend guests.

ACTIVITY

1. Rotate the types of activities to include a variety of interests.
2. Encourage teens to participate in all regular youth activities.

3. Enthusiastically lead the game and expect others to follow.
4. Find a way to remember names and use them throughout the evening.
5. Recognize that junior highers enjoy high energy/excitement games but will tend to miss some of the strategies and subtleties of the game.
6. Activities should include concepts that are familiar along with the new; it is good to balance the two.
7. Don't overlook simple games.
8. Take time to communicate clearly and allow for questions. Be prepared to repeat yourself.
9. Write out a complete activity plan for the event.
10. Distribute the activity plan complete with rules for the games to your adult leadership.
11. Direct the teens from the time they arrive to the time they depart. If you do not fill their time, they will.
12. Consider those who may not be able to afford the activity. If possible, don't make money the reason someone does not come.

REFRESHMENTS

1. Junior highers love to eat and tend to emphasize quantity over quality. Better to have three pieces of an okay pizza than to have only one of a great pizza.
2. Serve hot things hot and cold things cold.
3. Identify activities where extra liquids are needed.
4. Use themes with your refreshments. Junior highers enjoy bringing food with a theme—round, sweet, frozen, unusual, white, etc.

BIBLE MESSAGE

1. Use clear, simple language when speaking to a group of teens. Take time to explain biblical terms.
2. Illustrate and apply the biblical truth presented. Take the time to explain one truth well.
3. Preaching/teaching time at activities will have more effectiveness if it actively involves the teens in some way. Do not get locked into just a lecture mode; use object lessons, visual aids, etc., with creativity.
4. Teach truths that connect to the activity. Plan some activities around the message.

EVALUATION

1. Review strengths and weakness.
2. Decide what to throw out and what to do again.
3. Write down the improvements and variations.
4. Include warnings and possible issues that may arise.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN LEADING JUNIOR HIGHERS

1. Keep in mind the difficulties of transitions; plan activities that consider age. Juniors (upper elementary) coming up into the group are not prepared for senior-high style activities.
2. Plan and prepare to have safe-feeling activities. Be aware of teens who tend to be cruel. Do not allow name calling, personal cutdowns, or unkind practical jokes to have any place at an activity.
3. Simple awards often raise the excitement and enthusiasm.
4. Plan time for adult leadership to be able to talk with the teens.
5. Adding an extra objective to simple activities makes them exciting. Add a treasure hunt to a bike ride or hidden riddles to a hike.
6. Giving teens comfortable roles will affect their attitudes toward the activity and allow them to both buy into and desire to protect the success of the activity.
7. Junior high teens need guidance and direction. Be specific, demonstrate, and patiently instruct. Expectation without instruction brings discouragement.
8. Over-prepare for new activities (too many games, extra food, etc.). It is better to have too much than for someone to miss out.
9. Plan some activities with the purpose of stretching the group.
10. Plan activities that incorporate their favorite games (e.g., one-base baseball using a kickball as the ball).
11. Junior highers tend to be open and moldable. Seek to reach their heart through relationship.
12. It is not the game but the relationship that will gain a teen's ear. You must earn the right to be heard.
13. Create traditions in your teen group to which they can look forward.
14. Remember that young teens will cross the spectrum in personalities. Some you may be able to use as an illustration, while others would be mortified to be positively identified.
15. Being embarrassed is a frightening thing and may lead a teen to not attend. Some teens are afraid of being called on to read or to answer a question they did not volunteer to answer.
16. Junior highers resemble a junior more than they resemble a senior higher.
17. Make a point of teaching the right way to do things. Do not be surprised when junior highers do not have proper manners.
18. From time to time it is good to have activities that are for all boys or all girls.
19. Include intellectual games as well as athletic games to include the strengths of more people.
20. Keep things moving; play games that involve the majority of the group.
21. Work on keeping the balance between challenging them and overwhelming them.
22. Don't be afraid to say, "Well, we know that didn't work."

23. Variations of the same game in an activity bring a challenge of newness without have to learn a completely new game.
24. Each teen group is unique; learn their strengths and build on them.
25. Choose games that build unity and teamwork.
26. Choose games that add to excitement and enthusiasm.
27. Switch things around and keep things moving. If you are doing many types of games, you have a better chance of doing at least one thing each individual likes.
28. Doing special stunts or games with early arrivals will prepare for an on-time start. This will also heighten the excitement for those arriving when they see things are already going.
29. Be aware of the group effect. You must often train teens to have fun. Junior highers love zany, crazy stuff if they do not have to give up acceptance. Your group will limit or expand what you can use by their attitude.
30. Visitors can profoundly affect the atmosphere of your group. A group that felt free to have good, clean fun may not participate because of the attitude of the new visitors. Prepare your teens for visitors and empower them to be bold.
31. Beware of using games that encourage guys and gals to have much physical contact.
32. Junior highers love the expected unexpected. Warn them that the unexpected is coming, and they will love it.

IDEAS TO TRY

CAPTURE THE FLAG WITH MARSHMALLOW SHOOTERS

Build PVC pipe shooters for less than a dollar. With colored electrical tape, personalize them and look for a good place to play Capture the flag. (See Volume 2 of *The Brain for Youth Leaders* for the blueprint.)

EVERYBODY'S IT TAG

Use this as a quick excitement builder; it often lasts less than two minutes. After you're finished, play it again. This is a good transitional game. You could do a whole activity on tag variations.

MONKEY SOCCER

Using a couple soccer or kickballs, have teens hit the ball with their hands instead of kicking. Use the whole end line as the goal. Throw in more than one ball.

MOW-N-GO

With the help of parents or other adult sponsors, set up an activity to do lawn and indoor projects for needy folks. Guys can do the lawn, and gals may help inside.

MUD ACTIVITY

Prepare a mud pit or area and pick some of your favorite games to play in the mud (tug-o-war, steal the bacon, tube tug). Warn parents ahead of time and prepare to handle the mud on departure.

MUSICAL PILLOW FIGHT

Mark an area off with cones (4' x 4' or a small circle), have two items to pass, play the music, and whoever is holding the items when the music stops must pillow fight. Use a time limit or out-of-bounds to determine the winner.

NAME GAME

Have the group form a circle, then have each person pick an adjective starting with the same letter as their name (e.g., Delightful Dan, Drastic Dave, Faithful Fred). The first person says his adjective and name, the second person repeats the first person's and adds his, and so on. You may need to split groups larger than twenty.

OLD FAITHFUL

Using a beach ball or volleyball, gather the teens into a close group and see how many times you can keep the ball in the air. Each person may hit the ball three times in a row before he has to pass it. Keep track and set record goals. Don't give up too quickly. This is a good unity builder.

SCAVENGER HIKE

Choose a hike into a nice area nearby. In film canisters, hide riddles or clues to a scavenger hunt which they do while hiking. Give prizes.

SURPRISE NIGHT

Set up a whole night of surprises. Surprise the first to enter the youth room with a prize. Make a list of fun, wacky surprises throughout the night.

TREAD AND TRAIL

Find the best bike trails in your area and set up a bike activity. (Many cities have great urban trails; bicycle stores often have maps.) Ride to a destination, have a picnic lunch, play games, talk, have a message, and ride home.

TWO-BASE TAG

The object is to get your team members around the other teams' base (marked off 4' x 4' area). One point is scored for each person who goes around the other base and safely makes it back to his. The catch is that you can only tag the people who left their base before you left yours. You can go back to base and become the last off, making everybody your target (and no one can tag you) until someone returns to his base and can tag you. There are many great strategies. You will need a few referees to watch who can tag whom.

VISIT SHUT-INS

Take a few of your teens to visit those who cannot get out regularly to church services.

WACKY GAMES

Put a string of crazy games together—water balloon, tennis ball, ping pong ball, and puzzle games with a time limit. Add water guns to the time limit—let the opposing team spray them after the time limit is up.

WACKY PRIZES

At an activity announce that it is a Wacky Prize activity and reward winners with crazy prizes. (Dollar stores are fun sources for these prizes.)

WACKY SODA

Have every teen bring two cans of their favorite soda, pour them all into a cooler with ice, and serve. The more flavors the better!

Good activities meet the needs of those who attend them.

CHARACTERISTICS TO CONSIDER

1. Love humor
2. Self-conscious
3. Strong rote memory
4. Weak on thinking ahead
5. Have a great sense of justice
6. Desire to be independent
7. Open and moldable
8. Tend to participate
9. Impulsive and live in the moment
10. Tend to be emotional
11. Love simple, active games and tend to miss subtleties
12. Active
13. Forgetful
14. Fear embarrassment
15. Imaginative and sometimes lack practicality
16. Crave personal attention
17. Interpret attention as caring

1 Corinthians 13:11–13 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Borrowing the Apostle Paul's illustration in 1 Corinthians 13, there is a logical statement made here that youth leaders must keep in mind: "When I was a child, I spake as a child." We need to understand that young teens will act immaturely. We should not be put off by them or frustrated, but rather recognize the role and opportunity we have in the life of these people. "I understood as a child, I thought as a child." Remembering the process of growing up gives us a guidelines of how we are to approach them. They will think and understand simply. Remember this fact and avoid speaking over their heads and demanding things they have not comprehended yet. To be childish is not a sin, nor is it a character flaw for a child. "When I became a man, I put away childish things." Our role is to help them transition and grow into the roles of an adult and to help them to put away childish thinking and childish things. What a great opportunity we have if we will be wise, patient, and loving.

IDEA SHARE FOR LARGE GROUP GAMES YOUTH LEADERS' RETREATS 2002–2003

BIG BALL VOLLEYBALL

1. Use a bus in place of a volleyball net.
2. If you plan to use strobe lights, let the young people know ahead of the time. (They can cause seizures.)
3. Use a glow-in-the-dark volleyball.
4. Use glow-in-the-dark bracelets or glow sticks on the top of the volleyball net.

BUCKET BALL

Put two buckets on opposite sides of field for goals. Use one or two balls.

CHUCK IT

Equipment: One tennis ball and for each person a one-gallon milk jug with the bottom cut out—your local dairy may sell milk jugs really cheap; big scissors will cut the bottom.

How to Play: Toss the ball up. Whoever catches it can go five steps, then he needs to throw it to someone else on his team. If the ball isn't caught, it's free for all. The goalie may use a tennis racket or may catch the ball with his hands, but he cannot score.

Tips and Tricks

1. Use a couple of referees with whistles to keep control and to call out-of-bounds or roughness.
2. Goal has to be scored under the goalie's neck height.
3. Can set up a parameter around goal to avoid hits.

COMMUNIST CHURCH/UNDERGROUND CHURCH

Start with adults on the inside of the building and young people on the outside. When the young people enter the building, they are looking for the church, "the light." Adults who capture young people can interrogate (ask questions), and the young people should answer with Scripture. Captured young people may either be taken to jail or let go. (They shouldn't know who will let them go and who won't.) They should ask adults, "Have you seen the light?" If they have found the right person, he will tell them that they have found the light.

CONTROLLED FOOD FIGHT

Kids bring their own food. Have them sit in chairs facing each other. During the food fight, they have to stay in their chairs. Run through sprinklers afterwards for a fun cleanup.

DESTINATION UNKNOWN

"Blindfold" the vehicle by blackening the windows and putting a sheet behind the driver. Go to first destination and give the group a clue leading to the next destination. If the group guesses wrong, they should go back to that destination and read the same clue over again. The final destination could be an ice skating rink, etc.

DINNER AND A SHOW

Comedy night with stupid skits—at practices bring a video camera and made a bloopers tape; the video could be used for an additional night of activity for those who participated.

EGG SMUGGLE

Put two five-gallon buckets on opposite ends of a field. One person passes eggs to different people. The goal is to get your egg to the other side. Those without eggs try to find those with eggs and break them.

FAMILY FEUD

1. Junk yard war—give each team the same items in a bag to build a car. Guys can only give advice, not actually build.
2. Child takes dad fishing (magnetic fishing poles, dads blindfolded).
3. Have the group form two lines on each side with a center line. On each side of the center line, have two large buckets and two small buckets (can be hung from ceiling). Each team should have 150 to 200 balls—soft balls, balls used in fast food restaurant play areas, and other soft balls. Teams throw the balls simultaneously and try to make baskets.

FLASHLIGHT TAG

The group is divided into teams, but teams do not have to stay grouped together. Establish boundaries and set a time limit. When someone is tagged, the tagger should say “I see you.”

FLAT BALLOON RELAY

Have two young people blow up balloons and release them. Wherever their balloon lands, they go to that spot, blow up the balloon, and release it again. They continue until they reach the finish line.

FRESHER

Form two lines of about fifteen people each. Use inner tubes as “pods” and set them in the middle. If someone comes off the line, he is “fresh.” Last person off is the “freshest.” The freshest is the only person who can tag. If you get tagged, you are out or in jail. Pods in the middle are safety for only one person. Those in prison have to all hold arms and stretch lines. The goal of those on the pods is to get those in prison out.

GOOFY OLYMPICS

Divide the group into teams representing different countries, compete for medals, and keep records for fun and to break. Events can include shooting Cheerios out of your nose, etc.

HULA BALL

Use a big ball that can be dribbled or a ball similar to basketball. The goalie has to be on his knees. Make a fifty-foot parameter around the hoop and attach the hula hoop for the basketball hoop.

JELLO NIGHT

Play any game that usually uses water, substituting Jello (e.g., Jello balloons or tube tug with tarp in the center covered with Jello).

MARINE BALL

Split into small groups (named A, B, C, etc.) to follow the treasure trail around church property. “Hoodlums” with water balloons try to hit team members. If a team member is hit, he has to give up a token. First group to reach destination wins.

THE NOT-SO-GRAND PRIX

Use two cars, preferably compact, and adult drivers. Fit as many guys in the car as possible, put the car in neutral, and have girls push it (or vice versa). Can use 100 Grand candy bars for prizes and smash the cars at the end of the activity.

Other Options

1. One guy push the car for time
2. Teams push the car for time
3. Push the car through an obstacle course

PAINTBALL VARIATIONS

Play any paintball game without using paintball guns. Water balloons, a film canister full of flour, or toilet paper filled with flour can be used to tag people.

PICT-O-PHONE VARIATION

Two to four teams line up facing a white board or chalkboard. The person at the end of each line is shown the same, simple picture. Using their fingers, each one draws the picture on the back of the person in front of him. As the drawing works its way to the front of the line, the person at the front draws it on the board. The first team to complete the drawing wins.

POCKET MIRROR DUEL

Can use small pocket mirrors or CD backs.

ROOK CARDS

Hand each kid a card. All the *ones* need to find each other, get in groups of a certain number, etc.

SLAM BALL

Inside a room, slam a ball against the wall. If the ball hits someone on the bounce, he is out. If you catch the ball, the person who threw it is out. No direct throws or off the floor count.

TABLE TAG

Put two eight-foot tables together to form a square. Blindfold two participants; they must keep a hand on the table. The chase each other around the table until one tags the other; they cannot tag across the table. Team members who aren't blindfolded can yell instructions.

TOWERS

Give each person twenty balloons and Scotch tape. The young people have to build a free-standing tower with these. Tallest tower wins.

THE WALL, A NIGHT GAME

Create a wall using string, ropes, or caution tape through the middle of a field or woods. Let the teens see it before the game begins. Tell them that they are in East Germany and must escape under the wall to West Germany. The other side is trying to capture them (like Capture the flag). Leaders are the guards on the wall; they have flashlights but can only use them for two seconds on and five seconds off. You can have a beam scoping all the time. A guard may leave the fifteen-foot parameter of the wall, but the other team can then pull his team's flag. Jail can be emptied when it has six players in it. Everyone is trying to get to the safe zone. This game is best played on a really dark night. (Idea from *Adventure Games* published by Youth Specialties.)

WATER BALLOON VOLLEYBALL

Attackers have water balloons, defenders have socks filled with flour. The goal is to assassinate the other team's president who is sitting in a circle. You can give him a super soaker just for revenge sake; it doesn't count as a hit. If a defender hits someone, that person is out for the round. Water balloons must break to count.

WHY AND BECAUSE

Have everyone write a question that starts with *why* and an answer, though not necessarily the answer to his question. Mix up the questions and answers.

LARGE GROUP GAMES

Key: \$=props cost only,
 \$\$=low individual cost,
 \$\$\$=high individual cost

AN AMAZING RACE

Preparation: Choose a unique place to go to in a unique way. Select a location about thirty to fifty miles away that is not well known but is not difficult to find. (Our location gave a receipt with a time stamp which was nice. It had only one paved road in and out, so the groups did not get lost. When all the teams arrived, we cooked hamburgers and had a message around a fire.) Take an obvious picture of the location. For example, if your final destination is a campground, take a picture of the campground sign. Take fifteen pictures of distinct places or things teams will see while traveling to the location. Make copies of the pictures for each team. Put the picture of the final location first and put the others in random order.

The Race: Give each team an envelope which includes the pictures, money for fees (e.g., entrance into the campground) and gas, and a sealed envelope with a map in it. At some of the places, give bonus points for the first teams there. If a team gets lost, they can open the map envelope, which should include a telephone number; but, it will cost them a large amount of points. The last team to make it under the time limit could be given the same bonus as the first team as a reward for being good stewards of their time.

Supplies

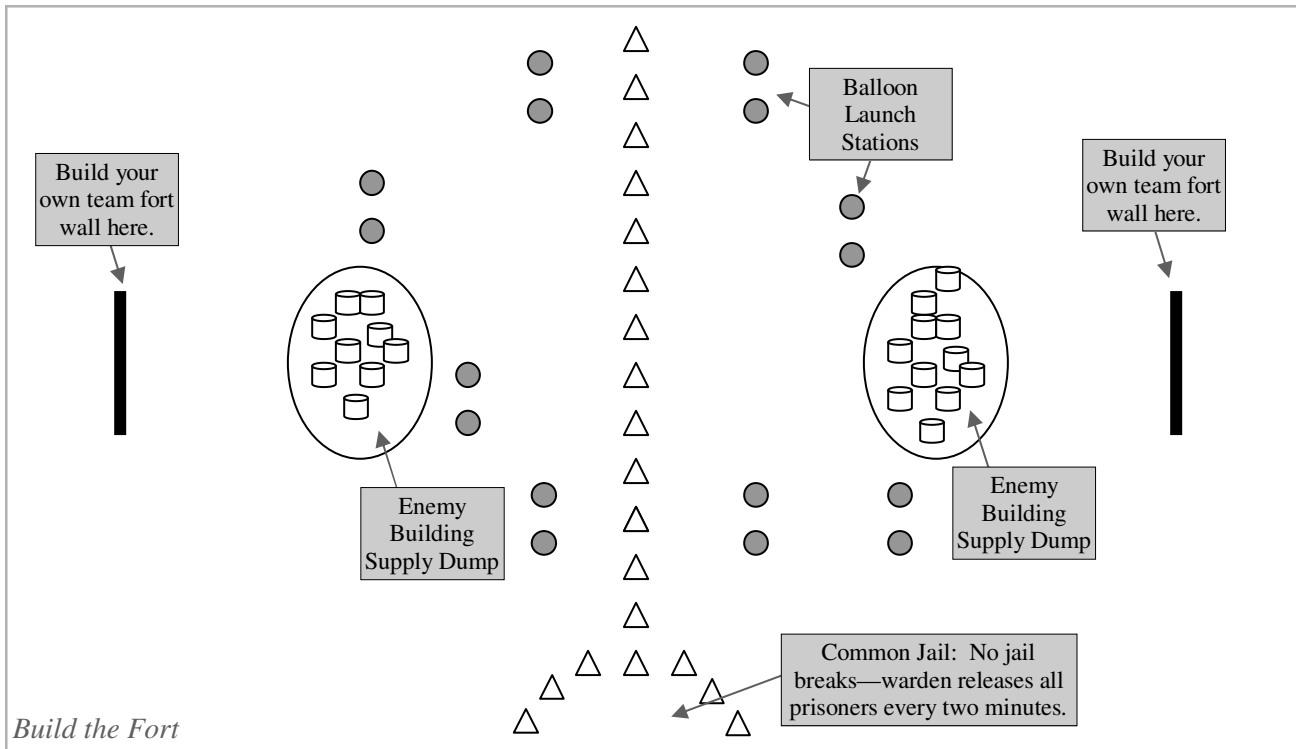
1. A picture of the target location
2. Pictures of unique objects which give some clues to the location (assign point values to each)—a teepee, a balancing rock, information on a sign which took a 1/2-mile walk, a safe mine, a sundial, a Gila monster slide, a funny name on a sign, a fifty-foot kachina doll, a sign with bullet holes, a hitching post, an Indian ruin, etc.
4. Money for the places they will stop on the way
5. Extra bonus points placed at a certain location
6. An envelope with a map of the location and a cell number so all teams can make it
7. A points sheet to record the pictures locations
8. Vehicles for the teams with adult drivers
9. Team leaders
10. A time limit
11. Food and drinks at the end

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–100
Props	Some
Cost	\$
Type	Race
Time	2½ hours
Referee	1 per group

BOUNDARY BALL

Divide into two teams and divide a basketball court into two; for smaller groups, play on one half. Give each team two or three balls. The object is to underhand throw a ball across the other team's back line. Players can catch and throw the kickballs on their half of the court but may have to stay back to defend the balls thrown toward their line. Points are given for each ball that passes their back line. Play to ten; then for one minute double the point value. Switch sides and play one more round.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–25
Props	4–6 kickballs
Cost	\$
Type	Dodge ball
Time	20 minutes
Referees	1–2



Build the Fort

BUILD THE FORT

Build the Fort is a variation of capture the flag that could be played on a wide field or throughout a structured facility. There should be a definite boundary line between the two playing halves. Instead of capturing an enemy flag, your team will attempt to sneak into an enemy building supply yard, retrieve building material, and get back to your own side while not getting tagged by an opposing team member. The building materials (five-gallon buckets) should be brought back to the safety of your own side in order to build a fort (a pyramid of buckets).

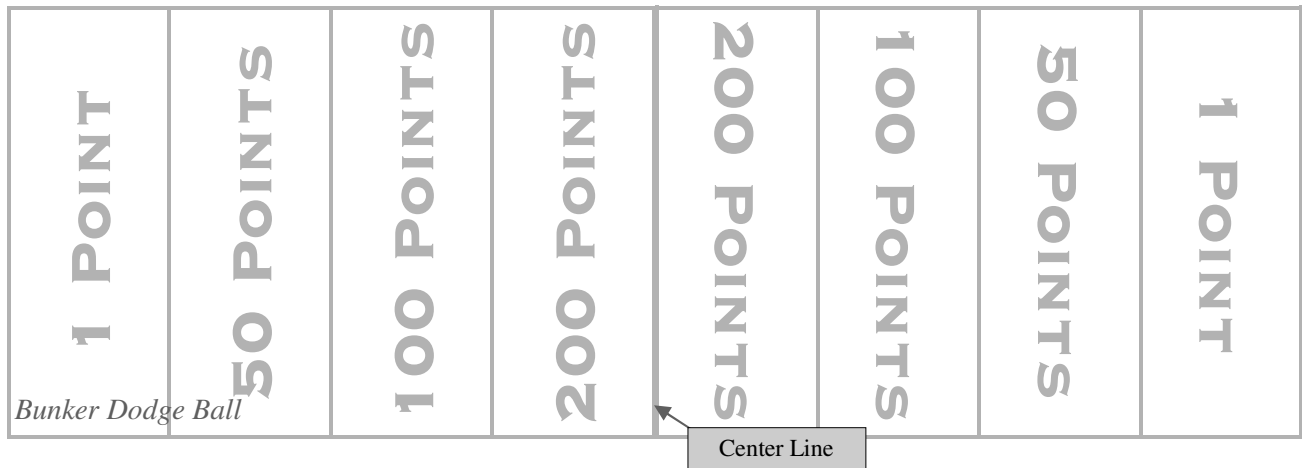
BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	40–300
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Capture the Flag
Time	20–40 minutes
Referees	3

While you are attempting to build your own fort, you should attempt to knock down the enemy fort from several water balloon launching stations that are spread out on your side. The opposing team will be attempting to knock down your fort with water balloons being launched from their side. Any piece of your team's fort that is knocked to the ground with enemy fire should be returned to the enemy supply yard.

Rules

1. The object is to retrieve building materials from other side, return them to your side, and build a bucket fort.
2. The bottom layer of the fort is seven buckets across, next layer is six, and so on, up to a level of two.
3. Each team has several water balloon launching stations to try to knock down the opposing team's fort.
4. Each team also has a balloon filling station to fill balloons. Filled balloons should be delivered to the launching stations.
5. If you are tagged on the opposing team's side, you must go to jail and wait there until the warden releases you.
6. If you catch an opposing team's balloon, take it to the bucket behind your bucket fort for points.
7. You cannot enter your cone line to defend your walls or defend the buckets on your side.
8. All material hit with or knocked down by a water balloon is deemed unusable and must be returned to the supply dump where they can be used again.

Supplies: Lots of five-gallon buckets, lots of #10 cans (big coffee cans), forty cones, balloon launchers, balloons, balloon-filling stations, and two big buckets for caught balloons.



BUNKER DODGE BALL

This dodge-ball variation keeps players in the game. Everyone begins in the 200-point zone on his team’s side of the playing area. When a player is struck with a ball, instead of leaving the game, he moves back a zone, further away from the center line. There are four zones per side, to which players can progressively get knocked back. Each zone is worth a diminishing number of points. When the round is over, players should remain in the zone where they are until their points can be counted.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20–80
Props	Dodge Balls (1 per every 4 players)
Cost	\$
Type	Dodge Ball
Time	5-minute rounds
Referee	1

Rules

1. Basic dodge ball rules apply.
2. If a player is hit with a ball or steps backwards into the next zone, he is not out; he should move back one zone.
3. Players can’t block an incoming ball with a ball they are holding.
4. If a player catches an incoming ball, the person who threw it is out.
5. If a player makes it all the way to the one-point zone and is hit while there, he is not out; he stays there.

Supplies: A basketball court divided into the sections, cones to divide the sections, and dodge balls.

CATCH THE DRAGON’S TAIL

Object of the game is for the first person in the line (the head) to catch the last person in line (the tail). All the players line up and put their hands on the waist of the person in front of them. The last person in line tucks one end of the scarf in his back pocket, belt, or waistband. The first person in lines tries to grab the scarf. When the head gets the tail, he dons the scarf and becomes the new tail. The person second in line becomes the new head.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–30
Props	Large scarf or handkerchief
Cost	\$
Type	Tag
Time	15–45 minutes
Referee	1

Variation: Form two or more teams, each being a dragon trying to catch the other’s tail.

The Source for Youth Ministry, “Big Room Games,” <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/bigroom.asp>.

CHINESE FIRE DRILL BASKETBALL

If your church is blessed with a gym and more than two baskets, this is a good game. Divide the group into a number of teams that is one more than the number of baskets you have. The extra team gets a basketball. Each of the other teams is assigned a basket to defend. When the game starts, following basic basketball rules, the team with the ball attacks one of the defended baskets. If the attacking team scores a basket, they take the ball with them and attack the next basket located counterclockwise in the gym. If the defending team gains possession of the ball before the attacking team scores, the defending team becomes the attacking team and moves to the next defended basket. The team that just lost the ball stays at that basket and defends it from the next attack. Repeat this pattern until time expires. For extra mayhem, pick teams so there are initially two extra teams and two baskets being attacked. Be sure your good basketball players are spread among the teams.

The Source for Youth Ministry, "Big Room Games," <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/bigroom.asp>.

DIGITAL CAMERA CRAZY TEAM PHOTO ALBUM

On the return trip of an outing, divide your teens into teams and give each vehicle a digital camera and a list of things to take pictures of, such as—

- A great group shot
- A goofy group shot
- A water shot
- A statue
- A great sign
- A picture with a group of strangers
- A picture with an official
- A scenic picture
- Something strange
- A picture of the team's favorite vehicle
- A food picture
- An animal picture
- Something funny
- A nature shot

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–100
Props	Digital cameras and projector
Cost	\$
Type	Scavenger hunt
Time	1½–2½ hours
Referee	1 leader per group

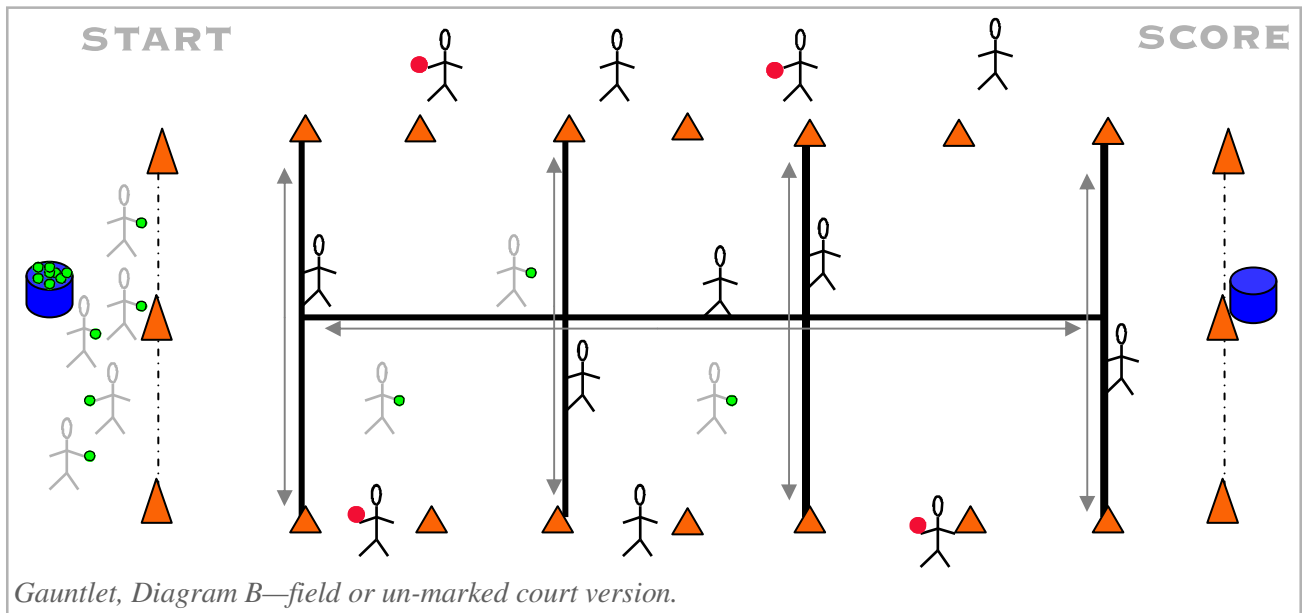
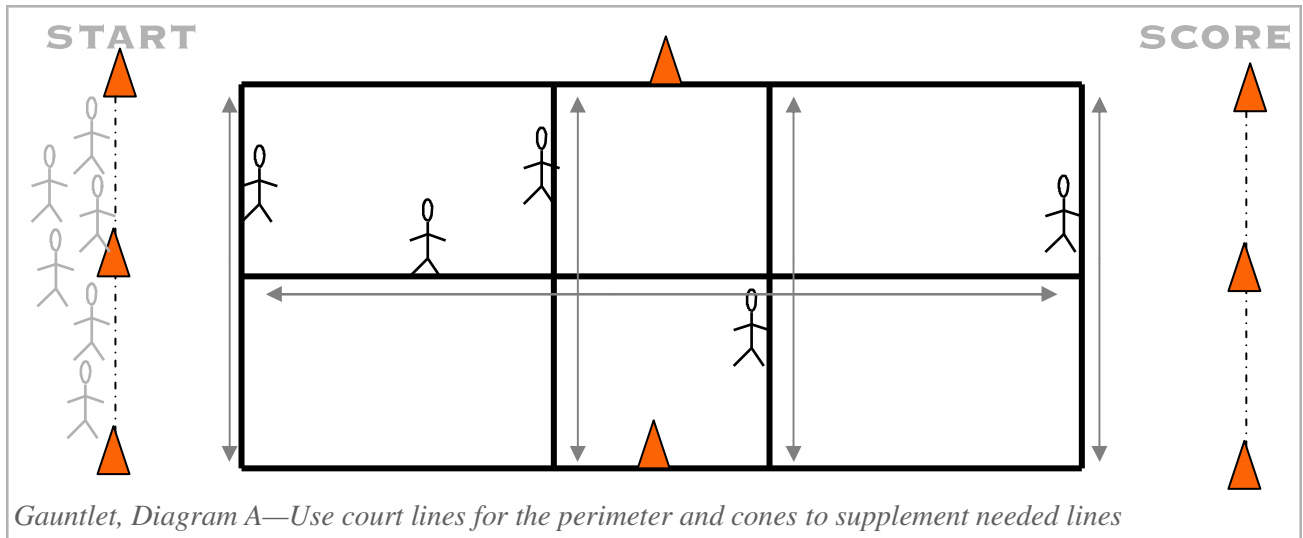
When you arrive at your destination, show the pictures and decide which team had the best picture in the various categories.

THE GAUNTLET

Volleyball Court Version (Diagram A): Illustrated is the tag game where one team tries to get as many through the gauntlet in the given time. The linemen of the defensive team may move along their lines to tag a runner but may not move off them; linemen must remain on the individual line to which they are assigned. The defensive team tries to eliminate as many opponents as possible. Run timed rounds of one to three minutes. The offensive team gets points for each person each time he gets through in the round.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–200
Props	Some
Cost	\$
Type	Race/Dodge Ball
Time	20 minutes
Referees	2–3

Field Version (Diagram B): In this illustration, the gauntlet is a dodge ball variation still using the tags of the linemen who move freely on their lines but only on their lines; it adds the bombardment from the outside to eliminate runners through the gauntlet. It is a timed round scoring runners who run through the gauntlet each time. If you would like to add another feature, have the offensive team carry "treasure" (tennis balls or such) through the gauntlet to their safe side, transporting another treasure each time through. The team capturing the most treasure wins. You may have the team members sit if hit by a ball and allow them to run again on a given command from the leader. To create defensive scoring, you may also have the defense capture the treasure from people the lineman tag. Runners may all go at the same time, or teams may stagger them.



Set up for Diagram B: Mark out four lines about five yards long and ten yards apart. Bisect them with one line running through all four lines.

Supplies

1. Paint or flat/semi-flat markers
2. Cones to mark off perimeter
3. Four kickballs
4. Twenty plus tennis balls or any other hand-size treasure to transport

HEADS OR TAILS KICKBALL

Divide teams into two and play normal kickball rules; the variation comes in a referee flipping a coin and showing it to the player who is kicking the ball. If heads, the kicker runs to first base first, and runners run the regular direction. If tails, the kicker runs to third base first, and all runners will run the bases backwards,

following the direction of the kicker. This may mean the last person who kicked a single can go home from first base and score a run if the coin falls tails. Players and the defending fielders must pay close attention.

KNOCK OUT

The object of this game is to be the one who is not knocked out of the game. To start the game, the referee picks a spot on the floor. Once that spot has been chosen, everyone lines up in one line. Give a basketball to each of the first two people in line. At the command to go, the first person in line shoots the ball. Once the shot is released, the second player in line may then shoot his basketball. The second player is trying to knock the first player out of the game by making a basket before the first player does. If the first player makes the basket first, he rebounds the ball and gives it to the third person in line who attempts to knock the second player out of the game. Players who make a basket go to the end of the line and wait another turn. Play continues until one is person left. The winner gets to choose the spot where the next round begins.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	5–100
Props	2 basketballs and a basketball hoop
Cost	\$
Type	Recreation
Time	10–30 minutes
Referee	1

LONG BASE

Divide into two teams, one in the field and one at bat. At least one, but as many as three individuals, may bat at one time by bouncing the dodge ball and hitting it with whatever part of their body they can. After hitting the ball, the teens attempt to run to the far wall of the gym or the opposite side of the field without being hit with the same ball they just hit. Teens in the field may get a batter out by throwing and hitting him with any of the balls that were hit. If a teen makes it to the far wall, he must keep one hand on it to remain safe. To score a run, the teen must make it back to the place from where he hit the ball. Teens may remain on the other end as long as they want, but they do not get a run until they return home. There is no limit to the amount of teens that may stay safe at one time; they can try to run home at any time except for when new batters are up to bat.

The Source for Youth Ministry, “Big Room Games,” <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/bigroom.asp>.

NERDSVILLE NIGHT VIDEO SCAVENGER HUNT

We entitled our video scavenger hunt “Nerdsville Night” based on all the crazy things they had to accomplish. Split teens into groups of four or five. Each group needs an adult leader who is comfortable handling a video camera. The goal is to complete as many of the items listed as possible. All things listed must be caught on camera in order to receive full points. Each item is worth a set number of points, each listed on their paper following the item. The team with the most points wins a prize awaiting them back at the church.

Rules

1. First team back to the church gets bonus 3,000 points.
2. Second team back to the church gets bonus 2,000 points.
3. Be respectful and courteous and represent Jesus Christ well.
4. Adult must verify that all participant are playing.
5. For every minute that you are late, you will lose 1,000 points for your team.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–100
Props	Few
Cost	\$
Type	Scavenger Hunt
Time	2 hours
Referee	1 per car

STUNT	POINTS
1 Entire group around an unusual road sign.	150
2 Entire group singing Barney's "I Love You" to a McDonald's manager.	150
3 Entire group running the bases on a baseball field.	100
4 Police officer eating a doughnut.	200
5 Barking dog (must be visible).	100
6 Group helping someone take out his groceries and placing them in his car.	150
7 Vacuuming out the vehicle your team is in.	400
8 Group wearing Burger King crowns and being knighted by a Burger King manager.	500
9 One female group member kissing a living frog.	500
10 Entire team doing the "Hokey Pokey" in a grocery store for at least fifteen seconds.	500
11 Entire group singing and doing the motions of "Father Abraham" as loudly as possible in a dumpster.	1000
12 One person diving in a pool and kissing the bottom of it.	1000
13 One girl asking a complete stranger "Do you think I'm good looking?" until she gets a yes.	500
14 One guy going into Wal-Mart and saying to the female greeter, "I know we haven't known each other very long, but will you marry me?"	500
15 Getting the autographs of six different gas station attendants.	600
16 Selling a cup of dirt to a stranger in front of Wal-Mart.	500
17 Entire group going to the door of a complete stranger and singing "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."	500
18 Buying a set of party hats for the entire team and wearing them the rest of the activity.	500
19 Two people standing by a water fountain and getting ten signatures on your petition to "Save the Amoebas."	1000
20 Convincing a department store clerk to let you make an announcement of his choice over the store paging system.	1000
21 Getting the autograph of a person over 6'5" tall.	400
22 Entire group going into a Target Café and singing "Happy Anniversary" to a guy and girl who are sharing a Coke while the rest of the team sings.	800
23 At any stop sign, one person getting out and reading the entire book of Jude out loud.	500
24 Entire group doing fifty jumping jacks at an intersection.	600
25 One person standing by the restrooms in the mall and saying for four minutes to people passing by, "Thank you for using our restrooms tonight."	1000
26 One girl finding a stranger who uses Secret and asking if she uses it because it is "made for a woman" or "strong enough for a man."	1000
27 Selling your youth pastor's autograph for at least \$5 and giving him the money when your team returns.	1000
28 Convincing a complete stranger to let you make a phone call with his cell phone (call your youth pastor's cell phone to verify you did this).	500
29 Convincing a place that sells ice cream to give each team member a free cone and scoop of ice cream.	1000
30 Toilet paper _____ house without anyone catching you (only use toilet paper; no destructive materials, or your team will forfeit all points).	5000

NOODLE GAMES

The book *50 Ways to Use your Noodle* by Chris Cavert and Sam Sikes has many games to have great fun with pool noodles. [Learning Unlimited Corp. © 1997, 200 pages, \$16.00 (ISBN 1964654113).]

Supplies: You will need to cut pool noodles in various sizes. Noodles vary in length and in diameter and can be cut with a steak or butter knife. Most games use midaronis (half the length of a regular noodle) for play, so one noodle will provide fun for two people. You will also need some smaller sizes called meatballs and minironis.

Noodle Terminology (from *50 Ways to Use your Noodle*)

1. Maxaroni Rex—a noodle approximately 58” long and 4” in diameter
2. Maxaroni—a long noodle (regular pool size noodle) approximately 64” long and 3” in diameter
3. Midaroni—half of a maxaroni
4. Minironi—a maxaroni piece 3” long
5. Meatball—a 1¼”-long maxaroni rex (If you cannot locate a maxaroni rex, you may wish to substitute a maxaroni understanding these will be smaller, lighter, and harder to use.)

Warning! Explain all pertinent game information *before* you give out the noodles. When teens have noodles, they automatically begin to play.

HOW TO PLAY

Last Man Standing: Everybody is it. The last one alive wins the round. This is a fun way to start an activity with noodles and raise the excitement level quickly.

Team Survival: Divide into teams; last team alive wins. You may consider buying different colors of noodles to make an obvious delineation of teams. (We used two colors with many noodles and two other colors to break it down farther.)

Ninja: Mark out a circle and place a person in the center of it. Blindfold the center person and give him a mini noodle. Have the other players put clothespins on the person’s clothes. When many—twenty-five or more—clothespins have been put on, set a time limit and have the others players start from outside the circle. The object is to take the clothespins from the person without being hit. If a person is hit with a clothespin, the clothespin must be dropped at the spot. Play for three minutes. You can play ninja verses crowd—the ninja wins if more clothespins are caught than lost; you can also play individual—the teen with the most pins wins.

Flippin’ Burgers: Each teen is given a midaroni and a meatball; each should place his meatball on his back. The object is to not let it fall off. Teens cannot hold on to the meatball by pinching it with their fingers or with their other hand. A person is eliminated when his meatball is dropped or knocked off by another teen’s midaroni.

Pool noodles provide a safe way to tag or hit another without injuring them. You can add noodles to almost any game that involves tagging and find the addition really fun. For example, play capture the flag using noodles to tag.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–50
Props	Lots of noodles
Cost	\$1.00–1.50 per person
One-time investment	\$50–75 for noodles
Type	Tag
Time	20–90 minutes
Referees	1–3

PAIRS TAG

Designate an area for the game. Each person picks a partner and each pair stands about fifteen feet apart from each other. "It" can be determined by who is older/younger, taller/shorter, girl/guy, etc. As soon as you have announce who it is and have begun the game, the pairs have the whole area that you have designated to try to tag the other one. You now have a giant game of tag, with a bunch of little games of tag going on at once. When they get out, have them return to the area and wait for the others to finish. After everyone has returned, give them a second to catch their breath before starting a new round. Have the other one be "it" or have them switch partners. We used our whole gym, balcony, and surrounding classrooms for the game; it was fun watching everyone run into each other as they ran in and out of the rooms.

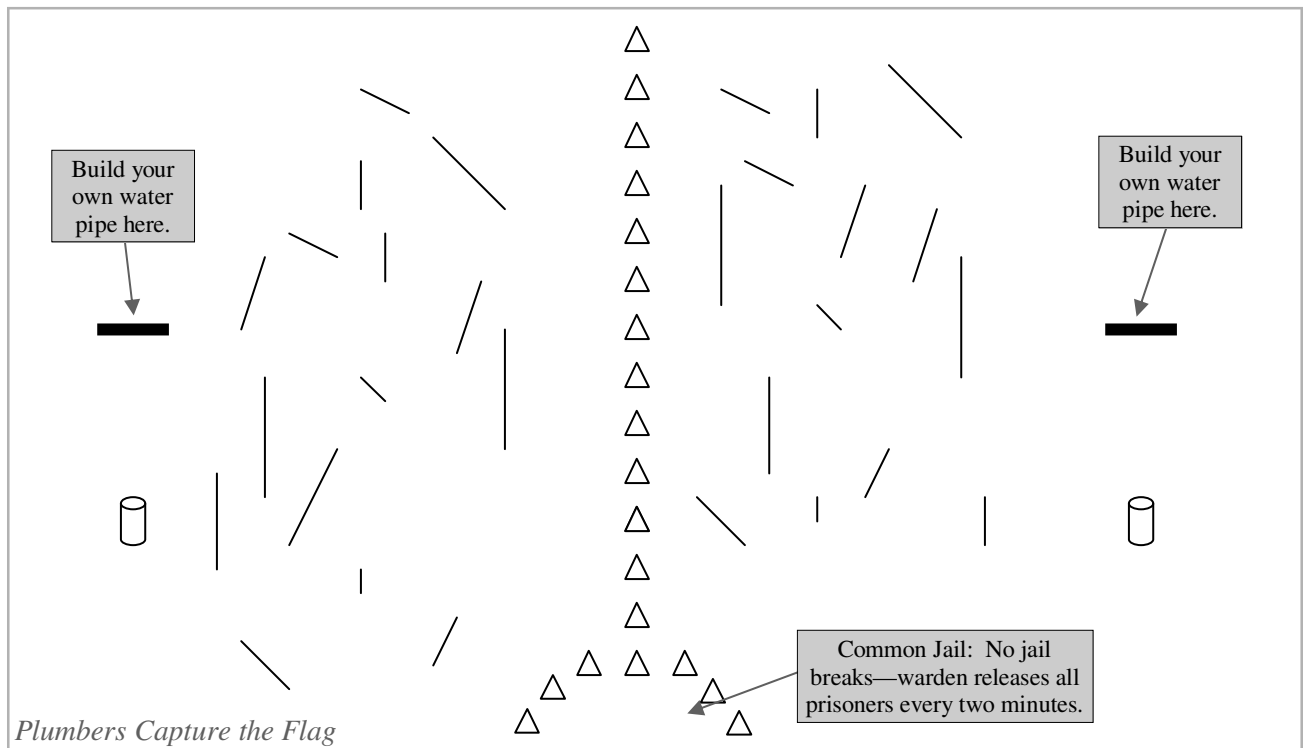
PLUMBERS CAPTURE THE FLAG

This version of capture the flag spreads the flag all over the opposing playing field. Your side also has a flag to defend that is spread out all over your side of the field. You will capture various PVC parts that are a variety of elbows, sweeps, reducers, joints, and pipe length in both 1/2" and 3/4" sizes.

Only one PVC piece may be brought back across the center line at a time. It is your team's job to use those captured plumbing pieces and construct a flow of water that will fill a bucket of water twenty feet away. Those defending their own side may not touch the PVC that they are defending. The first team to capture items, construct its water pipe, and fill its bucket will win. If you are tagged in enemy territory, you are sent to jail.

Supplies: A large playing field or gym and about eighty pieces of variety PVC for each team, spread evenly on both sides of the playing field.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	40–300
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Capture the Flag
Time	20–40 minutes
Referees	3



PUMPKIN FACE-SAVING CONTEST

This is a variation of the basic egg drop with a few interesting twists. Divide your group into teams of four to six people and give them the items necessary to decorate and protect their pumpkin. The team with the best score is the winner.

Supplies (for each group)

1. Decoration part of the event—one pumpkin, two eyes, markers, push pin tacks, paper clips, hot glue gun, and whatever you can find
2. Save face part of the event—one roll of masking tape, bag of fifty small balloons, thirty feet of twine

Preparation: Using a dowel, puncture each pumpkin and thread a rope through it. Once the rope is through the pumpkin, tie it off and use the rope loop to hang the pumpkin in order to decorate and protect it. Each group must begin their decorating by placing the two eyes. After gluing them on, that side becomes the face of the pumpkin and what they must eventually try to protect. No matter how small the eyes, the face-saving judges should consider the face of all pumpkins covering half the pumpkin.

Timeline

Start Explain and divide up in groups.

:10 Decorate the pumpkins.

:25 Judge the pumpkins for creative face making. Get an envelope for each team and put the décor score (on a scale of 1 to 10) on a 3 x 5 card and put it in the envelope. An impartial judge is crucial to this subjective job.

:35 Give each team their items to protect their pumpkins. On your mark, get set, GO! Fifteen minutes to design an airbag system to protect the pumpkin face.

:50 Find the highest spot available to drop the pumpkins. (We were able to attach a pulley about forty feet high. The pulley system made it easy to lift the protected pumpkins to their perch. The splat was fun!) A judge, not the décor judge, should give a score (on a scale of 1 to 10) for how well the pumpkin face made it through the fall.

1:20 Tally and announce the scores by multiplying the décor score and the face-saving score together.



BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20–80
Props	Many
Cost	\$50
Type	Build
Time	90 minutes
Referees	2 judges

PUMPKIN JOUSTING

For our harvest party we like to do unusual things with a pumpkin. The Pumpkin Jousting Contest was a fun event full of imagination, laughter, and picture taking. It took great effort to set this up, but the novelty of it attracted many people.

Groups of four to six work best. Estimate how many groups you will have in order to figure out the supplies you will need.

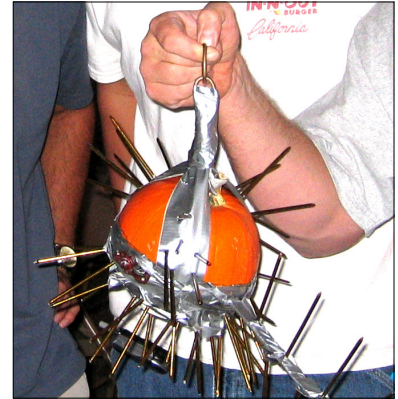
BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	12–50
Props	Many
Cost	\$50–100
Type	Invent and destroy
Time	60 minutes
Referee	2

Supplies for Each Group

1. Small pumpkin (pie pumpkins worked well for us)
2. \$1 roll of duct tape
3. Metal ring
4. Small action figure
5. Handful of 16d nails
6. 3' dowel ½ inch in diameter

Rules

1. Draw a line halfway up each pumpkin. Teams may not stick tape above the line. (Tape can be above the line but not stuck to the pumpkin above the line.)
2. Nails and tape (armor) may be arranged in any way to protect the pumpkin or inflict damage to the opposing pumpkin.
3. The dowel should be used as the pumpkin's jousting rod. This is the primary offensive weapon. Teams should figure out how to best aim their jousting dowel.
4. The metal ring must be attached so that the referee can clip the pumpkin into the jousting harness. Teams should work hard to attach the ring securely. (This will probably be the weakest part of their creation.)
5. The small action figure must be placed somewhere with the pumpkin.
6. Each team should name their pumpkin, and the referee will set up a tournament bracket.
7. Teams will try to annihilate their opponent. The first pumpkin to break loose of the jousting harness (*see instructions below*), lose their action figure, or lose a golf-ball-size piece of pumpkin is the loser. (No penalty for losing armor, a.k.a. nails and tape.)

**Setting Up the Jousting Harness**

1. Stretch a fifty-foot piece of rope approximately ten feet off the ground.
2. Attach two clothesline pulleys to the rope.
3. Tie a rope (approximately five feet long) to each pulley with a clip on the end. The pumpkin clips into this rope.
4. About one foot above each clip, tie a twenty-foot rope, leaving about ten feet of rope going both directions. These are the ropes with which the teams will control their pumpkins.

**Tips and Tricks**

1. Take a before and after picture of each pumpkin.
2. When the jousting begins, have somebody readying the next round to keep the activity level high.
3. Make a big deal of making it to the final four.
4. Don't allow modifications or repairs to the pumpkins once the build is finished.
5. Colored Sharpies are fun to use to "trick out" the pumpkins.
6. If you do this in a driveway, remember that many nails will fall off the pumpkins.

TRASH BALL

Divide your group into two teams. Give each team a trash can that is about the same size as the ball. Have each team choose a trash can holder. (Rotate regularly: it's a fun place to be.) Have each trash-can holder stand up on a chair; he can't move from the chair or grab a ball—just move the trash can). Make a boundary with tape about ten feet around each trash-can holder. Anyone caught inside the tape must sit there indefinitely at the referee's discretion.

Tips and Tricks

1. For large groups, add an extra ball or two.
2. Limit players steps to three when they have the ball; more young people will be involved.
3. With the help of the basket holder (who can assist with getting the ball in), almost anyone can make a full-court shot. You may want to add a rule that a certain number of girls must handle the ball before the team can take a shot.

Variation: Play indoors with strobe lights.

The Source for Youth Ministry, "Games & Icebreakers," <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/>.

TUNNEL OUT

In this capture-the-flag variation, the objective is a group of MIA prisoners instead of a flag. You must find a way to tunnel them out without them being captured. Tunnels are made by covering markers with cones that are picked up and placed in enemy territory on the tunnel marker. Prisoners can move from the prison circle through the tunnel. Once in a tunnel, the prisoners may wait for the tunnel to be completed into safe territory, or they may make a run for safe territory. The object of the game is to recover all of your prisoners from the enemy's prison. Any prisoner caught cannot count as a recovered prisoner; they become a regular team player. Players caught on the enemy's side trying to create the tunnel are injured in action and must go to the hospital for a later release.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	30-200
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Capture the Flag
Time	45-60 minutes
Referees	3

HOW TO PLAY

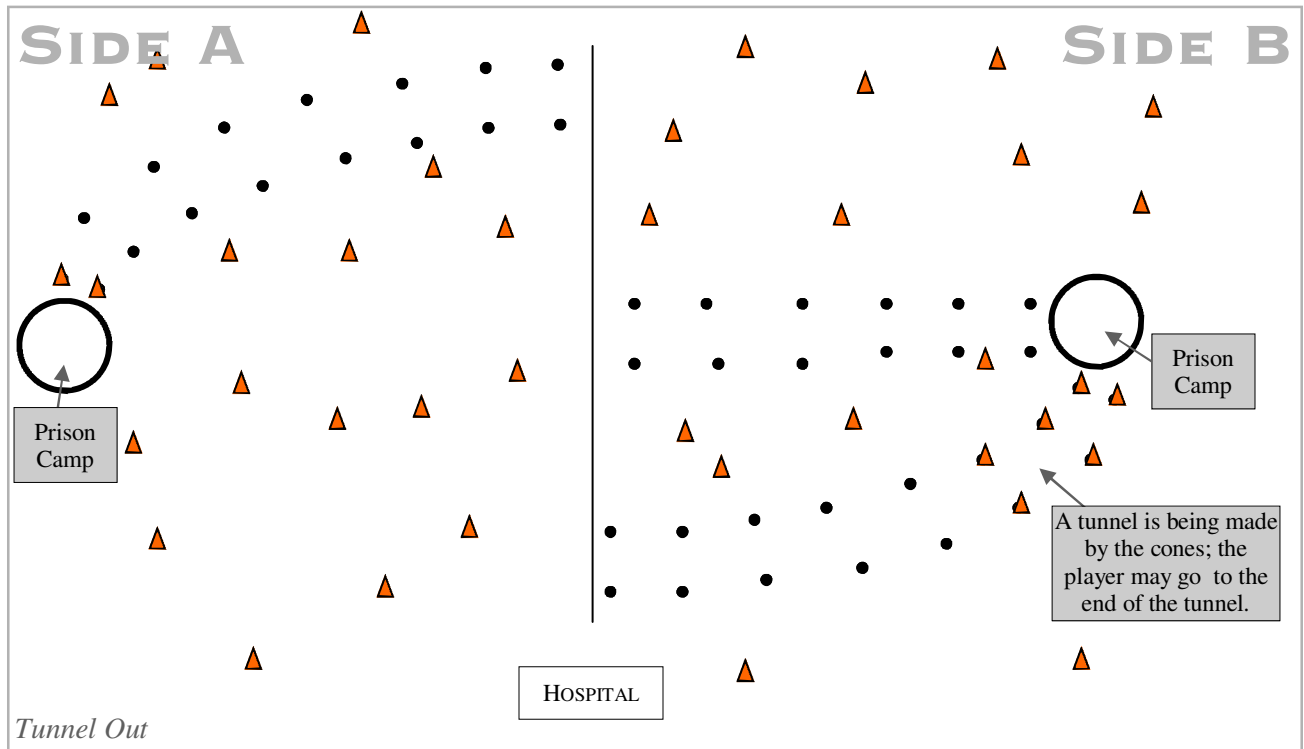
Teams each choose four people to go to the enemy prison camp; these four are the prisoners the team needs to rescue. Tunnels can start from either side of the playing field, but prisoners cannot leave the prison camp until a tunnel is started from their side. Teams build tunnels by placing cones over previously set markers (see diagram on next page). Players must avoid being tagged in enemy territory, or they are injured and must recover in the hospital for a while. No prisoners may be tagged while they are in the tunnels; the tunnels are secret. Any prisoner that leaves the tunnel in enemy territory may be captured and must go to the hospital. Upon release from the hospital, players join the game as normal players; they cannot be counted as rescued prisoners or add points to their team. Those who make it from the prison camp without being tagged to their team territory are rescued prisoners and count at the end of the round. The team with the most rescued prisoners wins.

Tips and Tricks

1. For a larger group, increase the number of prisoners; for a smaller group, decrease the number of prisoners.
2. A person can only be tagged when he is in enemy territory.
3. Hospital release is random and up to the head physician. If a release is made, everyone in the hospital is released, regardless of how long they have been there.
4. Cones set on tunnel markers cannot be removed.

Set Up

1. Mark out two circles (prison camps) and a hospital zone.
2. Clearly define the two sides of the playing area.
3. Randomly spread out a large number of cones on both sides to be collected and used by teams.
4. Set up both sides the same way with at least one possible tunnel with markers that can be covered by cones. (You may make more than one possible tunnel, depending on the size of the group. Side A illustrates one tunnel; Side B illustrates two.)



WAR

A few times this past year we put to use the finger rockets we purchased last year at the Youth Leaders' Retreat (www.primetimeinteractive.com and www.partypalooza.com) in our teen activities. Here's an idea we used—

A large room, a small gym, youth room, or even an auditorium would be a great place for this free-for-all war game. Split the group into two teams and give each team a side of the room. The object is to shoot as many people as you can while attempting to not get shot yourself. Players can hide behind chairs, tables, desk, pews, and the like. No real strategy is needed.

Variation: Play a version of capture the flag using these finger rockets. Player could be “hospitalized” after getting hit three times. They would go to the hospital, and the “doctor” would release them back into battle after two or three minutes.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	2–100
Props	Finger Rockets
Cost	50¢/rocket
Type	Recreation
Time	30 minutes
Referees	1–3

YUCK ACTIVITY

What is a Yuck Activity? It's like a clean mud fight. It's like playing with applesauce and Jello but not having a sticky clean up. It's like a snowball fight without the cold.

Supplies

1. You will need to order a supply of yuck from www.recfx.com. They have game ideas and instructions with the yuck.
2. Three super soakers or stream machines (for Yuck Ball).

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	15–100
Props	Some
Cost	\$1/person
Type	Various
Time	2 hours
Referees	3–5

Types of Yuck

1. Original—like playing with small chunks of Jello
2. Ultimate—like applesauce and can be used in super soakers
3. Slushy—like snow

For a fifty-person activity, we used a pound of each type of yuck. The cost turned out to be less than \$1 per person, and we had more than enough. We made the yuck in ten-gallon igloo coolers which made it easier to move and to divide per team. If you have more water than necessary, it is not a problem. The yuck will stick to shirts until knocked off or dehydrated. Yuck is biodegradable and 99% water. It is very safe and great to use outdoors.

HOW TO PLAY

Divide your group into teams and score each event giving points for the particular team.

Yuck Ball: Use a baseball diamond and basic baseball rules for play. Instead of a bat, use a water balloon launcher and a tennis ball. The team at bat has four outs to work with instead of the usual three. The first, second, and third basemen are equipped with super soakers or stream machines, a.k.a. yuck cannons (water gun with a large opening that can spray any type of yuck). When a player is running the bases, he is out if he is “yucked.” Basemen with the three yuck cannons can fire after the tennis ball has been shot and picked up. Players may run after they shoot the tennis ball from the launcher and may go as many bases as possible without getting out. Outfield players just need to pick the ball in the air and show that it is caught. A ball caught without hitting the ground is an automatic out, and the player may be yucked if the team chooses.

Variation: You may choose that the outfield team has to get the ball in a container after picking it up before their players can yuck the offense. This will give more base running and higher scoring. A supply of yuck is kept on the team’s sideline, and the teams should give fully loaded yuck cannons to the other team between innings.

A Yuck Slip-n-slide: Use tarps or a large plastic sheet and a supply of yuck to keep the tarp slippery. Place the slide on an incline or a hill. Choose judges to score the slide for length, style, or spins; it’s up to you. You may choose to allow each contestant to challenge a member of the other team, give each competitor two chances, and award points to the team of the winner.

Yuck Dueling: Choose a player from each team, load the yuck cannons, then have the players stand back-to-back. They should take five steps, turn, and fire. You may select a winner or just enjoy the show. You could have two or three simultaneous duels to get through your group quickly.

Yuck Tag: Using clean or new socks, put a water balloon in a sock, and dip it in yuck. Have teens in a clearly marked square or circle. Choose three to seven players from each team and put them in a circle playing as teams. The object is to hit the other team’s players without breaking your water balloon. If you are tagged or your water balloon is broken, you are out. The team with the last players in wins. Give points per player.

Yuck Marble Hunt: Using marbles in a small inflatable swimming pool, have participants find as many marbles with their feet in two minutes time.

A Yuck Activity is much like a water activity, so summertime is the best time for this activity. You can put yuck in water balloons, too; so your imagination is the only limit to what you can do. It is unusual enough to really draw teens curiosity. Visitors will come for this, making it a good outreach activity. Our teens have made it an annual activity for the week school lets out for summer.

SMALL GROUP GAMES

GOLF COURSE MADNESS

One of the most enjoyable activities that we have ever done with our teen guys is to take them golfing. Our leadership enjoys the game, and as we continued to talk it up in student ministry, our guys became interested in giving it a try. We purchased a bunch of old clubs and bags from a yard sale, then we divided them up amongst the teens. They were junky clubs, which helped them not have to worry about keeping them in good condition. The madness came as we attacked the course. (We did warn the course ahead of time that we had many first timers that were going to be golfing that day, and we reserved a block of tee times early in the morning so not to disturb other groups trying to play real golf.)

We chose a fun little par-three course and rented carts for the teens to drive. I am really not sure how much the guys enjoyed the golf, but driving the carts has impacted them to this day. Club heads were flying, guys were laughing so hard on the greens that they were crying, and the adults in each group (good idea to keep some control!) were hoping they could get off the course before they were chased off. We do this a couple times per year, and it is one of the highlights for the guys. They come back so excited about it that now the girls want to give it a try.

Ways to keep it interesting include the following:

1. Offer a prize to the one with the lowest score—lowest is best.
2. Offer a goofy prize to the one with the highest (worst) score—this is the one they all shoot for anyway.
3. Offer a prize to the one who gets the longest drive.
4. Offer a prize to the one whose club head goes the farthest.
5. Offer a prize to the one who makes the longest putt.

Tips and Tricks

1. Give a crash course in golf course etiquette before you begin.
2. Let them know people are watching them and that golf is a gentleman's game. You do not want to make a mockery of the golf course.
3. Keep up the pace by allowing the boys to hit with the leader where his ball lies instead of continuing to hack at their own.
4. Make sure there is a leader that knows how to play golf in each group of four.
5. Have a competition between group and take the winning group with the lowest score to lunch.
6. Don't take carts on the course every time because they get a little crazy driving through the fairways. It is fun just to walk around nine holes as well.

HAGOO

Separate your group into two even teams and have them stand in two separate lines, shoulder to shoulder, facing the opposite group. The two groups should be about three or four feet apart.

How to Play

1. The players at the opposite ends of each line are opponents. They step out of the lines, facing each other and looking down the middle of the two rows, like an old cowboy shootout.
2. They will both say, "Hagoo," and start to walk between the rows toward each other.
3. They must not break eye contact with each other. The object is to get to the opposite end of the line without laughing or smiling.

4. When the players pass each other, they must continue to maintain eye contact. If a person does break eye contact, laughs, or smiles, he must join the end of the line of the opposing team.
5. The teams can do or say silly things to make the opposing player crack up, but they must be careful not to make their own player lose concentration.
6. The teams may NOT touch another player.

This process will continue until everyone has had a turn. The team with the most players at the conclusion of the game, wins.

NYLON STUFF

Divide your group into teams of four. Give each team a pair of nylons and a two-minute time limit to place as many personal items as possible into the nylons without tearing them. Each item should be inserted through the waist end of the pair of nylons. Declare the team with the most items in the nylons the winner.

Variation: Blindfold the teens, then do the same game.

SKITS

DINNER DECISIONS

Two business men walk into a restaurant for a business meal.

CUSTOMER 1. What a day!

CUSTOMER 2. Really? What happened?

CUSTOMER 1. Oh, just so many decisions to make. Bill comes in right before lunch, wanting me to make a decision on the Thompson Project right that minute. I'm like, "Bill! It's lunchtime!" Then later, Wanda starts bugging me about the decorations for the office party, and someone else is taking up a collection, and wants to know how much would I like to donate . . . So many things to think about. By the end of the day, I was fed up with making decisions.

CUSTOMER 2. Sounds tough.

CUSTOMER 1. I just want a nice, quiet, relaxing dinner. No thinking. Just quiet.

Enter the WAITER. For the rest of the sketch, CUSTOMER 1 should appear frazzled, harried, tired, etc.

WAITER. Hi, welcome to Lenny's. Table for two?

CUSTOMER 1. Yes, thank you.

WAITER. Smoking or non?

CUSTOMER 1. Non-smoking, please.

WAITER. Would you prefer to dine indoors or outdoors this evening?

CUSTOMER 1. I guess indoors would be good.

WAITER. Very well, sir. Would you like to be seated in the main dining room, the enclosed patio, or our lovely solarium?

CUSTOMER 1, *slightly sarcastic*. Uh, whatever, the solarium sounds lovely.

WAITER. Now, would you prefer a view overlooking the golf course, the sunset on the lake, or the majestic mountains to the west?

CUSTOMER 1. Whatever you recommend.

WAITER. Very well then, do you need a few minutes before I take your order?

CUSTOMER 1. No, I think we're ready to order now.

WAITER. Oh, all right. How about if I take your dinner order first?

CUSTOMER 1. Fine.

WAITER. What will you have?

CUSTOMER 1. I'd like the steak and eggs.

WAITER. What kind of potato would you like with that?

CUSTOMER 1. Pardon me?

WAITER. What kind of potato? (*CUSTOMER 1 is thrown off, thinks for a second.*) French fries, baked potato, mashed potato, rice, or cole slaw?

CUSTOMER 1, *obviously tired from working all day.* Uh . . . baked potato.

WAITER. And would you like sour cream, chives, cheese, onions, or chili on that?

CUSTOMER 1. Uh . . . cheese.

WAITER. American, cheddar, or Swiss?

CUSTOMER 1. Cheddar.

WAITER. Melted or shredded?

CUSTOMER 1, *perplexed.* Melted!

WAITER. All the way melted, or just sort of half-way melted?

CUSTOMER 1, *a little irritated.* All the way melted!

WAITER. Okay, sir. Now, how would you like your steak cooked? (*Customer 1 is drawing a deep breath, recovering from this burst of decision-making. Before he can answer, WAITER cuts him off.*) Rare, medium-rare, medium, medium-well, well, extra-well, or charcoal briquette?

CUSTOMER 1. Medium-rare.

WAITER. And how would you like your eggs? Sunny side up, over easy, over medium, over hard, scrambled, scrambled with cheese, poached, boiled, hard-boiled, soft-boiled, or raw in a cup?

CUSTOMER 1, *rubbing his forehead.* Over easy.

WAITER. Toast, biscuit, English muffin, or bagel?

CUSTOMER 1. Toast.

WAITER. White, wheat, rye, sourdough, kaiser, or pumpernickel?

CUSTOMER 1. Wheat.

WAITER. Soup or salad?

CUSTOMER 1, *trying to out-smart him.* How many kinds of soup are there?

WAITER. Fifty-three.

CUSTOMER 1. And how many kinds of salad?

WAITER. Just one.

CUSTOMER 1, *smiling smugly*. Well, I'll have salad then.

WAITER. Ranch, blue cheese, thousand island, French, Italian, Russian, honey mustard, barbecue sauce, or vinaigrette?

CUSTOMER 1, *sighing, defeated*. Ranch . . .

WAITER. And what would you like to drink?

CUSTOMER 1. I don't want anything.

WAITER, *throughout this speech, CUSTOMER 1 is protesting, insisting he doesn't want anything to drink*. We have Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, Mr. Pibb, root beer, orange juice, apple juice, tomato juice, grapefruit juice, lemonade, iced tea, hot tea, herbal tea, coffee, cappuccino, milk, hot chocolate . . . (*interrupted by CUSTOMER 1*).

CUSTOMER 1, *finally breaking in*. Milk! I want milk! Just bring me some milk!

WAITER. Whole milk, lowfat, two percent, or one percent?

CUSTOMER 1. Two percent!

WAITER. Cow milk, goat milk, yak milk, or beaver milk?

CUSTOMER 1. Forget it! I want water! Just a glass of water. (*To CUSTOMER 2*) How hard can that be?

WAITER. Ice or no ice?

CUSTOMER 1, *practically yelling*. Ice!!

WAITER, *meekly*. Do you want a straw?

CUSTOMER 1. NO!!!

WAITER. Okay, okay, okay! That's fine. (*Turns to CUSTOMER 2*) Now, what would you like to have, sir?

CUSTOMER 2. Um, I'll have the steak and eggs—steak well, eggs scrambled, white toast, French fries with Heinz ketchup, vegetable soup, in a bowl, with saltines, and a tall glass of Sprite with nine cubes of ice in it.

WAITER. Do—?

CUSTOMER 2. And a straw. (*That answers WAITER's question.*)

WAITER, *as he takes menus*. Okay, I'll put your order in, and I'll be back in a moment with your soup and salad. Do you need anything else?

CUSTOMER 1, *grumpy, half-sarcastic*. Yeah, an aspirin.

WAITER. Tylenol, Advil, Bufferin—

CUSTOMER 1. Never mind. Listen, we just want to go. Can we just pay for these drinks and go?

WAITER, *throughout this CUSTOMER 1 stands quite perturbed, slamming a wad of bills down on the table and throws the glass of water in the waiter's face*. Certainly, sir. Would you like to pay by cash,

check, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, you can go back and wash dishes for a while, you can barter a couple chickens . . . ? (*Waiter turns to CUSTOMER 2.*) How do you think he wanted his change?

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

The scene opens with a receptionist at a doctor's office. A person comes in and asks to see the doctor. The receptionist says, "The doctor is busy; please take a seat."

A second person comes in to see the doctor. This person has an obvious problem—hives. He is continually scratching. The second person asks to see the doctor and is told to wait and sit down. The second person sits down next to the first person. Eventually, the first person starts scratching, and the second person stops. Cured, the second person leaves the office.

A third person, continually barking like a dog, enters the office. He asks to see the doctor and is told to wait. He sits down next to the first person. The third person eventually stops barking while the first person continues to scratch and then begins to bark like a dog. The third person leaves cured while the first person continues to bark and scratch.

A fourth person enters the office. This fourth person has a repeatable head tick, violently jerking his head back every few seconds. The fourth person asks to see the doctor and then sits down. First person continues to scratch and bark and then starts a head tick. The fourth person stops, is cured, and leaves.

The first person is sitting there with a head tick, barking, and scratching.

Finally, a girl comes into the office obviously very pregnant. The first person who is now barking, scratching, and tormented by a head tick takes one look at the girl and runs out of the office screaming, "NO!"

THE DYEING ROUTINE

ABBOTT. You'd better take that suit over to my Uncle Herman's at the Kurt Dry Cleaning Plant.

COSTELLO. Dry cleaning plant? What's your Uncle Herman doing there?

ABBOTT. Well, this is Wednesday; he's dyeing today.

COSTELLO. That's terrible, Abbott, I didn't even know he was sick.

ABBOTT. Oh, he isn't sick; he's dyeing.

COSTELLO. He's dying, and he isn't sick?

ABBOTT. That's right. If he was sick, he couldn't dye.

COSTELLO. Why not?

ABBOTT. Well, it's against the rules of the cleaning plant.

COSTELLO. You mean they wouldn't let him die if he's sick.

ABBOTT. That's right. If a man is sick, they won't let him into the place to dye.

COSTELLO. What do they do? Leave him out in the alley?

ABBOTT. Oh no no no! He can't dye in the alley.

COSTELLO. He can't?

ABBOTT. No, if he wants to dye, he has to go up seven floors.

COSTELLO. He's got to die on the seventh floor?

ABBOTT. Well, certainly.

COSTELLO. Is there any elevator in the place?

ABBOTT. No.

COSTELLO. The nerve of the people!

ABBOTT. What do you mean?

COSTELLO. Making a poor man climb seven floors to die! Why don't they send him home?

ABBOTT. Because his wife won't let him dye in the house.

COSTELLO. Wife don't?

ABBOTT. She don't want him dyeing in the house.

COSTELLO. She don't?

ABBOTT. No.

COSTELLO. He might as well go crawl under a rock. Imagine a guy can't even die in his own house.

ABBOTT. No, no, if there's any dyeing to be done around the house, his wife does it.

COSTELLO. You mean his wife has got to die too?

ABBOTT. Certainly.

COSTELLO. Abbott, what are you trying to do? Bump off the whole family?

ABBOTT. Oh, keep quiet.

COSTELLO. I'm going to bring Uncle Herman to my house to die.

ABBOTT. Oh, he couldn't dye at your house.

COSTELLO. And why couldn't he die at my house?

ABBOTT. Because you have no dye.

COSTELLO. You gotta have dye to die?

ABBOTT. Costello would you pay attention! I'm trying to tell you that Uncle Herman has to dye so he could live.

COSTELLO. Well, naturally . . . what was that?

ABBOTT. I said my Uncle Herman has to dye to live. If he doesn't dye, he can't eat.

COSTELLO. You mean he eats after he dies?

ABBOTT. Well, certainly. He dyes for a while, then he eats. Then he dyes again, then he eats some more.

COSTELLO. Must be the food that's killing him!!! He must be eating at your backstage joint.

ABBOTT. No no no, you idiot!! A man has to eat if he stands up all day dyeing.

COSTELLO. You mean he has to stand up to die?

ABBOTT. Naturally, did you ever hear of anybody lying down to dye?

COSTELLO. All the people I ever knew. They use the standard way.

ABBOTT. No no no, he can't lie down on the job. He's got to be through dyeing by six o'clock. If he dyes after six, he gets time and a half.

COSTELLO. You mean he gets paid for dying?

ABBOTT. Oh sure, it's piece work.

COSTELLO. He dies a piece at a time?

ABBOTT. Look you idiot. When I say Uncle Herman is dyeing, I don't mean that he's dying like a person dies when he dies. I mean he's dyeing for a living, and a person that dyes for a living is living even though he's dyeing!

COSTELLO. When you say that Uncle Herman is dyeing, you don't mean that he's dying like a person dies when he dies. You mean he's dyeing for a living, and a person that dyes for a living is living even though he's dyeing!

ABBOTT. Now you've got it.

COSTELLO. I don't even know what I'm talking about!

FIFTY SAYINGS

Andy Andrews first compiled this list of the fifty most famous parental sayings. Memorizing them as a list and reciting them in under ninety seconds will take some work, but is a funny, impressive routine.

You'd better change your tune pretty quick, or you're out of here.

I mean it. Do you understand?

Don't shake your head at me. I can't hear your head rattle!

Don't mumble. You act as if the world owes you a living.

You've got a chip on your shoulder.

You're not going anywhere looking like that.

You're crazy if you think you are.

If you think you are, just try me.

I don't know what's wrong with you.

I never saw a kid like you.

Other kids don't pull stuff like that.

I wasn't like that.

What kind of example do you think you are for your brothers and sisters?

Sit up straight. Don't slouch.

Would you like a spanking?

If you'd like a spanking, just let me know and we can get this thing over with.

You're cruisin' for a bruisin'.

I am you're father. I brought you into this world, and I can take you out.

As long as you live under my roof, put you're feet under my table, you'll do as I say to do.

You think the rules don't apply to you. I'm here to tell you they do.

Are you blind?

Watch what you're doing.

You walk around here like you're in a daze.

Something better change and change fast.

You're driving your mother to an early grave.

This is a family vacation.

You're going to have fun whether you like it or not.

Take some responsibility.

Pull your own weight.

Don't expect others to pick up after you.

Don't ask me for money.

Do you think I'm made out of money.

Do you think I have a tree that grows money?

You'd better wake up, and I don't mean maybe.

Do you act like this when you're away from us?

We've given you everything we possibly could—food on the table, a roof over your head, things we never had when we were your age.

You treat us like we don't exist.

That's no excuse.

If he jumped off a cliff, would you jump off a cliff, too?

You're grounded.

I'm not going to put up with this another minute.

You're crazy if you think I am.

If you think I am, just try me.

Don't look at me like that.

Look at me when I talk to you!

And don't make me say this again.

THE "FOULED UP" LOVE AFFAIR

NARRATOR. It's Friday night; we are all at a basketball game in the field house. A typical occurrence is taking place as we speak in the stands—showing the strong communication gap between guys and girls.

GUY. See that big substitute down there playing forward? I think he's going to be our best man next year.

GIRL. What? Our best man? Oh darling, this is so sudden!

GUY. Well, I dunno, I think we've guessed it for some time.

GIRL. Well, we have to make plans. There's so much to do and so much to discuss. There's the reception and the honeymoon. Oh Joe, I just love doing things together, don't you?

GUY. Oh yeah, they're a real team aren't they?

GIRL. Uh, Joe, how many children do you think you want to have?

GUY. *Number thirteen just fouled out.* Thirteen!?

GIRL. Thirteen? That many? Oh, my goodness!

GUY. Come on, Ref, you can't take thirteen out. That's a bad call—he didn't foul!

GIRL. That's okay, Joe, I like children, too. I suppose we should discuss the method of discipline. I mean, thirteen children, we'll need some form of restriction, a paddle, a ruler maybe.

GUY. Slam 'em! Beat 'em!

GIRL. Slamming and beating them? Joe, that's a bit drastic don't you think? You're joking I'm sure. I mean, what's the purpose of discipline if we have to scrape our children off the floor?

GUY. Yeah! That's it! Scrape them off the floor!

GIRL. Joe, really, there must be another way!

GUY. Kill 'em!

GIRL. Joe! You can't be serious! I can't believe you said that! You say some of the most shocking things sometimes.

GUY. *Someone just scored.* Oh, that was beautiful!

GIRL. Oh, well, thank you. I bought it for this date. I suppose we could talk about, uh, food yes, we'll discuss our food. What do you think is the best approach to handling a food budget?

GUY. Steal it! Come on. Take it away!

GIRL. Steal it? Oh my goodness! I don't think we'd better go that far! (*shyly*) Joe? What made you start dating me?

GUY. Rebound, man!!

GIRL. What? You were on the rebound? That's the reason?

GUY. Pass it!

GIRL. All right! But I still think that's a pretty shaky reason to marry someone. Now, where would you want to live? Would you like an apartment? Of course, a house would be too expensive . . .

GUY. Traveling!

GIRL. Travel? Well, okay, but that might be difficult with thirteen children.

GUY. Come on, defense!

GIRL. I'm not getting defensive. I just want you to see the facts.

GUY. Out of bounds!

GIRL, *meekly*. All right Joe, you're right. You will be the head of the house, so I'll try to be submissive. Joe? What do you think our first child will be? Maybe it will be a girl. Do you want me to fix her hair like mine?

GUY. Aw, come on, my grandma can do a better job than that!

GIRL. What, Joe!

GUY. What a baby!

GIRL. I'm not being a baby! I am simply trying to carry on a civilized conversation with you and . . .

GUY. Come on! Stuff it!

GIRL. What! Stuff it? Well, I'm shocked! I don't think I want to marry you, Joe!

GUY. What? Oh, Mary? Your roommate? She's in the stands over there! (*waving*) Hey, Mary!

GIRL. Oh, I can see what you've had on your mind this whole time! I will not marry you, Joe! And I never want to see you again!

GUY. What? Was it something I said?

PIECE OF YOUR COUCH

CLERK 1. Number 72.

CUSTOMER A. Hi!

CLERK 1. Hello, sir.

CUSTOMER A. Hi! I'm here to renew my license.

CLERK 1. I'll need your current license and your birth certificate, sir.

CUSTOMER A. There you go.

CLERK 1. And your passport.

CUSTOMER A. You need my passport?

CLERK 1. Yes sir.

CUSTOMER A. Why?

CLERK 1. I need your passport, sir.

CUSTOMER A. Look, I don't have my passport with me, so I guess I'll come back tomorrow. What time do you open?

CLERK 1. Tomorrow, sir?

CUSTOMER A. Yeah.

CLERK 1. Tomorrow our hours are 6:35 a.m. to 7:05 a.m.

CUSTOMER A. You're only open for a half an hour?

CLERK 1. That's right, sir.

CUSTOMER A. Okay, fine. I'll be here tomorrow at 6:35 a.m.

CLERK 1. Don't forget to bring your passport, sir.

CUSTOMER A. Don't worry. I won't forget.

CLERK 1. Number 73.

CUSTOMER B. Hi, I'm here to get a city parking permit.

CLERK 1. I need your license, birth certificate, registration, and passport, sir.

CUSTOMER B. Yeah, I've got everything right here.

CLERK 1. And I need a piece of your couch, sir.

CUSTOMER B. Pardon me.

CLERK 1. I need a piece of your couch.

CUSTOMER B. A piece of my couch?

CLERK 1. Yes, sir.

CUSTOMER B. I don't understand. Why do you need a piece of my couch?

CLERK 1. I need a piece of your couch, sir.

CUSTOMER B. Aw, c'mon. All I want to do is get the parking permit, so I could be . . .

CLERK 1. Do you have a piece of your couch with you, sir?

CUSTOMER B. No no, of course not.

CLERK 1. Number 74!

CUSTOMER B. Aw, man!

CUSTOMER C. Yeah, I'm here to get a new sticker for my license plate.

CLERK 1. I need your license, registration, birth certificate, passport, medical history, the instruction manual for your refrigerator, two chickens, and a box of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch screws.

Customer C. Yeah, here you go.

CLERK 1. Uh huh. And I also need a mouthpiece for a sousaphone, a three-pound bag of Chinese celery, and a box of trail mix.

Customer C. Um hum, right. Here you go.

CLERK 1. I'm sorry, sir, I need a three . . . oh . . . you have that, too.

CUSTOMER C. Yeah, everything is here.

CLERK 1. Everything is there.

CUSTOMER C. Yep.

CLERK 1. I have to go. (*He runs off.*)

CUSTOMER C. Hey . . . hey, wait a minute. Where in the world do you think you are going?

CLERK 2. What seems to be the trouble, sir?

CUSTOMER C. I came in to get a new sticker for my license plate.

CLERK 2. Did you bring your license, registration, birth certificate, passport, medical history, refrigerator manual, two . . .

CUSTOMER C. Yes yes, see, it's all right here.

CLERK 2. All right. Everything seems to be in order; just sign this form.

CUSTOMER C. Okay, do you have a pen?

CLERK 2. Number 75!

STUNTS

JOUST

Supplies

1. Two five-gallon buckets
2. Two jousting sticks (Pool noodles or pillows work great.)
3. A soft area to play

How to Play: Place buckets up-side down, about three feet apart. Two players, each with a jousting stick or pillow, each stands on a bucket. When the judge says “Go!”, each one tries to knock the other player off his bucket. Discourage head shots and other “cheap” shots.

STRENGTH TEST

Supplies: All you need is a flat, ordinary bathroom scale.

The goal is to register the highest weight on the scale. You can have an individual or a team of two make an attempt in the following ways:

1. Each person holds the scale with two hands and squeezes it, pressing as hard as possible to register the highest weight on the scale.
2. Two people, one holding the scale and the other pushing, attempt to register their highest weight on the scale.
3. Two people, one holding the scale and the other pushing, attempt to register their highest score.

The Source for Youth Ministry, “Up-front Games,” <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/upfront.asp>.

QUESTIONS UNDER FIRE!

Choose four volunteers from four different grades. Bring them up one at a time to ask them questions. (See below.) Whichever contestant can answer ten questions in ninety seconds wins. Contestants may “pass” as many times as they want and come back to a question later.

As soon as you begin asking the questions, the audience can distract the contestant by yelling out random statements, answers, or noises. They can even get out of their seats and do goofy things as long as they don't get in the contestant's face or touch him.

Below are four sets of questions. You may switch questions around or make up your own. You may want to have easier questions for younger teens on at least one list. Some of the questions have definite answers; some are random or silly.

Points that can be made by this game: It's hard to focus on what's in front of you—God, priorities, what matters most, etc.—when there are so many distractions/voices around you trying to take your focus away from what's important. It's hard, but not impossible, if you concentrate and keep your attention on God, your priorities, what matters most, etc. Listen to God's voice above all others, just like you tried to listen only to the voice asking the questions.

First Contestant

1. What did Jesus call His followers? *Disciples*
2. How many lives do cats have? *One*
3. What letter comes after V? *W*
4. Is a snake a reptile or amphibian? *Reptile*
5. How many ounces are in a gallon? *128*
6. What is the name of this youth group?
7. How many stripes on the US flag? *Thirteen*
8. What shape is the earth? *Round/sphere*
9. What color are your eyes?
10. What is your neighbor's address on the left?
11. What color is good milk? *White*
12. How many appendages do you have? *Four (arms/legs)*
13. What is Garfield's owner's name? *John*
14. What do you put on popcorn?

Second Contestant

1. How many ounces in a half gallon? *Sixty-four*
2. How many disciples did Jesus have? *Twelve*
3. What is $37-24+19$? *Thirty-two*
4. What is your mom's middle name?
5. How many phalanges do you have? *Twenty (fingers/toes)*
6. What is your or your friend's cell phone number?
7. What branch of military service mans submarines? *Navy*
8. What color is blue? *Blue*
9. How many stars are on the US flag? *Fifty*
10. How do you make a tuna sandwich? *Any combination of bread, tuna, knife, mayo, relish*
11. When Moses parted the Red Sea, who were the Israelites escaping from? *Egyptian army*
12. What US president died in June 2004? *Ronald Reagan*
13. How many wheels are on a car? *Four (or five, including the spare)*
14. On what does a rolling chair move? *Wheels*

Third Contestant

1. Say hello in Spanish. *Hola*
2. Which candle burns longer—pink or blue? *Neither; they both burn shorter.*
3. How many megabytes does your computer have?
4. What does the acronym ASAP mean? *As soon as possible*
5. Eat a what a day to keep the doctor away? *Apple*
6. *Rendezvous* is French for what? *To meet*
7. Who sewed the first US flag? *Betsy Ross*
8. What size shoe do you wear?
9. What is the exact time?
10. What is perfect vision? *20/20*
11. Count from ten backwards.
12. Who is the lead (senior) pastor at this church?
13. Give me a prime number between 1 and 10. *2, 3, 5, 7*

Fourth Contestant

1. What show says, “Won’t you be my neighbor?” *Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood*
2. Count to ten in any foreign language.
3. How many books in the Bible? *Sixty-six*
4. What three colors are on the US flag? *Red, white, and blue*
5. What color is the stem of a red rose? *Green*
6. How do you get skunk smell off? *Tomato Juice*
7. How do you spell Mississippi without “i’s”? *Msssspp (It also counts if he covers his eyes to spell it!)*
8. Which is bigger—a deer tick or a wood tick? *Wood tick*
9. Say the alphabet backward. *Z, y, x, . . . (It also counts if he turns around and recites the alphabet!)*
10. Who is your favorite youth pastor (leader)?
11. Which way do hands turn on a clock? *Clockwise*
12. What is 1800 in civilian time? *6:00 p.m.*
13. What is JVC? *Electronics or stereos (not junior varsity cheerleaders)*
14. What is a Hemi? *Engine (high performance)*

Alternate Questions

1. What disease can you get from a deer tick? *Lime disease*
2. What size shoe do you wear?

The Source for Youth Ministry, “Up-front Games,” <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/upfront.asp>.

TEAM BUILDERS

PLAY-DOH FLINGER THINGY

Supplies (for each team)

1. One can of Play-doh
2. One mouse trap (or even better a rat trap)
3. Two spoons
4. Ten rubber bands
5. One roll of tape
6. Ten paper clips
7. Five clothespins
8. One plate

Basic Scenario: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the first-ever Play-doh Flinger Thingy world championship event. We have assembled several teams from the area to compete in this event. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to build a Flinger Thingy with only the items supplied in the time allowed. The winning team will be the one that launches any size of Play-doh furthest from this spot. (You may have to choose a spot outdoors if you don't have a large room. If you are in a small room, another option is to see who can bounce it the farthest off a wall.) Each team must follow the timeline or risk the possibility of elimination.

Timeline

- Start Gather the group, explain scenario, and hand out supplies.
- :05 Give each group five minutes to plan. They may not touch any of their items; they can only plan what they are about to do.
- :10 Build build build! This should be done without the other teams seeing their design.
- :20 Bring their flinger thingy to the test spot and try it twice. This will give them a chance to see how theirs does and also how others do.
- :30 A time of adjustment! Back to their building areas to make modifications.
- :35 Official results! Give teams five minutes to shoot from behind the line and make as many adjustments as they want.
- :40 Declare a winner and announce a debrief location

Debrief: This event emphasizes the importance of experience. Teens many times have a tendency to disregard the advice of those with more experience. Begin the debrief by asking who kept the exact same design with which they started and made no adjustments. Next ask what the value of experience was to this event. What is experience? Who has experience? Obviously, those that have tried something have experience. As you debrief and ask what lessons can be learned from this event, here are a few topics that may come up.

1. Value of learning from others/my testimony.
2. Learning from myself—usually happens during failure.
3. Failure is valuable.

4. Multiple plans, the difference between okay and best, what is spiritually best or okay.
5. Dealing with changing plans.
6. How major are minor tweaks, importance of little details, importance of little details in your spiritual life.
7. Verses about advice and counsel from the experienced—

Proverbs 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established.

Proverbs 11:14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

TEAM BUILDING

Team builders, adventure games, initiatives—called by many names, these activities provide a wonderful environment for learning. Team building activities can be used in many ways and are popular with youth leaders and youth alike. A group will grow to love the challenge and the increased success they will achieve as they learn the keys to great teamwork. First, a review of Ironwood's philosophy for the team building adventure course, Jed's Quest. Then we will look at how team builders could work for a youth leader, a few pitfalls to avoid, we'll provide some low prop and no prop challenges.

JED'S QUEST: A TEAM BUILDING CHALLENGE

The purpose of Ironwood's Jed's Quest is to build unity in the group and to establish a way of thinking that applies spiritual truth to everyday situations. In the process, groups also learn to work together and to communicate in order to complete a difficult task; personality traits are brought to light, leaders emerge, quiet individuals' ideas are valued, and each member is included. Some groups learn foundational principles and others fine tune their relationships. All will realize anew the need for skills in communication, encouragement, planning, and cooperation. Individuals must think through problems and formulate suggestions to overcome an obstacle.

Where did we get the name "Jed's Quest"? Jedediah Smith was one of the most important men in the exploration days of the Old West. He packed in more achievements between his twenty-third and his thirty-third birthdays than most men do in a lifetime. He was the first man to travel the length and width of the Great Basin, the first to reach California overland from the American frontier, the first to cross the Sierra Nevadas, and the first to reach Oregon by a journey up the California coast. He saw more of the West than any man of his time and was familiar with the territory from the Missouri River to the Pacific, from Mexico to Canada. He survived disasters and massacres. His courage, character, and passion make him an authentic American hero. But it goes deeper than that; he was known as a modest, unassuming man in an age of braggadocios. His testimony stands through the grueling test of time. His Christianity is mentioned in secular history books. He had a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that pervaded every accomplishment. This balanced life is what we want to communicate through Jed's Quest. A self-sacrificing endurance, courage under fire, character in an era of indulgence, and the intelligence and leadership qualities that inspire men to follow no matter what the cost—this is the spirit of Jed's Quest.

Aside from the satisfying and well-sought-after feeling of meeting a challenge, at Jed's Quest we take time after each challenge to discuss the process. Even more important than reviewing the process is the time for discussion of spiritual analogies: "What spiritual, or unseen, truths can we learn from this event?" As well as all the social, physical, and mental advantages being gained by the participants, using Jed's Quest is important to the adult leaders. It reveals attitudes and qualities of those in their group. The single most signifi-

cant factor of Jed's Quest is that it provides a perfect setting for a multitude of spiritual, teachable moments for the participants.

THE NEED: WHY IS TEAM BUILDING IMPORTANT?

We are the body of Christ. A self-sacrificing love is the foundation of the health of our "body" (John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13). This is not a quality that comes without a daily "dying to self." Romans 12:1-2 are familiar verses to us: "present your bodies a living sacrifice." Don't stop reading there! The rest of the chapter deals with the how to be a living sacrifice. Consider verse five: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Being a living sacrifice involves serving people—giving up personal rights in order to promote the body of which we are members. First Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 also deal with the importance of caring for and building up each member of the body. Our society, our schools, our churches, and our families will crumble if teamwork is not practiced. But our sinful nature cries out, "Me first!" Recent tragedies and violence involving young people give us an urgent reminder. Teamwork is a way of thinking that requires overcoming our sinful nature.

THE SETUP: HOW DO I BEGIN?

Preparation

1. The challenge or simulation should include a bit of a story line. Some creativity in the explanation will add to the group's fun and level of participation. Most of the challenges involve a few props. Keep a box or duffle bag with a few supplies, such as blindfolds, lightweight ropes of various lengths, tennis balls, and hula hoops. Keep adding to it as you try new events.
2. The facilitator should think through the challenge from beginning to end and allow enough time for both the success of the group and the wrap-up/application time. Trying the challenge out on a test group of friends may be helpful, but don't let anyone who will participate later be part of the test group. Spend a little time thinking of the needs of your group and some potential applications for the challenge. Pray for wisdom. Keep a note pad and pen handy as you supervise the challenge; jot down comments that you hear and reactions you notice. Keep a few "pats on the back" in your notes, too. The hardest task for the facilitator is silence. Set up the challenge with your story line, answer a couple of clarification questions, and then sit back and watch the group.
3. The group will need to be prepared. If you only have a short time available to you, your first teambuilding challenge should be a very simple one. Allow them an easy success with a minimal struggle. Emphasize one aspect of teamwork at a time. The lesson of communication is a good starting point. Communication blocks, effective communication, destructive communication, non-verbal communication—all make up part of a big life lesson! As your group learns some of the foundational principles of teamwork, you can increase the difficulty of the challenge. A review of some of the lessons learned in the past will give the group a head start on the challenge of the day.

THE PROCESS: WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

The challenge should be physically safe. If there is a potential of physical risk, teach the group to "spot" each other and to value each other's well-being. Each challenge will have a few risks. These risks involve the participants allowing themselves to become vulnerable physically, emotionally, and socially. Address this vulnerability briefly before a challenge that you believe will cause them stress. Have them commit to each other verbally. This could be done as a part of a time-out if you need to step into the process because the group is headed down a destructive path and you are short on time. Think of a few ground rules for edification. These could be established by your group as part of one of the team challenges.

The facilitator has a difficult assignment. It is a delicate balance to allow the group to struggle and yet to ensure a successful outcome. The facilitator should not fear struggle and wrong behavior as a part of the process. The teachable moments that such emotions allow are invaluable. The balance is to keep the emotions from going over the edge where the damage done cannot be recovered from in the time you have avail-

able. The facilitator needs to patiently allow the participants to make mistakes, try various strategies, and learn to communicate.

Some things to avoid—1) adults or non-participants on the sidelines talking or laughing, 2) sideline observers offering suggestions, 3) a challenge that is inappropriate for your group (i.e., for guys and girls together, for a wide age range, or for a physically challenged person). There is extreme value in the group overcoming a perceived handicap. Do not hurry the process. It is more valuable to do one challenge well and take advantage of the teachable moments than to hurry through three or four challenges.

Progression

1. Level One—begin with a simple, physical challenge to warm up the group. Stay at this level for most junior high groups. Some of the Level Two challenges can be made into Level One challenges if the facilitator sets up a basic structure, appoints a leader, or gives a plan to begin the challenge. Basic communication and cooperation skills are learned without having to struggle with complex planning or leadership issues.
2. Level Two—advance to challenges that require the group spend some time planning. This level is a difficult step for 7th and 8th graders or a group without basic communication skills.
3. Level Three—for groups that are really enjoying the puzzle element of the challenges and have established an ability to communicate and trust well, the more advanced challenges require planning, action, evaluation and adjustment. This process, “the action cycle,” is a great life skill. The time required for successful accomplishment of the more advanced challenges may limit their use to special events.

NO PROP CHALLENGES!

EVERYBODY UP: LEVEL ONE OR TWO

The Story: Those desert pygmies must be stopped! They continue to get the best of us. After stealing our shoes, they bind us hand-in-hand to each other (with our own shoelaces) and hang our shoes overhead. They are only three feet tall, so the shoes are never out of reach if we are standing, but we never are. They always seat us in a circle on the very hot sand. Not only is this humiliating, but we also end up with blistered feet. (Not to mention our seats!) Our shoes cast one tiny spot of shade in the center of our group. We have decided that the next time we find ourselves in this predicament that we will be prepared. We will practice standing up with our hands bound and our tender feet on the shaded ground. We will allow ourselves to be bound in a predetermined pattern. We will be able to stand so quickly that we will catch them off guard and be able to teach them a lesson!

Props or Limitations: No props are needed; this is most effective for a group of seven to ten so that each person will become quickly involved in the solution. For larger groups or mixed genders, begin with several smaller groups. If one group finishes very quickly, consider having them offer to send one person from their group to encourage or give advice to another small group. When all the small groups have succeeded, combine two of the small groups and continue combining groups until the entire group is working together.

Rules: Two people from the group sit on the ground and face each other with their feet touching. While maintaining contact with their feet, they should attempt to stand simultaneously by gripping each other's hands and pulling. This action, while somewhat difficult to explain, will be fairly natural to execute. The rest of the group may advise them. When they succeed, add a person, and another, and another until the entire group is working together to stand simultaneously. The group must be completely linked together through their handgrips, but they may choose in what order they are linked. The group must begin from a seated position each time. Be sure to prepare for a “group fall” in the case that a grip is lost. The area should be clear of obstacles and have a relatively soft surface.

Follow Up: After the group has succeeded at the task, ask the group some questions: What happened? What made the challenge difficult? What did you do in order to succeed? Other questions can come from

your observations and notes. For example, “I watched one time when Julie had two different people telling her to do two different things at the same time. What were you thinking, Julie?” “Remember, Frankie, when you let go of George’s hand? What happened to the rest of the group?” This time of discussion allows them to laugh, verbalize some of their feelings, and share in the victory. After they have had a chance to do this, move the discussions to the spiritual application stage by saying, “Every time we do one of these challenges I want you come up with some spiritual object lessons. I want you to come up with a lesson that we can learn about real life from the challenge that we have just done. Can anyone think of an object lesson from this challenge?”

During the challenge event, the facilitator’s goal is to enable the group to succeed on their own; during the follow-up or debrief, the goal is to lead them by asking good questions to discover the lessons on their own. The facilitator should resist the temptation to teach the lesson.

Spiritual Applications: Don’t be afraid to wait a minute for the group to think. Silence isn’t a bad thing if they are thinking. An example may help them think.

1. The team can’t succeed without everyone participating. If we hold back or hesitate, we throw the entire team off balance. Our youth group is like that. If we try to protect ourselves by hesitating, we handicap the group. What are some examples of hesitating or holding back in our group?
2. Success requires us to be fully committed and to trust each other. To do this, we make ourselves vulnerable; we may think, “What if I fully trust and someone else doesn’t? That will make me look silly or to fall.” Our lives are like that: we are told in the Bible to make ourselves vulnerable. Can you think of any verses that say this? When might you feel vulnerable in this group?
3. We began with only two and slowly increased our number. If we had started as a large group, do you think we would have had a hard time? Did the lessons we learned along the way increase the speed of our success as we grew? Sometimes life is like that: we plug along through struggle after struggle, and as we look back we can see God’s hand at work preparing us for more and more. Can you think of any examples from your life?
4. I’m sure you will come up with much more!

GROUP PUSHUP: LEVEL ONE OR TWO

A difficult physical challenge

The Story: We find ourselves in a cave on the shore of an icy sea. As the tide rises, we need to get ourselves off the floor of the cave, but the ceiling of the cave is only three feet high. We would quickly fall prey to hypothermia if our clothing becomes wet from the icy water. We came equipped with insulated, waterproof gloves, but the rest of our waterproof clothing has become torn and would quickly fill with the deadly cold water. We only need to remain off the floor for a very short time (approximately thirty seconds) in order to avoid the quickly rising high tide. We must determine how to work together to have the entire group off the floor with only our hands touching the floor. No part of our bodies can sag below eighteen inches; because the ceiling of the cave is jagged and dangerous, no part of our bodies can rise above thirty-six inches.

Props or Limitations: No props are needed; this activity works best for a small group of guys of relatively equal size and strength. Several accommodations can be made for a weaker member or a member who may carry a heavier load. Depending on the maturity and relationships of your group, you may allow them to struggle through this added challenge, or you may need to offer some hints in order to prevent a situation that may put the spotlight on a young man already sensitive about his weight or strength. Allowing a weaker member or a person lifting an extra load to do his pushup first gives him a significant advantage. He can do a pushup with his knees on the ground, then straighten and lock his knees after getting his arms straightened and locked. This same principle suggests that the last person up will have the most difficult task so a simultaneous pushup is the best way to spread the load out equally.

Rules: Depending on the size, insight, and strength of the group, you can allow them to create a plan on their own from the scenario alone or you may jump start them. For a quicker solution, begin with only three young men. Arrange them on their stomachs on the ground in a circle head to toe. Put the shins of each young man across the upper back of the young man at his feet. They should attempt to do a group pushup and lift each other's feet off the ground so that only hands are touching the ground. As they succeed, add members to the group one at a time. You may also begin with many small groups of three or four, combine two small groups, and so on until the entire group is working together for one giant pushup.

Variations: By limiting the space, you can change the challenge. The group may attempt to arrange themselves in such a way that several members don't need to carry anyone else's weight, or you can give a strong member a handicap or give them some "equipment" to carry. The physical challenge of a pushup alone is difficult for many, so watch out for members who may be unable to do a regular pushup. This is a very fun challenge to give older teens. Make a choice ahead of time to allow or limit the role of the observers. There are advantages and disadvantages for both choices: silence or coaching.

Follow Up: Ask the group some questions. The same questions work to begin most discussions. See the follow-up for "Everybody Up." Some more examples: "I watched John struggle with the weight on his back for a long time before anyone noticed the problem. John, what were you thinking?" "Miguel, I heard you say, 'Come on guys!' You sounded pretty frustrated. What was going on?" Remember, this time of discussion allows them to laugh, verbalize some of their feelings, and share in the victory. It is very valuable to learn to adjust for the strengths and weaknesses of the various individuals in the group while still making every member feel a significant part of the group. Help them discover that sometimes those who are weaker physically have strengths in other areas that are keys to success in other challenges. Take the time to create this lesson by being prepared to remind them of examples when this happened.

Spiritual Applications: Give them a moment of silence to think. Following are some possible directions these applications can go; take the time to be specific with your group.

1. In order for the body of Christ to succeed we must communicate our needs. Because of the position we are in, we can't see what or who causes the breakdowns. Does that bring any examples to mind? What do you think the word *edify* means, and how might it apply to this challenge? What aspects of love are illustrated by this challenge?
2. Was it difficult to take advice from the people on the outside watching? How is that like real life? What makes the advice difficult to accept? What could make that advice easier to receive? (Encourage them to think of specific examples.) What does God's Word say about this?
3. If someone in the group is capable of more but doesn't want to do any more work than the weakest member, what would that do to our efforts? How is that like real life? Can you think of any examples from the Bible? That is just like our youth group, each member is responsible to use the talents that he has been given and not to compare himself to anyone else. Illustrations could come from the parable of the talents or the passages on the parts of the body. Consider 2 Corinthians 10:12.

GROUP SIT: LEVEL ONE OR TWO

The Story: We need to sit and rest on one of our adventures deep into uncharted jungle territory, but there are no benches. We are uneasy about the vegetation. The plants resemble the carnivorous insect eating plants of the wetlands we have visited on other adventures . . . only gigantic. We don't trust them. A mysterious traveler challenges us to "sit and solve a riddle of a wheel of flesh where no one stands but all feel upright. No one carries his own weight but each carries the weight of another." What could he be talking about?! We decide to stop and solve his riddle.

Props or Limitations: No props are needed; this is a very good challenge for a large group but could be quite awkward for a mixed group. If you want to use this challenge with a mixed group, consider positioning siblings or spouses together at the junction of guys and girls. A large space free of obstacles with a rela-

tively soft surface is required. You can give them enough structure to enable them to succeed; they will still the adventure of discovery as they experience the team working to sit down and completely trust. A group of less than eight will have a difficult time with this challenge.

Rules: Stand in a circle with your right arm towards the center. If you have a mixed gender group, you may want to divide the group into a guys group and a girls group. It is very important to emphasize before beginning that once we have achieved success we must be very careful in exiting our loop. If anyone pulls out of the circle independently, all will end up falling. The group must execute a “dismount” with as much care as they use in achieving success.

Variations: A variation would be to have them do this without speaking or even blindfolded. After success has been achieved in the group sit, attempt to “spin” the wheel by “walking.”

Follow Up: Ask the group the basic questions listed in the previous challenges. “What made this challenge difficult?” “What enabled us to succeed?” Continue with questions from your observations and notes. For example, “I enjoyed watching Jerry’s face. Jerry, what were you thinking?” “Frances, what were you were nervous about?” “Genny, was that true? Did she ‘squish’ you? Why wasn’t it difficult?” Remember to bring out any conflict that occurred and to deal with this conflict in a biblical way.

Spiritual Applications: This activity can illustrate many principles.

1. Edification—the principle that we should carry each other’s burdens—Galatians 6, 1 Thessalonians 5.
2. Maturity—this activity gets easier with practice. Many things in the Christian life are like that. When we start (fill in the blank—being kind, being honest, obeying mom, etc.), it is really hard! But with practice, the basics become easier; it becomes natural, even enjoyable.
3. Trust and love—the idea of completely resting on the knee of the one behind me is difficult. I want to protect myself and to not be a burden to you. However, the only way I will be able to help the one depending on me and allow the group to succeed is if I trust the one behind me—1 Corinthians 13.

ROPE CHALLENGES

COMMUNITY JUMP ROPE: LEVEL ONE

The Story: We are traveling as a group through an underground ventilation system. We have come to a ventilation fan that blocks the tunnel. The blades are turning very slowly, and it looks like we can pass through between the blades if we time it just right. We know that the alarm system in these ventilation shafts is fairly primitive. If we pass through in small groups, we won’t be detected. If we pass through one at a time, we will be. Also, we must pass through on consecutive turns of the fan, or we will be detected by the alarm system.

Props or Limitations: You will need thirty-foot, moderately heavy rope and two strong people to swing the rope like a giant jump rope. They should turn big steady slow circles for the group. You will need a room with a high ceiling and a big open area free of obstacles.

Rules: Stand on one side of the swinging jump rope and pass through the rope as it turns. The group should take a little time to plan before attempting passage through the “fan.” Once the first group members have passed through the rope, the rope may not make a complete turn without a small group passing through. If this gap occurs, the entire group must begin again. Remind them to take a little time before beginning to make a plan and arrange themselves in little groups.

Variations: You can create several variations. Pass through as individuals, pass through as one entire large group, or split the group in half and have them change sides by passing through the swinging rope.

Follow Up: Ask the group the basic questions listed in the previous challenges. “What made this challenge difficult?” “What enabled us to succeed?” Continue with questions from your observations and notes. Point out how this challenge is easy for some and difficult for others. Having those who find the task easy help those who find the task hard will illustrate many spiritual truths.

Spiritual Applications: This activity simple, fun, and can create some great illustrations on encouragement and stronger Christians helping the weaker Christians.

THE HOUSE: LEVEL TWO OR THREE

The level depends on how you set up the group and how much information you initially give them.

The Story: If you use your imagination to set up each challenge, you will add an element of adventure and create a reason for the group to attempt the task that you have for them. For instance, to present the challenge for the group to make the shape of a house out of a fifty-foot piece of rope, create a story like this:

A group of us have gone to visit a newly discovered tribe. The tribesmen are suspicious of us, and they tie us together with a long rope and consider keeping us from returning home. We know that we must prove our value to them and show them that we have a desire to help them. As the tribal leaders huddle together hotly debating our future, we know that language is a barrier that will be hard to overcome. We notice in the distance a building with a flat roof. A group of people are working; they are carrying out pots of water and water-damaged items from inside the home. We realize that rain has caused the flat roof to leak. We believe that we can show them a better way to build their roof and possibly prove our goodwill to the tribal leaders. We must quickly arrange ourselves into the shape of a square house with a peaked roof.

Props or Limitations: You will need a thirty- to fifty-foot rope. The challenge works best for a group of seven to twenty people but could accommodate larger groups. The larger the group, the more difficult the challenge. You may need to draw a picture for them to help them get started. You will need a fairly large open space.

Rules: The group must hold onto a long rope with one hand. They may slide along the rope but never let go of it or change places with anyone along the rope. The challenge is to form a square house with a peaked roof without the rope doubling back on itself. This puzzle is often done with a pencil and paper by saying “draw a house without lifting your pencil from the paper or overlapping any lines, your line may cross over itself.” An envelope with a flap may be easier to visualize than a house but it would be the same shape.

Follow-up: Ask the same type of questions as in the previous section. “What happened?” “What made the challenge difficult?” “What did you do in order to succeed?” Continue with questions from your observations and notes. Look for specific people to call on to talk about their experience—frustration, fear, confusion, tone of voice, attitude, relationship struggles and effort expended are all good issues to get them to put into words.

Spiritual Applications: This challenge usually lends itself well to lessons on communication and vision. Often outspoken leaders will have a faulty plan, and quiet thinkers will not attempt to communicate their ideas. Responsibility and humility are great targets for discussion. Special responsibilities come with our gifts and our place in the body of Christ. All the members of the body have responsibilities to the body. You can direct the applications in a specific direction by making an observation and asking a question.

1. Maturity—often group members get frustrated when they can’t see the plan or haven’t had a chance to be part of the plan. They often react by pulling out of the process emotionally. What does the Bible have to say about this? Maturity can be defined as “doing the right thing at the right time with the right attitude.” Gratefulness and a sense of others first are part of knowing what the right thing or right time

- is. For the benefit of the body, we must risk expressing our ideas or concerns to the group. Knowing how and when to express an idea so that others can and will listen is part of maturity.
- Humility—often several ways will lead to the same solution. It takes humility to listen to all the ideas, humility to stop and re-evaluate my own ideas, humility to follow someone else when I think my idea is best, and humility to shine the spotlight on someone with an idea. What does the Bible say about humility? How is humility needed in our youth group?
 - Communication happens on several levels in this challenge. Some communication won't even be conscious effort. Think of the things that break down effective communication and things that enable effective communication. Name some biblical principles that apply.

THE STAR: LEVEL TWO OR THREE

The Story: Be creative with your adventure-filled scenario. We are going to start with a fifty-foot circle of rope and make a five-pointed star. To communicate information to a helicopter from a raft adrift at sea? To ask a symbol-based culture what direction we need to go in order to get home? Why do we make a star? Why do we need to hold onto the rope? Where are we? For whom are we making the star?

Props or Limitations: A fifty-foot piece of rope with the ends tied together so that it forms a loop. The group size can range from five to fifty, but the challenge is probably ideal for about twenty people. You will find that the more people involved, the more difficult the challenge. This is a very difficult challenge! You will need a fairly large open space.

Rules: Each group member must grab the rope with one hand. They may slide along the rope, but they cannot let go of the rope or change places with anyone along the rope in the process of accomplishing this task. The whole group must create a five-pointed star with the rope, just like the star that crisscrosses in the middle. Once they think they have accomplished the task, they should carefully set the rope down on the ground and step back to admire their work.

Follow-up: Ask the same type of questions as in the previous section. “What happened?” “What made the challenge difficult?” “What did you do in order to succeed?” Continue with questions from your observations and notes. For example, “Joe, you were the leader. What frustrated you the most?” “Did you believe it could be done?” “What made you keep going?”

Spiritual Application: This challenge usually lends itself well to lessons on perseverance, patience, adjustment, and planning. You can direct the applications in a specific direction by making an observation and asking a question.

- We really had to work together to accomplish this task. Everyone had to be willing to endure some chaos and some trial and error. How can this process be used in our homes and in our youth group?
- Communication is difficult if the group is large. Having one person talking at a time is hard when they are facing different directions. Think of the things that break down effective communication and things that enable effective communication. Can you think of some biblical principles that apply? Can you think of how and when these things happen in our homes and youth group?

SCRIPT WORK

The Story: It is dark, we are deep in enemy territory, and we need to send a one-word message to the command post. We each have a letter that needs to be used in the word, all the letters should be used, and no extra letters can be included. Our spy plane will fly over in just a few minutes, and we have a rope that can be seen by the special equipment on the plane's sensors. The plane will see and record the word, transmit our word to the command post, and there it will be decoded.

Props or Limitations: The rope should be about thirty feet long, and each member of the group will need a blindfold. A group of seven is ideal. Several groups could work on this challenge independently and the

debrief would work as one large group, each having had a little different experience. You will need an open space free from obstacles.

Rules: Each member of the team should put on a blindfold and choose a letter. No more than two people in the group should have the same letter. We hope that several will choose vowels. (Don't reveal the challenge to create a word until after they have chosen their letters.) After they have announced their letters aloud, tell them the scenario. Each person is responsible to form the letter that he has chosen and the group should come up with a word that uses each of the letters. Answer any questions they may have.

Follow Up: Ask the basic follow-up questions: What made it work? What made it difficult? What would you do differently if you were going to start again? Continue with questions from your observations and notes. For example, "What happens to communication when you can't see the group?" "What happens to the adjustment and evaluation process when you can't see your progress?" It is fun to share your observations about how different individuals went about the challenge since they couldn't see what was happening. Often people will make assumptions, both in the giving and receiving of instructions. When they can't adjust their instructions based upon seeing the person, the project can become very different from how it was originally meant to be.

Spiritual Application: This would be a fairly simple task if you could see, but the handicap increases the challenge. This task can teach great lessons about communication and the many things that can cause us to be blind to a person's real needs.

1. Blindness and darkness are illustrations that the Lord uses several times to describe a person who isn't saved. From this challenge, what kind of things come to mind that illustrate the handicap of trying to talk to unsaved people about spiritual things? What spiritual truths are illustrated by the way we have to be so careful to communicate to "blindfolded" people? What lessons can we learn about listening carefully when we are blindfolded?
2. Asking questions and good listening skills are foundational to understanding a person's true needs. What kind of lessons can we learn about trying to give counsel or advice to someone when we don't understand the real problem? What is the biblical solution to this handicap?

INDOOR CHALLENGES WITH PEN AND PAPER

These challenges have proven very useful for large groups. The events usually feel like a competitive game when they start; that is part of the fun of the lessons to be learned. We don't encourage deceiving the group into feeling competitive; it usually happens without any provocation! Don't announce these events as team builders; set them up as adventure games.

WIN AS MUCH AS YOU CAN

Objective: To win as much as you can!

Props or Limitations: You will need one chart (next page) and a pen or pencil for each small group. You will need to divide the main group into four groups and have a large room for them to be far enough apart to not overhear the other groups' strategies. You will need a way to mark the scores for all to see each round (e.g., a white board, overhead projector, or video projector). You will need a second room or hallway to take the team representatives out of the main room for a couple of "conferences."

Rules

1. Divide the audience into four groups.
 - a. Make sure you do not call the groups a team, a department, or anything that would promote competition.

WIN AS MUCH AS YOU CAN

The objective of this exercise is to win as much as you can. For ten successive rounds your group will choose either X or Y. The payoff for each round is dependent upon the pattern of choices made by all the groups. Take three minutes to look over and discuss in your group the values listed below.

4 X's : Lose \$1 each
3 X's : Win \$1 each
1 Y : Lose \$3
2 X's : Win \$2 each
2 Y's : Lose \$2 each
1 X : Win \$3
3 Y's : Lose \$1 each
4 Y's : Win \$1 each

ROUND	TIME ALLOWED	CONFER WITH	CHOICE	\$ WON	\$ LOST	BALANCE
1	2 minutes	Group				
2	1 minute	Group				
3	1 minute	Group				
4	4 minutes	All Groups			x 3	
5	1 minute	Group				
6	1 minute	Group				
7	1 minute	Group				
8	4 minutes	All Groups			x 5	
9	1 minute	Group				
10	4 minutes	All Groups			x 5	

- b. Divide the audience so that husbands and wives are not in the same group and the members of departments (office, maintenance, etc.) are not in the same group .
2. Hand each group one or two copies of the paper. (See previous page.) Each group should have a record keeper.
3. There are ten rounds with different time limits in each round. At the end of every round, each group must put an *X* or *Y* in the choice column. Then each group must reveal its choice.
4. Refer to the table to find how much each group made.
5. In rounds four, eight, and ten, each group will send one representative to the middle of the room to discuss what the four groups should do. After the groups reveal their choices, multiply loss or gain by the number in the column.
6. At the end of the ten rounds, each group will tally its total score, which will probably be negative.
7. The points you make are the following:
 - a. This exercise is designed to show the effects of trust or the lack of it due to competition. Reveal to each group that they are really a small team in one large team. The money you were trying to win was for the team as a whole. If the four small teams would have worked together, the group as whole would have made \$80. Each group would have contributed \$20. What will undoubtedly happen is that each group (team) will try to outdo the others.
 - b. In the rounds in which the groups got together, chances are that trust was broken. You will find from that point on things became negative. When trust is broken, it does not come back.
 - c. If we are going to successfully work as one team, all the groups must work together, totally trusting each other. This exercise shows what will happen if trust is broken or one group does not work with the team.
 - d. Try it with high schoolers to get an idea of what will happen.

Spiritual Application: The lessons about trust, vulnerability, influence, integrity, how quickly these can be destroyed, and how long it takes to restore these create great teachable moments for your group that you can refer back to over several weeks and months. “That was an *X* decision” may become a way to describe a selfish action. Be sure to not miss the wide-open opportunity this challenge creates to address specific weaknesses or problems in your group. The fun of the lesson and the intensity of the emotion can create long-lasting memories.

TIC TAC CHALLENGE

Objective: To score as many points as you can!

Props or Limitations: You will need two or three copies of the game grid (see next page) and a pen or pencil for each small group. You will need to divide the main group into groups of two to five. Each group will need a surface on which to play. You will need a scoreboard for the entire group to see (a whiteboard, etc.).

Rules: Give the instructions clearly and quickly before too many questions can be asked in front of the whole group. In the first round or two, try to never say the word competition; the group will immediately assume that is the goal. Ask everyone to choose one of the symbols from the game grid that they will play on. Emphasize the scoring system. Highlight the fact that four in a row results in four victory bonus points and ends the game. After the first few rounds, begin to point out the total scores for each grid as well as for

the individuals playing on that grid. Drop a few hints about high scores being possible; 124 could be a target to shoot for. If you want to set a challenge for them after they begin to think teamwork, announce a world record of 270 points.

To review the scoring system: Each symbol on the grid is worth one point. Three of the same symbol in a row earn an additional two point bonus; therefore, this combination scores five points. Four of the same in a row could score twelve points: one point for each of the four symbols, a two-point bonus for the enclosed three in a row, a two-point bonus for the second three in a row overlapping the first three in a row, and finally the four victory points. But, you also end the game.

RESOURCES

Project Adventure, Inc., www.pa.org, 800.796.9917, PO Box 100, Hamilton, MA 09636—*many valuable resources (books, equipment, and how tos). The books are relatively inexpensive but have a wide variety of information in them, which you may not be able to use, i.e., ropes course obstacles. Karl Rohnke is a popular author and creator for them (take him with a large grain of salt), and he seems to be founder of the team-building movement.*

Learning Unlimited Corporation (LUC), 918.622.3292, 5155 East 51st, Suite 108, Tulsa, OK 74135.

Cowtails and Cobras II by Karl Rohnke (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 1989), ISBN 0840354347.

Silver Bullets by Karl Rohnke (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 1984), ISBN 084035682X.

Quicksilver by Karl Rohnke and Steve Butler (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 1995), ISBN 0787216100.

The Bottomless Bag by Karl Rohnke (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt), ISBN 0840366337.

The Bottomless Baggie by Karl Rohnke (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 1991), ISBN 0840368135.

The Bottomless Bag Again by Karl Rohnke (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 1994), ISBN 0840387571.

Fun Stuff by Rohnke (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 1996), ISBN 078721633X.

These books are very suitable for indoor activities for groups of various sizes:

Executive Marbles by Sam Sikes (Tulsa, OK: Learning Unlimited Corp., 1998), ISBN 0964654121.

Feeding the Zircon Gorilla by Sam Sikes (Tulsa, OK: Learning Unlimited Corp., 1995), ISBN 0964654105.

Playful Activities for Powerful Presentations by Bruce Williamson (Duluth, MN: Whole Person Associates Inc., 1994), ISBN 0938586777.

Into the Classroom by Mitchell Sakofs and Outward Bound (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 1995), ISBN 078721972X.

Affordable Portables by Chris Cavert (Oklahoma City: Wood N' Barnes, 1999), ISBN 1885473400.

The Book on Raccoon Circles by Jim Cain and Tom Smith (Tulsa, OK: Learning Unlimited Corp., 2002), ISBN 0964654164. (Available at www.teamworkandteamplay.com.)

ACTIVITIES WITH A THEME

CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS BINGO

Divide your group into at least three teams and have them choose a creative Christmas-related team name. After they do that, explain to them the object of the game.

Objective: Be the first team to get a bingo (five in a row any direction) or be the group to get bingo the most in the allotted time.

Rules

1. The team must stay together for the entire time
2. The adult leader of the group should be able to verify that the task was accomplished
3. Be back on time

Supplies

1. Bingo sheets (*See next two pages for one used in San Francisco.*)
2. Pens
3. Maps of your town or city
4. Some type of camera for each team (Polaroid, digital, video)
5. Prize

Considerations

1. This event works best in a well-populated area such as a downtown or a shopping mall.
2. Come up with some ideas that would be unique to your playing area.
3. About ninety minutes should be enough time.
4. Have some sort of prize for the winning team.
5. Consider meeting at a restaurant after the game.

CHRISTMAS CAROL QUIZ

Name that Christmas Carol—

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Bleached Yule | 18. Red Man en Route to Borough |
| 2. Castaneous-colored Seed Vesicated in a Conflagration | 19. Frozen Precipitation Commence |
| 3. Righteous Darkness | 20. Spill the 411 on the Baby |
| 4. Smack the Passageways | 21. Song about a Hoofed Animal with a
Crimson Schnozola |
| 5. Loyal Followers Advance | 22. The Dozen Festive 24-hour Intervals |
| 6. Far Off in a Feeder | 23. Traversing in the Fourth Season in an
Amazing Country |
| 7. Quiet Non-day | 24. Singular Yearning for the Twin Ante-
rior Incisors |
| 8. It Showed Up on a Cloudless Twelve at Night | 25. Chilled the Crystallized H ₂ O Male |
| 9. Move and Speak Toward the Elevated Plain | |
| 10. Yahweh Sleep You Happy Dudes | |
| 11. Hey! The Number One Angelic Beings Belt It Out | |
| 12. Shaking Chimes | |
| 13. Happiness to the Planet | |
| 14. 12-25 Shrubbery Song | |
| 15. Small Percussionist Lad | |
| 16. Small City of Christ's Birth Song | |
| 17. Trio That's Royalty from China | |

B I N G O

<p>Find someone you don't know who has the same birthday as someone in your group and take a PICTURE with him.</p> <p>Birth date: Signature:</p>	<p>Get a PICTURE with three Chinese people and your group outside the gates at China Town.</p>	<p>Have your entire group go to the top floor of Macy's via the escalator and have a clerk sign below.</p> <p>Signature:</p>	<p>Get five people you don't know to tell you one of their Christmas traditions. Write the traditions on the back of this paper and have each person sign his name by his tradition.</p>	<p>Have someone you don't know write a new chorus to "Jingle Bells" on the back of this paper and get his signature.</p> <p>Signature:</p>
<p>Find the most expensive item you can in Nordstrom at San Francisco Center and write down the purchase price below. Take a PICTURE of it, too.</p>	<p>Get three people you don't know to sing one verse of "Silent Night" with your group and have the three sign below.</p> <p>Signature: Signature: Signature:</p>	<p>Find a Starbucks and get a nutritional menu from them and have a clerk sign the menu.</p>	<p>Get two people from your group to get a PICTURE with Santa Claus.</p>	<p>Find someone who looks like Santa Claus but is not dressed in a red suit, get a PICTURE of him, and have him sign below.</p> <p>Signature:</p>
<p>Get ten people you don't know to finish the phrase "Twas the night before Christmas..." and write the words on the back of this page.</p>	<p>Get something from the Macy's at Union Square that has the name Macy's on it and bring it back with you at the conclusion of the game.</p>	<p>Get something to represent each of the Twelve Days of Christmas and bring those twelve items with you at the conclusion of the game.</p>	<p>Find someone you don't know who can write down all the names of Santa's reindeer on the back of this page. Have him sign here—</p> <p>Signature:</p>	<p>Go to the Sir Francis Drake Motel and get a group PICTURE with the doorman.</p>
<p>Get something from the Chinese restaurant (Cathay House) at the corner of Grant and California (across from Old St. Mary's church). It must have the restaurant's name on it.</p>	<p>Find a street performer and get a PICTURE with at least three people from your group "performing" with him.</p>	<p>Get a PICTURE with three people from your group and a homeless person.</p>	<p>Get someone you don't know to whistle "Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer" and have him sign below.</p> <p>Signature:</p>	<p>The song "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" talks of "figgy pudding." Find the best definition someone not in your group can give you of what that is and write it below.</p>
<p>Get two people from your group and two people who work at a fast food restaurant to sing a quartet special of "Away in a Manger." Get a PICTURE.</p>	<p>Take a short poll and ask fifteen people you don't know what their favorite Christmas movie is. Tally the results on the back of this page.</p>	<p>Get a ticket stub from one of the events at the Orphium Theatre and bring it back with you at the conclusion of the game.</p>	<p>Get a cable car guy to let your group help him turn the cable car and get a PICTURE of at least five people in your group doing the job.</p>	<p>There is an interesting display in the window of the Wells Fargo Bank on Montgomery and California—what is the display? Take a PICTURE of it.</p>

<p>CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS</p> <p>1. <i>Signature:</i></p> <p>2. <i>Signature:</i></p> <p>3. <i>Signature:</i></p> <p>4. <i>Signature:</i></p> <p>5. <i>Signature:</i></p>	<p>CHRISTMAS MOVIE POLL RESULTS</p> <p>•</p> <p>•</p> <p>•</p> <p>•</p> <p>•</p> <p>•</p> <p>•</p> <p>•</p>
<p>NEW "JINGLE BELLS" CHORUS:</p>	<p>"TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS . . ."</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p>
<p>THE NAMES OF SANTA'S REINDEER:</p>	<p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>

CHRISTMAS CAROL CHAOS

Divide group into teams. Each team sends one person up; give him the name of a Christmas carol. The person returns to group and tries to get the group to guess the name of the carol by **DRAWING ONLY**. As soon as the group knows the song, they must sing it as loud as they can. After singing the carol, they send a new person for another song. Play continues until one group completes all five songs.

Tips and Tricks

1. Make sure your group is well warmed up, or the teens won't want to sing.
2. Make the carols easy ones.
3. If your teams are very large, you may need a chalkboard, dry erase board, or big sheet of butcher paper on the wall so that everyone can see.

The Source for Youth Ministry, "Games & Icebreakers," <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/>.

THE SIAMESE TWIN GIFT-WRAP

Divide your group into teams of two people. You'll need to have wrapping paper, tape, and all supplies for wrapping a present, in this case a tissue paper box is ideal. The teams will need to wrap the present standing side by side with one hand free and the other on each others' waists. The idea is two people side by side, one using his left hand, the other person using his right hand. The object is to see which Siamese Twin team can wrap their present the best in the allotted time. Teams select the best package as the winner. This can also be played as a relay or be based on fastest time, as long as it is wrapped correctly.

Have players attempt to rip the sheet of construction paper into the shape of a Christmas tree, behind their back. Players are not allowed to look at their creation until it is complete. Hang the works of art for everyone to judge. Give prizes for the best-looking trees.

FROSTY'S PORTRAIT

Give players a piece of paper and a marker. Instruct them to draw a snowman, with the piece of paper on the top of their heads. Display the drawings and have players vote on the best-looking drawings.

CHRISTMAS SCULPTURES

Supplies: Be sure to have enough supplies for creative sculptors.

1. Rolls of news print or packing paper—the end rolls of newsprint can be obtained from a local newspaper at a small price; they do not use the end of the roll.
2. Christmas wrapping paper.
3. Packing tape and Scotch tape.

Divide teams and set a time limit (twenty-five minutes). Assign two sculptures to be made. You might assign a star or an angel or a gift; the teams have to come up with the second sculpture themselves. Depending on the group, you will want to adjust the time spent on the project. (When we used this, the teens were enthusiastic. The sculptures were complicated and elaborate, taking a lot of time, so I kept adding five minutes at a time as they were really into the activity. One star turned out to be six feet tall and the angels were living sculptures.) When time is up, judge the sculptures. Give points to each team; be creative in your awarding of points for various reasons.

Sculpture Hide and Hunt: Without telling the teens previously, give the teams five minutes to hide their sculptures and five minutes for teams to find them. Award points for each sculpture found. (This was a great time as some of our sculptures were living sculptures. The angels were ladies wrapped with wings and paper harps and elaborate gowns. These angels were hidden also with someone to provide company.) You will need to set clear boundaries, e.g., no hiding on the roof or in the storm drains.

GLOW STICK GAMES

WAYS TO USE A GLOW STICK

1. Identify teams
2. Create atmosphere in your surroundings
3. Identify leadership
4. Highlight a person who is talking (e.g., to pass around at a testimony fire)
5. Create a night hike in the woods or in a dark place (The hike leader should be someone who did not set up the path.)
6. Use as a baton in relay races
7. Attach one to a ball and have a glowing egg-toss like game at night
8. Make boundaries under a cone or just lying on the ground
9. Change up games a bit or make games usable at night (bombardment games or the ones listed below)
10. Attach strings to them and make floating lights in the air

GLOW STICK GAMES

Capture the Flag

1. Use two different color lights as the flags to be captured.
2. Use lights to raise the difficulty by having each player wear their color.
3. Have some light sticks resemble MIA members who you are trying to free as you try to capture the flag.

Ultimate Frisbee Football

Using a light-up Frisbee, give two different color glow sticks to divide teams.

Search Games

1. Hide a number of glow sticks and have teens search for them.
2. In Sardines, all players begin with glow sticks. When a player joins a Sardine group, he should pocket his glow stick, leaving the searchers clearly identifiable.

American Eagle

Have each person start with a glow stick. Depending on the way you have set up the game, those who are caught would lose their glow sticks and become catchers with no glow stick or a different colored glow stick.

GLOW STICK SOURCES

1. Wholesaleglowsticks.com has a glow ball that you assemble from the glow bracelets (bracelets start at 9¢ for 500). They also have glow stick candles for 49¢ each for 125.
2. GlowRus.com has a glow ball and accessories for \$7.50 and four-inch glow sticks at a quantity of 50 for \$17.50. Six-inch sticks were \$19.50 for 50. Both of these have about three hours of good glow. A better quality will last longer but cost more.

OLYMPIC BEDLAM

BUMSLEDDING

Get with three others and form a bobsled team. Sit on the floor in a line and wrap your legs around the person in front of you to form your sled. While sitting, scoot forward ten feet. Have one of your teammates sign your paper.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES?

Get with another person. You are the announcers giving us the last twenty to thirty seconds of an amazing ice hockey gold medal victory by the underdog Ecuadorian team. Stand on a chair and let the world know what is happening. Sign each other's sheets.

JUDGE NOT

Get with two other people. Two of you are figure skaters, and the third person is the judge. The skaters must skate twenty seconds and include exciting jumps and spins. Remember that judges love the double axel-double toe loop combo. After the skating performance, the judge will announce the score by holding up between one and ten fingers (ten being perfect). The skaters should react accordingly. Initial each other's sheets.

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Give someone a piggyback ride across the room using skiing motions and making Nordic noises (whatever those are). Sign each other's sheets.

WE WON!!!

The Team USA just got gold, silver, and bronze medals. Grab two others, stand on a chair, and sing the first part of our national anthem (through "were so gallantly streaming") while waving to the crowd. Initial each other's sheets.

PLAY DOUGH PANORAMA

Things you could do with twenty to forty pounds of play dough. (We used 30 pounds for a group of 55 and had plenty.) Isaiah 64:8 is a great verse for the devotional.

Isaiah 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

CAVEMAN

Get a couple of Styrofoam wig holders and give each team three minutes to collect "stuff." After the three minutes, give them lots of play dough to reconstruct a caveman face complete with jewelry, hair, etc.

TWO-MINUTE CHALLENGES

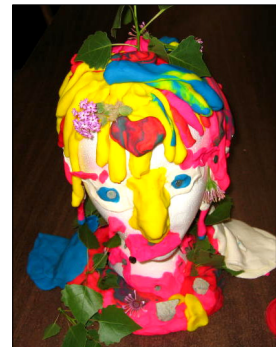
1. Create the tallest free-standing-for-30-seconds structure
2. Make the longest continual string of play dough
3. Cover as much of a person's head as possible

CLAYMATION

If you have a small group, try to make your own claymation slide presentation. If you need a good idea of what to animate with clay, google "Bambi meets Godzilla." This 1969 short film is a classic. You may even be able to show the original and then show your rendition.

SCULPTIONARY

Divide into teams of four to six and pick one person to be the sculptor. Use Pictionary cards to determine what the people have to sculpt. Stay in the middle of the groups so that you can hear the first group that says the correct answer. Rotate sculptors.



PERFECT FAMILY

Each group sculpts the perfect play dough family and family room. Compare notes on what the groups thought made up the perfect family. Have each team mold a playscot (mascot) to be smashed by the winner.

Tips and Tricks

1. Put a plastic tarp down before you ever get started.
2. Have somebody check shoes for play dough as people leave the tarp.
3. Play dough does clean up fine.
4. Use play dough containers to hold chip dip for your refreshments.
5. Buy cookie dough for refreshments.

PLATFORM PHILOSOPHY

1. General Considerations
 - a. Services at camp are different than services at church.
 - b. Participation is an underlying goal during services at camp.
 - c. Participation occurs on several levels—watching a pre-service PowerPoint; cheering for, being involved in, or laughing at a stunt; singing songs and doing the actions during songs; opening Bible during preaching; responding in heart or walking forward during an invitation.
 - d. Services will be designed to be age and gender appropriate.
 - e. The work of changing hearts is the Holy Spirit's job—attempt to do all things in order to cooperate with Him in this work.
 - f. The platform should glorify God in all things fun and serious.
 - g. The music program will avoid offense and stick with sacred, traditional songs, choruses, and Scripture songs.
 - h. Endeavor to know the speaker and the audience.
 - i. Endeavor to eliminate distractions in the service—a distraction is anything that causes the audience to not be prepared or able to hear the message that God has for them at the service and beyond. This can occur in many ways such as plat-jacking (hijacking the platform by laughing or singing louder than the crowd, clapping alone, talking during announcements, anticipating punch lines in skits, etc.), scolding, poorly presented special music, piano gaps, PowerPoint spelling errors, lack of preparation, or energy level too high or too low for the speaker's style.
2. Types of services—adjust for how the speaker feels led.
 - a. Teaching—shorter and possibly more relaxed for interaction.
 - b. Invitation—have a point of persuasion.
3. Announcements.
 - a. Important but should not outweigh the goals of the service.
 - b. Take into account timing—both in where they are placed in the program and in how much time is given to them.
 - c. Strategies should be made in consideration of other elements in the program (e.g., an offering).
 - d. Maximum effort should be made to make the written schedule coincide with the actual length of service—balance eliminating distractions (too long a service vs. no answers) and optimum number of young people present (everyone there at the stunt time vs. large number missing after invitation).
4. Promptness.
 - a. Set the tone by being prepared to begin on time.

- b. The song leader or youth leader should determine if adjustments need to be made.
- c. A sense of promptness and preparation will be communicated if the pianist continues to play between the prelude and the time that the song leader actually takes the platform.
5. Avoid over participation—young people need to be prepared by the beginning of the preaching time to sit still and listen while participating by thinking and responding in an appropriate and cooperative way.
6. The platform and all that occurs during a service should lead the audience to take an active and cooperative role in the preaching that takes place. Endeavor to set the stage for the preacher and to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in His work. The pianist is a vital part of the platform team.
7. Song/service leaders must arrive in time to be ready to begin at the scheduled time but be flexible in coordination with others leading the service.
 - a. The goal should be to never scold from the platform—have strategies for taking control of the platform without scolding; doing nothing is just as bad as scolding.
 - b. If you anticipate or experience a problem from a young person, ask a youth leader to help or speak to the individual personally—the platform should anticipate instead of react when possible.
 - c. The song leader and other youth leaders should back each other up by helping control any rowdies while the other is on the platform. Youth leaders who know the group can help anticipate problems.
 - d. The platform is a serious part of each service; therefore, we want to encourage all those who will be on the platform in any way to dress in a manner that reflects that importance, will not cause a distraction or offense, and meets the guidelines that we suggest for our young people. If you have questions about what is appropriate, ask the youth pastor. When in doubt, go the extra mile so that the Lord is glorified!
8. Song service.
 - a. The song leader should learn to read an audience—energy levels, maturity, adult helpers, and more come into play. The amount of interaction and action must be adjusted based on these ingredients.
 - b. Consider your personality and experience when choosing songs and stunts.
 - c. The song leader should learn the preferences or theme of the speaker.
 - d. The energy level that the audience is left at after singing must be one that the speaker is comfortable with—default mode should be a moderate energy level.
 - e. The content of the songs should be just as important as their energy level and speed. Begin with action and taper activity so that audience is ready to listen and be still by the last song's ending.
 - f. Consider singing Scripture songs for each service as an opportunity to memorize Scripture.
9. The pianist.
 - a. Make the song leader successful and strive to not take the spotlight but to give it to the person on the stage.
 - b. Obtain and be able to play the music that is chosen by the song leader or to communicate a problem with him in time to make adjustments.

- c. Arrive at least ten minutes early to prepare (have music out and on the piano ready to be played) and play a prelude for about seven to eight minutes; the songs for the service could be played for prelude music. The prelude is an important preparation time of hearts and minds.
 - d. Work to know the song leader's preferences (e.g., slow down at the end of song and introduction to songs).
 - e. Help eliminate distractions by filling in dead space with music, playing while the song leader interacts with the audience, during stunts, and while the song or stunt leader walks up to the platform.
 - f. Be prepared to play an offertory if an offering will be taken.
 - g. Use the time that the audience is being seated after a song as the transition time for the pianist and accompanist to exchange places if a different pianist is accompanying special music, .
10. Stunts help involve the audience and prepare them for the remainder of the service.
- a. The more of the audience that is involved the better.
 - b. Participation can come from creating competition to cheer for (e.g., guys vs. girls).
 - c. Target time for a stunt is five minutes or less. (If the purpose of the stunt is to introduce the speaker or introduce new people to each other, a longer stunt or mixer should be used.)
 - d. A stunt elevates the energy level of the crowd and should prepare them to participate in the rest of the service.
 - e. Stunt leaders should learn to communicate clearly and to know the audience—consider the words used and the literal interpretation of them.
 - f. Consider strategies for recruiting volunteers so that time is minimized and distractions eliminated—recruit in advance, explain rules to the designated teams in advance, designate in advance an adult to choose a volunteer, know whom you are recruiting so that you don't have a distraction (such as immodest clothing) on the platform.

ABC'S OF SERVICE DISTRACTIONS

The Ironwood team developed the following list of things that can disrupt a service. Developing a list like this helps your whole team be aware of how they can be a service distraction and encourages them to eliminate distractions.

A ctions, amplifier feedback, ants, audio glitch	N odding off, no sound, nasal problems
B ehavior malfunction, babies, broken chair	O dors, oddities of the speaker/platform person
C oolers, coughing, crying babies	P DA, phones, problem campers
D rafts, doodlers, dogs barking, dress of speaker/platform person, doors	Q uirks of the platform, quads in river bottom, quiet sound system
E ssence, entrance open, earthquake, electricity	R ain, radio
F ish smell, flickering lights, frigid, fireplace logs crackling	S nooring, screen obstructions, schedule problems, snakes
G etting up, gum smacking, grime inside, going long (speaker and/or service)	T emperature, tired
H yperactive children, halitosis, hair grooming, hot, hard seats	U n-fun topic, ummm's, un-tuned piano, un-prepared
I nsufficient information/preparation, insects, interruptions, idiosyncrasies of speaker	V ery hot, vents, vomiting, vehicles
J okes (too many, inappropriate, not funny), jingling coins or keys	W andering, whisperers, worries, window blinds
K nowledge overload, kicking my chair, kitchen smells	X iting (not closing well), eXcuses without solutions
L ights, lack of attention, laughter	Y awns, your cell phone, yucky smells
M unching, mumbling, mice	Z ipper down, zzzzz's

DADS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Deuteronomy 6:4–9

The job of a father is one of the greatest responsibilities handed down by God to man. Throughout the Bible, we are given instruction on how to fulfill that responsibility. Parents are given stewardship of a child with the design that they will help the child to grow in “*wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man*” (Luke 2:52).

There is nothing more destructive to the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of a child than a dad who has “checked out” or given up in the area of parental guidance. As youth pastors, our number-one job is not to entertain the teens but rather to reinforce the godly training they should be getting at home. We are to support fathers and aid them in any way possible. It is not our responsibility to raise the teens, but we can (and I believe are called to) help moms and dads with their responsibility.

In order to help them, we must understand some important things.

Dads who make a difference understand the importance of a relationship with God and faithfulness to His Word.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

1. A Saving Knowledge

Without God making a difference in their lives, they cannot hope to make a difference in the lives of their teens.

2. An Intimate Knowledge

It must go beyond a general knowledge and be personal.

3. A Teaching Knowledge

Obedience to God as a family will promote the teen to obey God as an individual as well.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITHFULNESS TO GOD'S WORD

1. God's Word is not to be taken lightly.

2. God's Word must be strictly adhered to.

3. It is important to be faithful to God's Word even if it means being the “bad guy.”

The Bible shows us clearly that in order to make a difference we must have compassion. True, Christ-like compassion is willing to chasten and refuses to overlook sin no matter how slight or insignificant we may deem it.

THE NEEDS OF PARENTS WITH ELEMENTARY CHILDREN

I am a strong believer in having a written, concise, understandable, passionate, clear philosophy of ministry. I believe it is critical in every aspect of ministry to know not only what to do but exactly why we do what we do.

I am continually refining the *whats* and *whys* of the children's ministry of our church. Over the last few years, a question has cropped up in my mind. I have a good staff of people that work with me, and I believe that we are, for the most part, on the same page in what we are trying to accomplish. But, here is the question: As a ministry, are we really producing the kinds of kids we have set out to produce? We think we have a good idea of the mark, but are we hitting it? How would we know if we did? Are we doing it consistently? Are our programs reaching and edifying our children in the ways we think that they are?

As a first step in trying to answer these questions, I wanted to get a picture of what our goals really were or should be. A few months after the 2007 Youth Leaders' Retreat, I had a meeting with several of my parents to do some brainstorming about children's ministry. The focus of this was the following question:

As a Christian parent, what do you want the children's ministry of our church to help you produce in your elementary child by the time he graduates from sixth grade?

Now I recognize that every child is different—they mature physically, mentally, and spiritually at different rates. Some will grow a lot spiritually at an early age, and others will be spiritually immature all the way to adulthood. I realize that God is the one that does the work in hearts and minds, and I also realize that parents play a much larger role in the lives of our children than our children's ministry ever will. But, in general, what are the characteristics we want to see in a child that graduates from our ministry? Does the way we minister to these children really lead to the goals we have in mind?

I am the father of three elementary children, and I know what I want for my own kids; but I wanted to hear from the parents of my church kids. What are the desires of their hearts? What are their burdens for their children? What do they pray for on behalf of their kids? What is it that they want from their children's ministry? What are their needs?

Before we go on, how would you answer these questions? Be specific. Think of the whole person.

On the next page is a chart in which I attempted to organize the thoughts that came out of that meeting. This is by no means comprehensive or intended to be a road map for your ministry. In fact, I am hoping to get some good ideas and perspectives from you as we discuss this together. But there were some things that came up that I thought were very interesting. As they were intriguing to me, I hope that they will challenge your thinking. I hope it will cause you to take a good look at your ministry in a new and fresh way.

As we began to list characteristics in our meeting, they began to fall into three categories: 1) what we want them to know, 2) what we want them to do, and 3) what we want them to be. I thought this was interesting. While we do teach concepts in all these categories, we tend to teach it in a style that lends itself to the know-and-understand category. For example, many times we teach *about* kindness, but is that the best way to teach someone to be kind? Many times we teach that we *should* share our faith with others, but is that the best way to equip a child with the skill of sharing the gospel? Looking at these categories caused me to ask some interesting questions about how we do ministry.

What Do I Want My Child to KNOW AND UNDERSTAND?	What Do I Want My Child to DO OR BE ABLE TO DO?	What Do I Want My Child to BE?
Salvation, Baptism, Assurance		
Worship		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kind • Obedient • Respectful • Honest • Modest • Faithful • Innocent • Burdened • Unselfish • Broken • Independent • Loving • Fruits of the Spirit • Discerning • Grateful and thankful • Humble • Initiative • A leader—the right kind of peer pressure • Passionate for God • Steadfast
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Bible doctrines • Most Bible stories, characters, and events • Biblical principles • About God & God Himself • Memorizing Scripture with understanding • Life in the body • God’s Word is the place to turn for all answers in life • History, the big picture, how it all fits together • Creation/Flood vs. unbiblical scientific explanations • Some basic apologetics • Biblical principles of music • Spiritual gifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their faith • Devotions • Find verses in the Bible and use a concordance • Give a testimony • Pray publicly • Pray privately regularly • Interact with adults • Resolve conflicts • Love God and love others • Edify/serve • Develop Bible study skills • Have people skills 	

WHAT DO I WANT MY CHILD TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND?

Of the three categories listed, this is the one I think most churches do best. I think this is what most children’s curriculums are aimed at. We understand the need for visuals, the need for object lessons, and the need for illustrations and stories that bring doctrine and the content of Scripture alive. We need to teach in a way that leads to understanding and applying biblical principles.

But how comprehensive is the content being taught in your children’s ministry? Do you use a curriculum for Sunday school? I am blessed to have great Sunday school teachers. If I asked them to, I have no doubt that they could come up with fantastic lessons on a weekly basis. They are creative and passionate about God and the Bible. I have no doubt that if they put their minds to it they could come up with lessons that were more exciting or more effective than what is in the lesson books. If I have such faith in my Sunday school teachers, why do I spend the money on Sunday school curriculum? For me, it is all about the plan. My teachers have the freedom to present the lessons in different ways, change the teaching style, and do activities that may not be part of the curriculum. My one request is that they stick with the content. By doing this, I have confidence that all the major Bible doctrines, characters, and stories will be covered in the time the child goes through that program.

Most curriculum publishers have a curriculum overview that shows what is being taught and when. Have you looked at this overview? Some companies use a more topical approach—if it is more topical, is it covering all the bases in content? Some curriculums are more content oriented—in these, is it covering the bases in the doctrinal area? Are you mixing and matching curriculum—one publisher for the primary age and another for the juniors—if so, have you looked at it from a global perspective? By doing that, are there areas that get missed?

One last thought about curriculum. Most publishers work hard to produce age-appropriate material. Does the curriculum take into account effectiveness as well as the appropriateness? For instance, many curriculums will teach Creation and Noah's Ark in the kindergarten and early elementary years; but does your curriculum also cover this for fifth and sixth graders at a time when they are curious about science and interested in Creation versus evolution apologetics?

What about your mid-week program, children's choir, VBS, and children's church? What material (if any) are you using here? Are there overlaps or areas that are being missed? Don't leave this to chance. Make sure that you are helping your children know and understand the whole counsel of the Word of God.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH: HALFWAY BETWEEN KNOW/UNDERSTAND AND BE

For the last several years, I have been on a soapbox about children's church to anyone who will listen. In fact if you have been in a past session, you have probably heard me say something about the topic. The key element here is worship. I believe that children's church should be a worship service, and the songs and activities should be about worship. There are action songs that I might sing in Sunday school or AWANA that I would not sing in the worship service. The key elements here are the Bible message and the moment of decision. Children's church should not be a re-hash of Sunday school or another teaching time. The message needs to be one that focuses on change and leads to a decision; this does not mean that it has to be a preachy lecture. You should still use teaching tools such as visuals, puppets, and object lessons. The focus is not that the child know the story of Ananias and Sapphira, but that he confesses his sin of lying and commit to God to tell the truth. The first step in the *be* aspect of the child's character starts with the decisions that the child makes. A child needs to be given regularly opportunities to confess sin and chose right paths. Making the decision does not ensure that the character quality will become part of the child's life, but it is a start. If you are failing to give an invitation, you are missing the boat.

WHAT DO I WANT MY CHILD TO DO OR BE ABLE TO DO?

This is the one area that challenged my thinking the most. Look at some of the things in the list. How are we teaching our children to do these things? Are we teaching them in effective ways? Most of the things in this list are skills—what is the best way to teach a person a skill? How do you teach someone to paint, drive a nail, type, or drive a car?

When I was fifteen, I begged my parents to take me to the DMV so that I could get the study booklet for the written driving exam. I studied it inside and out. I learned all the laws of the road from who has the right of way to how fast I could drive in residential areas. (It is amazing what you can learn with the right motivation.) As soon as I was fifteen years and six months old, I took my written test and earned my learner's permit. At this time, I was also in a driver's education class at school. In addition to learning the basics of the road and safety tips, I was subjected to a healthy dose of "preaching" about the dangers of speeding and driving while intoxicated. This included many gruesome pictures. The kicker is that after all that I still did not know how to drive. When I got behind the wheel for the first time, it was unlike anything I had expected. The sensitivity of the brake and accelerator, the fact that you had to be moving to steer, the turning radius, pulling into a parking spot—these were all things that you had to experience to understand. To learn to drive you must get behind the wheel and drive.

As with most skills, the only way to learn it is to do it. How are you teaching your children to study their Bibles? How about the skill of sharing their faith? What about the skills of resolving conflict, praying publicly, and interacting with adults? These are all skills, and children need to learn by doing.

I have taught lessons on all these topics, preached messages on the need to witness or have your devotions, have taught and preached about prayer, and have had young people memorize plans of salvation so they can share it with their friends. I have seen lessons that have activities along these lines but not that comprehensively integrate the hands on teaching of these skills to young people. So how do we do this? Honestly, this is something we need to address in our ministry, and we must look for ways to do this and not be content with the same old way of doing things.

Witnessing

In the area of witnessing, CEF has a good DVD course for teaching children the gospel flipper flapper (a newer version of the wordless book) as a means of sharing the gospel with their friends. They watch a fun, short video segment with a secret-agent theme that goes over each section of the plan. Then they memorize a few key phrases and verses before practicing a few times with their neighbor. We integrated this into our VBS two summers ago. We had the kids watch the segment and memorize the phrases, but due to time constraints did not have them practice with a friend. Duh! We are so comfortable with teaching and having young people memorize Scripture that we missed fully teaching this skill and giving them an opportunity to use it.

Devotions

Another area that I am concerned about is devotions. There are some good devotional books out there. *Keys for Kids* are nice, and kids enjoy them; but the main thrust is the story, not reading a passage of Scripture. There are some good books out there, but they are quickly finished—then what? I want to encourage kids to read their Bibles every day, but they need more than just being told to do so. They need initiative and accountability. Occasionally, they get this from their parents but not always. They need to be given some material, and told, “Here, do this, and we’ll talk about it next week.” They need this to be consistent. I don’t have the answer to this yet, but this is a need.

Children’s Choir

One way we have tried to integrate a *doing* approach in our ministry is with our children’s choir. We have placed an emphasis on service in this ministry. We are teaching the children that participating in the choir is an act of service, but we have also applied this to other areas. Organized through the choir, we have done several service projects such as picking up trash in the parking lot, straightening up the hymnals and pew Bibles weekly in the auditorium, and promoting our church work days.

What can we change about our programs to teach these skills?

WHAT DO I WANT MY CHILD TO BE?

How do we teach character? We need to teach the cognitive aspects so that children know what it means to have initiative, for example. Children need to be told stories that illustrate good character qualities. As mentioned before, they also need to be given opportunities to confess sin, repent, and choose these characteristics for their life. This is a good start; but in most cases, character is caught more than taught. Think back over your life. What has been the most influential in the development of your character—a message that you heard, a decision that you made, or a person whom you knew?

When I have to choose between multiple candidates for a key staff position in our children’s ministry, I choose character over ability. It is tough, and for some the lack of ability is a struggle at first. However, when teaching and leading young people, who you are is so much more important than what you know. I

will always be willing to put up with logistical snafus or decisions made due to lack of experience when I have the right people.

I want to run our children past a litany of godly men and women, to constantly see examples of men and women living the Christian life. I want them to rub shoulders with, talk to, spend time with, and have relationships with people who are truly following Christ. Our children's ministry needs to facilitate these relationships. We need to be involved in the lives of these kids in real-life scenarios. Our ministry must extend beyond the walls of the church.

Deuteronomy 6:5-9 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

This passage is specifically for parents, but we need to take note. First notice that verse 6 says, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in **thine heart**." Notice that before you can teach them (v. 7), these things need to be in your heart. Next look at the where and when of the teaching—when you sit, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you get up. We need to teach in teachable moments, in real-life scenarios. How often are you in real-life scenarios with the children you teach?

With our children, our society is going in the opposite direction. It is becoming harder and harder to plan activities, but we need to find ways to do it. I had a teacher who wanted to plan a hike with his kids, and the permission slip / medical release / church approval of the activity was almost more of a hassle than it was worth. Because of lawsuits, safety concerns, and over-protective parents, children's groups are doing fewer and fewer activities; in the process, we are losing the opportunities for relationships and opportunities for those teachable moments.

When I was in third grade, my Sunday school teacher led a trek of the twenty kids in his class to the top of Superstition Mountain. The hike (and in some places climb) up and down took over ten hours. I honestly cannot imagine doing something like that today with third graders. I had quite a few teachable moments on that hike.

In fifth grade, I learned a lesson I still remember to this day—I don't remember a single Sunday school lesson, but I remember this. On a trip to Pima Air Museum with my Sunday school class, we stopped at a convenience store for a snack. Once we were all back in the van and over a mile down the road, I noticed that the cashier had given me incorrect change—an extra \$1 in my favor. I mentioned this to my teacher, and without a second thought he exited the freeway, turned around, and returned to the store to give me the opportunity to return the money. Our schedule flew out the window to give one boy the opportunity to do right.

This is the kind of character lesson that cannot be taught in the classroom. We need to have godly men and women in places where they can live the Christian life before their students.

YOU GET WHAT YOU INSPECT NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT.

For a teacher, manager, or parent, this is so true. If you expect the history chapter to be read, you give a quiz. If you want your child's room clean, you check it when he is done (including under the bed). We can apply this concept in two ways.

1. To accomplish the goals in our children's ministry (from the chart)

How do we know if we have succeeded? What ways can we inspect the knowledge, skills, and character of our kids? Do we make them take an SAT (Spirituality Aptitude Test)? With the know/understand category, we can play review games to see what is being learned. Sometimes, though, the way these games work you are only getting the input from a select few. What about the skills and character traits? What are some ways to check? Parent surveys or testimonies before graduation may give some indication. I don't have the answer to this one, but we need to look for ways to indicate if we are hitting the mark.

2. To help facilitate some of the activities and relationships we want to produce

I have used two ideas recently. The first was in facilitating relationships with my AWANA leaders and their kids. At one of our meetings, I did a short teaching session on the five love languages. This was a fun topic that the leaders enjoyed and many learned from. But I did not stop there. I gave every leader a chart to fill out and determine the primary love language of every one of their kids. In order to do this, they had to show love in all five ways and look for how the kids responded. They were all required to turn this in (with the incentive of Starbucks coffee for the first from each group). By inspecting—requiring the chart, I ensured that my leaders were applying what they learned. Even if the leaders got nothing else out of it, every child was shown love in at least five ways.

The second is something we did with VBS and something I want to expand on as one possible solution in the *do* category. This is certainly not a new concept, but something we do not do much of. We designed some take-home activities that required the children to interact with their parents. They included things such as looking up passages and reading them to a parent, doing a devotional, or finding a verse using a concordance. By requiring these activities or at least heavily promoting them with team points, we were able not only to get the child to work on a skill but also to interact with his parents in way that not all of them do.

This brainstorming session with my parents produced several interesting ideas. I certainly do not have all of the answers, but with some of the right questions we will continue to move forward to improve the way we help kids come to Christ and grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

PARENTS' PLACE IN YOUR MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION

The ministry of parenting is one of the most vital and difficult responsibilities that faces those sitting in our churches today. While circumstances and cultures have changed dramatically over time, the primary responsibility of believing parents has remained the same: instruct your children in the ways of the Lord. This command was stated with utmost clarity in *Deuteronomy 6:4–9* and is assumed throughout the remainder of the Bible as the primary responsibility of parents. Every scriptural do and don't for parents is focused upon the parents' ability to effectively fulfill this responsibility.

Unfortunately, the focus upon this responsibility has been blurred in many churches, if not lost completely. Parents feel helpless to fulfill their responsibilities; and in the “Nanny State” culture in which we live, they are more often than not willing to turn over their God-given responsibilities to someone else, even if that is not their stated intention. This attitude often carries over into their attitude toward the church youth ministry. Parents drop off their children for youth group and activities but never have or take the opportunity to see what is going on there. They have no idea what is being taught during preaching/teaching time. To make matters worse, that teaching time is often the primary spiritual time for those teenagers each week, because little is going on at home. Unfortunately, many churches have adopted a youth philosophy that only furthers that kind of thinking. In many cases, neither the parents nor churches are doing this intentionally. In fact, when confronted by such a charge, they would probably be very surprised. The parents simply assume that sending their child to the church youth group is sufficient, and church youth ministries in their desire to be relevant and “cool” often overlook the fact that they are primarily an arm of the overall ministry of the local church, not simply a way to coordinate fun in a safe environment.

While the analysis above represents a somewhat extreme negative perception of the role of youth ministries in churches, such is not the necessary situation of all churches that have active youth ministries. In fact, it is tempting to look with a critical eye at churches whose youth groups have more social value than spiritual value. But the simple fact is this: all youth ministries must constantly be on guard against the temptation to abdicate their primary responsibility of assisting Christian parents in the discipleship of their children. And it is impossible to carry on such a ministry to the parents without the parents.

The following information is designed to be a motivation for us to make sure the priorities of our youth ministries are in order. It is all given with an understanding that all churches and situations are not created equal. Will you have teenagers in your youth group who do not have Christian parents? Yes. Will you have Christian parents who simply do not want to be involved in the youth ministry of the church? Yes. Will you at times necessarily be the primary teacher of some teenagers in your youth group because others have refused to follow their biblical responsibility? Yes. But there are many situations in which you should be unwilling to accept that as the norm.

If the church is truly meeting the needs of its entire congregation, it must challenge parents to fulfill their God-given roles while also being a ready and able assistant to those parents in that endeavor. Parents *must* have a place in your youth ministry. The church will be limited in its discipleship abilities if they are not.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Each individual that is involved or comes into contact with your youth ministry has specific needs that must be met biblically. When you take all of these needs together, the only solution is to have a youth ministry that biblically addresses each of these needs.

The Needs of Teenagers

The fact that teenagers have specific needs that the church youth ministry should address might seem unnecessary to mention. We would not have youth ministries if we did not believe such was the case. But in order to develop a plan to help them biblically, it is important that we pinpoint those needs accurately.

1. Teenagers need biblical teaching and counsel.

A teenager's world is filled with various spiritual land mines, no matter how much churches and parents seek to protect them. Godly, biblical teaching and counsel is vital as they seek to navigate the waters of life. But who is to give such counsel and advice?

There can be no mistaking that the biblical emphasis places the primary responsibility for this job upon parents. Of course, the assumption is that Christian parents are in view. Take a look at the book of Proverbs, for example. Much is said in this book about receiving wisdom and instruction in general, but more often than not, the emphasis is upon the parental relationship. This is seen as early as *Proverbs 1:8-9*: “My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.”

One might make the case that focusing on Proverbs or Deuteronomy is not valid in and of itself because the church was not in existence yet. However, two things should be kept in mind. First, despite the fact that the New Testament church did not exist as it does now, the religious community of the Jews certainly had its fair share of religious leaders and teachers who could be sought for counsel. But they did not replace believing parents then, and neither do pastors and youth leaders now. The second thing to notice is that even in the New Testament, there is no evidence of a specific ministry to teenagers at all, let alone one that would take on the responsibility previously reserved for parents. The reason I mention this is not to disparage church youth ministries today; rather, it is simply to remind us of how God designed things to work from the beginning and to demonstrate that He has not changed His mind.

Lest we err to the opposite side of the argument, we must not assume that the biblical data precludes others from entering the scene when it comes to giving teaching and counsel to teenagers. Just the opposite is true. Whether during Old Testament times or the Church Age, God has ordained spiritual leaders in religious institutions to be spiritual guides to those under their care. So while the parents bear the primary responsibility of teaching and counseling, the church is a support mechanism in the parents' realization of that goal.

2. Teenagers need biblical correction and encouragement.

Neutral teaching and counsel is not always enough. As teenagers deal with the daily issues of life, it will be necessary to help them in their application of the teaching they have received. This can come in a positive way (encouragement) or in a negative way (correction). Both are necessary and biblical. Again, parents have the primary responsibility in this area, but spiritual leaders in the church can certainly provide valuable assistance.

3. Teenagers need time spent with godly adults.

Most teenagers feel closer to their peers than they do the adults in their lives. The natural result is that the majority of their counsel and times of fellowship comes from their peers—the blind leading the blind. While the natural attraction to be with those one's age is understandable to an extent, parents and youth leaders have too often accepted this cultural phenomenon as a necessary part of the child's development. This leads to a chasm between teenagers and the adults in their lives.

While this culture has made the job of adults in this area much more difficult, Christian parents and youth workers must understand the responsibility that they have to spend quality time interacting with teenagers. Teenagers need that time. They need to see how godly adults handle situations and decisions. They need to understand that the world is much bigger than they are. The time they spend with adults will help them to think logically instead of literally all the time. They do not get this by spending time with their peers; they get it by talking to adults. This is also how maturity is developed. For example, have you ever noticed that you can put a group of teenagers sitting together in church or in some other assembly, and even the “good” ones are normally going to cut-up, goof-off, write notes, snicker, pull out the cell phones to text message, etc. Now, you can take those same teens and have them all sit with their parents, spread throughout a congregation of adults, and they act completely different. The people around them make the difference.

The Needs of Parents

Teenagers are not the only ones in their families that have needs. The parents have needs as well, even the godliest of them.

1. Parents need biblical teaching and counsel.

While parents bear the primary responsibility to rear and teach their children, they do not have to tackle this task alone. God has given them the local church and the people within it (including the church leaders) to help them continue to grow spiritually and in their knowledge of Scripture. One of the most beneficial things that a youth minister can do for parents is helping them to grow spiritually as well. They need to be challenged to do what is right. They need guidance through some of the tough decisions of life. They need to be pointed to Christ for the answers to all of their personal and parental needs.

2. Parents need godly support.

The things that the godly parent is teaching at home must be supported through the church ministry, including the youth ministry. Under no circumstances should a parent who is following biblical guidelines be contradicted by the youth ministry of the church.

3. Parents need to be encouraged and empowered.

It is not easy being a parent in this world. It is especially not easy being a Christian parent. There is so much information out there that contradicts what parents should be doing with their children. As they make tough choices and even take stands on particular issues, the youth ministry must be there to encourage them to continue to do what is right. So many parents have fallen prey to the notion that they must give over some of their authority to their children. This generally leads to the parents feeling helpless and the teens having unguarded privileges. The youth ministry should be a tool that reminds the parents that they are the parents. They have the right to make decisions that impact their children regardless of how those decisions are viewed by others (including the children). Empowering parents is not giving the parents more power but rather reminding them of the God-given authority they possess and of God's desire to give them wisdom to use that authority wisely.

4. Parents need opportunities to serve in the local church.

One of the biggest tragedies in churches today is the number of people who are attending but not actively serving. Many of these are the parents of teenagers. While serving in the youth ministry is not the only place they can serve, it certainly is a logical place for them to start.

The Needs of the Youth Worker

1. Youth workers need parental support and access.

One of the greatest blessings a youth pastor or worker can have is the known support of the parents whose teens they are serving. It is important that there are open lines of communication so that the youth ministry and parents are on the same page.

2. Youth workers need parental faithfulness and assistance.

Mark DeVries states this point the following way: “Doing youth ministry without parents is like driving a car without an engine. From the top of a hill, this kind of car can coast at high speeds. But only for a while. Eventually it will stop. Without an engine, it has no lasting power” (*Family-Based Youth Ministry*, 67–68).

In other words, the youth ministry needs parents to succeed biblically. Who better is there to assist in the ministry to teens than the parents of those teens? Sure, many others who are not parents can be valuable help as well, but when you have a resource as valuable as parents, you should use them!

3. Youth workers need parental wisdom.

Humility is the order of duty here. The simple fact is that parents have the best view of their children's lives—they live with them, and they know them. That does not mean that their interpretation or decision-making is always best, but it does mean that they cannot be overlooked. Parents have much wisdom to offer the youth pastor or worker. While we remind the teens not to ignore the wisdom of their parents (see Proverbs), we should not either.

When taken together, the best solution is for these three groups of people to work together and at times be together. The most natural way for this to happen is to involve parents in your youth ministry.

TEMPTATIONS TO AVOID

Youth workers can use many reasons (or excuses) to avoid involving parents in the youth ministry. The following are some temptations that must be avoided.

1. Youth workers can fall into the trap of viewing their youth ministry as their castle.

This thinking is fueled by a my-way-is-best attitude that is both prideful and selfish. The youth ministry does not exist for the youth pastor or worker. It exists for the glory of God. If the youth ministry feels threatened by parental involvement, that is a sure sign that the motivations for ministry need to be re-evaluated.

2. Youth workers often see parents as an unnecessary obstacle to what they are seeking to accomplish.

If this thought enters the mind of a youth leader, it may be time to reevaluate what it is exactly the youth ministry seeks to accomplish. If the goal is to have a perfect youth ministry that is beyond shortcomings of imperfect parents, then that goal must be changed—completely. Some parents will at times provide obstacles to achieving biblical objectives. It may be wise to limit some parents in their involvement based upon their own spiritual standing before the Lord. But even in a situation like this, normally the parent can serve some way in the youth ministry and be made to feel a part. Overall, having more parental involvement removes more obstacles in youth ministry than it creates.

3. Youth workers simply overlook the option of asking parents to involve themselves in the youth ministry in some way.

Sometimes, the issue is simply not thinking about involving parents. Due to the modern culture, many have never seriously considered the idea or how they would use parents in the youth ministry. Such a valuable resource as parents must be constantly kept before us.

4. Youth workers can overly prioritize the activity coordination aspect of their ministries to the neglect of the ministry aspect.

It can often be fun being a youth pastor or worker. You get to do things on a regular basis that you might not otherwise have the opportunity of doing. You get to be creative and think of activities that the teens will enjoy. But be careful not to get caught up in all the details of youth ministry planning, lest you forget that your ministry is primarily spiritual in nature.

5. Youth ministers often focus only on the needs of the teenagers while ignoring the needs of the parents.

This limited perspective is the reason we spent the time we did reminding ourselves of the various needs of people who are affected by our youth ministry, including parents. In many ways, a youth pastor is in a sense a family pastor. What happens to each individual in a family impacts everyone in that family to some degree. One of the best things that can happen to a teenager is for a Christian parent to get some things right with God. That revival then can overflow to their children. But such is less likely to happen if ministry to and with parents is ignored.

GETTING OUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

The most serious error made by church youth ministries is often improper priorities—specifically, incorrectly prioritizing the importance of the youth ministry. Realizing this error does not mean that we must abandon youth ministry, but it does mean that we need to constantly evaluate our youth ministry to make sure it is reflecting biblical priorities.

The Centrality of the Home

As has been noted previously, the home is the primary venue for discipleship to take place, so our youth ministries should promote that end. This means involving parents as an active part of the ministry. It does not mean that all parents are involved all of the time, but it does mean that they are actively investing in the youth ministries of which their children are taking part. Taking such action also is a helpful teaching tool to the teens concerning the centrality of the home. Spiritual leaders of the church and parents can talk about this concept all they want, but the best way to show teens that we believe it is true is to practice it.

The Secondary Importance of the Church Family

God has given the teenagers in our youth ministries another resource to draw from—the extended church family. While not primary, it is a vital part of God's plan for evangelization and discipleship. The extended church family provides opportunities for believers of all ages to minister together. So when parents become active in the youth ministry of your church, they are not only ministering to their own children, but to other teenagers as well. We also have the opportunity to take those under our wings who have become a part of our church ministry but do not have Christian support at home. This is the New Testament picture. When there is no family to lend support, the extended church family enters the picture in a stronger way than normal. So it is very possible to centralize the importance of the home in your thinking without taking away from the God-given role of the church.

CONCLUSION

Parents must have a place in the youth ministry of your church. Certainly different strategies and emphases are to be debated and considered, but it is vitally important that we as youth leaders do not see the parents as an obstacle, but rather as a blessing.

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PARENT MEETINGS

MINISTERING TO THE PARENTS OF MY TEENS

PHILOSOPHY

Why?

Question: Is there value to a youth leader or parents for a youth leader to take time out of a busy schedule to initiate and run a parent meeting?

Answer: Yes

1. A youth leader's ministry with the parents of his teens is just as important as his ministry with the teens in his youth group.
2. God has given the responsibility to the parents to raise his children to obey God. Youth leaders are tools that parents use to help accomplish their God-given parental mandate.

Ephesians 6:1–4 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

3. Parent meetings provide a time for the youth leader and the parents to get on the same page (e.g., upcoming calendar events).
4. Parent meetings let the parents know what is happening and what is being taught which will assist youth leaders in bridging the gap between the church staff and the parents.

Who?

Three main groups of people should be present.

1. The Youth Leaders—it is important that all the leaders in a youth group be present and, when appropriate or called upon, to participate in a parent meeting.
2. The Parents—letting the parents know both the date and time of the meeting as well as the importance of attending the meeting is critical to the overall goal of your meeting.
3. The Pastor—this meeting is a great time for the parents to see that the youth leaders and the pastor are on the same page. It also gives the pastor an opportunity to share his heart for the families of his church in another setting.

When?

Twice a year is a great goal—one in the early fall to introduce fall and winter activities and one in the mid-spring months to introduce spring and summer activities.

1. Parent and youth leaders have busy schedules so the meeting becomes an effective way to refresh memories of upcoming calendar events.
2. More effective ministry is done when the youth leaders and parents can get on the same page.
3. Initiating parent meetings creates important deadlines for a youth leader to use to prepare and look ahead at the needs and activities of his youth group.

4. An upcoming parent meeting also means that the pastor and youth leader are discussing activities and philosophy prior to the parent meeting, which creates opportunities for the youth leader and pastor to get on the same page and share needs and concerns about the youth group.

SAMPLE PARENT MEETING AGENDA

Time Frame: 1 hour

Realize that a parent's schedule is already busy, so try to keep your meetings as short as possible yet long enough to cover what is necessary.

Schedule

1. Pastor's opportunity to speak to the parents—10 minutes
 - a. To show to the parents that a youth leader and pastor are on the same page
 - b. To allow the pastor to share some thoughts and challenges to the parents
2. Open up with an ice breaker activity or some simple getting-to-know-you questions—10–15 minutes
 - a. Use refreshments to make the meeting more inviting.
 - b. Provide an opportunity for the leaders and the parents to interact in a casual setting in order to build relationships and allow the parents to get to know other parents and the leaders of their teens.
 - c. Create an opportunity for youth leaders to get to know the parents.
3. Information Forum—20–30 minutes
 - a. Share what you are teaching—use this opportunity to share with the parents the Bible topics that you are covering in both mid-week and Sunday school services.
 - b. Share upcoming calendar events.
 - 1) Hand out a bi-annual calendar of events.
 - 2) Inform the parents of activities and special events (e.g., teen service Sundays, nursing home service, special Wednesday night services, visitation opportunities, summer camp dates, and fund-raising activities)
 - c. Share philosophy while you share the activity details.
4. Question-Answer Time—10 minutes
 - a. Allow the parents to ask questions or to have input in your ministry. Don't feel threatened with the questions asked.
 - b. Be okay to get back to the parents with answers you don't know. Those times of follow up might allow for some one-on-one with a parent.

**REMEMBER THAT THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY TO RAISE
GODLY YOUNG PEOPLE BELONGS TO THE PARENTS. YOUTH
LEADERS NEED TO ASSIST PARENTS, NOT TAKE THEIR PLACE.**

PERSONAL EVANGELISM

INTRODUCTION

1. The number one reason why teens do not share the gospel is the fear of saying the wrong thing.
2. Inspire your teens
 - a. with a logical sequence by which they can share the gospel: knowledge;
 - b. with the confidence that they too can do this: examples of others.

THE FUNCTION OF GOD'S LAW IN WITNESSING

1. Stops the mouth.

Romans 3:19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

2. Defines sin.

1 John 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

3. Gives knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

4. Reveals sin.

Romans 7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

5. Leaves one helpless.

Galatians 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

THE MODERN GOSPEL

1. Life enhancement is the goal—fruit of the Spirit and other benefits. These should be benefits of salvation not reasons for salvation.
2. Experimental attitude is created—I'll try this to see if it works.
3. Repentance is lacking—there are no magical words!
4. Unexpected results are experienced—temptation, tribulation, and trials.
5. Eternal price is paid—lost and inoculated.

Matthew 7:22–23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

BIBLICAL EVANGELISM

1. Law to the proud—breaks the hard heart (e.g., the proud lawyer in Luke 10:25–37).
2. Grace to the humble—heals the broken heart (e.g., the adulterous woman in John 8:1–11).

PREPARATION

1. Teach through the Ten Commandments.
2. Memorize gospel verses.
3. Memorize the Ten Commandments (pictures).
4. Role play.
5. Videotape the first efforts in the field.
6. Review and learn from the video.

WITNESSING METHOD

Take the person from the natural to the spiritual.

1. Put out a feeler—see if the person is receptive.
 - a. Try to start conversation.
 - b. Give a gospel tract.
2. Go through the commandments—remember: 90% law and 10% grace.
 - a. “Have you ever told a lie?” Be specific.
 - b. “What does that make you?” Make him be specific.
3. Ask, “By God’s standard, are you innocent or guilty?”

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

4. Ask, “Do you think you will go to heaven or hell?” Remember that a just judge will never overlook a crime.

Roman 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

5. Explain what Christ did (pardon/substitute).

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

6. Explain what he can do to receive God’s free gift.

Romans 10:9–10 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

7. Pray with him. If possible, let him pray in his own words.

THE HISTORY OF YOUTH MINISTRY

OVERVIEW

Youth ministry is a relatively recent development in church history. Its major expansion has been in the Western world, particularly in the United States since the 1940s. Today, there are thousands of youth workers actively involved in local churches or in parachurch organizations all over the world. Seminaries and Bible colleges now offer degrees in youth ministry. A great deal of time, money, and effort is being put forward for reaching adolescents with the message of salvation.

One way we can consider the history of youth ministry is to think of it in terms of discipleship. What we have then is the story of how Christians in the United States have disciplined teenagers. One may be surprised to find that as we study this history, many methods and ministry approaches for ministering to young people have been used, refitted, and used again. One researcher has even gone so far as to suppose that the cycles are so predictable, we can to some degree know what's coming next in youth ministry (Senter, *The Coming Revolution in Youth Ministry*).

In viewing youth ministry's history, it is important to first define terms. Mark Senter (*Reaching a Generation for Christ*, 123) provides us with three categories and distinctions regarding terms:

“**Youth ministry** has to do with adults whose primary desire is to disciple students in their Christian faith.”

“**Youth work** is a broader term that does not necessitate Christian discipleship.”

“**Youth movement** in a Christian context describes young people discipling other young people, a process in which adults play a decidedly secondary leadership role.”

Our goal in this brief consideration of history is to gain answers to the following questions:

1. Where did teenagers come from?
2. How did youth ministry develop in response to the formation of this new class of people? When did it begin? Who has influenced it?
3. Where are we today in its historical development?

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Much of the following material has been culled from four sources, which can be found in the bibliography—*Understanding the 21st Century Teenager*, a doctoral dissertation by Michael Loftis, *Reaching a Generation for Christ*, and *The Coming Revolution in Youth Ministry*.

1. Where did teenagers come from?

Adolescence, or pre-adulthood, is mostly a product of the twentieth century. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and the resultant society shift away from the farm and into the city, both the secular society as well as the church was forced to meet the needs of a whole new class of people—teenagers. There are at least five factors that combined to lengthen the period of time known as adolescence:

- a. **Puberty**—sexual maturity begins to occur earlier by three to four months per decade since the mid-1800s. Due to improving health care and better diet, people grow larger.

- b. **Marriage**—people get married later in life. The average age at which a couple married in the late 1800s was fourteen to sixteen; now, the average age is between twenty-three and twenty-five.
 - c. **Child labor laws**—children at risk due to long hours and dangerous equipment combined with adults needing work push the creation of laws safeguarding young people.
 - d. **Compulsory education laws**—federal and state laws are enacted requiring education for children ages six to eighteen. Before this, many children may or may not have attended school.
 - e. **Juvenile justice system**—due to the notion that teens were not helped if punished as adults, adolescents were viewed as a legally distinct class.
2. How did youth ministry develop in response to the formation of this new class of people? When did it begin? Who has influenced it?

The timeline below traces the historical development of youth ministry. There are three eras to examine: the early foundational era, the society era, and the fellowship era.

EARLY FOUNDATIONAL ERA (1780–1875)

As the Industrial Revolution broke out, families and individuals were driven off their farms and into the cities. As children filled the streets of the city, the need grew to get children off the streets and to teach them to read. As child labor was de-emphasized, children had more time and required more attention. This era's emphasis was still on children, as most teenagers still entered the workforce relatively early. An important change occurred in 1875: that was the year the first public high school opened in the United States

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| 1780 | Robert Raikes' Sunday School in England. |
| 1824 | American Sunday School Union formed in Philadelphia. |
| 1848 | Evidence of youth ministry at FBC Rochester, New York, and 1858 at FBC, Troy, New York. |
| 1851 | Young Man's Christian Association; 1858, YWCA—the purpose was to help rural Christian youth retain their faith as they began to move into the cities. Methodology was through providing a place where young people could meet with friends, study the Bible, be trained as teachers, read, relax, and have prayer meetings. |
| 1875 | Supreme Court decision to allow public U.S. tax dollars to fund high school education. Birth of the public high school. Senter cites this as the end of the early era; as public education recognized that adolescents were in need of formal education (instead of entering the workforce), churches would have to follow suit. |

SOCIETY ERA (1881–1925)

During this era, believers struggled to respond to the question, “How can the church shelter and keep young people who have committed themselves to an active faith?” Taking its cue from visionary leaders like Francis Clark, Christians organized societies and clubs to meet the challenges of this growing expanse of young adults.

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1881 | Francis Clark founded the Society for Christian Endeavor. The primary goal was to reinforce the desire of young people to grow in their walk with God—to strengthen their Christian endeavor. Accountability was high, and the movement spread internationally; more than 50,000 attended the Boston convention of 1895. |
|------|--|

- 1886 Student Volunteer Movement begins (1886–1912). In the United States and United Kingdom, they send 7,265 volunteers into foreign missions work.
- 1887 Clark resigned his pastorate to work full-time with Christian Endeavor.
- 1889 Epworth League (Methodist).
- 1891 Westminster League (Presbyterian). On April 22, 1891, a national Baptist young people's organization was formed which became the Baptist Young People's Union in 1895 (Ross 1989). The intent was to embrace Baptist youth groups, both emerging and established (like Christian Endeavor Societies, which were present in many Baptist churches); all societies were urged to subscribe to the *Young People at Work*, a Baptist national publication, in order to provide continuity with regard to Baptist distinctives. From this point on, denomination allegiance became primary.
- 1893 Walther League (Missouri Synod Lutheran).
- 1895 Luther League (Lutheran).
- 1905 G. Stanley Hall coined the term *adolescence* in a book of the same name.
- 1920 One-third of the population between ages fourteen and seventeen attends public high schools.
- 1925 Scopes Monkey trial brought an end to what one youth ministry writer called the "period of accountability" in youth ministry. Credibility of the Bible was in question, with the essence of youth ministry in danger.

FELLOWSHIP ERA (1935–1987)

Characteristic of this era was the emergence of both church-based youth ministries and parachurch clubs. In Southern Baptist churches, youth work included primarily—if not exclusively—the youth director and the youth. A gap developed between the youth program and other programs of the church, even Sunday school. This time period was dominated by full calendars and sometimes disconnected events.

- 1929 To reach teens, Lloyd Bryant started a youth broadcast in 1929 and sparked the youth rally idea. He held his youth rallies in Manhattan three times a week for seven years and called his organization the Christian Campaign of America. In 1935 he made a film entitled "Youth Marches On," which he showed across the United States to stir interest in reaching teenagers. He also started Christian Youth Fellowship meetings in Washington, D.C.
- 1930 Sunday evening fellowship meetings began to replace youth societies. Local churches began to take charge of all church-related youth activities. This was a massive shift as thirty-nine major denominations formalized this change. Change occurred as basic emphasis of youth ministry shifted from nurturing the faith of young people to training in churchmanship.
- 1931 In 1931 Percy Crawford started the Young People of the Air radio broadcast, out of which developed *Camp Pinebrook for Adults*, *Camp Mountainbrook for Girls*, and *Camp Shadowbrook for Boys*. Thousands of people, including Jack Wyrzten and his wife, were reached for the Lord at these camps.
- 1933 Evelyn M. McCluskey founded the Miracle Book Club in Portland, Oregon, emphasizing storytelling and Bible exposition; she was the mother of the parachurch movement. Jim

Rayburn (Young Life) and Al Metsker (Youth for Christ) were both teachers of Miracle Clubs; but they eventually proved too far out on the edge for McCluskey, because they wouldn't use her materials. They would soon have other ideas for clubs.

- 1934 Evangelistic rallies birthed the Youth for Christ (YFC) Movement. The slogan "Youth for Christ" was first used in the late 1930s in conjunction with evangelistic meetings. Jack Wyrzten and Jim Rayburn both had a form of these rallies, though Rayburn's were called "Young Life Campaigns" and featured higher percentages of youth in attendance.
- 1935 This was the beginning of what Senter called the "teens telling teens" movement. Incarnational strategies involved youth attending club meetings in homes (McCluskey's idea).
- 1936 Child Evangelism Fellowship was organized under the leadership of Jesse Irwin Overholzer.
- 1937 The first full-time Southern Baptist youth minister was at the Third Baptist Church, St. Louis.
- 1938 First Youth Week—students were spotlighted and given significant responsibilities in the church, including preaching, directing music, and teaching in adult Sunday school.
- 1941 Jim Rayburn founded Young Life, using a different strategy than had been used before.
- Leader centered.
 - Evangelism focused—a missionary effort to win unsaved teenagers.
 - Not primarily a Bible study.
 - Messages had a conversational approach, unlike fiery sermons.
 - Emphasis on relational, contact work—earning the right to be heard.

Other similar club movements followed.

- 1944 High School Evangelism Fellowship was incorporated and developed into a network of club under the leadership of Brandt Reed in the metropolitan areas of New York and New Jersey. They were called High School Born-Again Clubs (HI BA Clubs). In 1950 missionaries Ken and Jane Clark left the United States to establish HI BA Clubs in Japan. They enjoyed great success in the island nation.
- 1945 Chicago-area YFC leaders held a rally which drew 75,000. The YFC movement is formally organized that year with Torrey Johnson as the president. Billy Graham preaches for youth rallies with thousands responding to the gospel invitation.
- 1949 Phil Harris was named professor in youth education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.
- 1950 By 1950 it was common for all large and many medium-sized churches to have a youth director. Often, the youth director was responsible for activities for entire church.

AWANA founded—the AWANA clubs, first called the White Shirt Brigade under Lance Lathan, began their development in Chicago in the 1930s; the organization was officially incorporated in 1950. The clubs had been developed for children in grades three through

eight; however, a coed teenage club with a nautical theme was added later called Shipmates. This kind of club was a program that local churches developed themselves using the national AWANA curriculum, format, and materials. The program has been very successful, reaching into over 7,000 churches.

YFC Club era goes into full swing under the direction of new president Bob Cook. Clubs utilize Bible quizzing and other forms of inter-club competition to draw teens.

Campus Crusade begins and grows rapidly under the leadership of Bill Bright. His “Four Spiritual Laws” method of witnessing enjoys great success on college campuses.

1954 Fellowship of Christian Athletes is begun by Don McClanen—initially targeted to collegiate athletes, it soon expanded to high schools. By 1979 its program consisted of 150 junior high groups, 1300 senior high groups, and 200 college fellowships.

1965 Institute in Basic Life Principles (Youth Conflicts Seminars)—Bill Gothard began successfully working with teen street gangs in the inner city in 1963. However, in evaluating over five hundred converts, he could not see any progress in their development as full-time servants of Christ. On the basis of *Malachi 4:6*, “*And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers,*” he changed his whole approach. Seeing that the best way to reach teens was by training the fathers, he started his Youth Conflicts seminars in 1965, reaching youth pastors with the new approach. The youth pastors and the Christian adults who found solutions to their own conflicts in the principles of the Word of God urged their friends to attend. Their word-of-mouth recommendations resulted in seminars all over the country to train youth and parents in Bible principles. Whole families attend the seminars, but the emphasis is on the fathers’ fulfilling their God-ordained training function (Ephesians 6:4).

The emphasis on building families by training fathers has been promoted in many churches across the United States as a result of the Gothard seminars. Many churches are now having yearly family conferences, and many camps are now holding regular couples’ retreats and family camps.

1966 Bill Bright begins a high school version of Campus Crusade known as Student Venture. By 1984 it had 200 staff members ministering to more than 100,000 high school students across the country.

1969 In Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Frank Hamrick developed special clubs, known as Pro-Teens, designed to serve as the young people’s Sunday night youth meeting in the local church. These were designed very much like the original Christian Endeavor program with Bible-based curriculum and competition.

3. Where are we today in its historical development?

By the 1970s local churches began to copy the programs of many major Christian youth organizations and implement them in their own youth ministries. Large numbers of children and teens were brought to church-based activities through burgeoning bus ministries. Camping ministry also grew during this time. Youth evangelists were in high demand as were youth pastors. Colleges and seminaries developed and expanded their youth ministry curricula.

The 1970s and 1980s also saw the rise of the Christian day school movement. With the increasing secularization of the public school system (prayer was removed by the Supreme Court in 1963), many

churches saw the answer to this challenge to be the institution of their own schools to provide an education with a distinctly Christian worldview to reach and teach the next generation of Christian leaders.

Today, at the dawn of the new millennium, the emphasis and the majority of work in youth ministry continues to be centered in the local church. The growth of many youth ministry organizations has been as a result of the need to train youth workers. Consequently, youth ministry is continually subjected to theological debated and systematization. Youth ministry coursework in Christian colleges now includes youth counseling, sociology, psychology, and developmental classes in an effort to gain a holistic understanding of adolescence.

The very latest movements within youth work are summarized by the following trends (since the 1980s):

- a. **Renewed emphasis on family**—with the breakdown of the traditional family structure, and the breakup of the family into age-specific categories, the need has been voiced to return the church structure to a family-based design. Often, this means the elimination of a specific youth department and youth pastor in favor of a family pastor who helps to train parents, provides counseling, and keeps activities intergenerational.
- b. **Confronting the urban youth crisis**—as the inner city has grown, so have the attendant gangs, drugs, sexual deviation, child exploitation, child abuse, and crime. This has resulted in the need to develop specialized ministry to urban youth.
- c. **Providing for youth leadership and evangelism training**—teens have been targeted as leaders and as the best possible solution to the evangelization of their peers.

IMPLICATIONS: WHAT DOES HISTORY TEACH US ABOUT YOUTH MINISTRY?

1. **Burdened individuals make all the difference**—youth ministry has been advanced at different points by impassioned, burdened, and visionary adults. Denominations and organizations typically play “follow the leader.” It has been people and sometimes a few independent local churches which have been the innovators and catalysts for change.

A youth worker should consider the following questions:

- a. What is my burden? What am I passionate about?
 - b. Why do I love ministering to teens? What do I see in them?
 - c. What future do I envision for these teens?
 - d. Are the people who work with me passionate and burdened for the teens?
 - e. Are there others in our church who are passionate and burdened but not involved with the youth ministry? Why? Why not?
 - f. Do I have clearly articulated vision for the youth ministry at our church? Do I have an accurate mission statement?
2. **Structure is crucial**—managing a *program* and developing a *ministry structure* have distinct differences. Historically, having a purposeful structure has been a central foundation in accomplishing effective ministry. A good program always flows from a biblically sound structure, not the other way around. Too often, youth pastors and churches have installed programs in the desperate attempt to have structure, and have been met with frustration and failure.

A youth worker should consider the following questions:

- a. Can I explain my current structure to an outsider unfamiliar with it in less than five minutes?
 - b. Do I have a written philosophy for youth ministry? Does my ministry structure reflect my ministry philosophy?
 - c. Could the youth ministry at the church function with its current structure even if God had moved me to a new ministry?
 - d. Did I inherit a program? Am I *managing a program* or am I *leading teens*?
 - e. What biblical goals is our structure meeting?
 - f. Who are the fruits of our ministry, and what are they doing now?
3. **Adults reaching teens is most effective in the long run**—youth have been evangelized/disciplined best when evangelized and disciplined by adults. Youth-initiated and/or led movements (whether inside or outside the church) have been powerful agents of change, but they have been very rare and short-lived.

A youth worker should consider the following questions:

- a. Whom am I counting on to evangelize the lost teens in my community?
- b. Whom have I trained to evangelize the lost teens in my community?
- c. How have the teens been encouraged/trained/equipped to evangelize? How have the adults been encouraged/trained/equipped to evangelize?
- d. What is my strategy for reaching the lost teens of my community? What has my personal involvement been?
- e. Have those who have been won to Christ been disciplined appropriately? For how long? By whom?

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DISCIPLESHIP

Disciple: (n), a follower, an adherent to the doctrines of another
(v), to make disciples of; to convert to doctrines or principles

Discipline: (v), to prepare by instructing in principles and customs

INTRODUCTION

There is an ever growing and increasingly alarming trend amid Christianity today. That is the Christian who is content just to be saved and never expresses a real desire to change his life or move beyond the initial stages of salvation. I would first have to wonder if they are indeed saved (1 Corinthians 5:17). The failure stems from two sources.

First, and ultimately responsible, is the Christian who has no real desire to change. Whether or not someone personally invests time in your spiritual life, all Christians have the tools and ability to grow in Christ. In 1 Peter 2:2 we are instructed to desire the Word “that ye may grow thereby.” The Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit are more than sufficient tools for an immature Christian to grow into a fruitful, fellow laborer in Christ. However, that does not mean that young Christians should ignore the other tools that God has made available.

The second failure lies with the “mature” Christian who is unwilling to sacrifice some of his time and invest it in the spiritual development of young Christians. We will be held accountable for those lives we were able but unwilling to mentor and disciple.

Christ set forth a great example of discipleship. He invested His time and Himself in His apostles. That example was followed in Scripture—Barnabas with Paul, Paul with Timothy, and many more. Every Christian should be a disciple who discipled disciples (John 15:16).

THE DISCIPLE

1. Requirements

- a. Salvation—the unsaved man cannot and will not understand or give heed to the things of God (Ephesians 4:17–18).
- b. Obedience—everyone wants to know *why* he or she should do this or that; God never explains *why* to someone who won't.

2. Responsibilities

- a. You must grow (Jude 20; Colossians 2:6–7).
- b. You must be productive (2 Peter 1:5–8).

THE DISCIPLER

1. Requirements

- a. Salvation (2 John).

- b. Growth and obedience (1 Corinthians 9:27; 2 Timothy 2:1).
 - c. Understanding of the essential place of the local church in discipleship.
2. Responsibilities
- a. Be personal.
 - 1) Invest your time (Ephesians 5:16).
 - 2) Let them see discipleship in you—they need to not only know your beliefs; they need to see your convictions.
 - b. Be fruitful.
 - 1) Evangelize (Matthew 28:18–20).
 - 2) Establish (Colossians 2:6–7; 2 Timothy 2:1–4).

CONCLUSION

Every Christian is called to be a disciple and a disciple-maker. As youth leaders, our very purpose is to edify the lives of our teens. The greatest edification happens one-on-one or in a small group, and it happens most effectively outside of the classroom. A youth leader who does not consciously have two to five teens, with whom he is regularly and purposely spending time, is no youth leader at all. They need to hear you talk of your commitment to Christ in every aspect of your life. They need to see you live your commitment to Christ in every aspect of your life. This is discipleship. Discipleship happens on purpose in the mind of the discipler but is rarely detected as deliberate or planned in the mind of the disciple-ee. A teen naturally expects you to live right and talk right—fulfill these expectations. Without discipleship, you become a glorified day-care worker and cheat your teens out of valuable experiences.

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YOUTH SURVEY

Circle One: Male Female

What one thing worries or concerns you the most?

What do you believe are the three top worries or concerns of the teens you know?

1.

2.

3.

On a scale of one to ten, how well do your parents/guardians relate to you?

Poorly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Well

On a scale of one to ten, how well do adults in general relate to teens?

Poorly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Well

In what one area do you have the most conflict?

YOUTH SURVEY

Circle One: Male Female

What one thing worries or concerns you the most?

What do you believe are the three top worries or concerns of the teens you know?

1.

2.

3.

On a scale of one to ten, how well do your parents/guardians relate to you?

Poorly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Well

On a scale of one to ten, how well do adults in general relate to teens?

Poorly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Well

In what one area do you have the most conflict?

CHALLENGING GIRLS WITH MINISTRY

Ministry defined as *servant*—a person serving as an agent for another; to attend to the wants and needs of others; the act of serving.

MINISTRY IS NOT AN OPTION!

1. As Christians we are called to serve.
 - a. Scriptural mandate.
 - b. Christ's example.
 - c. Examples of saints—women from Scripture and women from recent history.
2. Serving creates opportunities.
 - a. To grow in Christ-likeness.
 - b. To demonstrate the love of God.
 - c. To honor God.
 - d. To influence others.
3. A good servant exhibits the following qualities.
 - a. She is transparent, not drawing attention to herself.
 - b. She represents her master, bringing honor to His name.
4. A servant meets the following qualifications.
 - a. Titus 2.
 - b. Colossians 3.
 - c. Ephesians 6.

GIRLS ARE CALLED TO MINISTRY!

1. Godly femininity is not something for which our culture encourages young girls to strive.
 - a. Contrasting cultural values—sexual, crude, bold, demanding, tough, self-destructive, self-centered, giving to get, taking.
 - b. Errors in contrast—simple minded, passive, helpless, unqualified for ministry.
 - c. God's intent—specially gifted, specifically called, uniquely qualified.
2. To teach or imply that God only uses a woman when a man is not willing is to be used creates resentment, disrespect, frustration, and arrogance.

3. God used women in the Bible.
 - a. Hebrews 11:11—Sarah.
 - b. Hebrews 11:23; Exodus 2—Jochebed, the mother of Moses.
 - c. Hebrews 11:31—Rahab.
 - d. Hebrews 11:32; Judges 4–5—Deborah.
 - e. Hebrews 11:35; 1 Kings 17—widow in Zarephath.
 - f. Hebrews 11:35; 2 Kings 4—mother from Shunem.
 - g. Acts 9:36–43—Dorcas.
 - h. Esther 4:14—Esther.
3. God has called women to ministry.
 - a. Occupational ministry is not the only full-time ministry—e.g., mothers, co-workers, and bosses.
 - b. Missions—Gladys Aylward, Amy Carmichael, Rosalind Goforth, Isobel Kuhn, and Elizabeth Elliot.
 - c. God wants to use you, today and in the future

GIRLS NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR MINISTRY

1. Cultivate the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5; Ephesians 5).
2. Teach the attributes of love (1 Corinthians 13).
3. Identify and develop each individual's gifts (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12).
4. Teach them service skills—e.g., cleaning, listening, writing, sewing, painting, gardening, flower arranging, shopping, and homemaking.
5. Girls are naturally prone to treasure relationships; they will be quicker than boys to sense emotional needs and will be willing to respond and meet needs.
6. We need to encourage them and create opportunities to serve today.
 - a. Discover needs.
 - b. Make opportunities.
 - c. Create plans.
 - d. Do ministry.

Encourage a lifestyle of ministry. God is at work all of the time, all around us. We must be alert to what He is doing and be quick to jump in and serve Him by serving others.

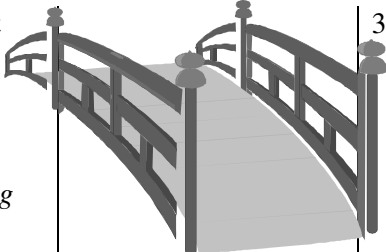
BRIDGING THE RELEVANCE GAP

If, in fact, we are “believer priests,” illuminated by the Holy Spirit for an understanding of the Word of God, indwelt by Him from the moment of our salvation, and accountable to Him as faithful stewards; then it goes without saying that we have both the responsibility and the privilege of studying the Holy Scriptures so as to discern God’s will on any particular subject or issue.

Romans 12:1–2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Hebrews 5:12–14 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

FOUR QUESTIONS EVERY BELIEVER MUST ASK AND ANSWER ABOUT THE WORD OF GOD

<p>1. What does it say?</p> <p><i>Reading or hearing what the Bible says</i></p>	<p>2. What does it mean?</p> <p><i>Studying the Bible for understanding</i></p>		<p>3. What does it mean to me?</p> <p><i>Applying the Bible to my situation</i></p>	<p>4. What will be my response to its meaning?</p> <p><i>Obedying or disobeying the Bible</i></p>
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The gap that needs a bridge is the gap between questions two and three; this is the gap between a literal, historical, and grammatical interpretation of the Bible and a balanced application to everyday life in today’s world and culture.

There are two major errors to avoid in relation to making the Bible come alive and relevant to us today. The first is the belief that interpretation is enough without any application. This is studying the Bible as an academic exercise and then teaching it without any persuasive element involved. The second error is jumping right into application lessons and decisions without an accurate interpretation and understanding of the passage. Either of these can lead to the dangerous practice of adding to or subtracting from Scripture (Revelation 22:17–18).

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE VALUE OF APPLICATION?

1. *James 1:22–24 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.*
2. *2 Timothy 3:16–17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

- a. Doctrine = teaching
 - b. Reproof = rebuke, what is wrong
 - c. Correction = how to do it right
 - d. Instruction = disciplined training in righteous living
3. Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23; 2:2

TWO BRIDGES TO HELP US SPAN THE GAP

1. The Bridge of Direct Precepts

These are passages that contain an explicit command from God to His people. They are worded as commands, prohibitions, exhortations, wishes, and permissions. They are the clear dos and don'ts of Scripture—the absolutes.

Three Guidelines for Proper Interpretation of Direct Precepts

- a. If it was originally given in the Old Testament, is it repeated in the New Testament?
 - b. What indication is there that it should be considered normal and appropriate for believers living today?
 - c. Are there any contextual, cultural, and/or historical meanings that may affect its current usage?
- ### 2. The Bridge of Derived Principles

These are truths derived or implicitly drawn from the Scripture which usually come from narratives, examples, parables, or themed sections of the Word. A principle can be defined as a general truth derived from a biblical narrative or example as it relates to a specific situation from that time but can then be applied to similar situations today. To be valid principles must be

- a. derived directly from the text without stretching the point (is there any indication in the text that this should be done by others too?);
- b. affirmed elsewhere in Scripture (Old Testament principle, New Testament teaching);
- c. consistent with all of Scripture—Scripture, properly interpreted, never contradicts itself.

LEARNING TO HEAR GOD AS YOU READ HIS WORD

1. Use the commonly suggested questions as you do your daily devotions—a journal helps.
 - a. Is there a sin here that I should forsake?
 - b. Is there a promise here to claim?
 - c. Is there an example in this passage that I should heed (good or bad)?
 - d. Is there a command here to obey?

- e. Is there a general principle here that I can apply to my life today?
 - f. Is there a warning for me or others to avoid?
 - g. Is there an others-first principle that I can implement?
2. What in this passage can help or hinder my various relationships?
 - a. With God.
 - b. With others.
 3. Think in terms not only of *action* principles but also of *attitude* principles.
 4. Make your principles personal—use *I, me, my, and mine* rather than *we, us, our, or yours*.
 5. Be as specific as possible—not just “to be a better Christian” or “to be more like Christ.”
 6. Add the characteristics of good goals to your applications, such as a time element with target dates and measurable goals.
 7. Select issues you are facing now.
 8. Think about some future needs of high interest—dating, courtship, and marriage.
 9. Journal what you learn, your decisions, and your progress.
 10. Use action verbs in your writing of principles and decisions.

EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR DOUBTFUL ACTIVITIES

From *Dangerous Parenting Detours*, pages 24–25

Listed below are some principles for proving (1 Thessalonians 5:21–22) or testing activities. When activities are neither specifically endorsed or condemned in the Bible, we may question whether we should participate or not. The question of our participation needs to be answered by the careful interpretation and honest application of such biblical principles, thus helping us to discern the wisdom of such participation by placing gray issues into either black or white columns.

1. Does it cause someone else to sin? Stumbling block principle; the law of love (Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8; 1 Corinthians 10:23–33).
2. We are to lay aside sins and every weight that keep us from being the best possible Christian (Hebrews 12:1).
3. We are to make no provision for the flesh (Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:16–22).
4. If it is doubtful, it is dirty (Romans 14:23; James 4:17).
5. A Christian should be separate from the world (2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15–17).

6. Does it glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31)?
7. Would Jesus Christ have done it (1 Peter 2:21)?
8. Would we be ashamed if Jesus Christ came and found us doing it (1 John 2:28)?
9. Can we feel free to do it when we remember that God the Holy Spirit dwells within us (1 Corinthians 6:19)?
10. Is it fitting conduct for a child of God (Romans 2:24; Colossians 1:10)?

CHARACTERISTICS AND CHALLENGES OF JUNIOR HIGHERS

As we narrow our focus to the junior high years, it is easy to be distracted by their unpredictable mood swings or awkward experimentation with behavior and appearance. But we must consider each individual as God sees them. Consider the pattern of *Luke 2:52* which says, “*Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.*” A junior higher should be growing in the same areas.

Increasing in wisdom—early teens must grow in their ability to apply knowledge. It is understood that knowledge must increase. The ability to apply that knowledge must also increase. We must provide programs that teach the foundations of truth and equip youth to make correct application.

Increasing in stature—early teens are growing physically. In these years will be awkward growth and an increased tendency to compare their abilities and appearance with others. We must provide programs that allow youth to compete with godly attitudes. We must teach them that they are God’s unique creation, created for His glory, and that their bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost.

Increasing in favor with God—early teens must know who God is and what He wants in order to be able to grow in favor with Him. We must provide programs that teach youth how to please God by teaching them to love His Word and equipping them to know and use it.

Increasing in favor with man—early teens need to understand how to grow in favor with other people. They are increasingly desirous of approval by their peers, and we must prepare them for ungodly pressures from peers. We must provide programs that teach social skills and responsibility to community.

Junior highers, young people in grades seven and eight, have unique characteristics. Our programs for them will be most effective when they are age-specific.

CHARACTERISTICS OF JUNIOR HIGHERS

1. Physically
 - a. Experiencing rapid, uneven growth about which they are embarrassed.
 - b. Extremely sensitive about their appearance.
 - c. Experience low endurance.
 - d. Going through puberty—girls are developing sooner than boys.
2. Mentally
 - a. Able to memorize well.
 - b. Weak on thinking ahead.
 - c. Enjoy adventure and activity.
 - d. Have a tendency to daydream.
 - e. Tend to make snap judgments.
 - f. May have a know-it-all attitude.

- g. Highly critical of inconsistency and hypocrisy.
 - h. Interested in the here and now.
 - i. Impulsive.
 - j. Open and moldable.
 - k. Miss subtleties but are learning to use inductive thinking.
 - l. Imaginative and sometimes lacking practicality.
3. Socially
- a. Cautiously attracted to the opposite sex.
 - b. Desire to belong to a gang or clique.
 - c. Want to act like adults at times.
 - d. Tend towards crushes on older members of the opposite sex.
 - e. Desire approval of the group.
 - f. Need recognition, love, and patience.
 - g. Become show-offs at times and self-conscious at others, fearing embarrassment but craving personal attention.
 - h. Desire to be independent of adults.
 - i. Tend to participate.
4. Emotionally
- a. Unstable, sudden variations in mood from mountaintops to dark valleys.
 - b. Often feel misunderstood, will only confide in someone they trust.
 - c. Extremely self-conscious.
 - d. Want to be treated like adults.
 - e. Love humor.
 - f. Interpret attention as caring.
5. Spiritually
- a. Begin to question many childhood beliefs.
 - b. Want to do something for the Lord.
 - c. Can establish habits of Bible study and personal devotions.
 - d. Can become effective witnesses for Christ.

- e. Make life-changing decisions for the Lord.
- f. Want to learn more about the Bible and apply it to their lives personally.
- g. Advertise root problems with outward misbehavior.

This is a difficult stage of transition and confused emotions for young teens, and we must exercise supernatural love and patience as we work with them. An understanding of the plan that God has for changing a dependent child into an independent adult is essential. Allowing a young person the opportunity to reason aloud and guiding him to the source of truth will enable him to develop godly thinking skills that will equip him for this transition and for mastering control of his emotions.

The world that junior highers are living in is very different from the world one generation ago. We have moved from a generation of entertainment and passivity to a generation of interaction and integration as the internet becomes more and more accessible to children worldwide. Young people have available to them nearly limitless information in nearly infinite avenues. They are able to boldly express ideas and opinions without the consequence of personal responsibility or the immediate consequence of peer approval or disapproval. This has both positive and negative aspects for Christians. They are able to become part of a group or gang without the responsibility or struggles of face to face friendships. We must consider these new factors as we teach young teens to please God and live godly lives. Purity in thought and actions must be emphasized as the internet world has given the curiosity of youth an avenue of easy access to ungodly sights. Youth must be taught the eternal consequences of these sites.

The change in our culture has resulted in a blurring of the line between childhood and adolescence. Adults act and dress like children, and children are given role models that live like teenagers. So why, they reason, should they bother with the difficult transition?! We must inspire them with a passion for Christ-likeness and a hunger to know God's Word.

CONCLUSION

Our ministries should teach young teens that they are essential parts of God's body, uniquely and carefully crafted for His glory. Our teaching should equip young teens to use the Bible to judge all that they see and hear.

Our ministries should use godly adults to set consistent examples of what God intends for adults to be. We should provide a safe place for early teens to engage in group experiences and emphasize that God loves them as individuals and created them for His purposes.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Consider creating a list of goals for your junior high ministry. Then design your objectives, your practical plan, for reaching your goal.

Goal: To teach young teens to love God's Word.

Objectives: _____

Goal: To teach young teens what it means to be a godly adult.

Objectives: _____

Goal: To teach young teens social responsibility—godly living in the world.

Objectives: _____

Goal: To teach young teens to apply God's Word.

Objectives: _____

Goal: To teach young teens the importance of purity in all areas of their lives.

Objectives: _____

Goal: To encourage young teens to serve God daily and prepare for future lives of ministry.

Objectives: _____

Goal: _____

Objectives: _____

Goal: _____

Objectives: _____

Goal: _____

Objectives: _____

Goal: _____

Objectives: _____

Goal: _____

Objectives: _____

Goal: _____

Objectives: _____

Goal: _____

Objectives: _____

ACTIVITIES JUST FOR GIRLS

The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed. Titus 2:3-5

Every youth group is made up of the same few types of people. There's the athletic guy that always wants to play fast-moving, competitive games. There's the quiet girl who'd rather die than be called up front to participate in a silly contest. There's the awkward seventh grader who desperately wants to make a name for himself among the older boys. There's the flirty, pretty girl who loves to be the center of attention. But what about the ones in the middle? Sometimes we focus on the extremes and leave out the rest when planning activities, teaching lessons, visiting, or even just chatting before and after class. Most of our girls end up in this middle group. A girls-only activity is a great way to get everyone involved and on equal footing.

WHY HAVE ACTIVITIES JUST FOR GIRLS?

1. It's a chance to help prepare them for life as a Christian woman.
2. Lessons can be taught outside the classroom.
3. Close bonds are formed between girls when there are no boys to distract them.
4. Girls who may not come to activity normally will come if it's "safe."
5. It helps to break up cliques: "You don't have to LIKE everybody, but you do have to LOVE everybody."

ACTIVITY IDEAS

Girls' Night Out

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Bowling | 6. Popcorn/Movie Night |
| 2. Miniature Golf | 7. Home Economics Theme Nights |
| 3. Mary Kay Makeovers | 8. Mother-Daughter Night |
| 4. Scrapbooking/Card Making | 9. Pottery Painting |
| 5. Cleaning/Service Projects | |

Slumber Party

Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids. Proverbs 6:4 ☺

Sleepovers can be a lot of fun and a great getting-to-know-you experience if they are planned well and run efficiently. Some things to consider:

1. Host the party at a leader's home, not at one of the girl's home.
2. If possible, send your husband and kids away for the night.
3. Have everyone bring a snack to share.
4. Be the last one to fall asleep and the first one to wake up in the morning.

5. Sleep in the room with the girls—control the “girl talk” (*Proverbs 10:19*).
6. NEVER have a slumber party on a Saturday night!
7. Give a devotion before bed.
8. Be a “meanie” and set a lights-out time.
9. Have a good breakfast ready for the morning. (See Breakfast Burritos recipe below.)
10. Playing lots of silly games will keep the night moving and keep things fun. Some ideas:
 - a. Watch an appropriate “chick flick”—no TV.
 - b. TP a church member who has a good sense of humor.
 - c. Mirror-less “makeovers.”
 - d. Cooking contest—give each group the same ingredients and see which can come up with the best dessert, snack, etc., in the time allowed.
 - e. TP dress designs.
 - f. Depending on facilities, have a bonfire or go swimming.

Overnight Breakfast Burritos

6–8 slices uncooked bacon, cut

1 pound cooked sausage

1 package hash browns (O’Brians with peppers and onions)

½ large loaf of Velveeta

2 jalapenos, chopped

12 eggs, beaten

Spray crockpot with cooking spray and layer ingredients as listed. Cook eight hours on low. Serve on tortillas and top with salsa and sour cream. Yum!

Shopping Trip

Most girls love to shop, and those who might not will still have a great time if you use a little creativity! Some suggestions for planning the activity:

1. Go out of town—it’s fun to explore a new place, like an outlet mall.

Ontario Mills Outlet	Dos Lagos Shopping Center (Corona)
Cabazon Outlets	Horton Plaza (San Diego)
Fashion Island (Newport Beach)	South Coast Plaza (Costa Mesa)
Lake Elsinore Outlet Mall	Tanger Outlets (Lenwood)
2. Have a nice dinner at a restaurant.
3. Go in December to help them with their Christmas shopping.
4. Keep the whole group together or in a few large groups.
5. Keep them moving—no slow shoppers/browsers monopolizing the time.

6. Use the trip as a teaching tool for modesty or thrift.
7. List off-limit stores before you go into the mall.
8. Keeps things fun and exciting by trying some games while you shop:
 - a. \$10 Challenge—the best deal or the most items purchased with \$10 wins; be sure to check receipts for each item. Donate the purchases to the church missionary closet, Sunday school treasure chests, or use them for Angel Tree Christmas gifts.
 - b. Mall Scavenger Hunt.
 - c. Create a Look—build an attractive, modest outfit with accessories; judge the best look.

Horseback Riding

There's something about girls and horses! Even those who are afraid to ride may like to be around the horses and spend a day outside with friends.

1. If possible, host the activity at a church member's house.
2. Have the girls help with the grooming and saddling.
3. If your group is small, the host can give mini-lessons to each rider.
4. Have a picnic lunch.
5. Plan the activity for a few hours on a Saturday afternoon.

Pool Party

1. Fun in the sun! Take advantage of the summer months to host an easy, self-running activity!
2. Have the party at a member's home for privacy—no boys or men allowed!
3. BBQ lunch.
4. Have plenty of pool toys and games ready for when things get slow.
5. Be sure everyone wears a modest, one-piece swimsuit.

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. Colossians 3:23

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31

IDEA SHARE

BASICS OF COUNSELING YOUTH

1 TIMOTHY 4:12–16

Everyday in America:

1,000 unwed teenage girls become mothers.

1,106 teenage girls have an abortion.

4,219 teenagers contract sexually transmitted diseases.

3,610 teens are assaulted; 80 raped.

2,750 kids see their parents divorced.

7 juveniles are arrested for murder.

6 teens commit suicide (for every successful one, at least ten are unsuccessful).

(Statistics published by Children's Defense Fund for information in the book *13th Generation*.)

Introduction: As a youth leader you will wear many hats. You will be a friend, disciplinarian, instructor, parent, and much more. But perhaps the hat that should be taken the most seriously, but rarely is, is that of counselor. When a hurting teen comes to us, it is not the time to pile on them or deal with our own issues. We must be focused on meeting the spiritual needs of those God puts under our leadership.

1. Characteristics of Biblical Youth Counseling

a. Truth makes people free (*John 8:31–32*)

1) God is truth.

2) We must always deal in truth.

b. Almost all problems can be traced back to an inaccurate understanding of God.

c. A relationship with Christ is essential to proper healing (*Philippians 4:3*).

d. The goal is not happiness.

1) The goal is Christ-likeness (*Colossians 1:28*).

2) Happiness is a byproduct of a healed spirit.

e. Healing will not come without sound biblical preaching and obedience to God's Word.

1) Don't seek to change the behavior, change the person.

2) It requires a reliance on and allowance of the Holy Spirit working.

2. Object of Biblical Youth Counseling

a. Spiritual Wholeness (*Colossians 1:28; 2:6–10*)

b. Emotional Wholeness

c. Relational Wholeness

1) First with God

- 2) Second with Parents
- 3) Lastly with Others

Bibliography

Josh McDowell and Bob Hostetler, *Handbook on Counseling Youth* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1996).

DEALING WITH DISCOURAGEMENT

Numbers 20:10–12

Moses was a little discouraged; he was having some tough times.

1. His sister died.
2. His plans to go to Canaan were put off for forty years.
3. They had no water.
4. The people complained and wanted to stone him.
5. He never asked for the job.
6. He had had it up to there.
7. He hit the rock twice, and now he is out—no Promised Land.

THE THREE STEPS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

Sometimes it is just tough living! We have to fight the sin of staying discouraged. We all have been there, but we can't stay there. Outside of some besetting sin, the tool Satan often uses is discouragement. When we are discouraged, we lack the courage to keep going. Let's look at the three steps of discouragement.

1. The first step is disappointment.
 - a. Have you ever been disappointed?
 - 1) More hair is in the drain than is on your head.
 - 2) You pray for one hundred dollars, go to the mail, and find a bill for two hundred.
 - 3) The teens rebel, the pastor leaves, there is no involvement, and parents stir up strife.
 - b. Satan starts with disappointment—learn and know this.
 - 1) We got married, and it's not what we thought.
 - 2) We start a new youth program; and the teens, parents, or pastor hate it.
2. If we do not deal with disappointment, it will turn into discouragement—Moses was disappointed, and his disappointment turned into discouragement.
 - a. You invest in teens for years, then they graduate and forget you and God.
 - b. *Galatians 6:9* *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*
3. If we don't deal with discouragement, it will turn into disqualification—Moses had been disappointed and didn't deal with that disappointment; it turned into discouragement and then disqualification.
4. It is important to deal with discouragement in the beginning so that we don't disqualify ourselves—Moses came to the place where he did one thing that stopped him from becoming what God had intended. (Because of God's grace and mercy, Moses did get to see the Promised Land 1500 years later.)

5. Let's not disqualify ourselves; let's not get discouraged to do that we have to deal with disappointment.

AVOIDING DISAPPOINTMENT

1. Avoid all sin.
 - a. No one on their deathbed says, "I wish I had sinned more."
 - b. Get in the right and stay there.
 - c. Fear and flee sin (e.g., Joseph and Potiphar's wife).
2. Give your expectations to God.
 - a. *Psalm 62:5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.*
 - b. Our expectation must be from God.
3. **AVOID COMPARISON**—my youth group is bigger than yours, smarter than yours, loves God more than yours, and is starting a mission in Uganda this summer. What is yours doing?!
 - a. *2 Corinthians 10:12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*
 - b. Be you, not the other guy.
 - c. Remember God looks at faithfulness not numbers.

Matthew 25:23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
 - d. God will give you what you need to have.
 - e. Don't exaggerate to make yourself feel like more of a youth pastor; it's still lying.
4. Walk with God.
 - a. You will never be disappointed if you walk with God. Your esteem will be high, and you will feel important, because you are somebody around Christ.
 - b. God loves us period. Seemingly producing or not.
 - c. We are accepted in the beloved.

Ephesians 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.
 - d. Spend time with Him.

Psalm 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.
5. Make proper decisions.

- a. Small decisions can change your life. We may choose the decisions we make, but we can never choose the repercussions.
 - b. One decision (e.g., reading the Bible, staying in church, making your marriage work, staying pure, controlling your eyes and thoughts, and doing right) can separate us from God's will or put us directly in the middle of God's will.
 - c. Simple decisions have a tremendous impact.
 - d. Seek godly, wise counsel (Proverbs 13:20; 15:22).
6. Take up the shield of faith.
- a. When we are discouraged, we often quit studying, reading, and growing. That is when Satan is shooting his darts at us. Take up the shield! Setting down the shield when we are discouraged is like not eating when we are hungry or like not taking in fluids when we are thirsty.
 - b. When we are discouraged, it knocks the breath out of us. The Word of God is His breath to us.
7. Always get up.
- a. *Acts 14:19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.*
 - b. Don't stay down; there are Timothy's out there to find and books of the Bible to write.
 - c. Paul's message was powerful, because he went right back into town after being stoned. He lived his message.
 - d. *Hebrews 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT AND DISAPPOINTMENT

1. Be a witness—you need it.
 - a. Hear of the broken hearts of this world.
 - b. You're most likely better off than most.
 - c. *Psalms 126:5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*
 - d. Be a burden bearer.
2. File things that encourage you.

Notes, messages, pictures, coloring sheets, poems, videos, and favorite songs.
3. Go to places that stir your heart.
 - a. The place where you got saved.
 - b. The place where you grew the most.

- c. Show me where you brought me from and where I could have been.
4. Get in the ministry of encouragement.
 - a. Exhort one another.
 - b. *Hebrews 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*
 - c. *Hebrews 10:24–25 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*
 - d. Don't be a towel thrower inner but a towel hander backer.

TRAINING FOR TRANSITIONS

Trust in the Lord.

Proverbs 3:5–6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Jeremiah 17:7–8 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Isaiah 26:3–4 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.

Nahum 1:7 The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Psalms 115:11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

Respect.

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly.

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility.

Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Ask, Seek, Knock.

Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

Mark 1:35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

James 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.

Psalms 34:6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Needy.

Psalm 34:18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Proverbs 3:7 Be not wise in thine own eyes.

Proverbs 26:12 Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

Psalm 40:17; 70:5; 86:1 I am poor and needy.

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit.

Separation.

2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

1 Peter 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

Titus 2:12–14 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Independence—none allowed in transition.

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.

Galatians 6:3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

Teamwork.

Philippians 2:1–5 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:27 That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

Ephesians 4:25 We are members one of another.

I—See above *I*.

Organized.

1 Corinthians 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

Proverbs 13:16 Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.

1 Corinthians 9:24–27 So fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.

See also Luke 9:14–15; 14:25–33; Ephesians 1:9–10.

Never-ending.

Colossians 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

Hebrews 12:1 Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

Philippians 3:13–14 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Proverbs 3:5–6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

TRANSITIONS IN THE BIBLE

1. Old Covenant → New Covenant
2. Children of Israel—Bondage → Freedom
3. Esther—living in the king's palace
4. Adam and Eve—Garden of Eden → life of sin
5. Daniel—multiple kings
6. Disciples—with Jesus → without Jesus
7. Moses → Joshua
8. Paul → Timothy
9. Judges
10. Kings

PASTOR VS. YOUTH PASTOR

THE GRUDGE MATCH

It is not uncommon to hear stories from both pastors and youth pastors of relationships that have gone sour. Sadly, very little training and information is provided to better equip both parties in this crucial relationship in the Christian church. Something must be done to educate and prepare future leaders as well as current leadership in order to prevent what some believe is inevitable—the clash of the pastors.

Grudge match—this might describe an experience that you have had at a specific ministry with a specific person. Notice the definition of *grudge*.

1. A feeling of ill will or resentment
2. Permit with reluctance; submit to unwillingly
3. To resent the good fortune of (another)¹

My hope and prayer is that your feelings do not resonate with the above definitions. Unfortunately, they may.

If knowledge is power, then the knowledge we must strive to gain from this topic begins with an intense look inward. This is known as developing the discipline of *self-knowledge*. As long as we choose to live in a way that is blinded to our weaknesses and failures in this relationship, we can never achieve the relationship that God desires for us to enjoy with our senior pastor, and the churches we serve will ultimately suffer great loss.²

Let's begin by agreeing that this relationship is meant to be a relationship that honors God, builds Christ's church, and ultimately exalts the work of Christ in this world. Within Scripture there is ample evidence that reveals Divine desires supporting relational harmony in the ministry.

HOW DOES THIS RELATIONSHIP EVOLVE?

1. Recognize your calling to this specific ministry.

“The power of divine calling is not in how one is called but that one is called in the first place” (James R. Edwards in “The Calling”).³

This calling is significant because a calling by God is what will enable you to look beyond the faults, failures, and inconsistencies in others. There must be an understanding on your part that there is more power in your calling than in your success or your position. When both parties understand that a calling is in place and that God has orchestrated both callings, the relationship between pastor and youth pastor / associate will take on new/renewed meaning.

- a. Calling—what are you holding on to?
 - 1) Public call
 - 2) Private call
 - 3) Providential call

- b. Calling—why is it significant?
 - 1) Patience
 - 2) Perseverance
 - 3) Passion
- c. Calling—what if I don't feel called?⁴

2. Relate effectively to your pastor.

In the process of my mentoring through the efforts of my senior pastor, I have been lead into the philosophy that relating to one another is one of the most essential ingredients to an effective relationship and fruitful friendship. Ideally, it would be great if we all were operating from the basis that all senior pastors believed this philosophy. However, this is not always the case. Although I believe this is a critical factor for lasting in ministry, this may have to be fostered on your behalf (remember, we must first look inward).

The path to relating to your pastor:

- a. View your ministry as cooperation, not competition.

“The first and most overarching commitment in working together is to develop a spirit and mindset of cooperation and partnership, not competition.”⁵

A competitive ministry

- 1) focuses on my ministry vs. our ministry;
 - 2) leads to an unsettling feeling in the church;
 - 3) creates a climate of suspicion;
 - 4) fosters an adversarial relationship rather than a relationship viewed as an advocate.
- b. Value the ministry of your senior pastor and show a mutual concern for ministries other than your own.
 - c. Be a source of constant encouragement and support.
 - d. Submit to a mentoring process provided by your senior pastor.

3. Respond to your pastor's needs.

A positive relationship between pastor and youth pastor / associate is a two-way road that must be developed overtime. Personally, the longer I am working with my pastor the better our relationship is. Over time I have come to appreciate him more, and he has shown his appreciation toward me more. Great relationships in any capacity are built over long periods of time and generally encounter obstacles along the way. These obstacles are not relationship killers but serve as opportunities to grow and help meet the needs of those we are in relationship with.

What can I do to help meet the needs of my pastor? Develop an attitude that will draw your relationship closer together by

- a. being cooperative;
 - b. being loyal;
 - c. being honest;
 - d. being competent;
 - e. taking initiative;
 - f. being trustworthy;
 - g. communicating effectively.
4. Reap the rewards from one of the greatest earthly relationships you can have.

Like a good relationship, rewards from this relationship will take time to reap. As you demonstrate that you desire a healthy relationship with your pastor, you will begin to notice certain rewards (perks) of having a unique relationship with another.

- a. You will gain access to your pastor that many do not have.
- b. You will receive feedback and evaluation that most people are not privy to.
- c. You will have available to you a mentoring relationship that exceeds books, training seminars, or a degree.
- d. You will have the privilege of partnering in a ministry with another.
- e. You will receive the reward of a good name.
- f. You will receive encouragement and affirmation that will propel you into a fruitful ministry.

Concluding thoughts on your relationship with your pastor—

1. Next time you are tempted to complain about your ministry, praise God for the specific calling He has placed in your life.
2. Next time you are tempted to complain, criticize, or gossip about your pastor; thank God for him and immediately pray for him.
3. Next time you want to quit that ministry, put that thought into perspective by acknowledging that your ministry is an act of worship unto God.

Notes

1. *Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1)*, s.v. “grudge,” <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/grudge>.
2. Gary L. McIntosh and Samuel D. Rima, Sr., *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership: The Paradox of Personal Dysfunction* (Baker House: Grand Rapids, 2001), Foreword.
3. Kevin Lawson, *How To Thrive in Associate Staff Ministry* (Alban Institute Publication: La Mirada, 2000), 9.

4. Ibid., 9–19.
5. Ibid., 32.

COUNSELING SINGLE ADULTS

Youth work is dependent upon volunteers in order to get all of the work done. Whether one is a full-time pastor or a lay youth pastor, having a team of volunteers is essential in helping our young people grow. One of the best volunteers to help in youth ministries that are spontaneous and time consuming can be the singles that are in your church. As a youth leader, one must not only seek to help the youth grow, but one must also seek to help the youth staff grow. Many times assumptions are made about singles that are not accurate, and sometimes we can hurt them more than help them. The following should help the youth leader in his interaction with singles to help them grow into the person God wants them to be.

The topic of counseling single adults is a very large and broad topic. The purpose of the following presentation is not to give a detailed explanation of counseling single adults, but rather it is an overview. Rather than getting into the detail of all of the different situations in which a counselor may find himself, it will give a bird's eye view of what are some of the basics of counseling singles and what are some of the fundamental issues that singles face today. Even the title of this presentation does not represent the wide variety of singles and issues that are out there. The title suggests that singles are just one group of people. We must recognize that there are many subsets to singles in our churches today; they do not fall into one category but many. Singles may be in college, have a career, be divorced, be a widow/er, have children, living in cohabitation, and many other situations. It is not possible to cover all of the issues that all of these people face. For the purpose of this presentation, three categories of singles will be used fully recognizing that there are many more. The three categories of singles for the purpose of this presentation will be Never Married (18–25), Never Married in Careers (26+), and Single Again (divorced or widow/er).

DOS AND DON'TS OF COUNSELING SINGLES

1. Don't . . .
 - a. Always talk about contentment.
 - b. Assume that all singles are desperate for a spouse.
 - c. Assume there is something wrong because they are single.
 - d. Assume that a spouse will solve their problems.
 - e. Assume that they are immature because of their marital status.
 - f. Always talk about what they must stop doing.
 - g. Allow emotional attachment to grow between you and the counselee.
2. Do . . .
 - a. Give them hope for change.
 - b. Talk about what they must do to change and grow.
 - c. Treat them like mature adults.
 - d. Set reasonable expectations.
 - e. Give them time to grow.
 - f. Protect your testimony (where and when you meet).

BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. Principle of the Mind—the mind must be renewed to have lasting change.

Too many times in fundamentalism, we have created a checklist Christianity, saying that if you do certain things or avoid certain things then you are okay. Consequently, this has created a misunderstanding: people do not understand that much of the battle fought in our Christian life is fought in the mind.

- a. *Romans 7*—the battle that we do what we don't want to do and don't do what we know we should do.
 - b. *Romans 12:2*—we are changed through renewing our mind.
 - c. *John 13:17*—right thinking to have right actions to have right feelings.
2. Principle of Change—change is a process, not a one-time decision.

Changing is a process not just a decision. Jim Berg in his book *Changed into His Image* does an effective job at explaining the process of change. One must mortify the flesh, meditate on the Word, and then he can manifest Christ-likeness. Following are some charts that may be used to help someone understand and see how this process must take place in their life.

- a. *Romans 6*—mortify.
 - b. *Joshua 1:8, Deuteronomy 17*—meditate.
 - c. *2 Corinthians 5*—new man, manifest.
3. Root-Fruit Principle—root issues must be dealt with to change the fruit of one's life.

People come for help in counseling usually because of fruit that is in their life that needs to be changed. It is important in counseling not to deal with just the fruit; you must deal with the root if you are going to have lasting change. Counselors must deal with heart issues and not just what they see on the outside. A young adult once came to me to confess that she had been sexually active. The real problem was not that she was sexually active but the bitterness that she has at her parents that she refused to deal with in her life. Today she is a single mom still running from the Lord.

- a. *Ezekiel 14*—idols of the heart.
- b. *Luke 6:43-45*—what is in the heart comes out.

BASIC SINGLE ISSUES

The following issues are not exhaustive but from personal experience are the issues that continue to rise up in the life of the single. Also included is a list of books that deal with single issues that may be of some help to the counselor dealing with singles.

PURITY

Principles

1. Any hint of sexual impropriety should be avoided (*Ephesians 5*).
2. Dating standards should be established on biblical principles (dating principles—see section on relationships).

3. Strange people should be identified and avoided (Proverbs).

a. Characteristics

- 1) Flattery and sweet speech (6:24; 5:3; 2:16).
- 2) Enticing speech, tells you what you want to hear (7:14–18; 7:21).
- 3) Deceitful and manipulative (7:13).
- 4) Undependable, unstable in life (5:6).
- 5) Clamorous and rebellious (7:11; 9:13).
- 6) Unfaithful to man and God (2:17).
- 7) Draws attention to body, entices with body (6:25).
- 8) Chases after those who would listen (9:14–16).
- 9) Leads you to immorality (9:17).

b. Results

- 1) Life-destroying results (5:4–5; 7:26–27; 9:18; 2:18–19).
- 2) Lose your honorable reputation (5:9; 6:33).
- 3) Loss of personal possessions (5:10).
- 4) Personal physical problems (5:11).
- 5) Rebellious lifestyle (5:12–13).
- 6) Adultery and falling to temptation (7:27).
- 7) Broken relationships (6:29–35).

NEVER MARRIED (18–25)	NEVER MARRIED IN CAREERS (26+)	SINGLE AGAIN
Experimentation. Going farther than what was planned. Having God’s definition of purity. Engagement. Date rape. Homosexuality. Friends with benefits.	Cohabitation. Emotional impurity.	Coping with going from having a sexual life to none. Fear of close relationships.

All three categories: pornography, fantasy, internet dating, and masturbation.

Homework

1. Write out dating standards.
2. Study the strange woman in Proverbs.
3. Read *Not Even a Hint*.
4. Accountability.
5. Install internet protection.

FINANCES

Principles

Five Principles of Priorities of Financial Stewardship (taken from Legacy Institute for Financial Excellence pp. 22–23).

1. Giving to the Lord; honor God (*Proverbs 3:9; Genesis 14:20; Acts 4:36–37*).
2. Saving for your Future (*Proverbs 6:6–11; 21:20; 22:3; 21:5*).
3. Spending on your needs (*Psalms 37:21; Romans 13:7a; 1 Thessalonians 4:11–12*).
4. Offerings to others (*Proverbs 19:17; 1 Corinthians 16:2–3; Romans 15:24*).
5. Enjoying luxuries for your personal pleasure (*Job 42:12; 1 Timothy 6:17; 1 Corinthians 4:7*).

NEVER MARRIED (18–25)	NEVER MARRIED IN CAREERS (26+)	SINGLE AGAIN
Learning the basics	Dealing with debt	Learning basics again
Reigning in entertainment spending	Buying “toys”	Re-entering the workforce
Paying for college	Beginning to live life now— buying a house	Bankruptcy
Getting a job	Planning for future	
Buying a car	Gambling	

Homework

1. Make a budget
2. Record spending.
3. Make a plan following the five principles.
4. Start tithing.
5. Do a study on stewardship.

TRANSITIONS**Principles**

1. God is in control—Ruth.
 - a. God providentially directs through difficult times (1:1–22).
 - b. God providentially provides through difficult times (2:1–3:18).
 - c. God providentially accomplishes His will through difficult times (4:1–18).
2. Will of God—understanding God’s specified, known will and how to find His direction for your life.
3. Personal identity must be found in Christ (*Colossians 3:1–5*).
4. Decisions must be based on biblical principles. The following questions should be asked before making a decision:
 - a. Are there any clear biblical commands that deal with this issue (*2 Timothy 3:16–17*)?
 - b. Are there any biblical principles that apply to this decision (*1 Corinthians 10*)?
 - c. Have you gathered all the facts—count the cost, *Luke 14:25* uses gathering info as an illustration.
 - d. What does wise counsel say (*2 Chronicles 10:5–19; Psalm 1:1*)?

Proverbs 11:14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

Proverbs 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established.

Proverbs 19:20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

Proverbs 19:21 There are many devices in a man’s heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Proverbs 20:5 Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

Proverbs 20:18 Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.

- e. Will this decision be a wise stewardship of what God has given you (*Matthew 25:14–30*)?
- f. Have you planned staying yielded to the will of God (*James 4:13–17; 1 Peter 3:17*)?
- g. Have you prayed about it (*1 Thessalonians 5:17*)?
- h. Are you being God-dependent or self-dependent (*Proverbs 3:5–6*)?
- i. How will this decision affect your relationship with God and others (*1 Corinthians 10:21–11:1*)?

NEVER MARRIED (18-25)	NEVER MARRIED IN CAREERS (26+)	SINGLE AGAIN	ENGAGED
Independence from parents—honoring and obedience College to career No responsibility to re-sponsibility Unplanned pregnancy	Dealing with possibility of not getting married Promotions in jobs Moves in life Career changes	Living alone again Loneliness Grieving through death Single parenting	Leave and cleave principle Forming a family.

Homework

1. Do a study on the will of God.
2. Identify how Ruth responded to the transitions in her life.
3. Write out a list of the pros and cons of a decision.
4. Study *1 Peter* on how to respond to injustice.

FORGIVENESS/BITTERNESS

Principles

1. The result of brooding on people’s sin against you is bitterness and fornication (*Hebrews 12*).
2. The result of being proactive with people who have sinned against you is forgiveness and kindness (*Ephesians 4:32*).
3. Forgiveness must be modeled after God’s forgiveness.
 - a. God’s Positional Forgiveness
 - 1) In reaction to the sin of man (*Genesis 3; Romans 5*).
 - 2) Provision for reconciliation through the cancellation of the debt (*John 3:16-17; Colossians 1:13-14*).
 - 3) Made effective for the transgressor through restoration of the relationship (salvation) when guilt is admitted and trust put in the cancellation of the debt on the part of man (*Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:1*).
 - b. God’s Relational Forgiveness
 - 1) Man sins after salvation (*Romans 7:14-25*).
 - 2) Even if man dies at this point, his sin positionally has already been forgiven at the cross.
 - 3) Fellowship is broken Matthew (6:14-15).
 - 4) Restoration comes through confession (*1 John 1:9*).

- c. Man's Positional Forgiveness
 - 1) Attitude (Ephesians 4:31–32).
 - 2) Does not place limits of whom to forgive—i.e., only those who ask.
 - 3) It is modeled after the forgiveness of God who forgave our sin at the cross.
 - 4) Does not place limits as to what to forgive—God has forgiven ALL of our sin.
 - 5) Is accompanied by proper action toward the person who has sinned against you.
- d. Man's Relational Forgiveness
 - 1) Confrontation (Matthew 18:15–17; 5:23–24).
 - 2) Wrong has been committed.
 - 3) You must address the wrong on whichever side of the problem you are.
 - 4) It must be done in the right attitude.
 - 5) Don't forget the five laws of communication.
 - 6) Reconciliation can only occur when forgiveness has been asked for and given.

NEVER MARRIED (18–25)	NEVER MARRIED IN CAREERS (26+)	SINGLE AGAIN
Dealing with abuse	Contentment with status	Dealing with ex
Dealing with parental issues	Dealing with bad past relationships	Why God let this happen to me
	Seeing all your friends get married	Baggage from past relationships

Homework

- 1. Make a list of those who have sinned against you.
- 2. Do a study on Cain and Abel.
- 3. Confront the person who sinned against you.
- 4. Seek forgiveness.
- 5. Identify the fruit of bitterness

RELATIONSHIPS

Principles

- 1. Dating Principles.

- a. World's dating purpose: self-gratification.
 - b. Christian's dating purpose: establishing a relationship with someone in order to discern the will of God for marriage.
 - c. Avoid temptations; don't feed the flesh (Genesis 39:12; 2 Timothy 2:22; Proverbs 5).
 - d. Avoid all appearances of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
 - e. Only date a growing Christian (2 Corinthians 6; 2 Timothy 2:22).
 - f. Avoid physical contact that encourages immorality (1 Corinthians 7:1; Proverbs 6:26–28).
 - g. Purpose to maintain purity of the other (Genesis 24).
 - h. Do actions that support (Philippians 4:8).
 - i. Do activities that are not conformed to the world (Romans 12:2).
 - j. Only date people of sound character (Genesis 24; Proverbs 5).
 - k. Be accountable (Proverbs 5:21—to God).
2. Church Body Principles (Romans 12).
 3. Four laws of communication (Ephesians 4).
 - a. Be honest.
 - b. Keep current.
 - c. Attack the problem not the person.
 - d. Act, don't react.
 4. Relationship Builders.
 - a. Love.
 - b. Communication.
 - c. Forgiveness.
 5. Relationship Breakers.
 - a. Selfishness.
 - b. Silence, tears, and anger.
 - c. Bitterness.

NEVER MARRIED (18-25)	NEVER MARRIED IN CAREERS (26+)	SINGLE AGAIN	SINGLE PARENTING
Parents	Where I fit in the church	Dealing with ex	Removing detour signs that directs kids the wrong way (<i>Dangerous Detours</i> by Walt Brock)
Peers	Dealing with bosses and co-workers	Children and new "interest"	
	Marriage expectations	Dealing with former in-laws	
	Building healthy relationships		

Homework

1. Write out dating standards
2. How you see God—do a study on the names of God.
3. Study the Peacemakers series.

PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Principles

1. Life motivation must be Jesus Christ, who He is, and what He has done for you (2 Corinthians 5).
2. Goal of life must be to glorify God (*see the attached life goal and principles sheet*).
3. Your personal identity must be in Christ.
4. Gift of singleness—if you are single, you have the gift.
5. Decisions must be based upon the sufficiency of Scripture that is able to bring to a point of maturity (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
6. Knowing why you believe what you believe is essential to lasting spiritual growth (Ephesians 6).

NEVER MARRIED (18-25)	NEVER MARRIED IN CAREERS (26+)	SINGLE AGAIN
Figuring out future	Balancing work, play, and God	Does God's way work?
Relativism/absolute truth	Freedom to serve	Sovereignty of God
Sowing wild oats	Leaving a legacy	Bible-based emotions
Why you believe what you believe		

Homework

1. Write a personal mission statement.
2. Practically apply seven principles.
3. Write out your goals for life.

CONCLUSION

Remember that your responsibility is not to make people change, but rather to proclaim the truth and help give them the tools for change. It is only the work of the Holy Spirit that will enable someone who relies upon the Spirit to change. Success in counseling is not ultimately determined in how many people do what we want them to do, but in our proclaiming God's Word in a loving way that gives direction for change. Your interaction with the singles on your youth staff will not only end up helping the individual person, but will in turn impact the lives of the teens they touch.

**GOAL OF LIFE:
GLORIFY GOD**
2 CORINTHIANS 5:9-10



Is it biblical?
2 Timothy 3:16-17

Is it helpful?
1 Corinthians 10:23

Is it selfish?
1 Corinthians 10:24, 33

Is it Christ-like?
1 Corinthians 11:1

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

LIFE CHOICES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

What is its cultural
association?
1 Corinthians 10:25-30

Does it cause
others to sin?
1 Corinthians 10:25-30, 32

Does it
glorify God?
1 Corinthians 10:31

BEING AN AUTHORITY THAT PLEASES GOD

INTRODUCTION

Serving God as an authority is simply that—serving God. We should view it as an opportunity to be an influence, not an authoritarian. Being an authority over teens often provides specific unique challenges, depending upon the overall attitudes of those teenagers. When dealing with potential discipline issues, youth workers are often tempted with two extremes of response.

- Reacting in ungodly anger and harshness that is motivated by the flesh.
- Letting the incident(s) pass in order to avoid conflict and keep favor in the eyes of the teen.

Most authorities tend to favor one of these responses over the other, and they are often critical of other authorities who tend toward the opposite response. Biblically speaking, though, neither is the correct response; and therefore, neither is most helpful to the teen. The following are some biblical principles designed to help those of us serving as authorities over teens to please God in the way we respond to and guide them.

1. Be genuine (*Genesis 19:12–14*).

Teenagers can generally spot hypocrisy a mile away. While our teaching ministry to them is very important, it is crucial that our lives not betray our teaching. In *Genesis 19*, we see an example of hypocrisy blinding family members to the truth. Lot, after much prodding from his “visitors” (who were telling him of the upcoming destruction of the city), all of a sudden has some urgency to get out of the wicked city of Sodom. But when he seeks to convince his family members of the urgency, they do not take him seriously (v. 14). And why should they? He has been living there for some time. He apparently has not reacted negatively to the sin there, and when you read earlier in the chapter, even the impending judgment upon the city was not enough to get him moving right away. Why did Lot’s family not believe him? No doubt, they did not believe him because he was a hypocrite. So when he did try to do something righteous, they were not buying it.

Reading that story should lead each of us to ask, “What in my life is betraying what I am trying to teach to young people? Are any of my actions as an authority communicating something different from my words?” Authorities who please God are not perfect, but they are genuine in their faith. Their lives demonstrate the same truths that they teach. Does yours?

2. Be gentle (*Ephesians 6:4*).

The challenge of *Ephesians 6:4* to provoke not children to wrath is directed specifically to fathers. But the application easily touches all authorities. Overbearing and harsh authority often communicates to teenagers that you are more interested in wielding your power and getting your way than you are in ministering to them. If you add your sin of fleshly anger to their sin, you have complicated the situation instead of instructing them in righteousness. If you are an authority who rarely shows pleasure in the successes of teens while always riding them for their faults, they will be exasperated. Gentleness does not mean a lack of firmness. But it is a meekness that does not communicate self-righteousness, and therefore, does not put a young person in a situation where he believes he will never be able to please you. Remember, your teenagers’ goal should not be pleasing you anyway; rather, they should be consumed with a desire to please God.

3. Be consistent (*1 Samuel 3:11–13*).

Eli provides an example of a man who knew what was right, probably taught his sons what is right, and yet, he did not effectively “restrain” his children from wickedness. And God judged both Eli and his sons as a result. Eli may have had many godly tendencies as a priest. The account of his life certainly shows some spiritual sensitivity. But he was not consistent in the way he applied what he knew to those under his authority.

We as authorities also can face the temptation to overlook sin for the purpose of keeping peace or maybe even getting those under our authority to like us. While we must not be harsh and full of fleshly anger in dealing with them, refusing to deal with them at all is not the answer (nor is it a demonstration of love—see below) and is equally sin in the eyes of the Lord.

4. Be loving (*2 Corinthians 11:2*).

Every action you take as an authority ought to be motivated by a genuine love for those under your authority. It is the heart of a shepherd that desires to present those under his care as “chaste virgin[s] to Christ.” God is glorified, and their lives matter. If you tend toward either overreacting or underreacting as an authority, pray for the kind of love (defined further in *1 Corinthians 13*) that will help you be the godly authority you ought to be.

CONCLUSION

Authorities are often eager to teach those under them of their need to submit. Yet, how often do we stop to make sure we are the kind of biblical authorities who do our part to create an atmosphere where young people desire to submit to human authority as a way to show their absolute allegiance to God? That should be our goal. So before thinking about (or even teaching about) the need for young people to submit to you as their authority, search your heart before God, repent of any sin the Holy Spirit through God’s Word reveals, and then ask for wisdom (*James 1:5–6*) to use your authority in a way that exalts Christ and edifies young people.

Also see “Dealing With Authority” in Lobe 7.

THE ART OF STORYTELLING

Storytelling is an art. Just as with music or oil painting, there are basic skills one needs to acquire, but these skills are just the mechanism to deliver the thought, idea, feeling, passion, or picture the artist wants to express. A well-chosen, well-told story can be a powerful tool in communicating the truth of God's Word.

WHY STORYTELLING?

1. **It was one of the methods Jesus, the master teacher, chose to use to communicate truth.**

The lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son, the sower and his seeds, the wedding feast, the master giving talents to his servants—all are stories that give us insight into the kingdom of God in ways that straight exposition could not have.

2. **It has the ability to tap into our creativity, imagination, and emotions.**

In our preaching and teaching, we want to do much more than just convince our audience with facts. We want to motivate, inspire, compel to action, exhort, and instill a passion for the things of God. To do this we need to go beyond just speaking to the mind through a logical presentation. A story has the power to touch our emotions and motivate us in ways logic cannot. It can paint a picture to inspire us to heights and possibilities we never thought of before.

3. **It aids in memory.**

Because stories create mental pictures and have a logical flow to them, it is much easier to remember a story as opposed to just memorizing facts.

4. **It is more fun to listen to.**

People of all ages love to hear stories. Instead of trying to convince them to listen, they actually want to hear. You have a captive audience. In addition, there are walls that usually go up to preaching and Bible teaching. A story that your audience wants to listen to can soften hearts.

5. **Sometimes it gets through to someone when nothing else will.**

Think about Nathan confronting David in 2 Samuel 12. He does not come right out and confront David's sin. He starts with a story. He has completely captivated David and compelled him to action when he lowers the boom—you are that man!

WHERE DO I FIND STORIES TO TELL?

1. **Be an avid reader.**

The best stories we tell are the ones we truly love ourselves. Read numerous stories in a variety of genres and find those that touch you and speak to you.

2. **The Bible.**

The Bible is one of the best places to find stories to tell. Not only are they true, they are alive and powerful. They are timeless and will endure forever. Search the Scriptures. Many times there are great

stories to be told that only appear in a few short verses. I have heard twenty-minute renditions of the story of the shepherd going after his lost sheep. This story spans only two verses in Matthew. I am amazed that I continually hear stories from Scripture that I have never heard before. But we also want to be careful not to play fast and loose with a story from Scripture. Make sure that the details you infer add depth to the story and are presented in such a way that they are not taken as biblical truth. "I like to imagine that . . .," is a good way to present details that are unknown.

3. **Reader's Digest, magazine articles, children's books, comic strips, and at times television and movies can be good sources of stories.**

Find stories that are appropriate for your audience. With children, read great children's books looking for story ideas. For men, read sports stories or read war stories about snipers, pilots, and men in the special forces. For women, read . . . well . . . (anything that I put here will probably sound stereotypical; so as not to bring down the wrath of my wife, I will refrain). The point is that authors of great books for children, teens, men, or women probably know a little something about how their readers think, the vocabulary they use, and what captures their attention. So, pay special attention not only to the topics in the stories, but also how the story is told and the vocabulary the author uses. This will give you insight on how to better tell your story to your audience.

4. **Search the internet.**

- a. The internet can be a great place to search for stories and story ideas. Google it! Type your subject, the word *story*, and if appropriate, add *Bible* or *Christian*; you will be amazed at what you find.
- b. Devotional websites often have short stories on a number of topics. Our Daily Bread (www.rbc.org/odb) and Keys for Kids (cbh.gospelcom.net/kfk) are two examples of this; the nice part about them is that you can search the sites based on topic.

5. **Get to know a librarian.**

While the internet is a great tool with an abundance of information, it cannot replace the personal touch of a knowledgeable person. If your church or school is fortunate enough to have a library, your librarian can be a tremendous resource for choosing stories. If your ministry does not have a librarian, get to know your local librarian. Librarians are usually people who do their job as a labor of love and are usually excited to share with you some of their favorite stories.

6. **Write and tell your own stories.**

When I got tired of making up bedtime stories for my children, I played a game with them in which we made up our own stories. One at a time we began listing aspects of the story.

- a. Who are the characters? What are they (animals, people, etc.)? What are their names? Where are they from? What do they do?
- b. What is their goal, quest, or adventure?
- c. What goes wrong? How does it work out in the end?
- d. What are the consequences of their actions?
- e. What do the characters learn?

Adding detail upon detail, we would eventually have a pretty good story.

OKAY, I HAVE A GOOD STORY. HOW DO I TELL IT WELL?**1. Communication.**

Storytelling is ultimately about communication. If the listeners cannot hear or understand your words, the best story in the world, with great gestures, expression, and voice changes will be meaningless. When I think of this, I think of Shakespeare. I absolutely hated reading *Romeo and Juliet* in high school, but it wasn't that the play was a bad story (in fact, I think it is a brilliant piece of literature). At the time, I did not understand the old English words and phrases. Because of this I missed a great deal of the content. I definitely missed the humor, and the depth of the tragedy was literally lost in translation. The same is true of your storytelling. Start with ensuring your words are clear and that every word is understood.

Project your voice and speak slower and louder than you think you should. Enunciate—form each word separately; don't run words together or mumble. If you feel like you are over-pronouncing your words, you probably have it right. Speakers who are nervous tend to talk faster and mumble. Take a deep breath, slow down, and focus on the words.

2. Audience interaction.

Any public speaking, but storytelling especially, should be thought of as two-way communication. The interaction that takes place between the speaker and audience is a two-way street. Eye contact is not a mechanism you practice to make your presentation more polished. You make eye contact to speak directly to individuals: your eye contact draws people into the story and makes them feel like you are not just telling a story, but telling it to them. Eye contact is more than just a way for you to communicate. As you are speaking, your eyes are reading reactions to your words. Are you putting the hearers to sleep? Are they starting to fidget? Do they have a quizzical or confused look? Are they completely engrossed in your tale and hanging on every word? This can let you know if you need to work harder to draw the audience in, need to clarify something, have gone on too long and lost their attention, or have them right where you want them.

3. Your voice is an instrument.

Imagine your storytelling is like playing a musical instrument. Sheet music has markings that indicate various dynamics to the musician. Are the notes staccato or legato (short and separated or long and running together)? Is the volume fortissimo or pianissimo (very loud or very soft)? Is the tempo fast or slow? Is it increasing or decreasing? What about crescendos and decrescendos (getting louder and softer)? Stories don't come with these markings on them, but you can examine the story to find how to change your voice. What is the mood of the story or a particular part of the story? Is it somber, frantic, and scary or cheery and bright? Can your voice match those moods with your voice? On Easter Sunday I told the story of Jesus on the cross. I began to build tension and frustration in my voice as I told of how they nailed Him to the cross. With each sentence I slightly increased the tempo of my words and volume of my voice. I built this to a climax as Christ said His last words then continued the tension as I described the darkness in the sky, the earth shaking, and finally the temple curtain splitting down the middle. Then silence. The next words were somber, almost a whisper, as I described the mood of the disciples and Joseph getting the body and placing it in the tomb.

Don't be afraid of silence. In the example above, the silence was palpable. There was not a sound or a single person moving (and that is saying much with four-year-olds in the room). Silence can be a very powerful tool; it can allow critical moments to sink in and allow the listeners to feel the emptiness or hollow feelings that go along with some parts of stories. Resist the temptation to rush back in—count to three in your head. This goes back to being in tune with your audience. Sometimes we need to pause to

allow the audience to laugh. If we try to rush back too soon, they will miss the next thing we say covered up by the laughter.

When emphasizing certain parts of the story, our natural tendency is to make important things louder. But sometimes a whisper can be more intense and add more emphasis than a loud voice. It is the intensity of your voice that adds the emphasis. Try saying something very softly or in a whisper, and give it great intensity. A whisper can also add a secretive mood. Sometimes when I whisper I can almost feel the audience leaning in to hear what I am saying. But again, be in tune with the audience. If they can't hear your words, the whisper won't do you any good.

Some words are just fun to say. A skit I have seen on several occasions has several people who are waiting at a bus stop. One of the people keeps saying interesting words like *galoshes*, *gazebo*, *beluga*, and *bulbous bouffant*. He is having so much fun doing it that the others join in; before you know it, there is a chorus of interesting rhythmic words being sung. Use words in your stories that sing. Words like *sizzle* and *crackle* are words that when you say them sound like the sound they describe (onomatopoeia). Have fun with the words and descriptions in your story.

4. **Painting the picture.**

Another way to look at telling a story is painting a picture with words. I was in an art gallery on Coronado Island near San Diego about a year ago with my family. In the gallery was a piece called *The Commission* by Thomas Dubois. This was one of four pieces that he did on the theme of Noah's ark. This particular piece was one of the ark during construction. The ark was silhouetted against a sunset, and you could see the scaffolding and the frame of the ark in progress. I was in awe. My family spent about thirty minutes looking at the many details in the painting. Each time we looked we saw something new. It so inspiring, that I almost considered purchasing it. If it were \$200 instead of \$1200, they might have had a deal. That is what we want to do with our storytelling. We want to pour rich detail into it. We want the layers and complexity to be there so that someone could listen to it again and again and find new things each time. Have you ever heard a story that was so real and vivid that you felt like you were there? What made you feel that way? It was the details that touched all of your senses. We especially want to do this with Bible stories. The Bible is alive and powerful, but often we tell it as if it were dead and powerless. So what kind of details do we need to pour into the story?

a. Start with the setting.

- 1) What do you see (e.g., landscape, buildings, people, nature, animals)?
- 2) What do you hear (e.g., commotion, silence, a soft rippling stream)?
- 3) What do you smell (e.g., food, flowers, barnyard animals)?
- 4) What do you feel (e.g., hot, cold, dry, humid, windy)?
- 5) What are people wearing?
- 6) How do they live?
- 7) What era or time is it?
- 8) What is the mood (e.g., peace, tension, war)?

b. Next think about the characters in the story.

- 1) What mannerisms do they have?
- 2) What do they like and dislike?
- 3) How do they talk? Do they have an accent?
- 4) What are they like? How would you describe their personalities?
- 5) How does an older person talk? How does a child talk?
- 6) What quirks do they have?

Bring each character to life with facial expressions, posture, and voice. This will take some work and practice, but the payoff in how rich the story becomes is well worth it. Pour as much of this detail as you can into the characters of your story.

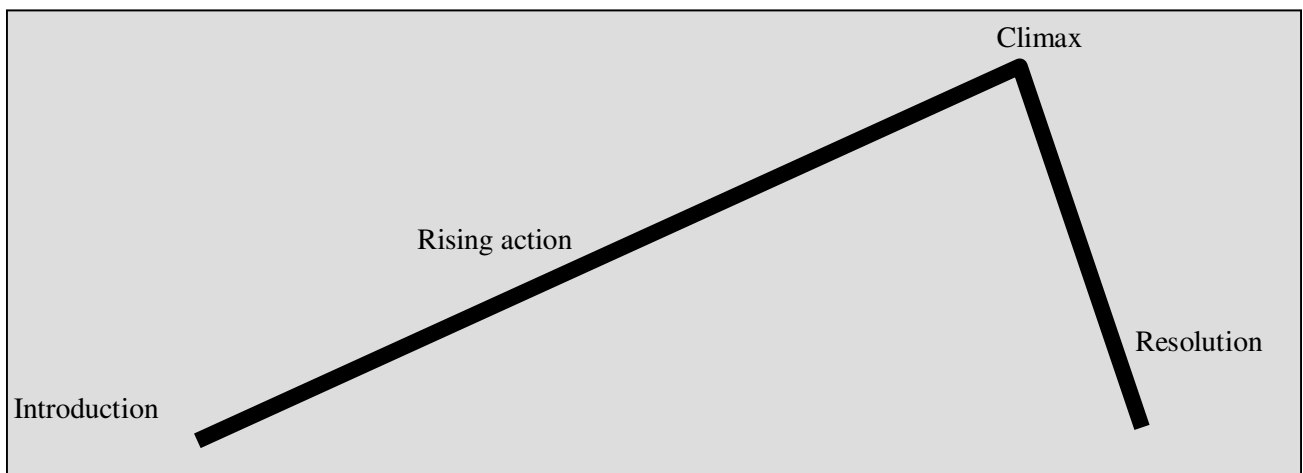
You may not have the time to incorporate all of these things the first time you tell a story. Add a few details each time you tell the story, and allow it to build and grow with you.

5. Story Structure.

It is important to understand the structure of a story. You don't want to neglect any portion of it, but you also want to understand its purpose so that you can match the mood and energy of your telling to it. Imagine the structure of the story as a checkmark lying on its side.

a. Identify the climax.

What is the point in the story to which all action builds? What is the moment on which the outcome hinges? For Daniel, it is not when he is thrown into the lions' den—at this point the outcome is still in doubt; the climax is the next morning when the king goes to see what happened. All the conflict and action builds to that one point. So, in your storytelling the tension needs to slowly build to that point. Don't let your listeners off the hook. Keep them in suspense. Use your voice, facial expressions, gestures, and movement to convey the drama of the moment. In the case of Daniel, you could pace up and down nervously as you are telling what the king was going through. Even when the listeners know the ending, it is exciting for them when you take them on that emotional journey.



b. Resolve your story.

This should not go on too long after the climax, but make sure you wrap up the loose ends. This is usually when characters face the consequences of their actions. In the case of Daniel, the story does not end when Daniel is safe, but when his accusers are punished and Darius proclaims that all should fear and worship Daniel's God.

c. **Introduction.**

While it is important to understand your climax and steadily build to it, the introduction can be the most important part of the story. You usually have just a few minutes to hook your audience—to grab their attention and compel them to continue listening. Your introduction should be compelling. The first sentence or two should be dynamic and gripping. Consider occasionally starting in the middle of an action scene. Arrows flying over head, the clashing of swords, the rumble of thunder and the crackle of lightning, and the wind blowing waves so big that you think you are going to be swallowed by the sea, the low rumble of the ground of something that must be a large animal, soldiers running away like frightened children shrieking in horror, “I’ve never seen . . . it’s so big . . . how can anyone?” then the thunderous cry of a giant shouting curses at the God of Israel. This action could be something leading up to the story you are about to tell. But I have also seen this technique used recently in books and movies to tell part of the action near the climax without telling too much, then going back and telling the action leading up to it. You can also ask a compelling question or make an extraordinary or unexpected statement. The key is that you want to hook your listeners in the first few sentences.

6. **Viewpoint.**

Another technique for changing up a story or giving it more of an emotional impact is to tell the story from a different viewpoint. Most stories are told from a third-person omniscient standpoint. This means the narrator knows all the action that is happening in every place and knows the reactions and motivations behind them. Consider telling the story from the viewpoint of one of the characters. Try telling the story of Naaman being healed of his leprosy strictly from Naaman's point of view. Try telling it from Elisha's point of view—then try Gehazi, the servant girl, or Naaman's advisor. Each story would be different. Each would have different conflict and different lessons learned.

7. **Dialogue.**

Dialogue is also much more exciting than just plain telling the plot. Telling the story in first person lets you tap into more dialogue. If you are telling the story from a third-person standpoint, don't neglect the dialogue. Consider telling parts of the story through what the characters say rather than just telling that part of the story. Having a messenger come to tell the king (or any character) what is happening is much more tangible and realistic than just narrating the event. With dialogue, you have the ability to convey the emotion and impact of the event from the perspective of the person speaking.

8. **Enjoy the process.**

Storytelling can be a lot of work: it takes time to prepare a great story, but it can also be fun. Enjoy the process. Try new things and stretch yourself beyond what you think you can do. The results will be well worth your effort.

INVITATIONS

A 3 X 5 INVITATION

It is important when working with young people to give them an opportunity to respond to the clear teaching of God's Word. One very helpful way to do this is to give a 3 x 5 invitation. Pass out a 3" x 5" index card and have them write out specific thoughts, decisions, or actions that need to be changed in their lives. Have them look up a verse to remember and write it out on the card. Then have them place the decision card in a place they will remember to look at it. Give them some ideas of places to post it or a book to put it in—e.g., mirror, car dash, refrigerator door, on their bed, or bedroom wall. Be sure to leave yourself ample time for them to think through their decision and come up with a plan of action. Have them share their decision with someone right away.

A LETTER TO YOURSELF

Have them write a letter to themselves which you will return to them at a predetermined time. Be specific about the goals that they list. You might have them write out people for whom they will pray, goals they will reach in the next month or year, or people to whom they will witness. In a meeting time, give the letters back and have the young people review and put down what they have completed and renew or revise the goals they have yet to complete. Sometime the best preacher to us is ourselves.

A BOX OF REMEMBRANCE

After a camp, revival meeting, missions trip, or other big event have the group record what God did in their hearts and the decisions they have made and why. Add pictures or small, specific items to place with their record of what they learned. Sometime in the future—particularly when times are difficult, teens are a bit distant, and decisions are being tested—bring out the box, give out the records, and refresh the memory.

OPENING THE EYES OF YOUR TEENS TO THE WORLD OF MISSIONS

DEVELOPING A HEART FOR MISSIONS IN YOUR YOUTH GROUP

DO YOUR TEENS SUFFER FROM MINISTRY MYOPIA?

Myopia is near-sightedness. Those with myopia see nearby objects clearly, but distant objects appear blurred. Teens (and adults) who suffer from ministry myopia only see ministry that is right in front of them and which concerns them. On the other hand, ministry which is done away from them and which does not immediately concern them can be a struggle for them to properly “see.”

Obviously, one area of ministry that can be blurred to them is missions. As youth workers, we have to ask ourselves:

- What assumptions about missions do we have that our teens might not have?
- What are the reasons for missions that we take for granted which our teens may not even be aware of?
- Put yourself in their shoes: “If I were a teen, what questions would I naturally have concerning missions and why our church participates in and promotes missions?”
- As we try to explain or teach missions, do we use terminology that may be ambiguous to them, like *world evangelization, church planting, cross-cultural ministry, faith-promise giving, deputation, furlough, mission board, proselytize*, or even *Great Commission*?
- If we are explaining and/or teaching on the subject, are we avoiding theological issues related to the subject? Why?

We need to be able to correct this problem. We want them to “see” missions—a ministry that happens outside of their normal experience—so that they clearly understand it, relate to it, and value it.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM *MISSIONS*?

To speak of missions is to speak of the church’s efforts to take the gospel to uttermost parts of the earth—starting in our own backyard. Missions is the strategic advancement of the gospel by the evangelization and discipleship of people (individuals, families, tribes/clans, people groups, communities, cities, and nations) in order to plant New Testament churches that will obediently participate in the Great Commission effort.

WHY MUST OUR TEENS GRASP MISSIONS?

1. Genuine discipleship includes sharing the burden of missions.
2. Our churches enjoy a rich heritage of missions.
3. It is one way of recruiting future missionaries.
4. Teens are a strategic group to encourage missionaries.

5. It is crucial to constructing a biblical worldview.

WHAT BENEFITS ARE TO BE GAINED BY FAITHFULLY KEEPING MISSIONS IN FRONT OF YOUR TEENS?

1. Sensitivity to a call into full-time (or part-time) ministry
2. Enthusiasm for promoting missions/missionaries
3. Openness to participating in short-term mission trips
4. Increased willingness to financially support missionaries
5. Renewed burden to pray for missionaries / mission fields / mission projects
6. Rekindle a passion for personal evangelism
7. Encouragement to get more training in apologetics / Christian worldview
8. Greater appreciation for church history
9. Deepened respect for pastors, missionaries, etc.
10. Larger heart for people

HOW CAN YOU BEGIN?

20 PRACTICAL IDEAS TO GET IT OFF THE GROUND!

1. Teach missions from the Scripture (e.g., the Great Commission, the Book of Acts, Paul's Mission Journeys, Ambassadors for Christ).
2. Adopt the theme/vision from this current year's mission conference at your church (or develop one!) as your youth group theme/vision.
3. Have the teens write letters of encouragement to the missionaries.
4. Have the missionaries add the youth group to their newsletter mailing.
5. Create a web-based community and have your teens join in.
6. Start a missions blog on your website (or use a free web blog site such as www.blogger.com).
7. Utilize resources such as "Operation World" to pray for nations, continents, regions, etc.
8. Have your youth group adopt your missionaries—organize small groups of teens into "prayer bands" named for a continent or famous missionary.
9. Plan a care package for a missionary (maybe one per quarter).
10. Plan a mission trip to assist one of your missionaries.
11. Recruit your teens to serve the missionaries/church at your church's mission conference.

12. Study the lives of famous missionaries and then have your teens compose dramatic presentations of their lives (or of scenes from their lives) to the church (or to the public—use it for evangelism!!!).
13. Identify a people group within your own community and help to establish a ministry to reach them or their teens (e.g., Hispanic, Asian, Filipino, East Indian, Native American, Arabic, Eastern European, African).
14. Use a special missions-oriented curriculum to teach more about missions (e.g., *Six Dangerous Questions to Transform Your View of the World* by Paul Borthwick).
15. Invite missionaries (either local or ones on deputation) to speak to your teens at special events (perhaps a themed banquet).
16. Have your teens become pen pals (e-mail buddies) with teens who live with their families on the mission field.
17. Host a “Mission Career Expo” and invite special guests who can introduce teens to the variety of careers in the mission field (pastors, church planters, educators, missions-based businesses, technology, administration, Bible- and study-materials translation, aviation, construction, medical).
18. Organize a youth choir to sing mission-themed songs, choruses, and hymns for your church’s mission conference or monthly mission emphasis.
19. Have your teens volunteer to provide monthly missions updates to your church congregation.
20. Present a faith-promise-type special missions project to the teens; have them pray and financially give to the special project.

CONFLICT 101

Have you ever noticed that conflict is inevitable when you work with people? It is not a matter of *if* conflict will come but a matter of *when* conflict will come. Because people are sinful, we will always deal with conflict in ministry. Conflict management is a necessary tool for anyone who is going to be involved in serving people in the local church. A week rarely goes by that I am not helping someone deal with conflict. This is not a new problem though; the early church also had to deal with conflict.

Probably the first book written in the New Testament was penned around 45 AD, just fifteen years after the death of Christ. James, the half brother of Jesus, wrote the book of James to the people who had been scattered abroad. Written to Christians, James used the word *brethren* nineteen times in seventeen verses. James challenged the people about what church life should be. It is not a book of suggestions, but rather it is a forceful book with fifty-five imperatives in thirty-six verses. He wanted them to understand that they had to live biblically. It is interesting to note, that most of the book is about dealing with conflict. Conflict caused by favoritism, conflict caused by the use of the tongue, and conflict that resulted from selfish living. James wanted them to understand that a right response of humility is the answer to conflict.

James gave four basic facets of conflict that we must understand to properly respond to conflict. The following outline of James will expound on these four facets and then consider some practical applications to dealing with conflict today.

THE FOUNDATION FOR DEALING WITH CONFLICT IS A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW (JAMES 1:1–27).

1. Hard times must be faced with joy and wisdom (vv. 2–8).
 - a. Life trials must be faced with joy.
 - b. Handling conflict correctly requires wisdom that is from above.
2. You must maintain an eternal perspective (vv. 9–12).
3. You—not God—are the source of sin (vv. 13–18).
 - a. God is not the source of sin (inner conflict), but rather our own lust is.
 - b. God is the source of that which is good.
4. You must put God's Word into action (vv. 19–27).
 - a. Listen; don't react (v. 19).
 - b. Sinful conflict results in unrighteousness (v. 20).
 - c. Expose yourself to the Word and not to sin (v. 21).
 - d. Be honest with yourself about where you are (vv. 22–24).
 - e. Proactively put it into practice by controlling your tongue and proactively seeking the good of others (vv. 25–27).

Application

Without this biblical worldview, the Christian walk will become very discouraging. Knowing that God is in control of the circumstances of our lives assures us that the pain we are going through is under His control. Also, knowing that the conflict we face must be handled through God's wisdom will help us be more dependent on God. Too many times, people blame God for the conflict they are in when, in reality, it is from their sinful choices and their failure to follow God's Word.

THE HEART OF CONFLICT IS PRIDE (JAMES 2:1–3:18).

1. Conflict results from an improper view of each other (2:1–13).
 - a. Conflict within church of showing favoritism.
 - b. God does not show that favoritism.
2. Conflict reveals a lack of faith (2:14–26).
 - a. Following the commands of God is a matter of faith.
 - b. Our actions must match what we say our belief is.
3. Conflict results from an improper use of the tongue (3:1–12).
 - a. Conflict is inevitable.
 - b. The use of our tongue will cause conflict.
 - c. We must control our tongue, or it will wreak havoc.
 - d. Leaders must be aware of the use of their tongue and how much it reveals about them.
4. Conflict reveals pride (3:13–18, especially v. 16).

Be honest about where your responses come from—God or earthly/sensual.

Application

It is important to get to the heart of what is causing conflict. As a conflict manager, you need to seek to understand the circumstances and the heart behind the actions in the conflict. Conflict comes many times because people believe that their rights and privileges have been infringed upon or that they are being sinned against. Resolution of conflict will only be lasting if one deals with the heart of the issue.

THE RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT IS THROUGH HUMILITY (JAMES 4:1–5:18).

1. Humility is the answer to the conflict that is occurring in your life (4:1–10).
 - a. Your problem is you (4:1–5).

Internal motives and desires draw you away from God.
 - b. Your problem can be overcome through God's grace (4:6).

- c. Your humility will solve your problem (4:7–10).
 - 1) Humility—placing yourself under the control of God.
 - 2) Submitting to God and resisting Satan (v. 7).
 - 3) Establishing a relationship with God (v. 8).
 - 4) Purifying and repenting of sin (vv. 8–9).
 - 5) Resting your future in God.
- 2. Humility maintains a right attitude towards other Christians (4:11–12).
- 3. Humility bases its life choices on God (4:13–17).
- 4. Humility trust God with life's injustices (5:1–11, especially vv. 7–9).
 - a. God will take care of judging those who have caused conflict or injustice.
 - b. The day of the Lord is coming.
- 5. Humility depends on God for life's hardships (5:12–18).

Application

The portrait of humility in James 4 and 5 is a difficult portrait for us to paint in our own lives. After you understand the heart of the conflict, you will be able to move forward with a person on developing an attitude of humility that will allow him to deal with the conflict that he is experiencing. You cannot eliminate conflict; you can only manage conflict. Our response of humility to the conflict that we experience will enable us to properly deal with it. Whatever you are facing in life right now, a humble person is going to allow God to handle life's injustices and to depend on God through the hardships.

THE RESTORATION OF CONFLICT IS THROUGH CONFRONTATION (JAMES 5:19–20).

- 1. Restoration involves correction.
 - Convert*—to cause to change one's beliefs or actions.
- 2. Restoration helps cover sin and its results.

“Wandering ones need to be brought back to the fold. James referred here not to evangelism but to restoration. Revival, not redemption, is in view. The rescue action is of great significance. A lost sheep is saved from destruction and his sins (the sins of the restored one, not the restorer) are covered as if a veil were thrown over them (cf. 1 Peter 4:8),” Wolvorrd.

Application

Conflict never goes away on its own. It may disappear for awhile, or it may take on a new form, but conflict will always be there until it is biblically handled. Only as the opposite sides are confronted with their need to have humility and they choose to be humble will restoration occur. When restoration does occur, it can resolve a multitude of sins. Too many times we avoid conflict thinking that it will solve itself with time.

Rarely is avoiding conflict the right answer. When we are able to bring restoration, then the body of Christ will be able to function as it should.

Your right response of humility is the answer to conflict.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

THE PROCESS OF HANDLING CONFLICT

1. Identify the contributors to the conflict.
2. Seek to understand the circumstances of the conflict.
 - a. Talk to both sides.
 - b. Ask many questions.
 - c. Ask more questions.
 - d. Do not come to preconceived conclusions.
3. Seek to understand the people in the conflict.
 - a. What are the attitudes of the people?
 - b. What is their spiritual condition?
 - c. Are there contributing circumstances that will aggravate the conflict?
4. Identify the biblical principles that would apply to the conflict.
 - a. Does the Bible specifically address the issue?
 - b. What are the principles that would apply to the heart issues?
5. Counsel with the people in the conflict.
 - a. Give biblical input.
 - b. Help them to understand the need to solve the heart problem before the “circumstantial” problem.
 - c. Address the circumstances of the conflict.
 - 1) Seek solutions to problems.
 - 2) Seek to improve what is there.
6. Seek restoration between the opposing parties.
 - a. Seek and ask for forgiveness.
 - b. Come up with a plan on how to better handle the conflict in the future.
 - c. Pray with one another.

THINGS TO REMEMBER IN CONFLICT

1. Unbroken people will result in unresolved conflict.
2. You can only control yourself—not others.
3. When someone is unwilling to resolve conflict, go as far as you can and leave it with them. The fool and scorner will not properly respond.
4. Forgive, forgive, forgive—Christ forgave you.
5. Seek truth, not the easy way out.
6. The pain of confrontation is worth the joy of restoration.
7. The pain of confrontation is worth the spiritual growth in people's lives.
8. The pain of confrontation is worth someone not being able to walk away with an excuse.
9. The circle of restoration is the circle of offense.
10. God—not you—changes people.

SAYING WHAT'S IMPORTANT

Shortly after you spoke your first words, impressing all those around you, you had to learn the next important lesson of what not to say and when to be quiet. If you think about the progression of wise speech, you begin with learning to mimic and then work through the steps of learning to speak wisely. That progression includes the following:

1. Speaking with limited understanding—young learners speak with limited understanding and often misuse words.

Proverbs 1:22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

2. Speaking often—young children often enjoy this new ability to communicate and may talk often in this stage.

Proverbs 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

3. Being selective—during this stage, fools and the wise are separated. A young person begins to see the effect of his words on others and makes adjustments based on consequences.

1 Peter 3:10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

- a. With words—what words should I use, how few, how many?
 - b. With tone—what tone and volume are appropriate for the situation?
 - c. With timing—when is the best time to deal with this subject?
 - d. With people—whom should I be talking to about this?
 - e. With topic—what should I be talking about, and what should I never say?
4. Saying less—when an individual realizes the damage and misunderstanding his words can cause and that he is accountable for his words, he learns to speak less.

Proverbs 17:28 Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

5. Saying nothing—being quiet—a wise person will come to a point of understand that the best response to a situation is to be quiet and listen to others or wait for a better time to add information.

James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

6. Saying what is most important or necessary—although being quiet can be the best way to avoid conflict, a wise person will speak difficult words understanding his responsibility to help others.

Proverbs 18:24 A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

It is an act of the wise to open their mouth to say what is important when the situation demands it regardless of the difficulty or reception.

THE TWO SIDES OF A REBUKE

Truly the words from someone's mouth are a good evaluation of the integrity of his heart; though not as obvious, the *reason* he would remain quiet is also a valuable determiner of character.

At times we are asked like a medical doctor to administer care, though painful, so that healing may begin. Surgeons often have to cut or pierce in order to heal that which is wrong with a person. When a person understands the importance of saying that which is important and makes it a habit, many difficult things will be avoided. As much as we seek to prevent a time when rebuke is needed, the fact is that there will be times in ministry when we must bring pain in order to bring health. How do you respond to a situation that demands words that will be difficult to say and as difficult to receive?

In 2 Corinthians 7, the Apostle Paul gave us a candid, intimate look into his private struggles and anxieties when he had to painfully rebuke those he loved in order to ensure that their actions did not bring them harm. Often those being reproved only think of the pain of the rebuke, never considering the other side of the rebuke and the price that a person pays who is willing to say more than what is easy—speaking the truth though it is difficult to say and difficult to receive.

1. Looking at Paul's experience during this necessary reproof, we see him in the UNDESIRABLE POSITION of pointing out sin in the lives of those he loved. He did not enjoy it but was more concerned with their repentance than his comfort. Those who are being rebuked should understand
 - a. the difficulty of the position;
 - b. that rebuke is often necessary in order to obey God (v. 12);
 - c. that proper rebuke is motivated by love (to compliment is easy; to correct is difficult).
2. Regardless of the amount of preparation, one's rebuke will be met with an UNPREDICTABLE RESPONSE—will it be worldly or godly sorrow? Paul's concern was centered on the Corinthians response to his correction. *Repentance is a change of mind resulting in action that is in accord with God's will.*
 - a. Worldly sorrow, such as the sorrow of Judas, produces regret but not repentance. The sorrow is over the following:
 - 1) Guilt of a decision
 - 2) Consequences of a decision
 - b. Godly sorrow, such as the Corinthians, produces repentance and change.
 - 1) A needed change of behavior
 - a) Carefulness—a concerted effort to make amends
 - b) Clearing of yourselves—by right actions and not by personal justification
 - c) Indignation—an anger against sin
 - d) Fear—alarm at their own action and its consequences
 - e) Vehement desire—longing and concern for Paul

- f) Zeal—a passion for duty
 - g) Revenge—a readiness to see justice done and a desire to make amends
- 2) Change that will not be regretted
 - 3) A change of reputation
3. Paul's desire was realized when the Corinthians allowed rebuke to perform its intended purpose of repentance and have an **UNDENIABLE EFFECT**.
- a. On the Corinthians (v. 7)
 - 1) "Your earnest desire"
 - 2) "Your mourning"
 - 3) "Your fervent mind toward me"
 - b. On Paul
 - 1) His boldness of speech toward them (v. 4)
 - 2) His boasting confirmed—"I am not ashamed" (v. 14)
 - 3) His confidence in all things (v. 16)

WHAT DOES A COMPASSIONATE REBUKE LOOK LIKE?

In 2 Corinthians 7 we also see the crucial elements of a compassionate rebuke.

- 1. The compassionate rebuker has the following:
 - a. A consistent, righteous testimony (v. 2)
 - b. A willingness to put himself in an uncomfortable situation (v. 8)
 - c. A genuine concern for the needs of another (v. 9)
 - d. An understanding (and fear) that damage can be done (v. 9)
 - e. A recognition of the need to offset other dangerous opinions

When you keep quiet before ungodly men, you give them the advantage.

- 2. A compassionate rebuke does the following:
 - a. Applies pressure that produces sorrow (v. 9)
 - b. Demonstrates loyalty by acting on personal care (v. 8)
 - c. Stands on a biblical foundation that recognizes sin and understands the truth for the solution (vv. 10–11)

- d. Allows timing and need to supersede the method of delivery (Delivering the rebuke is more important than the “perfect” opportunity.)
- e. Acts on the prompting of the Holy Spirit and biblical truths.

CONCLUSION

As those who minister to others, it is crucial that we ourselves are

1. willing to receive a rebuke;
2. active in building relationships that lend themselves to meeting all the needs of another, whether easily done or painfully acted upon;
3. willing to put a priority on saying what is most important whether that be praise, a word of encouragement, or a biblical rebuke.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Timothy 3:16–17

OFFICE BASICS

1. Your desk is for supplies not storage. If you haven't touched something in a year, it should be relocated to storage.
2. A secretary or assistant will not fix your problems. One might even magnify your problems.
3. One person, one calendar.
4. How do the following two questions get answered in your office: Where am I? When will I return?
5. Once a year cull—pick a day during the slowest part of your year to sort through your entire office.
6. To defend against clutter, designate a place for everything..
7. Decorate your office with reminders of what is important to you and, more importantly, what is important to God.
8. Cluster interruptions.
9. Your office is the hub of communication channels. Use the appropriate channel for the message you are communicating.
 - a. E-mail—for information
 - b. Phone—for questions, reminders, and time-sensitive information
 - c. Pen and paper—for encouragement
 - d. One on one—for teaching, problems, and adjustments
10. Little things an office should have include the following:
 - a. Tissues
 - b. Breath mints
 - c. Plenty of pens
 - d. Another chair
 - e. Something to fiddle with
11. A study office and a work office are different. If you are using the same office for both, how do you identify which office you are in?
12. Clear the top of your desk before starting your next project.

GENDER SPECIFIC TEACHING

INTRODUCTION

The cover of *Time* magazine, January 20, 1992, said it all: “Why Are Men and Women Different?” The subtitle for the cover story answered the question: “It isn’t just upbringing. New studies show they are born that way.”¹ Brilliant. While some undoubtedly read with great interest to see exactly what science had “uncovered,” others could only shake their heads with amusement and say or think, “Of course they’re different. I did not need a ‘study’ to prove it.” The reason such a headline was attention catching was that so many had bought into the feminist movement. The push for “equality” for men and women forced many people to seek scientific evidence for gender similarity to support their preconceived notions, a method often used by those who want to go against the status quo. Yet, after many years and studies, some were concluding differences did indeed exist after all.

As Bible-believing Christians, we are not surprised by such findings. In fact, many of us are among those mentioned above who approached such a headline with nothing more than amusement. Men and women are indeed different. The Bible teaches that they are different, and such a conclusion is not an exaltation or degradation of either gender. The same can certainly be said for teenagers. And while most preaching/teaching that takes place in church keeps the genders combined (and so they should for the sake of church body and family unity), there is room and value to be found in gender specific teaching that is carefully conceived and utilized in church discipleship ministries targeting teenagers.

If gender specific teaching is already in place in your ministry, my desire is that the following will allow you to examine its current effectiveness and respond appropriately. But if gender specific teaching is not a part of your current ministry to teenagers, my desire is that the following will encourage you to consider some of the potential discipleship benefits that are found by utilizing it.

GENDER SPECIFIC TEACHING WITH A PURPOSE

Gender specific teaching should not be done just for the sake of doing it. Philosophy should always be the engine behind the things that you do. It is always helpful for a church to evaluate its practices and examine why things are currently being done the way they are. In some cases, those practices are accomplishing a specific, stated goal. In other cases, a clear, stated goal exists; but the methods being employed may be having limited or zero effect in accomplishing the goal. The worst case scenario is when a ministry is doing things because “that is the way we have always done it,” even if it is not stated so exactly. For instance, one common place to find gender specific teaching is in the divisions of Sunday school classes. But *why* is that the case? There are many possible answers to this question. Some of it will depend on the scope and sequence of the curriculum you are using. Other factors can be staffing and spacing capabilities or just a desire to have smaller classes. (In the case of smaller classes, one might argue that dividing them on the basis of gender is not the only effective way to subdivide into smaller classes.) Of course, Sunday school is only one (though a common one) example of the subdivision of teenagers based upon gender.²

So when is it most valuable to have genders divided for teaching purposes? That depends upon your philosophy. There are several philosophical principles of mine that I can give as an example.

1. Be careful not to overuse gender specific teaching. Even if you have the staffing capabilities to handle the smaller groups at any time your teens meet together, the impact may be diminished greatly if genders are being divided all or most of the time. One value of gender specific teaching is that it provides variety and can create an atmosphere that is opposite of the “everything is always the same” feeling. Also, it is important for teenage girls and guys to learn how to appropriately interact with one another in a church ministry environment.

2. Know what you will be teaching and why you will be teaching it. The wrong approach is to say, “Hey, let’s divide the guys and girls on Wednesday nights during the teaching time. Now, let’s see . . . what should we teach them, now that we have them split up?” Such an approach places the proverbial cart before the horse. You need to seek God’s face while examining the needs of teenagers in general and your church’s teenagers in particular. Know what you are going to do and why you are going to do it.
3. Determine whether gender specific teaching will be an asset or a detriment to teaching what you plan to teach. In some instances, you will determine that gender specific teaching may have a negative effect. But in many instances, you will determine that some value might be gained from gender specific teaching.
4. Prioritize the areas of your teaching ministry so you know which areas would benefit *most* from using gender specific teaching. If you do not desire to have your teens divided by gender all of the time (see #1 above), you will have to make a decision concerning what teaching times will be divided by gender. Will it be during the Sunday school hour? Is youth group meeting the time to do it? Will this be a temporary or permanent arrangement? Or will it simply be used with particular issues on a more sporadic (though organized) basis?

Using these philosophical principles, you will be able to develop a program for gender specific teaching. And that might even change from year to year, depending upon the makeup of your group—size, attitude, age distribution, etc.

The following is a brief overview of how our current youth ministry structure³ deals with gender specific teaching based upon the preceding principles. This summary is presented for example purposes only and is not designed to be “the only way to do it.”

First, in order not to overuse gender specific teaching, we decided not to lock ourselves into having either Sunday school or youth group time devoted exclusively to gender specific teaching. Second, we put in place specific teaching goals for any time the youth group meets together. Our current focus in Sunday school is teaching through books of the Bible, using curriculum as an aid, but very focused upon biblical theology—helping teens understand how each book of the Bible presents a significant piece of the overall message of the Bible, the story of redemption. On Wednesday evenings, we have our “youth group” time, which is already age-divided between junior and senior high. During this time, the teaching is more topical in nature (though still expositional), seeking to help teenagers understand crucial issues that they are facing or may face in the near future.

The third step was examining our goals for both Sunday school and youth group to see if gender specific teaching would be an asset or a detriment. We determined that it could have a positive impact in either area. For Sunday school, there would be the opportunity to have application of Bible passages that is more gender specific. There would also be more likelihood of discussion (specifically among the girls) if the groups were smaller and the genders were split. But we also realized a potential advantage of having gender specific teaching during certain topics that are addressed in a Wednesday evening youth group setting, especially since the entire group is already divided into junior and senior high.

Finally, we concluded that we would potentially gain more profit from utilizing gender specific teaching during Wednesday evening youth group instead of Sunday school. There were two primary reasons for this decision. First, we decided that we would maximize our gender specific teaching times by using it primarily when addressing topics. The ability to help teens with specific application made this setup attractive. Second, by utilizing gender specific teaching during Wednesday evening youth group, we were not locked into doing it every week indefinitely until we changed structure again. We do not even try to use gender division a certain number of times each year. Gender specific teaching is utilized only when we believe it would enhance our ability to biblically and practically deal with a particular topic.

This example is not designed to throw cold water on using gender specific teaching in other ways. Particular aspects of your philosophy may lead to different conclusions. But make sure you are philosophy-driven in your choices, and constantly are evaluating your philosophy to ensure it is biblical.

So what do you do once you have the genders separated? At these times, your opportunity to drive home biblical truths in a very specific way is heightened. You do not want to waste it.

PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING TEENAGE GUYS

Teenage guys obviously deal with being distracted by girls in a youth group setting. So getting them together for teaching can remove that issue, at least temporarily. However, guys also like to “goof around” with each other even more when they are not in the presence of girls. The following are some principles to help you make your time of teaching them more profitable.

1. Maintain order and keep them focused on the lesson. Magnify for them the importance of self-control in godly manhood. They must be encouraged to love God’s Word and the times when it is taught. They need to learn self-control.
2. Encourage them to contribute positively to the spiritual atmosphere of the time. Give times for them to try to explain a text of Scripture and pray together. After a time of challenge, allow for guided brainstorming sessions concerning how they are going to ask God to help them impact the spiritual atmospheres at their home and church.
3. Utilize careful bluntness in application with them. Ask questions that encourage them to think and verbalize those applications themselves. You certainly do not want to be harsh, but neither do you desire to beat around the bush. Spiritual lives are at stake, and gender specific teaching provides you an opportunity for added bluntness.
4. Use illustrations that appeal to their masculinity. Certain illustrations (e.g., sports, cars, video games) will have a greater impact in an exclusively guy setting than in a mixed audience.
5. Challenge concerning God’s expectations for them as Christian men in a wicked world. While they do not have all the specific responsibilities of adult men, the general principles apply just as much for them.
6. Encourage them to ask questions that they might not be comfortable asking with teenage girls around. If you have guarded the atmosphere carefully, young men who desire to please God will have great questions to ask that they and their peers need to hear.
7. Look for ways to build rapport with them. Time spent together with them outside of the formal teaching environment can greatly help when the time of formal teaching comes.

Topics That Can Be Addressed Specifically with Teen Guys

- Embracing spiritual leadership—God’s expectations for men in the church and home; how to treat women (especially sisters in Christ) in general
- Purity—physical, mental, and emotional; deal with sexual temptation and issues of dating
- What to look for in a godly woman (*Proverbs 31*; contrasted with *Proverbs 7*)
- What a godly man looks like (character qualities mentioned in *1 Timothy 3:2–12* and *Titus 1:6–9*); various character and spiritual growth issues can be addressed here and specifically applied to guys

PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING TEENAGE GIRLS

While teenage guys may not temper their actions in front of girls, most girls act vastly different in the presence of guys (even those with whom they are comfortable) than they do when they are just with other girls. Gender specific teaching can have a tremendous positive effect on the girls in your youth group. Here are some helpful principles and hints for teaching girls separately.⁴

1. Keep their control and lovingly demand their attention. Girls like to communicate one with another, but the need to know that there is a time and a place.
2. Try to involve the girls in reading verses, answering questions, etc. Provide opportunities for them to share their thoughts about the lesson being taught. Doing this will introduce specific application opportunities that will not be available when the guys are around. Gender specific teaching provides you with an opportunity for added, though careful, bluntness with the girls, especially when addressing specific topics.
3. Seek to develop leadership among the girls by breaking them up into groups to answer questions about or find a specific application from a set of verses. Allow the girls in the group to choose a spokesperson, or assign a leader of your own choosing. You can also use this as an opportunity to break up the usual cliques within your group.
4. Look for ways to build rapport with them. Time spent together with them outside of the formal teaching environment can greatly help when the time of formal teaching comes. Also, taking time for prayer requests and then following up in later weeks will let the girls know that you care about them individually. Many girls are less inhibited about mentioning prayer requests when “the guys” are not around.
5. Incorporate creative activities that you know your girls enjoy doing into the lessons. For example, if you are teaching a group where several of the girls like to draw, allow them to make a poster illustrating the theme of the lesson. You can also use drama or poetry in a similar way.
6. If you are comfortable with leading music (even informally), incorporate singing into some of your teaching times. Many teenage girls especially enjoy singing. A song can drive home a point from your lesson and help the girls to remember it later on.

Topics That Can Be Addressed Specifically with Teen Girls

Embracing godly submission and femininity—how to follow male spiritual leadership and what to do when men do not lead

Purity—physical, mental, and emotional; deal with sexual temptation and issues of dating

What to look for in a godly man (character qualities mentioned in *1 Timothy 3:2–12* and *Titus 1:6–9*)

What a virtuous woman looks like (*Proverbs 31*; contrasted with *Proverbs 7*); various character and spiritual growth issues can be addressed here and specifically applied to girls

RESOURCES FOR GENDER SPECIFIC TEACHING

The following is a list of resources that can provide helpful material for dealing with various gender appropriate issues.

Elisabeth Elliot, *Let Me Be a Woman* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1976).

Elisabeth Elliot, *Passion and Purity* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1984).

Elisabeth Elliot, *The Mark of a Man* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1981).

Joshua Harris, *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Publishers, 1997).

Joshua Harris, *Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is)* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Publishers, 2003).

Barbara Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Woman* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001).

R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, Revised Edition (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001).

John MacArthur, Jr., *Different By Design* (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor Publishing, 1994).

John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991).

CONCLUSION

The opportunities that are available through gender specific teaching are many if utilized carefully. God has gifted men and women for His purposes to fulfill His Great Commission in this world. Challenging young people accordingly while they are still teenagers provides them an opportunity to get started on biblically right footing.

Notes

1. Christine Gorman and J. Madeleine Nash, "Sizing Up the Sexes," *Time* (January 20, 1992), <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,974689,00.html>.
2. With a desire to be even-handed, it should also be added that combining genders in a teenage Sunday school program (or in any other setting) should also be philosophy driven.
3. This arrangement is not necessarily designed to be permanent in our ministry, though we have no current plans to change it.
4. I am indebted to the ladies who work with the teenage girls at Northwest Valley Baptist Church, Glendale, AZ, for their help in compiling these principles that can be used by other ladies in teaching teenage girls.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY 101

In preparing for this session, I sent out a poll question to the pastors, school teachers, professors and children's workers of Tri-City Ministries. The question was, "If you could give one piece of advice to a new teacher, what would it be?" Below are some of the responses I received.

- Establish your classroom boundaries first. Relaxing rules is much easier than tightening up later. You're their teacher, not their buddy.
- Balance discipline with fun. If the right balance is reached, (1) less discipline is necessary and (2) the kids will listen with enthusiasm.
- Leave more time to study, and study earlier rather than later.
- Be consumed with your lesson or message. If it does not grip you, it will not grip your hearers. If you see it only as a job, a project, a lesson, then you should be doing something else.
- Know your material—don't take the basic Bible stories for granted.
- Don't "teach down" to the kids. Talk to them like "real people."
- Be enthusiastic. The biblical material must have a grip on your own life first if it is to have an effect on them.
- Don't be too self-conscious. Be willing to relax and "have fun" with them and laugh at yourself when necessary.
- Be flexible.
- Develop a genuine relationship with your kids founded in Christian love (a love that has fun during games, is firm during admonishment, that kids are attracted to when they need advice)
- If your students know the material, but they hate the subject, what have you really accomplished? Teach them to love the subject and you set them on the path for lifelong learning.
- Ask questions of the veteran teachers, and glean as much from other teachers as you can.
- Kids really want to participate in the lesson—find ways to let them do that and you'll make the Bible come to life.
- Know your audience. You must understand how the children in your age group think, act, learn, communicate, and relate to others if you want to effectively teach them.
- Be sure you incorporate a variety of activities into the lesson time to capture the kids' attention and interest—don't just speak from up front, make it real to them.
- I usually tell new teachers that in the first year you just survive, the second year you redo everything you did in your first year, and then by the third year you actually begin to teach.

That last statement is funny but true. Does that sound familiar? Are you overwhelmed—just looking to survive? Well today is not a day to ponder the deeper issues of the elementary child's psyche, take a philosophical and historical look at children's ministry, or try to determine the state of children's ministry in the

twenty-first century. Today is about what you need to survive and be effective in your first few years working with children. These are the basics broken up into the areas essential for the new teacher: You 101, Kids 101, Discipline 101, and Salvation 101.

You 101

In *1 Timothy 4:16*, Paul says to Timothy, the young man he has taught and mentored, “*Take heed unto thyself, and unto doctrine.*” The most important thing you can do for the children you minister to is make sure you are in a right relationship with God.

Let me be very transparent with you. As I look back on my ministry, I remember some of the things that my mentors taught me. I can think of Sunday school teachers meetings I sat in, I can remember college chapel messages I listened to, where I was exhorted that the most important part of my ministry was my personal walk with God. While I knew it was true in my head, I wasn't as interested in my heart. I was more interested in the mechanics of ministry. I was looking for new and innovative ideas. If I could just do ventriloquism like that preacher, or do gospel illusion like that evangelist, or if I could tell stories like that teacher, or if I had all the great illustrations that preacher had, I would be effective.

I didn't listen; I didn't get it. If you are listening to this, and the thoughts running through your mind at this very moment are, “Yes, I understand that. Yes, this is something I have heard before.” I would implore you to truly examine your heart. Ask God to reveal to you the thoughts and intents of your heart. Do you really get it?

Who you are is more important than what you know. You can be a brilliant educator, and not walk with God. You can teach a subject and inspire children without a relationship with God. Thousands of unsaved teachers around the country do it every day. But if you want to make disciples, if you want to have effective ministry, if you want to change the life of a child, you must take heed unto thyself.

If you had a fight with your spouse, are in rebellion with your parents, have unconfessed sin in your life, make it right and get right with God before you begin to prepare or teach.

You don't have to be perfect, but you do have to be maturing. You don't have to know everything, but you do need to be in a right relationship with God. You don't have to be a Bible scholar, but you do need to read God's Word regularly. You don't need to be a prayer warrior, but you must pray.

If I were to answer the poll question I sent out to my fellow staff members, my answer would be a single word—pray. I am convinced that my effectiveness in ministry is directly related to the time I spend in prayer. Again, let me be very transparent with you. The last three weeks are a perfect example. On two of those weeks I spent one hour one week, and forty minutes another in prayer before preparing those messages. This time was spent desperately begging God to give me wisdom, to give me the words, to help me communicate His truth. Out of those two weeks came two salvation decisions, a message that is transforming my own life, and tangible fruit in my kids and leaders alike. Week three was a different story. I prepared as usual, I actually had a very good plan and service. I did pray, but it was short, and shallow. The message, while I think it was one of the more entertaining messages I have preached in a year or so, was not effective, and I needlessly embarrassed a child by dealing with a discipline issue more publicly than I needed to. We must pray. Prayer is not a tack on or an aid to our work: it is our work. It is essential.

Please don't miss this. Sometimes when you are new, all the individual elements that go into teaching a class can easily consume your time, and attention. Please take the time to pray; please take the time to “*take heed unto thyself.*”

Following is a checklist to help you evaluate yourself.

- Am I saved?
- Have I been baptized?
- Is there any known, unconfessed sin in my life?
- Am I in a right relationship with my spouse, kids, parents, and siblings?
- Am I in a right relationship with my pastor?
- Am I in a right relationship with my ministry director?
- Am I in a right relationship with my teachers, professors, or others God has put in authority over me?
- Do I bristle at rules and standards?
- Do I take criticism well? Do I have a teachable spirit?
- Do I have a servant's heart?
- Do I have a regular, personal time in God's Word?
- Do I consistently spend time in prayer?
- Do I love the people of God and regularly attend church services?
- Do I love children?
- Do I love the children in my class/group?
- Do I love the age group I am working with?
- Do I have a clear understanding of why I want to serve in this capacity?
- Do I believe that this ministry is exactly where God wants me to be?
- Have I spoken to God about this lesson?
- Have I asked God for wisdom in communicating His truth?
- Am I a doer of the Word? Am I practicing what I teach?

KIDS 101

Teaching is the art of taking someone from where they are to where they need to go. If this is true, one of the most important things you can do is know where your student's are. This means knowing them individually. They have needs, family situations, and history that can dramatically affect the way they learn, behave, and respond to you. Get to know them. Talk with them. Ask them about what they like and don't like.

But beyond this, there are some general principles that relate to most children. Good material has been written on the distinctives of different age groups. The Sunday school / VBS Curriculum we use (RBP) has a page at the beginning of every one of their teacher's manuals that gives insight to age specific tendencies. Carol Bond has some great information beginning on page 3-13 of the *Brain for Youth Leaders, Volume 2* on the "Needs and Notions of Juniors."

Here are some of my thoughts on elementary young people.

1. **Kids need to FEEL loved not just be loved.** You may truly love the children you work with. But sometimes we fail to communicate that love to the children in ways they understand. A child's concept of being loved includes being liked and accepted. They need to know you like them. Show this to them in tangible ways. Make sure you learn their names. Learn something about them, learn something they like, and talk to them about it. If your only personal communication to them deals with their behavior, the message they hear is you do not like me; you don't love me.
2. **Children are very concrete thinkers—black and white, right and wrong.** Lower elementary children don't get symbolism easily. Upper elementary young people are starting to get it, but still need to have much of the symbolism explained to them. This means that object lessons, gospel illustrations, and illustrations with lots of symbolic references may not be the best choices for lessons for younger kids. Puppets and skits where specific scenarios can be acted out are better choices the younger you go.
3. **Children do not always make logical leaps.** They don't easily connect the dots from concept to every day life. Be sure to be very specific in application of truth. Sometimes when we teach on the principles of a topic, kids just don't get the application. I had a friend commiserate with me that he saw kids coming out of a school chapel service with a message on putting others first, run over to the drinking fountain and fight over who would be first in line. When confronted about what they had just heard in chapel, blank stares confirmed that they did not make the connection between the principle they had just been taught and the act of wanting to be first in line.
4. **Children like to play act and participate in class and in the lesson.** Having children participate in a skit, or act out a scenario can be very effective. In the situation mentioned above, imagine talking about putting others first then having three children come up to the front. You can tell each of them, that they are all really thirsty and in a hurry, and they need to get a drink before going to class. You are all approaching the drinking fountain at the same time. What should you do? Can you illustrate every scenario in the life of a child? No. But the more concrete examples you can help a child walk through the better.
5. **Lighten up! Enjoy your class and allow your children to enjoy it as well.** This isn't to say that you cannot deal with serious topics, but not everything you say and do should be gravely serious. Smile. Be willing to be silly and laugh. As with just about everything we do, there needs to be a balance. Kids will much more readily follow you into a serious discussion about their sin if they have just laughed with you.
6. **Kids love slapstick comedy.** When a puppet bangs its head on something or a goofball trips and falls in a skit, they love it. They love it when the unexpected happens. I have a silly gag I use all the time when doing balloons animals. Though many kids have seen it before, it never fails to get a roar of laughter. I blow up one of the balloons, pretend to tie the knot, ask for a volunteer to hold the balloon for me, hand them the non-nozzle end, and as I turn away from them as if to go get another balloon, I let go of the nozzle end allowing the air to escape. I pretend not to notice for a few seconds and then slowly turn to the child with the deflated balloon and ask, "What did you do?"
7. **Kids love it when they know something the teacher does not.** Having a puppet pop up while the teacher isn't looking, and have it drop out of sight when the teacher turns to look is a great gag. Kids love it.
8. **Kids love and respond to visuals.** Whether pictures, PowerPoint, transparencies, chalk or marker drawings, or objects, kids respond to what they can see.

9. **In working with kids, one of the things important to know about them is the areas they struggle spiritually.** Ask any parent, and he will tell you exactly where his kids are. Don't treat these as hobby horses, but kindness (especially with their siblings), selfishness, obedience to parents and authority, and controlling their tongues are all areas that almost every child struggles with continually.

DISCIPLINE 101

The one topic I get more questions about than any other is discipline. How do I deal with discipline issues? How do I get these kids to listen? I dealt with this in greater detail in "Large Group Discipline" beginning on page 5-25 in the *Brain for Youth Leaders, Volume 3*, but here are a few critical points.

1. **Have a few, clear, simple rules.** Review them often. Make them fun. I have just one rule. I play up this fact when telling kids about it. "You have lots of rules at school and lots of rules at home, but Pastor Bryan has just one rule. Isn't that cool?" It goes like this, "Sit up straight, silent, and still." That is actually three rules, but I can get away with calling it one. It is easy for kids to remember—I have them repeat it a few times. Depending on the crowd, I have added another *s* to the rule. Sometimes, especially if there is a reward involved, kids go overboard in trying to 'behave' and they sit like a statue, staring ahead trying not to move or blink. When I see this, I will add "Sit up straight, silent, still, (and in a sappy voice) and with a smile." Kids love it. You can take something that is normally not fun (rules) and make it fun.
2. **You will need a consistent method of gaining attention.** If you are having a good time, there will be times when you lose the focus (like after a big action song) that you need to bring it back. Years ago I decided to do a five count to gain attention. AWANA was already doing it, so instead of making up something new for the other ministries, I just used that. I tell the kids it is a secret code. When I hold my hand up and start to count to five, I am not showing off my counting skills. The code is telling you to follow the one rule of sitting up straight silent and still. When you hear the *one* and *two*, you know the code is coming; and on *three*, *four*, and *five* you need to sit up straight, silent and still.

Practice this with them. Tell them in just a moment you are going to say go. When you do, you want them to look at the walls, talk to their neighbors, and wiggle. Then you are going to give them the secret code, and you want them to sit up straight, silent and still. Be sure to lavishly praise them for the great job they did when you finish the five count.

3. **Use positive discipline.** Saying "Johnny, you need to be quiet," puts all the attention in the room on Johnny. Instead, say something like, "Wow the girls are doing such a great job of sitting up straight, silent, and still. Maybe our quiet seat prize today will need to go to a girl." Or, "Remember, Mrs. Miller is looking for a boy or girl who is sitting up straight, silent, and still to give today's quiet seat prize to." Also, reinforce the good things the kids are doing: "Wow, you boys are doing such a great job."
4. **Don't cause the problems yourself.** Sometimes in an attempt to get the kids really excited, we do something that has them going wild. Then we get frustrated when it takes them longer to settle down than normal. Sometimes when you have a wild and crazy song, don't try to calm everyone down before singing the next song—start singing the next song, and within the first few seconds, you will have them back.
5. **Have thick skin and don't allow yourself to become frustrated.** When you are frustrated, you tend to make mistakes about how you deal with distractions. Focus turns from calmly and lovingly dealing with an issue to scolding harshly. Ask yourself, "Is this really a problem for the class, or is it a problem for me?" I am not saying that you should excuse real issues, but I have seen teachers that were distracted by every wayward motion or glance from the class. In fact, they were distracted, not the kids.

SALVATION 101

The elementary years are prime time for kids to accept Christ. If you are not prepared for anything else, you need to prepare for this.

Have a plan. Either carry multiple children's gospel tracts with you, or mark up your Bible with your plan. But don't find yourself unprepared.

You have heard the statement, "The gospel is simple enough that even a child can understand it." While that is true, it is not simple to explain salvation to a child. You must be prepared. Count on the fact that you will be nervous when talking to a child about salvation. I have been working with children for over twenty-three years now, and I still get nervous when counseling a child about his salvation. So, have a plan.

Again, children are very concrete, so avoid using symbolism. Use simple, biblical terms. Ask lots of questions, but don't lead them with yes/no questions. Especially for younger elementary students, *why* questions are tough to answer. Use more *what* questions: What did you want to talk to me about? What is sin? Who has sinned? What is the punishment for sin? Who is Jesus? What did Jesus do for you? What do *John 3:16* and *Acts 16:31* say happens to those people who believe on Jesus? What do you need to believe in order to be saved? What would you like to ask Jesus to do for you?

In addition to what a child knows, it is important to gauge his motivation. Salvation is also an act of the will. Look for the "want to." Does the child shrug his shoulders frequently? Do you feel you are leading him kicking and screaming? A child who is ready to be saved will know what he wants to do.

I also believe that a child who is ready to be saved can ask Jesus to save him for himself. I do not like repeat-after-me-but-mean-the-words prayers. I will go over the basics with the child—you need to tell Jesus you are a sinner, you need to tell Him you believe He died to save you, and you need to ask Jesus to save you from your sin. Then I will ask, "Would you like to do that right now?" If the child says yes, I have him go ahead and pray out loud. It is then his words, his faith, and his asking Jesus to save him.

After the child prays, I will re-enforce this: Did you just tell Jesus you were a sinner? Did you just believe on Jesus? Did you just ask Him to save you? What does *Act 16:31* say about what you just did? Does it say "maybe will be saved" or "shall be saved"? Don't tell the child that he is saved—have the Bible do that.

Ask the child if he thinks it is a good idea to pray and thank Jesus for saving him? Have him pray.

Be sure to always communicate with the child's mom and dad about what the child did, regardless of the results of your counseling.

Working with children can be challenging, nerve-racking, and overwhelming at times. However it can also be one of the most exciting, inspiring, thrilling, and life-changing experiences of your life. There is no greater joy than to see God working in the life of a child. Take heed unto yourself. Know your kids. Have a few simple rules. Have a plan for leading a child to Christ. This is a solid foundation that you can build upon as you get more experience. You can do this.

MENTORING

DEFINITION OF MENTORING

The concept of mentoring takes on many different meanings to various people. It is important to understand that “[y]our world—business, military, academic, Christian organization, or whatever—will strongly influence your definition of mentoring.”¹ It is as if each world needs to define what mentoring will be for them in their culture and then develop their program around that. It is important to note that there are some key elements to most mentoring definitions. Mentoring involves some type of relationship that is usually personal, and it involves some type of influence on the life of another. Below is a list of definitions from various people.

1. Benjamin Buck—“Mentoring—investing in individuals” or 3N concept.²
2. Lee Davis—“A process of opening our lives to others, of sharing our lives with others; a process of living for the next generation.”³
3. Robert Clinton—“Mentoring is a relational experience in which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources.”⁴
4. Howard Hendricks—“The simplest definition I know of a mentor is a person committed to two things: helping you grow and keeping growing, and helping you realize your life goals.”⁵
5. Bobb Biehl—“Mentoring is a lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protégé reach her or his God-given potential.”⁶

There will probably never be one definition of mentoring that wins out over all of the others which is in large part due to the various views of mentoring. The key to defining mentoring is narrowing down the parameters of what a mentoring relationship looks like. *Mentoring is a deliberate personal relationship that has lifelong impact on the life of another.*⁷

EXPLANATION OF MENTORING

What is mentoring? What defines mentoring? What makes mentoring any different from any other relationship? These questions will be answered as the different aspects of mentoring are analyzed. Robert Clinton is one of the foremost authors and researchers in the area of mentoring in Christian circles. He has written a manual for mentors entitled the *Mentor Handbook*. Many authors today will base their works upon the paradigms of mentoring that Clinton has established.⁸ In his handbook, Clinton identifies five mentoring dynamics that make up the mentoring relationship. The following are the five dynamics in his words.⁹

1. *Attraction* is the natural tendency for a mentoree to move toward a mentor because there is something seen in the mentor’s life or ministry that is compelling and suggests the possibility of help for the mentoree.
2. *Relationship* refers to a growing interactive trust between mentor and mentoree which is the basis upon which responsiveness and accountability will function and which will eventuate in empowerment.
3. *Responsiveness* describes the attitude of voluntary submission that a mentoree exhibits toward the mentor so that advice and assignments will be respected, appreciated, heeded, and fulfilled.

4. *Accountability* is the responsibility of oversight that a mentor must have in order to insure that the mentoree follows through on advice and assignments and actually profits from them.
5. The *Empowerment Dynamic* refers to the process whereby a mentor enables a mentoree as well as the results of the process—the changed abilities, attitudes, and capacity to minister that happen in the mentoree.

The more there is of each of these dynamics, the better the mentoring relationship is. If mentoring is truly going to happen, each of these dynamics must be present to some degree. Not every mentoring relationship will have a vast amount of each of these dynamics, but every mentoring relationship, if it truly is a mentoring relationship, must have at least some of every dynamic. This is one reason why so much of what is out there that passes for mentoring is not truly mentoring. To say that an academic advisor that was assigned to the student is a mentor is going too far. That relationship does not have to have any attraction, real relationship, responsiveness, or empowerment. That is not to say that some academic advisors do actually become mentors to some of their students, but that is usually not the case for most academic advisors. Just because advice is given, and a life is impacted from that advice, it does not mean that a mentoring relationship exists. Drs. Clinton give a number of models of mentoring in their *Mentor Handbook*.¹⁰ The following table is a summary of their explanations and multiple tables.

Mentoring Type	Central Thrust of Empowerment	Relationship	
Discipler	Enablement in basics of following Christ	Active Mentoring (intensive)	↑ Most Deliberate
Spiritual Guide	Accountability for spirituality and spiritual disciplines for growth and maturity		
Coach	Skills, motivation to use		
Counselor	Timely advice; correct perspectives on viewing self, others, and ministry	Occasional Mentoring	↓ Least Deliberate
Teacher	Knowledge, motivation to see		
Sponsor	Career guidance and protections as leader moves upward in an organization		
Contemporary Model	A personal model for life or ministry that not only exemplifies but commands emulation	Passive Mentoring (loose)	
Historical Model	Dynamic principles and values for life and ministry		
Divine Contact	Timely guidance or discernment perceived as divine intervention		

Clinton’s dynamics of mentoring relationships are very useful when it comes to examining whether true mentoring is occurring. Based upon the previous definition given by the author,¹¹ four other aspects of mentoring should be noted. Some of these aspects of mentoring overlap with Clinton’s, but taken as a whole, they present another view on mentoring.

First, mentoring is DELIBERATE. Mentoring is not something that just occurs, but it takes a deliberate action on the part of the mentor or the protégé to not only initiate the relationship but to continue the relationship. “Mentoring intentionalizes a relationship”¹² so that deliberate actions are being taken. This means that a mentor is going to deliberately spend more time with some over others. “There will be people who will not understand why you spend so much time with just a few individuals,”¹³ but choices of time spent with people must be intentional. It is impossible to spend time with everyone. Christ narrowed the number with whom He worked from the 500 to the 72 to the 12 to the 3 to the 1. Christ probably received some flack for

only taking the three disciples with Him when He was transfigured. Some probably thought that opportunity should have been given to more people instead of just a few.

Mentoring is also a PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP. Mentoring is not about casual relationships in which information is exchanged or goals are accomplished. It goes far beyond a basic internship where the goal is not about the relationship, but the goal is about getting something done. Consider the following statements about mentoring as a relationship.

- “Mentoring is a relational process” (emphasis his).¹⁴
- “*The value of mentoring derives from the value of relationships*” (emphasis his).¹⁵
- Affection is the “cornerstone of effective mentoring.”¹⁶
- “We have to define a mentor not in terms of any formal roles that he carries out, but in terms of the *character of his relationship* with the other person, and the *functions* that that relationship serves” (emphasis his).¹⁷
- “Teaching is primarily a relational activity. The major dimension of spiritual formation that contributes to its effectiveness in fostering spiritual development is its relational process.”¹⁸

This last quote explains how some relationships can become mentoring relationships when the relationship goes beyond the content and concerns itself about the person. One of the difficulties in developing personal relationships is the fear of letting someone else see the inner self. “The real barriers that hinder our relational intimacy come from within . . . *fear* and *pride*. Being vulnerable to another person is to most a frightening experience.”¹⁹ As the personal relationship is developed, it allows for transparency and accountability because trust has been built. Davis points out that “a mentoring relationship feeds on trust, breathes in an atmosphere of honesty and openness, and is nurtured and maintained with forgiveness and unconditional love.”²⁰ This can only happen when a personal relationship has been developed.

Mentoring can also be characterized as LIFELONG. This idea of “lifelong” carries two different connotations with it. The first is that it characterizes the type of impact that should be taking place in a mentoring relationship. It should be impact that last a life. “In essence, mentoring becomes a whole life approach to development, rather than growth in just one or two compartmental areas. Scriptural examples provide good case studies for whole life, direction-shaping mentoring.”²¹ The other connotation is in regards to the length of the relationship. This is one aspect in which this author departs from a majority of the writers on mentoring. Most would say that there should be a starting point and an agreed upon ending point of the mentoring relationship. This is in part to the programming of mentoring and in part to a misunderstanding what true mentoring entails. Biehl agrees that mentoring should be lifelong when he states that “ideally, mentoring relationships are forever friendships, but realistically, not all of them last a lifetime.”²² He goes on to give the example of Bruce Johnson who has a eighteen-month mentoring relationship with his protégé but then remains available for life.²³ The idea is that the relationship has the potential to last a lifetime and there is no real cutting off point of the relationship. Usually, most mentoring relationships will naturally end due to time, circumstances, and location; but it should not have to be purposely ended.

The fourth aspect of mentoring is that it should have IMPACT ON THE LIFE OF ANOTHER. The protégé’s life should change as a result of being with the mentor. Mentoring is much more than about leadership—it is about Christ-like character and developing the spiritual growth of the person.²⁴ Davis drives this point home and makes two other statements that bring the reality of impact to the front.

- “Mentoring simply means we are committed to influencing others by the example of our lives. Mentoring can and should be a natural part of who we are in every arena of life: church, business, friendships, and family.”²⁵

- “The mentoring process has a lot to do with sharing our Christ-likeness with others, so that those best aspects of who we are in Christ can be soaked up by others.”²⁶

Mentoring is not about the mentor; it is about the person who is being impacted. Hendricks states that “First, whatever you do, make sure that your protégé drives the agenda, not you.”²⁷ Sometimes it is easy for the mentor to just talk about what they want to talk about, but they must consider the needs of the protégé and head that direction. “The curriculum for the school of spiritual mentoring is the unfolding story of life as the mentoree lives it.”²⁸ This would suggest that mentoring is not between two friends, but it is the impacting of one who is wiser on the life of one with less experience.

Sometimes mentoring occurs without the mentor even realizing it. Not that the mentor does not intentionally reach out to someone, but that the mentor does not understand that what he is doing is called mentoring. They are mentors without even realizing it. Dr. Jerry Tetreau, the Chancellor of International Baptist College, aptly describes this when he told the story of a young man that referred to Dr. Tetreau as his mentor. Dr. Tetreau never would have described the relationship at the time as mentoring, but looking back, Dr. Tetreau always had this man with him in his formative years.²⁹ “You see, *what matters is not so much whether you can see yourself in that role, but whether someone else sees you in that role*” (emphasis his).³⁰

A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF MENTORING

Perhaps the greatest example of mentoring in the Old Testament is the life of Moses. The example of Moses contributes greatly to our understanding of mentoring because he can be seen as the protégé and as the mentor. Being raised in Pharaoh’s house, Moses was well learned and had all kinds of power at his disposal. At this point, Moses is a man of pride and attempts to deliver the children of Israel through his own strength but drastically fails. Running from his failure and from his murder, Moses finds himself in the wilderness where he meets his bride and gains a mentor in her father, Jethro the priest of Midian. Moses joins this household for forty years until God calls him to return to Egypt and bring deliverance to the Israelites. Eventually, the people are released, and they head into the wilderness where God would establish the Law and prepare the people for their return to Canaan. Right before Moses goes up Mount Sinai to receive the law, Jethro visits Moses bringing Moses’ wife and children with him. Jethro observes Moses’ working with the people and tells Moses that he is not judging and ruling the best possible way. Jethro encourages Moses to delegate the work out to leaders and train them how to judge and rule, only bringing the major issues to Moses. Moses responds to Jethro’s advice positively and actively initiates Jethro’s advice. During this exchange, Moses provides us with a great look into what the protégé should be, and Jethro models proper mentoring. The following principles about the protégé can be found in *Exodus 18*:

1. Protégés must develop a proper attitude (respect) for their mentor (v. 7).
2. Protégés should be transparent about their life with their mentor (v. 8).
3. Protégés must be willing to be critiqued and observed (vv. 13–17).
4. Protégés must recognize their limitations (vv. 17–18).
5. Protégés need to develop a listening ear to their mentor (vv. 17–19a, 24).
6. Protégés should learn from mentors who give Biblical advice (vv. 20–21).
7. Protégés should apply the advice of their mentor (vv. 24–25).
8. The end result of the protégés following will be lifelong impact (v. 26).

Not only does this story give a good example in Moses of how a protégé should respond, but Jethro also gives a good example of a mentor.

1. Mentors should show interest in the life of the protégé (vv. 1–2; 7–9).
2. Mentors should rejoice at victories in the protégés life (vv. 9–10).
3. Mentors should exemplify a right relationship with God (vv. 9–12).
4. Mentors ask revealing questions (vv. 13–14).
5. Mentors should be willing to critique and give advice (vv. 17–23).
6. Mentors must know when their work is done (v. 27).

Because Moses listened to his mentor, “Jethro’s approach [to handling conflict] became the cornerstone of Israel’s judicial system.”³¹ This encounter between Moses the protégé and Jethro the mentor was a turning point for Moses. It was at this point that Moses invested in the lives of other men to prepare them for ministry which was Jethro’s basic challenge to Moses. Moses moved from just being a manager to becoming a mentor. He especially took interest in Joshua. Because of Moses’ investment into Joshua, Joshua continued to grow as a person and as a leader. Joshua was the commander of the Israelites in their first battle with the Amelikitites and led the Israelites on to great victory. After the event with Jethro, Joshua soon became the minister or assistant to Moses (*Exodus 24:13*). The word *minister* refers to a “high category of service” to a high-ranking person. This was an important place of service. This word is used of Joseph with Potiphar, Elisha with Elijah, Elisha and his servant, King Ahaziah and his nephews, and of Xerxes and his servants who stood with him in counsel.³² Joshua was one of the twelve spies, was given the responsibility of leading the Israelites after Moses’ death, and led the children of Israel in their conquering of the land.³³ As a mentor, Moses showed some great qualities of mentoring.

1. Mentors invest in people already serving (*Exodus 17:8–16*).
2. Mentors involve their protégés in ministry (*Exodus 32:17*).
3. Mentors give protégés real responsibility (*Numbers 13:16–17*).
4. Mentors enable their protégé to go further than they could (*Deuteronomy 31:23*).

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The youth leader must realize that they are more than an activities director or Bible teacher—they are a mentor. If youth leaders are not investing themselves into the lives of those around them, they will fail to have the greatest impact that they could. Mentoring must become part of their everyday life. The following are some practical implications for the life of a youth leader.

1. Mentor on purpose.

It usually does not happen on accident. Look around you and ask God who He wants you to invest more of yourself.

2. Mentor the people that God has given to you.

Sometimes we limit ourselves only to the people we think have great potential or talent.

3. **Develop listening, questioning, and discerning skills.**

Mentoring is not about sharing all you know with someone, but rather it is identifying where a person is and helping him grow to the next step in his relationship with God.

4. **Prioritize your time with the protégé on who he is as a person, where he is going, and what he is doing.**

Too many times mentors start with what they are doing and never impact who the protégé is as a person. It is more important to impact the heart than the action because changing the heart will change the action. *Titus 2* reveals that local church mentoring is primarily about character.

5. **Commit the time needed to the mentoring process.**

Grab coffee with the person; do ministry together; set up formal meetings at your office or home; be available at times of crisis. Most relationships will demand that you spend a quantity of time together before you are able to spend quality time with the person.

6. **Do not feel bad about spending most of your time with a limited number of people.**

Some call it playing favorites; I call it following the example of Christ. You simply will not have time to mentor everyone. Christ, Moses, and Elijah all specifically asked people to be their protégés who were actively serving God and desiring to do that which is right.

7. **Facilitate mentoring within the ministry that God has given you.**

You may not be the right person to mentor someone because of time, personality, and gifts. Help your ministry team identify whom they should be investing in and give them the resources and help to accomplish it.

8. **Find a mentor for yourself.**

You need to grow and have the input of someone else into your life. Never arrive; never stop growing; never stop learning.

Notes

1. Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992), 37.
2. Benjamin Buck, telephone conversation with author, 17 Nov. 06.
3. Ron Lee Davis, *Mentoring The Strategy of the Master* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 1991), 16.
4. J. Robert Clinton and Richard W. Clinton, *Mentoring Manual* (Altadena: Barnabas Publishers, 1991), 2–3.
5. Howard and William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 25.
6. Bobb Biehl, *Mentoring, Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One* (Nashville: Broadman and Holmes Publishers, 1996), 19.
7. I would argue for the narrowing of the definition instead of the broadening of it as some are trying to do today. When a word's meaning becomes so broad, it eventually loses most of its true meaning and simply becomes a buzz word to be used however the user sees fit.
8. Anderson and Reese wrote *Spiritual Mentoring* based upon Clinton's one category of mentoring spiritual mentors.
9. Clinton and Clinton, *Mentoring Manual*, 2-15–19.
10. Clinton and Clinton, *Mentoring Manual*, 2-23–24.
11. Mentoring is a deliberate personal relationship that has lifelong impact on the life of another.
12. Biehl, 22.

13. Davis, 159.
14. Clinton and Clinton, *Mentoring Manual*, 2-5.
15. Hendricks, 22.
16. Davis, 83.
17. Hendricks, 158.
18. Israel Galindo, "Methods of Christian Education toward Christian Spiritual Formation," *RevExp* 98:3 (Spring 2001), 419.
19. Stanley and Clinton, *Connecting*, 176–177.
20. Davis, 174.
21. John Taliaferro West IV, *Preparing College Students to Become Lifelong Christian Mentors* (D. Min. diss., Erskine Theological Seminary, February 27, 1997) (Portland, OR: TREN 064-0028), 10.
22. Biehl, 20.
23. *Ibid.*, 21.
24. Davis, 52.
25. *Ibid.*, 18.
26. *Ibid.*, 19.
27. Hendricks, 196.
28. Keith Anderson and Randy Reese, *Spiritual Mentoring* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 40.
29. Jerry Tetreau, conversation with author February 9, 2007.
30. Hendricks, 160.
31. Hendricks, 144.
32. R. Laird Harris, Robert Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, electronic ed., 958 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999, c1980), s.v. **2472** שָׁרָה
33. M.G. Easton, *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996, c1897.), s.v. Joshua.

HOW TO . . . DEBRIEF AN ACTIVITY

Scripture teaches us in Deuteronomy 6:7 that the way God wanted parents to make an impact was through teaching in the midst of life. Parents were to teach the commands of God when they were in every situation of life. Teaching happens best in the midst of experience when the lessons are easy to point out and plainly evident. To take the time to debrief an activity is to set up a framework to interpret the experience and from those actions see and teach the lesson. To debrief an activity is to make the most of the fact that experience is a powerful teacher and encourages learning from one's experience, which is an act of maturity. Maturity is an important goal of every teacher.

1. Debriefing allows for teaching that is memorable. What makes an event memorable? Here is a short list of some of the reasons.
 - a. Being a part in some way.
 - b. Success in the event.
 - c. Failure in the event.
 - d. An event that was reviewed.
 - e. A time which one understood something for the first time.
 - f. The people in the event.
 - g. The challenge of the event.
 - h. The surprise of an event.
 - i. A lesson pointed out.
 - j. The fun of an event.
 - k. The locations of the event.
 - l. The temperature of the event.
 - m. The atmosphere of the event.
2. Debriefing adds to value of an activity because people can have positive impact on their peers.
 - a. It allows for peers to voice a concern with direction.
 - b. It is a discussion.
 - c. It allows people to realize and recognize blind spots where there are smaller consequences.
 - d. It allows for people to recognize self-defeating/group-defeating actions.
3. Debriefing encourages a budding leader when small acts are recognized and revealed.
4. Debriefing emphasizes learning from peoples' actions during the activity. People learn by doing, but too often the emphasis and time is spent on the doing and not the learning.

5. Debriefing allows for a group evaluation of an event. It allows a group to think through the whys of their actions.
6. Debriefing allows for a leader to highlight the process of failure and success.

DEBRIEFING STRATEGIES

1. **Lesson Specific**—a leader may choose an activity based on a theme or a lesson that will be brought out by the goal of the event. Understanding the need for cooperation or specific actions needed to accomplish the goal the event is done with the purpose of highlighting these lessons.
2. **Event Driven**—you draw the lessons directly from the actions of the group during the activity. One's focus and emphasis is something he observed in the activity. This allows for many directions that may not be predictable at the beginning of the activity.

In the book *Open to Outcome* the authors Micah Jacobsen and Mari Ruddy share a model using the five key questions below which allows a facilitator to draw conclusion and lessons from the outcome of the experience. This model takes a group through the following debriefing process.

- a. Starting with the experience—did you notice...?
- b. Describing the event—why did that happen?
- c. Interpreting—does that happen in life?
- d. Generalizing the experience—why does that happen?
- e. Applying the lesson to one's life—how can you use that?

THE PROCESS OF A SUCCESSFUL DEBRIEF

1. Tips for success
 - a. Consider the position of the group. Organize them so that they can look each other in the eye when talking (e.g., a circle).
 - b. Give ground rules for discussion.
 - 1) No put downs and personal attacks.
 - 2) Choose your words carefully.
 - 3) Every one should try to participate in the discussion.
 - c. Do not be afraid of short silences; allow the pressure for the group to speak to build a bit.
 - d. Seek to draw in a number of people with your questions.
 - e. Spread out the discussion; do not allow any one person to dominate.
 - f. Draw the group back to the Bible and encourage them to apply Scripture to the application.
 - g. Ask leading questions.

2. Errors to avoid
 - a. Be alert to personal embarrassment of a group member.
 - b. Avoid making it a soapbox or preaching event.
 - c. Do not allow faulty reasoning to go unchallenged.
 - d. Be aware the strength of a challenge.
 - e. Do not assume that a quiet group is an unlearning group.

ACTIVITIES IDEAS

Here are a few activities you may plan with the purpose of a learning through a debrief.

Big Ball Trail

Using two tires or a ring of cones for a starting position, have a group of teens move the ball (a six-foot ball is great) from one place to another without using their hands or arms and without touching the ground with the ball. It is important to have the goal a good distance apart for a challenging goal (100 feet or more). If you have two balls, it is good to make two teams and have them doing the event at the same time. Do not make it a competition; watch how the groups respond to each other. Teams may turn around and lift with their backs and walk it across, or they may use the back lift but add a person or two to crawl underneath the ball to keep it off the ground. Teams may also take the approach of lying down and rolling the ball with some people's head or backs and move it across row of people.

Reward the Loser

Play a competitive game between two teams (the closer the game is the better) and give a reward to the losing team. If the winners complain, tell them their reward was the win. After letting the other team enjoy their reward (ice cream is great on a hot day, be sure it is a nice reward), ask the teams how they felt about the losing team being rewarded. Following are some great topics to teach.

1. Stewards are required to be faithful not always to be on top. Did the losing group play any less hard or give less effort?
2. Does every great play get noticed or rewarded?
3. Do we only play for the reward?
4. Do we only do right if we are noticed or rewarded in some way for it?
5. Bring in applicable Bible verses and principles.

This quote by Theodore Roosevelt was used during an event which focuses on the enthusiastic participant and not just the one who has the highest score: "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; because there is not effort without error and shortcomings; but who does actually strive to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly. So that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

HOW TO . . . USE SHADOW PUPPETS

EXPANDED FROM VOLUME 2

Puppets are always a hit with the children, and shadow puppets are another way of easily attracting their attention to a story and a way to put them to use in ministry aiding a teacher in telling the story.

CONSTRUCT A STAGE

Choose the option that best fits your space and budget.

1. Boxes of all sizes can be useful for a stage—a miniature stage for a small class in Sunday school, junior church, or even a VBS setting is helpful. You may choose to make a theme of shadow puppets and use the puppets for a month or two, getting the most out of your stage.
2. A 1' x 2' frame with cardboard sheeting or ¼" materials with an opening can serve as your stage—attach it to a table or build its own frame. You can easily paint it and use it with just a few hours of effort. Staple a sheet over the opening to have a working stage. A overhead projector or a trouble light (a work lamp with a clip on the side) can be used to create the silhouette effect. (Halogen lights tend to be too hot.)
3. PVC pipe and a white sheet also converts quickly into a stage. If your church uses a portable puppet stage for regular puppets this can be quickly converted to be used for a shadow puppet stage.
4. A clothes line hung with a sheet and something to anchor the sheet.

CHOOSE A STORY

Many stories can be used for your puppet show; here a few suggestions for sources of stories easily illustrated with shadow puppets.

1. Aesop's Fables (available online at www.aesopfables.com)—good, short stories which can be an easy springboard into a moral you would like to teach or a lead into a Bible story you would like to tell.
2. Missionary and gospel stories.
3. Bible stories.



A platform stage with a shadow puppet stage on each side



Ready to practice!



Backstage during a performance

MAKING CHARACTERS

Teachers are often looking for ways to involve their students. What better way than to assign them a character which they can cut out from a prepared sheet and put together with moveable legs using brads for the hinges? Adding to the figure handles (wooden skewers, straws, or craft sticks) allows them to create a character in the story. These characters can be trees, birds, wind, clouds, people, animals, and even the sun. With a little prep work, you have a craft that will lead into next week's story and builds excitement for the next meeting time.

If you have a shorter time period, you may choose to make them yourself.

SUPPLIES

1. Cardstock.
2. Scissors.
3. Figure(s) to cut out—many shadow puppet resource books have silhouettes you may copy. You can also use shapes from a coloring book, resources from the coloring materials that are included in Sunday school supplies, or you may draw your own simple creatures. Copies can help you multiply the shapes.
4. Brads for jointed characters.
5. Light source—an overhead projector, trouble light, or strong flashlight.

TELL THE STORY

Assign characters or use the ones the young people have made. Teach them to use their pieces as they hear them in the story without practice. After one telling, you could tell it again with some puppet adjustments. This will allow for a reinforced story and a story that will be hard to forget.

Recommended Resources

Worlds of Shadow by David and Donna Wisiewski (Englewood, Canada: Teaching Ideas Press, 1997).

Making Shadow Puppets by Jill Bryant and Catherine Heard (Ontario, Canada: Kids Can Press, 2002).



HOW TO . . . BUILD CAMARADERIE

THROUGH FUN

1. Take pictures and take time to remember the pictures at a History Night.
2. Games that create—have a Non-art Art Contest; teens present artwork and explain the “deeper” meaning of their artwork.
3. Sharing pictures with rest of the church in a scrapbook.
4. Youth video using a hook (story behind the hook) that the group understands—have a movie night with popcorn; kids can use technology that they’re into.
5. Major Motion Picture Night—the actual evening will last about two hours, but you will need several meetings to prepare.
 - a. At one meeting, teens create and video mockmercials that mock current commercials (e.g., a clap on / clap off pacemaker).
 - b. At another meeting, watch a selection of four *Gilligan’s Island* episodes and pick one to re-enact; film the re-enactment.
 - c. On the night of the fundraiser—
 - 1) Show the original *Gilligan’s Island* episode.
 - 2) Show mockmercials between scenes of re-enactment.
 - 3) Show bloopers from the re-enactment and give “Academy Awards.”
6. Melon Fest—use duck tape, rope, wire, etc., to make body armor out of melons.
7. Parent-Teen Night—have parents and teens in to watch a video that includes pics from all the youth’s parents.
8. If *everybody* is doing dumb things, it’s fun. Get *everyone* to participate.
9. All-girls senior trip to Disneyland—to include the whole youth group in on the trip, write down random things that are said during the trip and turn it into a skit to present to the youth group when you get back.

THROUGH HARDSHIP

1. Youth leader’s response is crucial! “It’s all part of the adventure.”
2. Activities that go wrong—e.g., vehicle breakdowns, eating frozen hot dogs, hood flying off car in caravan to winter camp (kids held the hood the rest of the way up to camp), pushing van that ran out of gas.
3. Don’t ignore that hardship; have a “family meeting” and discuss the hardship.

THROUGH LEARNING

1. Handles
 - a. Big Horses Sometimes Get Silly—reminder for questions in making biblical decisions.

- 1) Is it biblical?
 - 2) Is it helpful?
 - 3) Is it selfish?
 - 4) Does it glorify God?
 - 5) Does it cause others to sin?
- b. Phrase that the whole group knows: “Maturity is doing the right thing at the right time with the right attitude.”
2. Include teens in music for main service.
 3. When a teen makes a dumb mistake (not rebellious) that requires a new rule for youth group, name the rule after him (e.g., “David Rule”).

THROUGH A COMMON CAUSE

1. Fundraising—e.g., Where’s Waldo? (*see Right Brain Fundraisers*).
2. Designing a web site—different teens with different assignments, doodles for web site became a T-shirt.
3. Invite the whole church to a No-talent Night Fundraiser Night.

THROUGH RESPONDING WITH LOVE

1. Accepting a kid’s idiosyncrasies and loving him in spite of them (e.g., recruiting older teens to help a younger teen who has a hygiene problem).
2. Give youth workers an out-of-the-box challenge—leaders mentor new kids.
3. Resident seventh grader (person who isn’t always with it, but that’s okay)—leader letting the group know that you pick on people out of love.
4. Black Sock Award—award to a seventh grader in honor of former seventh grader who always wore white socks with his suits.

THROUGH KNOWING I AM A PART

1. Group-wide inside joke.
2. Time capsule.
3. Group picture.

GAME-STORMING

HOW TO . . . BRAINSTORM FOR GAME IDEAS

1. Formulating Game Components

a. Know your target market.

Who do you want to play the game? (e.g., age and interests)

b. Choose the environment.

What is the setting, theme? (e.g., Old West, police chase, or generic)

c. Figure out the characters.

1) What kind?

2) How many?

3) Even?

4) Imbalanced?

5) Scoring opportunities?

d. Decide on a format.

1) Board games—have a concrete boundary.

2) Role playing—movements dictated by spinner, dice, etc.

3) Games involving dexterity.

4) Field games.

5) Others.

6) Be cognizant of down time—is it spectator participatory?

2. Bringing Structure to the Game

a. Work out the mechanics.

1) What are the players' actions?

2) What are the consequences of the players' actions?

3) Build conflict—reward system should grow as the game progresses.

4) Don't overbalance, but give the guy behind a chance—catch-up feature/tailwind rule (but do not make it feel unfair or artificial).

- b. Narrow down the components—simplify.
 - c. As soon as possible, write the rules—in order to revise the rules, you must have something written down.
 - d. Run through it yourself and revise as necessary.
3. Fine-tuning the Game
- a. Play it with friends—get honest critique.
 - 1) As soon as someone else but the designer sees the game, make it comprehensible—if it matters, build it.
 - 2) Your game needs appeal—what's the pitch?
 - 3) Your game needs functionality—it's more than just a game.
 - 4) Don't ask the audience what they want—let them demonstrate while playing.
 - b. OR use a Blind Test
 - c. “Murder your darlings”—be willing to give up a great component if it helps the game.

HOW TO . . . HELP TEENS DEVELOP CONVICTIONS

FIRST THOUGHTS

1. This is a much bigger topic that can be addressed in one session.
2. The articles in the following pages and this outline are some good guidelines, but they are the thoughts and opinions of men.
3. Churches disciplining believers and helping their members develop convictions is their long-term goal and is actually part of what we refer to as the process of growing in one's progressive sanctification.
4. To start with, you must know what you believe about the method or mode of sanctification; therefore, study this doctrine.
5. Settle in your mind why this issue is important to you—is it because you want a youth group that “looks spiritual,” or is it because you really want the kids to develop their *own* convictions? Young people having strong convictions is a byproduct of sanctification, not an end in itself.
6. Convictions may differ—that does not mean they are a higher or lower conviction; it means they are different. We must agree on the fundamentals of the Scripture and their literal, grammatical, historical interpretation, but the Baptist distinctives of the autonomy of the local church, individual soul liberty, and the priesthood of the believer demand that we tolerate differences in honest applications of the same basic Scripture passage.

SECOND THOUGHTS

1. Know and clearly articulate the definitions of what you are talking about.
 - a. Often, kids will not ask questions about things that are confusing to them, and most confusion can be traced back to words they do not understand.
 - b. Teens can be confused into silence that is often mistaken by adults as acceptance.
 - c. Simple, complete explanations are the key to their understanding.
 - d. Some words need to be defined by you (so well that kids can explain them back to you).
 - 1) Convictions
 - 2) Standards
 - 3) Rules of conduct
 - 4) Preferences
 - 5) Personal or institutional
 - 6) Bible absolutes and Bible principles

2. Know and clearly articulate the authority upon which the above words are based—do not be guilty of vain worship.

Mark 7:7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

- a. The Bible as our authority
 - 1) Direct precepts
 - 2) Derived principles
 - b. Institutional authority—e.g., church, school, youth group, employer
 - c. Parental authority
 - d. Church leadership authority
 - e. Governmental authority
3. Pick a simple verse or passage of Scripture upon which to base your long-term thoughts and teaching to the youth.
 - a. *Romans 6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*
 - b. *2 Timothy 3:16–17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*
 - c. *Ephesians 4:22–24 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*
 - d. *Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*
 - e. *Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*
 - f. *1 Peter 1:18–25, especially verse 22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*
 - g. *Philippians 1:9–10 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.*
 4. Using such a verse or passage, then determine a methodology to use in teaching—a methodology that clearly moves from the authority of the Bible to the practical, everyday-living issues young people are confronted with.
 - a. Move from absolutes—to principles—to convictions, preferences, or rules.
 - b. Examples from Ironwood.

SUPERSEDEERS OF THE LAW OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

Galatians 5:1, 13; Romans 8:2; John 1:17, 8:32

1. The Law of Bible Absolutes—*Romans 13:9*
2. The Law of Bible Principles—*Romans 13:11–14*
3. The Law of Self-control—*Romans 13:14*
4. The Law of Love—*Romans 13:8, 10; 14:13, 15, 21; 15:1–3*
5. The Law of Holy Spirit Control—*Romans 15:13–16*
6. The Law of Conscience—*Romans 14:5, 22–23*
7. The Law of Obedience—*Romans 14:4; 15:18*

CONVICTIONS OR TABOOS

By Dr. John Brock, used with permission

The scene is a pastor's office. Seated are the parents of a nineteen-year-old son. It is obvious by the tear-stained cheeks and flushed faces that a sorrowful tale is unfolding. Frank, the son, was a church member and a graduate of the church's Christian school, which he had attended since third grade.

"I don't know what has happened to him, Pastor. We tried to do our best. We put him in a Christian school. We took him to church. He was a good boy. He always obeyed the rules. And then after graduation—leaving home, quitting church, smoking, drinking, rock music, sex. I don't understand. He was taught that all of that was wrong. What happened? We tried so hard!"

Yes, they had tried—and failed. This scenario could be reenacted multiple times involving our Christian school graduates and dropouts. It is clear from even a casual glance that many "Christian" young people all across our land have rejected the beliefs, standards, and practices that they were taught while in the Christian school. But why? There could be several reasons.

How could a child grow up in a Christian home, attend a Christian school, be in the church youth group, avoid serious disciplinary problems, obey all the rules, and still fall prey to the allurements of the world, rejecting the teaching of his youth? One possible reason is that all too often our children develop moral values based on passively accepted taboos rather than personally acquired convictions.

Let us define terms. *Taboo*, according to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, is "a prohibition against touching, saying, or doing something for fear of immediate harm." Taboos characteristically are not presented with sound rational evidence. They are the prohibitions we give children which use reasoning such as: "We do not do that because (a) our pastor said so, (b) we do not believe that way, (c) it is a school rule, (d) it is just not done, (e) nice people do not do those things, (f) it is just not right." These answers are usually followed up by the question, "Why?", to which we reply tersely, "Because I said so, and that settles it." Most of the time the child complies, and we feel the struggle is over. This is a hollow hope.

Convictions are altogether different. According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, a conviction is a "strong belief, the state of being convinced." It is a personal belief or strong conclusion regarding the "rightness" or "wrongness" of some activity or practice. Convictions are developed by an accumulation of evidence through (a) a study of the principles found in God's Word, (b) the promptings of the Holy Spirit, (c) the influence of important people in our lives (*Hebrews 13:7*), and (d) the urgings of conscience.

CONVICTIONS VS. TABOOS

Convictions are rational; taboos are arbitrary. Taboos fear reason. They seek simple, glib solutions to complex problems. They tolerate no analysis for discussion. Convictions are internal; taboos are external. Convictions emphasize inward beliefs which affect actions. Taboos are satisfied with outward compliance. Convictions are spiritual; taboos are fleshly. Convictions desire God's happiness; taboos seek to avoid punishment, disfavor, or loss of status with the ordaining group. Convictions are developed to help us practice holiness and godliness in the midst of a depraved and ungodly society. The motive is one which says, "Lord, you have spoken to me through Your Word today in the area of purity. How can I be pure today, and what things will tend to make me impure?" Taboos often flow out of a motivation to be thought "more spiritual, more separated, more fundamental," not with the view of pleasing God, but with a desire to be highly esteemed by other men.

While it is true we are to have a good testimony in the world, we need to beware of the prideful spirit of using our "separation and holiness" to impress fellow believers with our spirituality. Convictions rely on biblical principles; taboos flow out of personal prejudice or tradition of men. Everyone has prejudices regarding actions, behaviors, and practices, many of which are a result of traditions in our society and churches. This does not mean they are wrong or ought to be discarded, but we need to know the difference between actions that are motivated from conformity to tradition and prejudice and those which flow out of sound, clear biblical principles. Traditions and prejudices change. God's principles are eternal. When we elevate our traditions and prejudices and seek to give them an element of divine approval, we are in effect trying to make God the author of what we have determined. The damage to our children is that when our traditions and prejudices change, as they inevitably will, the children may assume the eternal principles are also fallible.

Convictions lead to humility and meekness, while taboos lead to pride. People who develop convictions regarding participation in worldly practices realizes that within the individual "dwelleth no good thing" and that the flesh and the devil are seeking to destroy one's testimony. Also understood is the realization that the power of the old nature working in concert with Satan's destructive forces is often effective in defeating resolve to do right. As a consequence, safe standards are worked out using biblical principles which aid in maintaining testimony by establishing safe boundaries from the precipice of sin. The convictions developed in recognition of sinful self surrender personal freedom for the sake of personal testimony. Taboos, however, are usually imposed upon someone else by one who thinks they need it. Sometimes the authority figure does not even keep his or her own taboo. This, of course, undermines the legitimacy of the taboo and other teachings of the taboo-giver, many of which may be good. In addition, taboos are adopted by some so they will "look good" to others. They want to "play the game" and "learn the lingo" in order to become

acceptable to the ordaining group. When this individual leaves the school or church and finds another group, he quickly exchanges one set of taboos for another. This replacement is often manifested by criticizing the original group and identifying with the new group's set of values.

Convictions allow a measure of toleration for others who differ. Taboos demand conformity. Because convictions are personally developed and automatically lead to humility and meekness, a person of convictions feels more comfortable living beliefs than trying to impose on someone else what God has revealed individually through personal Bible study. The Scriptures illustrate this toleration when the early church leaders at Jerusalem refrained from imposing their convictions upon the Gentile believers at Antioch (*Acts 15:1–29*). Again in *Romans 14:1–11*, the Scripture seems to indicate that Christians can and do have differing convictions which may have been developed in different situations and in response to different cultural practices. The injunction here is a warning against denigrating another believer's ministry or spirituality simply because God has given him different convictions. Additionally, the context strongly indicates that the different convictions were given by God and were not to be imposed by man. Taboos, on the other hand, allow no such flexibility.

WHAT ROLE STANDARDS?

One reading this may be tempted to say, "You ought to see our school or church youth group! It's got more taboos than you can count!" This probably is not the case. According to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, a standard is something which is "set up and established . . . as a rule for the measure of . . . quality." There are two basic classes of standards, institutional and individual. They are different and extremely important. Every organization, whether it be the Marines, IBM, a church, a youth group, or a Christian school has some type of standards which are necessary to insure institutional identity, acceptable performance and behavior, and equity.

It is important for any Christian school to have an identity distinct from public schools and even other Christian schools. A goal of most fundamental Christian schools is to reflect in the student body outward symbols of holiness and purity. To accomplish this goal, standards are developed which maximize communication of godliness and minimize communication of wickedness. The motive is not generated by a holier-than-thou attitude, but rather a desire to hold the light of the gospel high so that those who have need can find help. In our society, for example, a neat, clean, well-kept appearance is often considered consistent with godliness. Hence, Christian schools and youth groups which desire to communicate this quality to the world develop dress and hair standards to meet these goals. In contrast, sloppiness, indecency, and immorality are generally consistent with worldliness and ungodliness. Fundamental churches and Christian schools should and generally do try to set standards which rebuke these tendencies of our society.

It is also common for businesses to set behavior and performance standards for their employees. No business wants its reputation marred or besmirched by employees with behavior at variance with or contrary to company values and policies. Likewise, churches and Christian schools institute standards and rules which help in communicating the values of the institution. Parents can create great bitterness and rebellion in their children when they openly disagree with school policy and sympathize with their complaining sons and daughters. Children learn how to respond to authority by watching their parents, and they do not miss an undermining, complaining, and disloyal attitude. It is absolutely devastating to a child's character development when he becomes successful at manipulating parents with a view toward undermining the standards of the school. While parents may not agree with or understand all rules, problems should be handled professionally and in private without appearing to support a disgruntled child's complaining attitude. The school's behavior and performance standards were generally developed to set the institution's view of acceptable performance and behavior. Most good Christian schools take a "high road" approach, setting standards which

are clearly at variance with worldly trends of society. Rather than set standards close to the world, many institutions will place standards at a safe and comfortable distance to deliberately maximize the difference between worldliness and Christianity. It is indeed unfortunate that even many Christian parents chafe at the distinctives which seek to contrast these opposing life styles.

The last reason for institutional standards deals with the concept of equity. The Bible admonishes us not to be preferential in our treatment of others (*James 2:1-9*). Standards are a safeguard against partiality, since even application of standards places everyone under the same authority. There should be no difference in the way a pastor's or deacon's child is treated as compared to other students in the school. Standards reinforce the biblical concept of impartial accountability. Woe to the Christian school which practices double standards! Much bitterness and antagonism to the gospel can result from this kind of duplicity.

PERSONAL STANDARDS

Beyond institutional standards, many Christians who desire power, holiness, and purity in their lives construct a personal set of standards. These are not irrational taboos developed to make one appear "holier than thou," but are instead lines of safety drawn by the individual so that he will not violate a personal conviction. Let us say that a young man develops a personal conviction against (1) gambling, and (2) the appearance of gambling. He is convinced by Scripture and the urgings of conscience that God would not have him participate in these activities. He believes that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with cards per se (being but paper with numbers printed on them), and that chips are not necessarily money. As a result, he learns to play poker with friends using chips and initially has no qualms about his activity. Soon, however, he begins to feel uneasy about this "harmless" pastime, even though he is beginning to enjoy the game and is fairly successful. One day someone suggests "penny ante" poker. He plays, violating his convictions, and his conscience begins to bother him. During personal devotions one day, he repents of his sin of gambling and goes back to using chips only. However, he notices that frequently he is identified as "a gambler." He has to fight, not only this label, but also the temptation to return to the "penny ante" games. One day he realizes that his involvement is undermining his Christian testimony, and he realizes that to avoid gambling and the appearance of gambling, he must develop some personal standards. He decides that he will not be involved in simulated gambling, nor will he use cards associated with these games. He has developed a standard as a practical safeguard against violating his conviction. Individual standards then are developed by all of us as a safe line of conduct insulating us from violating a command of Scripture or a personal conviction. These standards limit our freedom so that we will avoid enslavement to sin or loss of Christian testimony. It is, therefore, a good and wise choice to set personal standards.

STANDARDS PETRIFIED

While in no way diminishing the need for good, safe standards, it is important to also realize that sometimes standards need to be changed. In the late '60s a hippie, long-hair, "challenge-all-authority and throw-off-all-restraints" mood infested the young people of our land. Part of this mood was reflected in a move to flared legs in men's clothing and rather bold patterns in the men's slacks. The administration of a Christian college put a ban on such pants because the style was seen as an expression of rebellion consistent with the ungodly mood of the time, and the school desired to take a stand against such wickedness. They were right! They were also right to quietly drop the standard when it became apparent a few years later that the flared trouser leg had lost its symbolic meaning. Symbols do change, and standards should be flexible enough to recognize this. What was once a good sign of victory in World War II became the traitorous peace symbol during the Vietnam War. Beards and moustaches, once consistent with masculinity, sturdiness, and dignity, changed to mean sloppiness and rebellion in the '60s. Christian organizations often correctly set standards to avoid association with Satan's counter-culture. There is a danger, however, of setting these types of

standards in concrete. It is unwise for an institution to maintain a standard beyond the point where it has a valid purpose; if it is held simply because all change is feared, or because the school wants to pridefully maintain the attitude of “strictness” or a spiritual one-upmanship, the standard should be dropped. Standards without current legitimate purpose petrify, and what was once a safeguard against worldliness can be transformed into a cold, legalistic, meaningless test of blind submission, becoming a petrified taboo.

Convictions stand while taboos fossilize or crumble. Convictions developed through a study of God’s Word are sturdy because they are based on eternal truth, but standards developed to maintain biblical convictions should be flexible enough to adjust when Satan’s tactics and tricks change.

Taboos, on the other hand, create an unreasonable rigidity which resists reason and the Berean spirit (*Acts 17:10–11*). A person with a biblical conviction welcomes sharing what God has given him when challenged, and often a person of high conviction has tremendous doors of witness opened to him by “giving a reason to every man that asketh.” The taboo-giver, however, bridles when asked to explain his beliefs. Disagreement is considered disloyalty, and Scriptures are wrested and twisted to justify instead of being used to interpret and rationally explain. When the young are unable to receive straightforward, reasonable answers regarding convictions and standards, they are provoked to anger and frustration. If the ordaining group is in a position of power and able to inflict sanctions on the offending member, one of two things generally happens. He may become rebellious and drop out, or he may play the game until out from under the particular authority. Then he quickly, like Frank in the beginning of this essay, rejects what has been imposed upon him.

HINTS AT HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP CONVICTIONS

Realizing now the difference between biblical convictions and taboos, as well as understanding the role of standards, how can we develop convictions in our children which will continue after they are away from the discipline of home and school?

Let us review our definition. A conviction is a personal belief or strong conclusion regarding the rightness or wrongness of some activity or practice, developed by an accumulation of evidence through (a) the study of the principles found in God’s Word, (b) the promptings of the Holy Spirit, (c) the influence of important people in one’s life, and (d) the urgings of conscience.

It can be seen that the development of conviction is each individual’s own responsibility. However, as (c) above indicated, important people in our lives influence us. Parents are the most important humans to any child, and as such they are in the best position to help the child develop sound convictions. Parents can help their children in the following ways.

1. The parents, not the school or the church, are the primary communicators and educators of convictions.
2. One of the biggest problems in teaching convictions is that a parent may not have any himself. Maybe he merely parrots someone else’s beliefs. If he does not know, based upon biblical evidence, why he believes what he says he does, it is going to be next to impossible to help his child develop internalized convictions.
3. Convictions must be lived and practiced. If parents honor God through living the separated Christian life, full of joy and blessing, it will create a thirst for the same character and conviction they have in the minds of their children. On the other hand, if parents are inconsistent and complaining about “suffering for Jesus,” then there is going to be little hope that their children will be attracted to that kind of “dedication.”

4. Children should be quizzed and asked to defend what they believe. If this is done in the right spirit, it can be fun and challenging. Search for answers together. Let them discover truth for themselves. Just because children are not quizzed, does not mean they will not be tested. Far better to prepare through practice than to see the old sink-or-swim routine when they leave home.
5. Children need plenty of evidence, such as trips to the rescue mission, films on the effects of smoking, V.D., AIDS. They do not have to be preached at or told exaggerated scare stories, but they should be told the truth and vicariously exposed to the effects of sin. They do not need to be preached at, for they will see as the evidence piles up.
6. Guide them into discovering biblical convictions which they can develop themselves. Human nature causes us to invest little effort into what can easily be copied or borrowed. Many young people borrow or copy “convictions” from someone else they admire. Again, in time of testing, borrowed beliefs soon evaporate, leaving the child exposed and vulnerable to Satan’s attacks. An excellent guide to developing convictions is a booklet entitled *Ancient Landmarks* by Frank Hamrick. This booklet exposes young people to basic principles and then challenges them to use these principles in establishing convictions for themselves. For adults and young people alike, this is an invaluable source of help.
7. Give lots of love and affection. Enjoyable family activities and opportunity of adventure dispel the notion that parents are against everything that is fun.

The world is looking for young people of conviction. People respect anyone who stands for what he believes. Let us guide our children into developing biblical convictions and standards rather than meaningless and arbitrary taboos.

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN CONVICTIONS

By Dr. John Brock, used with permission

Today Christians live in a confusing and ever-changing world. Each believer’s testimony and personal walk must be continually examined to make sure that his or her path is not leading either the believer or another into sin or danger (*Romans 14; Matthew 18:6ff*). In addition, one’s life should send a clear message of righteousness and holiness (*Matthew 5:6; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14*). It is, therefore, imperative that Christians be active in developing convictions through what the Bible calls a “proving” process (*Ephesians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Romans 12:2; Philippians 1:10*). Absent the process of proving (conviction formation), the Christian must rely on the beliefs of others, trite sayings, or tradition. These arbitrary practices often become meaningless taboos which neither establish testimony nor give guidance in our complex and changing world. Each believer should develop his own convictions based upon Scripture, Scriptural principles, and other reliable evidence. The following is a suggested strategy to accomplish this task.

1. Examine areas of life for which you will need to make decisions. Examples: dating, secular music, Christian music, entertainment (movies, TV, DVDs, live performances), gambling, borrowing (credit buying, credit cards), prescription drug use, alcohol, religious cooperation (in evangelism, in political causes), Sunday work, Sunday activities, etc.
2. Search the Scripture to seek direct biblical revelation.
3. Gather evidence which defines the nature, character, advantages, and disadvantages of the practice. The goal is to investigate truthfully the nature of the practice, its consequences (possibility of abuse, addiction, etc.), associations, or symbolic messages which the practice sends to an observing world.

4. Gather opinions of respected Christians. See if those with spiritual discernment have ideas, experiential anecdotes, or beliefs related to the event or practice.
5. Evaluate the evidence using biblical principles to determine if the activity or practice is acceptable in whole or in part. These conclusions constitute your conviction on the matter.
6. Submit your will to God's. The Bible speaks of yielding yourself to God (*Romans 6:13, 14*), walking in the Spirit (*Galatians 5:16*), and being led by the Spirit (*Galatians 5:18*). All of these concepts convey the idea of daily and momentarily yielding to God's leading. This is by faith—"Heavenly Father, in this issue I want nothing more than to know and do Your will" is an example of a prayer expressing this yielding. In the final analysis, after all our searching of Scripture and examining of evidence, we as Christians must "let the peace of God rule in our hearts" (*Colossians 3:15*). While it is possible to have a false "peace" in convincing ourselves that an activity is okay, Christians should never participate in any practice for which they have no peace (*Romans 14:14, 22-23*).
7. Develop some standards (objective indicators) which will keep you from violating your convictions. Example: "Baseball participation is permissible as long as testimony is maintained, and it does not interfere with more important matters. Standard: Participate but don't argue against authority. I will not forsake church (including youth activities) to participate except in emergency situations (to maintain my commitment to team membership). If I can expect team participation to interfere significantly with more important commitments, I will not participate unless I make sure in advance that the coach and team members are willing to support the choices I must make."

HOW TO . . . BE CREATIVE EVEN WHEN YOU THINK YOU'RE NOT

Have you ever heard (or said) something such as, “I am about as creative as a rock,” “She has more creativity in her little pinky than the rest of us put together,” “The day God passed out creativity; I was busy doing my taxes,” or, “I think my creativity genes are acid washed”? (Get it—*genes-jeans*; I crack myself up.)

Many people have the mistaken notion that creativity is some elusive, intangible trait that some people are just born with—you either have it, or you don't. I do not believe this is true. I believe that creativity, and more specifically the creative process, is a set of SKILLS that anyone can learn. While I do believe that there are those whose personality will lead them to grasp these skills more readily, anyone can be creative.

YOU ARE CREATIVE.

(But that's not really the point . . . your God is creative.)

Genesis 1:1a In the beginning God created.

We serve a creative God. There is no object, organism, idea, concept, design that did not first originate in the mind of God. Nothing is, was, or ever will be that did not come from Him.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Right now as I type these words, I happen to be looking out a window. I am in awe of the wonder and beauty of God's creation. A person could spend a lifetime studying just one single aspect of it—a single organism, a single plant, a single element, and not fathom its depths. Yet God not only thought of it, imagined every aspect of it, and breathed it into existence; He designed it with such beauty and elegance that it exists in harmony with every other part of His creation. Wow. Beyond anything else we talk about with brainstorming and creativity techniques, if we could get a glimpse of how great our God is, understand that there is nothing . . . *nothing* beyond Him, and simply trust Him to do what He says He will do; no problem, no challenge will be to great to overcome.

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

My mind cannot fully grasp the ramifications of that verse. We were created in God's image. While we cannot create something out of nothing, God created us with an aspect, a shade, a portion of His nature—and creativity is a part of His nature. He gave us the ability to design, invent, discover, and build. He gave us the ability to be creative. Let me say that another way. God gave YOU the ability to be creative.

You have the God-given capacity to learn and think thoughts that you have never thought before. You have the capacity to come up with ideas that you did not think possible. Have you ever shocked yourself with an idea or solution to a problem that just “popped into” your mind? You even have the capacity to think of something that no one besides God has ever thought of. Here is how I think of it. Our God is infinite. He has a limitless mind and capacity for thoughts and ideas. That means there are an infinite number of possibilities and ideas out there. If that is the case, probabilities are in my favor that I will stumble across a good one every once in a while . . . if I am looking for them.

But do not stop there. If you are a Christian, you have it even better. Not only are you created in the image of God, but you also have the very person of God—the Holy Spirit—dwelling in you. This cannot be overstated. The very person God, with all His knowledge and power, lives in you. Whether you are looking

for a creative solution to a problem, looking for a new direction or a program, or simply looking for a new spin to put on an activity, the Holy Spirit is there to lead and guide you.

DEPENDING ON THE SPIRIT FOR THE MUNDANE TASKS IN LIFE

Our God is not just there for the big problems in life—the walls of Jericho or the fiery furnace. We need to depend on Him for the little things. We need to walk in the Spirit, living our lives in moment-by-moment dependence on the Spirit and trusting God for the mundane, ordinary things that come up every day.

“Okay,” you might say, “are you saying that I should depend on the Holy Spirit to help me come up with a crazy twist to put on a game of capture the flag? Isn't that somehow improper or sacrilegious?” We absolutely need to look to Him for help. We need to get past the idea that we can do the little things on our own but will turn to God when we need help with the big things. Nothing big or small that we can do in the flesh will please God.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Notice the two examples given in the verse to do all to the glory of God—eat and drink. What could be more common and everyday than that? Whether you are a youth worker, a Sunday school teacher, or a parent helping with an activity; if you have been given the responsibility to come up with a creative solution to a problem, whom are you ultimately doing it for? God; therefore, it is God Whom we need to turn to for help.

Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

James 1:5–6 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

Have you ever considered the fact that those verses apply to much more than just the big things in life? Ask God to show you great and mighty things when you are planning that game. Ask Him to strengthen you when trying to plan an activity. Ask in faith for wisdom when you are looking for the theme for your next banquet.

I love the song “Lord, I Need You” by Ron Hamilton. The first verse starts with, “Sometimes when life seems gentle and blessing flood my way, I turn my gaze away from You and soon forget to pray.” The chorus begins, “Lord, I need You when the sea of life is calm.” That is so true; we need God's help in the simple and mundane things in life.

In addition to my work as a children's pastor, I also work full-time as a software developer. As part of my job, I have to come up with creative software solutions on a daily basis. I do not always turn to the Lord—it is very easy to get distracted by life; but on a regular basis, I trust God to help me come up with solutions, even for technical problems. (Are technical problems somehow beyond God's realm of influence?) I am just not smart enough to do it on my own. I am amazed at how the Lord leads when I simply ask for help.

OVERCOMING FEAR

When it comes to creativity, fear might be keeping you back for several reasons. You might be afraid of what others might think of your idea. You might be afraid of change. You might be afraid that you do not have the talent that others do.

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

One of Satan's most powerful tools is fear. Fear immobilizes people. Satan loves it when God's people do nothing. Do not be afraid to do what God has asked you to do.

Don't be afraid of ideas. To those of you who are reading this and consider yourself to be creative, that statement may seem ridiculous to you. But I realize that we all have different personalities and look at the world differently. Many of you who are reading this crave order and like things to be black and white. You may look at "idea people" as daydreamers who never get anything done. "Just tell me what to do." "Don't change my world with your crazy ideas."

My wife, for example, has a strong desire for security. She loves routine and does not like big changes. During the housing boom in Arizona a few years ago, I came home from work one day and asked my wife what she thought about selling our house. To me, this was just an idea. I live in the realm of possibilities and ideas all the time, and I was just looking for some feedback. What my wife heard was, "We are moving." For several weeks after that (I came to find out later), she was very insecure. What to me had been just an idea had shaken her view of the world—we were moving.

Ideas are just that—ideas. They are not plans. They are not actions. They are simply ideas. When attacking a problem, we cannot be afraid of an idea just because it does not sound plausible, we think it will never work, or we do not like the plan that may come from it. We need to be willing to entertain these ideas. That strange idea that has no chance of becoming a reality could lead to the idea that leads to the idea that revolutionizes your ministry. Do not let fear hold you back.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

So, what then is the creative process? What are some concrete steps I can take to be more creative? On page 6-25 and following is a chart with techniques that will help you in the task of generating creative ideas. These techniques will help you accomplish two main things.

1. Challenge your assumptions.

We are creatures of habit. We like routine. Sometimes we miss the simplest solutions to problems because we think about the problems in the same ways we always have. We make assumptions that never get challenged. We need to recognize the assumptions we are making and challenge them.

One of the most influential experiences in my life came on a high school mission trip to Hermosillo, Mexico. I attribute much of the fact that I am in the ministry today to the experiences on that trip. On the first day of the trip, we ran into a major snag that threw off our entire schedule for the trip. The plan for the trip was to spend most of our days visiting schools where we were allowed to show Moody Science films (translated into Spanish) and interact with the students. In the evenings, we would go to local parks and show evangelistic Christian films that had been translated into Spanish. On our first day there, the superintendent of the public schools told our youth pastor that due to some other conflict, we would not be allowed to come to the schools that week. Obviously this was a problem because this was the main goal of our trip. In the conversation with our youth pastor, the superintendent of schools made the comment, "Why don't you rent the movie theater downtown to show your films?" This initially sounded ridiculous. Our assumptions about our films, the culture, and the possibility of doing something on this scale limited this from even being a possibility. But the more it was pursued, the possibility became a reality. While talking with the local pastors, we learned that movie theaters did not have the same Hollywood associations that they did in the States. And renting the theater was a very reasonable price. Our youth group handed out sixteen thousand flyers, over two thousand people came to see

the films, and over two hundred people accepted Christ. By challenging some basic assumptions we had, we were able to come up with a solution far greater than we could ever have imagined.

2. Slice, dice, scramble, and look at the problem from different perspectives.

Look at the following word puzzle: **THE BACK SADDLE**

You may or may not find the solution quickly (back in the saddle). Once you see the solution, you cannot imagine that you could not see it before: it looks obvious. Often the solution to our problems is right in front of us, but we do not see it. Once we do, we cannot imagine that it could be any other way.

The creativity techniques force us to look at the problem, its attributes, and its associations from many different perspectives. By listing, splitting, and reorganizing our ideas, new patterns and ideas emerge. These techniques are designed to get us out of our normal thought processes and get us to look at our problems in new ways. They are designed to be idea engines.

This does not mean that all ideas from them will be good. In fact, realistically, most of the ideas will not be good ones. At the beginning, you should try to capture as many ideas as possible. Quantity is more important than quality. Don't evaluate the ideas as they come, just let them come and record them. Save the evaluation of those ideas for later.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.

When Christians gather together to solve a problem, it is so much more than merely the academic exercise of brainstorming. We know that brainstorming works, and it is a tremendous way to generate ideas. From a strictly human standpoint, just having people together with different ideas and perspectives greatly aids the process described above in challenging assumptions and slicing and dicing the problem. But for Christians, it is more than this.

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

From *1 Corinthians 12* we see that God has created us differently. He has given us different gifts for different purposes but all one Spirit and one body. We have the unique ability to work together in unity, and accomplish feats far greater than the sum of our individual abilities. When we come together to brainstorm, we need to do a few things to make it effective.

1. Everyone needs to sacrifice for the good of the whole—those who are accustomed to doing all the talking need to sacrifice their need to talk to allow the ideas of others to come to the forefront. But the reverse is also true: those who are more comfortable fading into the background need to sacrifice their need for anonymity and be willing to speak up even though it is not comfortable for them.
2. Don't evaluate ideas as they come up—again, go for volume.
3. Be willing to listen—be willing to give honor to the “uncomely parts,” the people you do not expect good ideas to come from. Honestly esteem others better than yourself and listen.
4. Start with a fun (even funny) activity to get people comfortable and ready to share their ideas.

Let's look at the individual techniques on the following pages and how to apply them to our ministries.

CREATIVITY TOOLBOX

Adapted from *Thinkertoys* by Michael Michalko

Name	Purpose	Method	Examples
Write the challenge	Specifically clarify the problem	In what ways might I . . . ?	In what ways might I increase attendance on Wednesday night?
Vary the words	Vary the challenge statement	Use synonyms	In what ways might I multiply community on Wednesday night?
Stretch the challenge	Broaden the scope, better understand why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask why to the challenge • Write down answer • Ask why to the answer • Repeat 	<p>? Why do I want to increase attendance? A To get more kids to hear the Scripture</p> <p>? Why do I want more kids to hear the Scripture? A So more kids will make life-changing decisions</p> <p>? Why do I want them to make life-changing decisions?</p>
Squeeze the challenge	Narrow the scope, get more specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who? • What? • When? • Where? • How? • Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can we get to come? • What program can we run? • When can we meet? • Where can we meet? • How can we make it more convenient? • Why do we want more people?
Reversal	Challenge your assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List challenge • List assumptions • Reverse each assumption • Draw ideas from the reversals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We meet on Wednesday night. We don't meet on Wednesday. • We meet with teens. We don't meet with teens. • We meet at the church. We don't meet at church.

Name	Purpose	Method	Examples																												
List attributes	Improving the whole by improving the parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List challenge List as many attributes as possible Take each attribute separately and look for ways to improve 	<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday Service Attributes</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Activity</td> <td>Student Interaction</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ice-breaker</td> <td>Food</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bible Message</td> <td>Youth Room</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Audio/Visual</td> <td>Leader/Student Relationships</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Songs</td> <td>Parent Involvement</td> </tr> </table>	Activity	Student Interaction	Ice-breaker	Food	Bible Message	Youth Room	Audio/Visual	Leader/Student Relationships	Songs	Parent Involvement																		
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Bible Message	Youth Room																														
Audio/Visual	Leader/Student Relationships																														
Songs	Parent Involvement																														
Split attributes	Splitting and re-combining attributes of the challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the challenge in two words Split those two words into two attributes Continue to split each attribute into two as far as you can Look for ways to combine ideas 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Increase</td> <td>Promotion</td> <td>Flyers</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Announcements</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Attendance</td> <td>Retention</td> <td>Visit</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Facilitate friendships</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Attendance</td> <td rowspan="2">People</td> <td>High School</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Junior High</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Groups</td> <td>Public School</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Non-Public School</td> </tr> </table>	Increase	Promotion	Flyers		Announcements	Attendance	Retention	Visit		Facilitate friendships	Attendance	People	High School	Junior High	Groups	Public School			Non-Public School									
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		Non-Public School																													
Map attributes	Organizing attributes by connecting and clustering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List attributes Connect and associate ideas Cluster similar ideas together Analyze the map for things that are missing, need improvement, or need to be connected in different ways 																													
Chart attributes	Dicing up attributes to come up with random combinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List challenge Divide challenge into parameters List attributes of each parameter Randomly combine attributes to form new ideas 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="4">Activity (625)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Location</th> <th>Equip.</th> <th>Mechanic</th> <th>Twist</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Gym</td> <td>Balls</td> <td>Relay</td> <td>Blindfold</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Youth Room</td> <td>Noodles</td> <td>Throw</td> <td>Slime</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Field</td> <td>Balloons</td> <td>Catch</td> <td>Mud</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Remote</td> <td>Beanbags</td> <td>Eliminate</td> <td>Wet</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Auditorium</td> <td>Ropes</td> <td>Capture</td> <td>Tied Up</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Activity (625)				Location	Equip.	Mechanic	Twist	Gym	Balls	Relay	Blindfold	Youth Room	Noodles	Throw	Slime	Field	Balloons	Catch	Mud	Remote	Beanbags	Eliminate	Wet	Auditorium	Ropes	Capture	Tied Up
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Substitute Combine Adapt Modify/magnify Put to other use Eliminate/ reduce Reverse/ rearrange	Improving subject or process through manipulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolate one element of the challenge to focus on Ask all the SCAMPER questions about each step in the or each attribute of the subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can I substitute for the icebreaker? What can I combine the icebreaker with? What can I adapt to use as an icebreaker? How can modify the icebreaker? How can I magnify the icebreaker? How can I put to other use the icebreaker? What can I eliminate from the icebreaker? What is the reverse of icebreaking? How can I rearrange the icebreaker to make it better? 																												

Name	Purpose	Method	Examples
Analogy	Getting a fresh perspective on the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List challenge • Bring in a completely random word (object) • List the attributes of that object • Force connections between the random word and your challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottles can be filled—am I filling my teens spiritually? • Bottles are transparent—am I being a transparent leader? • Bottles come in different shapes and sizes—am I recognizing the gifts/diversity of my staff and teens? • Bottles break when empty—am I sensitive to the teens in my group who are hurting?
Phoenix Questions	Asking the right questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List challenge • Use Phoenix Questions to dissect the challenge 	See Phoenix Checklist below.

PHOENIX CHECKLIST QUESTIONS: THE PROBLEM

1. Why is it necessary to solve the problem?
2. What benefits will you receive by solving the problem?
3. What is the unknown?
4. What is it you do not yet understand?
5. What is the information you have?
6. What is *not* the problem?
7. Is the information sufficient, insufficient, redundant, or contradictory?
8. Should you draw a diagram or figure of the problem?
9. Where are the boundaries of the problem?
10. Can you separate the various parts of the problem? Can you write them down? What are the relationships of the parts of the problem?
11. What are the constants (things that cannot be changed) of the problem?
12. Have you seen the problem before?
13. Have you seen this problem in a slightly different form?
14. Do you know a related problem?
15. Can you think of a familiar problem having the same or a similar unknown?
16. Suppose you find a problem related to yours that has already been solved. Can you use it? Can you use its method?

17. Can you restate your problem? How many different ways can you restate it (e.g., more general or more specific)? Can the rules be changed?
18. What are the best, worst, and most probable cases you can imagine?

PHOENIX CHECKLIST QUESTIONS: THE PLAN

1. Can you solve the whole problem? Part of the problem?
2. What would you like the resolution to be? Can you picture it?
3. How much of the unknown can you determine?
4. Can you derive something useful from the information that you have?
5. Have you used all the information?
6. Have you taken into account all essential notions in the problem?
7. Can you separate the steps in the problem-solving process? Can you determine the correctness of each step?
8. What creative thinking techniques can you use to generate ideas? How many different techniques?
9. Can you see the result? How many different kinds of results can you see?
10. How many different ways have you tried to solve the problem?
11. What have others done?
12. Can you intuitively create a solution? Can you check the results?
13. What should be done? How should it be done?
14. Where should it be done?
15. Who should do it?
16. What do you need to do at this time?
17. Who will be responsible for what?
18. Can you use this problem to solve some other problems?
19. What is the unique set of qualities that makes this problem what it is and none other?
20. What milestones can best mark your progress?
21. How will you know when you are successful?

Bibliography

Michael Michalko, *Thinkertoys* (Ten Speed Press: Berkley CA, 2006), 74.

HOW TO . . . DESIGN GAMES TO FIT YOUR NEEDS

GAMES LIST

What games has your group played? Take three minutes to list the games you remember.

1. _____	11. _____	21. _____
2. _____	12. _____	22. _____
3. _____	13. _____	23. _____
4. _____	14. _____	24. _____
5. _____	15. _____	25. _____
6. _____	16. _____	26. _____
7. _____	17. _____	27. _____
8. _____	18. _____	28. _____
9. _____	19. _____	29. _____
10. _____	20. _____	30. _____

PICK YOUR TOP TEN

Review the list of games and circle your top ten picks, then number them one (most favorite) to ten.

GAME CATEGORIES

This is one way of many to categorize games.

1. Tag
2. Goal scoring
3. Capture games
4. Relays
5. Hide and seek
6. Base running
7. Race
8. Head to head
9. Prop driven

10. Word games
11. Quizzes
12. Paper
13. Playground games

STARTING POINT: A BOX OF CREATIVITY

The Ironwood staff often use a box of creativity when brainstorming on a new camp or project. The sides of the box—purpose, time, money/resources, and people—represent our limits or expectations.¹ When creating a game, we can also use a box of creativity by changing the sides to the four key aspects of a game.

Group

1. How many people will play?
2. What are the ages of your group?
3. Does your group have any unique characteristics?

Goal

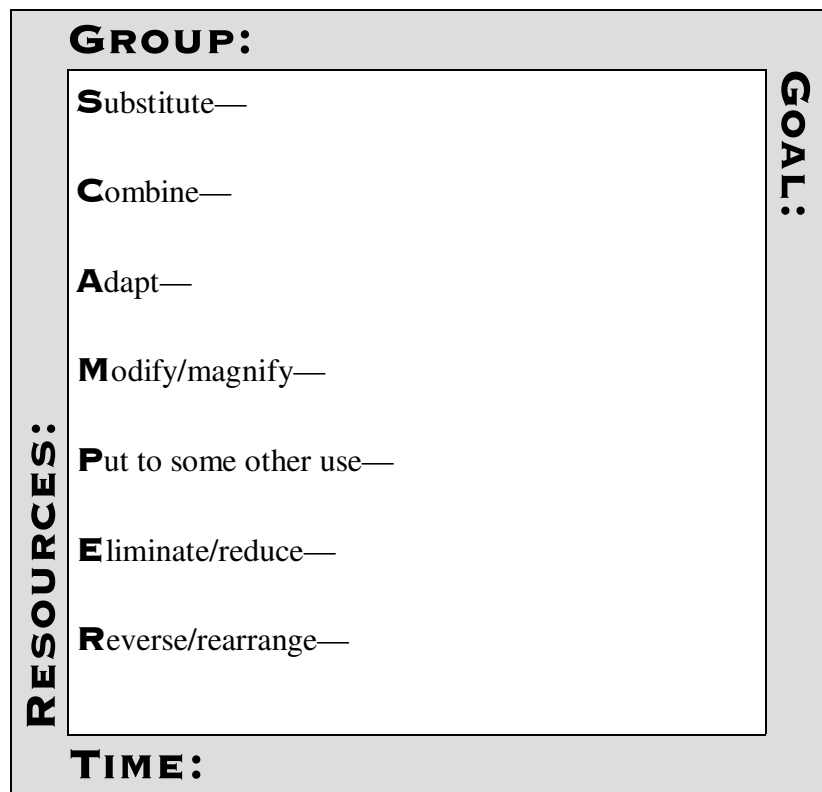
1. What are you trying to accomplish?
2. What is the purpose for the game?

Time

1. How much time do you have?
2. Do you want to play multiple rounds or multiple games?

Resources

1. What do you have to work with?
2. Is there a certain prop that you want to use?

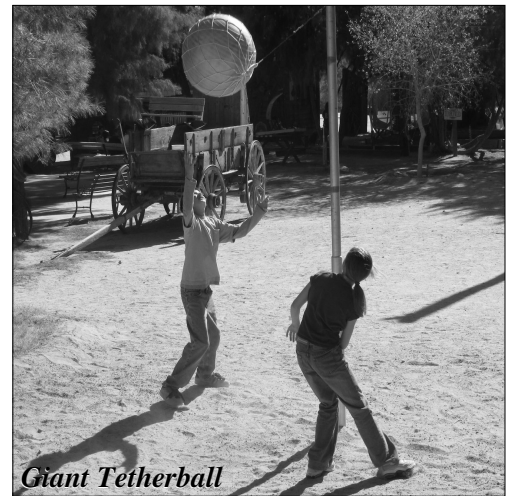


The acrostic SCAMPER² (see the Creativity Toolbox chart on the previous pages) is a good way to change a familiar game into something unique or quite different. Take the games that best fit with your identified needs to create unique games by adapting, switching, and rearranging in order to meet the purpose that you are playing the game to accomplish.

TIPS

1. Remember the law of diminishing returns—good games can lose their thrill with regular repetition. However, changing certain aspects of a game makes it unique, eliminating the need to play a bigger and better game.
2. Create some game traditions—certain games become traditions and can be something exciting to anticipate.

3. Incorporate a variety of familiar and new games—people like to do things they know, so mixing the new with the familiar establishes a comfort zone and allows a smooth transition into the unfamiliar.
4. Plan for the ripple effect—realize that when you make changes that there will be a ripple effect to the way the game plays.
5. Take time to practice—this allows you to discover the problems of the ripple effect and deal with them before the “official” first game.
6. Add more props for larger groups—to keep games moving with larger groups, you may need to add more props (e.g., balls, noodles, flags) so that more players can be active at the same time.
7. Organize for the size—a larger group requires more organization and supervision; also, communication will be more difficult. To communicate well with a large group, consider using a portable sound system, whistles, a megaphone, and more staff who know the plan.



EXAMPLES OF MODIFY/MAGNIFY

1. **LCR**—each player begins the game with three chips. Instead of using dice, we made three 4 x 4 cubes with three blank sides (keep your chips) and a letter on each of the other three—*L* (pass to your LEFT), *C* (CHOOSE which direction you pass to), and *R* (pass to your RIGHT). A player (or team) would roll all three cubes and pass one chip at a time based on what he rolled. We modified the original game by changing what *C* stood for—choose to give/take.
2. **Giant tetherball**—we super-sized the ball; the kids do the rest.



EXAMPLES OF COMBINE

1. **Capture the Flag SS**—add spud shooters to a game of capture the flag (CTF). When a player is hit, he must return to his base to reenter the game. We did not have jails because of our numbers. We played many CTF variations like center flag and moving your flag to the other team’s base.
2. **Hot Spot and Survival**—combine volleyball and four square (see *Small Group Games in the Right Brain*).

EXAMPLE OF COMBINE, PUT TO SOME OTHER USE, AND ADAPT

Derailment—we dug a pit (to be filled with water when we were playing the game) and constructed a wooden platform that looked like two footbridges crossing like an *x*. Players wear one or more inner tubes, depending on the rules for that particular round.



Players from the two teams try to cross to the other side at the same time; on their way across, they try to derail the opposing players. Players who make it all the way across earn points for their team; they do not earn points for any opposing players whom they derailed. Even though they aren't earning points, the players enjoy derailing opposing players into the water.

IDEAS

1. Add windmill scoring to a base-running game. Home is a scoring base but not a safe base or the end of running. Players score on home but must make it all the way to first to be safe. Players can continue to run and score as long as they are not tagged out.
2. Allow multiple players on a base at a time.
3. Change the flag in CTF to something else or many things.
4. Change the frisbee in frisbee football to an odd-ball object or a stuffed animal.
5. Combine water balloons, parachutes, and a splash zone.
6. Play soccer with multiple balls in a field full of trees and bushes.
7. Combine crossing paths, inner tubes, bridges, and water.
8. Change the bases to people in kickball.
9. Combine power tools and a wood race track to have power-tool drag racing (not recommended for youth groups, great for a men's activity).

10 PRINCIPLES FOR GREAT GAMES

See it big.

Keep it simple.

Keep it moving.

Keep it close.

Keep it fair.

Keep it balanced.

Keep it safe.

Keep it suspenseful.

Keep it clear.

Keep it building.

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HOW TO . . . DEVELOP SERMON SERIES FOR TEENS

1 CORINTHIANS 14:40; 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-16

Proposition: Consider three things when developing a sermon series for teens.

Opening Thought: How we get them is how we keep them!

1. Be Conscience
 - a. Of Bible Doctrine (*2 Timothy 3:16*)
 - b. Of the Ultimate Vision of the Pastor
 - 1) God has placed him over you (*Hebrews 13:17*).
 - 2) Adopt his philosophy and vision (*Philippians 2:4*).
 - 3) Carry out his program (*Philippians 2:19-20; Hebrews 13:7*).
2. Be Concerned (*2 Timothy 2:1-2*)
 - a. With Daily Needs
 - 1) Always think practically for the teenagers.
 - 2) Teens learning doctrine are acquiring knowledge; teens applying doctrine are exercising wisdom!
 - b. With Your Audience
 - 1) Don't speak down to them!
 - 2) Don't speak over their heads!
3. Be Creative
 - a. In Your Approach
 - 1) Vary your approach to teaching.
 - 2) If you doubt, preach expository. A steady diet of topical will burn you out.
 - b. In Your Delivery

If you don't show a passion for God's Word, your teens probably never will.

SERIES IDEAS

The following are examples of exciting series that have worked for me.

A Time of War

An expository study on Joshua and Judges

Lessons from Mascots

During football season, use football mascots as a springboard to teach Bible truths. Be creative! This works for any season. This could also work with the mascots from the local high schools that your teens attend; it adds a personal touch.

1. 49ers—teach the chapter 49's of the Bible or *Matthew 6:19–21* incorporating the Gold Rush of 1849 and the danger of material things.
2. Raiders—*2 Kings 7*.
3. Ravens—God's faithfulness to Elijah at the brook Cherith.
4. Colts—the triumphal entry.
5. Broncos—Balaam's donkey.
6. Chiefs—*1 Timothy 1:15* chief of sinners or "Who's Your Chief?" Jesus the chief cornerstone (*Ephesians 2:20*) and Jesus the Chief Shepherd (*1 Peter 5:4*).

Character Study on Teens in the Bible

Joseph, David, Daniel, the Three Hebrew Boys

Last Words of Men of God

Moses, David, Paul, Jesus

Practical Series on Doing God's Will

Teach the principles from God's Word about knowing God's will and then apply it to doing God's will by answering their questions over several weeks.

Obscure People in the Bible

Jehu (an exciting account in Scripture), Barabbas, the Marys of the Bible, Quartus, Tychicus

HOW TO . . . TEACH SCRIPTURE MEMORY TO CHILDREN

Consider using the following games in helping children and teens to retain God's Word in their memory. Whether you decide to use a similar method or not is really not the goal. The retention of God's Word in the mind of the student that results in a change of the heart and displays itself in a change of behavior is the objective.

Erase-a-Word—write a verse on a white / chalk board. Call children up to erase as many words as you wish to allow them to erase. (Different methods can be used to arrive at a certain number—e.g., rolling a dice or drawing a card from a bag.) Repeat the verse after each turn of erasing words is completed. (Different methods can be used to erase the words—e.g., simple cloth, squirt gun, or cloth on a stick.)

Write-a-Verse—each child is given a sheet of paper to write the verse, racing against the other children to be the first one done. Prizes are given for the quickest ones. Be sure to not allow misspellings, poor punctuation, or poor penmanship. Variations include writing with the opposite hand, writing without spaces, and writing without vowels.

Pop-a-Balloon—write two to three words of the verse on small sheets of paper. Roll the sheets of paper, comprising the whole verse, and insert one sheet into each balloon. Have the children race to get a balloon, pop the balloon, and arrange the verse in the correct order. The race can be one team running against another team at the same time or a race against the clock.

Arrange-a-Puzzle—write the verse on a piece of poster board (decorate the poster board with colored markers to help the children fit the pieces together). Cut the poster board into puzzle pieces. Have the children race to get a piece of the puzzle and arrange the puzzle correctly.

Arrange-a-Child—write a portion of the verse on sheets of paper large enough to be read from a distance. Choose enough children to hold the verse in front of the class (one child per sheet). One child is then chosen to arrange the children with their section of the verse in the proper order. (Note: the children actually being moved, not just the sections of the verse.)

Hang-a-Verse—cut articles of clothing from paper. Write each phrase of the verse on an article of clothing. Scramble the phrases, hanging them on the line. Children race to be the quickest to arrange the verse in order.

Build-a-Tower—each team is given a stack of 3 x 5 note cards. Write each phrase of the verse on a note card. Teams are given thirty seconds to construct the best tower (additional blank cards may be included in the stack for building the tower). Judgment is given on the best tower. Teams then compete to arrange the verse in the correct order the fastest.

Just a few thoughts . . . for your own personal use in memorizing or in teaching others.

- Repetition is a key—have the children repeat the verse before the contest and at the completion of each round of the contest.
- Races can be a head-to-head competition or against the clock.
- Help children understand the meaning of the words.
- Help the children apply the verse to their own lives—what does God want me to do? How can I do this?
- Try using mnemonic methods—e.g., what does ROY G BIV stand for and what does it represent?

- Write the verse. Look at the verse. Visualize the verse. Listen to the verse.
- Pray and ask God to enable you and those you are teaching to memorize His Word.
- Think through the logical flow of the verse.
- Understand the verse in its context.
- Make it memorable—obviously, the point of the game is to memorize the verse. However, putting the effort into the preparation of the game to memorize the verse will show itself to be extremely valuable.

Additional resources for memory verse games: www.kidzplace.org and www.creativebiblestudy.com

WHY SHOULD EVERY CHRISTIAN MEMORIZE THE BIBLE?

Memorizing Scripture is an often neglected discipline because many people misunderstand the value. John Piper sets forth the following challenge: “If I offered you \$1,000 for every verse you memorized in the next week, how many do you think you could memorize? The real value of the word is far greater than \$1,000 a verse.” Charles Spurgeon says, “The need for Scripture memory cannot be overemphasized.” Any student of the Bible knows that the Christian is in an intense war with Satan. Therefore, it is with great effort that we must attack the enemy if we will win. Temptation is submitted to far too easily, and yet how do we ever plan on winning if we do not diligently, purposely memorize God’s Word? The most difficult issue in Scripture memory is not dealing with a poor memory, lack of time, age, previous failure, or choice of methods to be used. The main point that must be understood in order to retain God’s Word in our minds and hearts is the value of the effort being given in memorizing the Bible. Consider the following list of benefits in Scripture memory.

Victory (Matthew 4:1–10)

Psalms 37:31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

Psalms 119:9, 11 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Transformation

Romans 12:1–2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Witnessing (Acts 2; 18:28)

1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

Counseling

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Value

Psalm 19:10–11 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Psalm 119:72 The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

Growth

1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Peace

Philippians 4:6–7 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Pleasure

Psalm 119:97 O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Psalm 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Joy

Psalm 119:14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.

Jeremiah 15:16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Satisfaction

Job 23:12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

Purification

Psalm 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Worship

John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Psalm 119:164 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

Success

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Prayer

John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Guidance

Psalm 119:24 Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.

Psalm 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Obedience

Deuteronomy 30:14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

Psalm 37:31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

Psalm 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Instruction

Psalm 16:7 I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

Speech

Matthew 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Discipline

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Defense

1 John 2:14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

Many have found Charles Swindoll's challenge to memorize Scripture to be a tremendous encouragement: "I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture . . . no other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified" (*Seasons of Life*, p. 53).

What reason could possibly be offered as to why any Christian should not memorize God's Word? We do ourselves and those we minister to a great disservice if we do not lead and encourage them to memorize Scripture. Memorize God's Word and feast on the enjoyment the task brings!

THEOLOGY AND APOLOGETICS FOR TEENS

INTRODUCTION

In *2 Timothy 2:2*, the Apostle Paul outlines God's method for discipleship: "*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*" The emphasis here is for the faith to be passed from one individual to the next, from one generation to the next. Those who work with children and teenagers should always have this commission in mind as they teach young people. With such thinking in the forefront, the necessity of teaching theology and apologetics emerges.

DEFINING OUR TERMS

Before getting into the whys and hows of teaching theology and apologetics to teenagers, let's take a brief look at what each term entails.

1. *Theology*—the study or doctrine of God

This term refers to all of the various studies about God and His Word, no matter how simple or how complicated. In at least one sense, all Christians are/should be theologians—students of God and His Word. As teenagers grow, we must make sure we are helping to increase their knowledge in the things of God. Theology breeds practice. In other words, what a person believes about God greatly impacts the way that individual lives.

2. *Apologetics*—the defense of the gospel against critical attack

The world is full of critics and enemies of the Bible and its message, the gospel. If a teenager has not faced an attack on his or her faith, it will come. Such attacks may come from a public school, unsaved coworkers or friends, and even from parents who are not believers. Teenagers need to know what they believe, why they believe it, and why it matters.

WHY SHOULD WE TEACH THEOLOGY AND APOLOGETICS TO TEENAGERS?

1. Teenagers often get more than we give them credit for.

It is often argued that teenagers cannot handle the deep things of God. We are told that they either can't get it or they won't get it. Especially in this culture of visual entertainment, it can be very difficult to simply keep a teenager's attention. For this reason, some have proposed various ways of meeting the needs of teenagers "where they are at." To be fair, there is some truth there. But I believe that truth is only partial and needs to be completed.

Let's use a physical illustration to help. Think about a little baby. A baby, who can only do certain things, eat certain things, and make certain sounds, has limited abilities and specific needs that need to be met. Certainly, it would be foolish to expect a baby to pull the car into the garage, eat a steak, or have a logical conversation. There is a sense in which the parents meet the needs of the child "where it is at." But what if the parents stopped there? What would happen if the parents never introduced some sort of solid food into the child's diet? What if they never talked to the baby in a human language? What if the child is never potty-trained? The result, of course, would be an unhealthy and/or underdeveloped child.

In many ways, we must look at our ministry to teenagers in the same light. Sure, it is important to con-

nect with them where they are. But don't leave them there! Human beings, no matter their age, tend to grow when they are challenged. School is designed this way with advancing grades. Athletics promotes the same challenges to get better. Yet in youth ministry, we often get caught in the trap of always trying to be relevant. While that is not bad in and of itself, the problem is that we are letting the teenagers define what is relevant instead of allowing God's Word to place appropriate expectations upon them.

2. Benefits of studying theology

a. Theology helps teenagers better appreciate God, the Bible, and salvation.

People often use things in life, taking for granted all that had to happen in order for them to enjoy it. This happens with cars, air conditioners, computers, power tools, etc. People know just enough about them to use them, but they often do not know the intricacies of how they work. Yet, if they ever have the opportunity to be shown how they work or are told about the production process of such items, it will give them a greater appreciation of what they have to use.

Likewise, it is easy for believers (and certainly teenagers) to take for granted the awesomeness of the God they serve, the miracle of having a Bible, or the immense privileges of salvation. Many times, they have grown up with it as a part of their lives, so they take for granted the wonder of the things of God. A healthy dose of theology should bring humility, thankfulness, and praise for those who have begun to take the blessings of Christianity for granted.

b. Theology has innumerable practical applications to issues in daily life.

The following applications are merely for the sake of example and not meant to be exhaustive.

1) Personal crisis

Sometimes it is unbelievable to realize the burdens that teenagers are carrying, which often stem from some sort of personal crisis in life—e.g., the loss of a loved one, a divorce in the home, or dad losing his job. Most people in church know some key verses and maybe even some Christian clichés that can be used at times like these, but the best way to help a teenager prepare for crisis or go through a crisis is to make sure he has a proper view of Who God is and what God does. We all know that the whys of particular situations are often unknown from a human perspective. But an individual who is saturated with the goodness, grace, and sovereignty of God is going to be the best prepared to handle the crisis in his life biblically, not just attempt to survive.

2) Disaster perspective

How should a believer view natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, and hurricanes? How about terrorist attacks and wars? Again, one's view of God and His ways is crucial in having a biblical viewpoint.

3) Ethical decisions

Every Christian makes daily choices concerning whether he is going to sin or not. Each of these is an ethical decision. Our ethics must be driven by what we know to be true about God. We often teach decision-making concerning various issues in life, and we are quick to point out what are good decisions and what are bad. But are we giving teens a theological basis for why various things are good and bad? And do they understand biblical teaching enough to apply biblical principles in areas that the Bible may not specifically address? Things are not arbitrarily good or bad—their value is always connected to truth about Who God is and what He is doing

in the world.

- c. Theology helps teachers make sure they are careful to be biblical in their teaching.

Whenever we have the opportunity to teach teens, whether in a group teaching setting or one-on-one, we should always be concerned with being biblically accurate. In a quest to be unique, relevant, or creative; it can be easy to teach something that sounds good, but is not necessarily biblically accurate. Or we may make the error of teaching the right truth from the wrong passage of Scripture. As teachers, no matter the age or maturity level of our audience, we must always strive to be accurate. Theology greatly helps bring about this goal.

3. Benefits of studying apologetics

- a. Apologetics helps teenagers value the defense of the faith by godly men and women of the past.

It is easy to forget that many of the truths we hold dear were defended through great difficulty or even to the death by Christians of the past. There is a sense in which these soldiers of the cross ought to be commended to our young people now. But in order for them to appreciate those efforts of the past, they need to have a handle on what apologetics is for themselves.

- b. Apologetics equips teenagers to deal with attacks against their faith that either currently exist or will arise later in their lives.

Apologetics is not just a thing of the past. The Bible and the gospel are still under constant attack, whether it be from atheists or from false religions. Are our teenagers equipped to handle questions from skeptics or cynics?

HOW DO YOU TEACH THEOLOGY AND APOLOGETICS TO TEENAGERS?

1. Make a motivated effort to learn about theology and apologetics for yourself.

It is a blessing to be able to go to Bible college or seminary to learn about God's Word. If you do not have this opportunity, you can still learn yourself and teach others. Either way, you will need to be diligent in your own personal study of God's Word. This means that you cannot take shortcuts or be completely dependent upon prepared curriculum to tell you what to say. You need to have a passion for learning the deep things of God for yourself. I am convinced that the failure of God's people to take the study of His Word seriously is one reason that we have children and teenagers growing up in Bible-believing churches without buying into the faith of their parents or the adults in the church. The adults know what they believe, but they have never prioritized passion for God's Word in their own lives to the point that the younger generations see their knowledge of and passion for God's Word and want such a faith for themselves. You must make intense study of the Bible as much of a priority as possible.

2. Use the tools that are available.

Again, you do not have to be an expert in theology or have seminary degrees. We live in an age where there are many resources available to help in these areas—e.g., books, tapes, and DVDs (a handful of helpful resources are listed after the conclusion of this article). Buy, borrow, and rent whatever biblically sound tools that you can to equip you in your own study of theology and apologetics.

3. Make valid applications to daily life.

When teaching anybody theology and/or apologetics (especially children and teenagers), it is very im-

portant to show that we are not dealing with a mere academic exercise; rather, the things being taught from the Bible have a multitude of practical applications to life. The following are some ideas to get you started in incorporating theology and apologetics into your regular teaching schedule.

a. Examples of applying theology

The challenge is to help the teenagers understand why each of the following subjects matter.

- 1) Inspiration and the Bible—one's belief about the origin of the Bible greatly impacts that individual's understanding of and faith in the things actually written in the Bible; if the Bible is not from God, then it is vain and its authority is lacking.
- 2) Christ as God—many people believe Christ lived and even died on a cross, but that is not the same also believing in His deity; His death on the cross means nothing without Him being God.
- 3) Ethics and the character of God—this world desires a “God of love” who would never want to harm anybody; issues like war, self-defense, and capital punishment are contrary to this man-made image of God; one's understanding of the various attributes of God weighs heavily in ethical decision-making.
- 4) The Old Testament and salvation—many young people have grown up thinking of the Old Testament as simply a collection of character-building stories; yet, the main point of the Old Testament is the beginning of God's unfolding of His redemptive plan that would later be revealed in the New Testament.
- 5) The Holy Spirit and God's will—one's view of the Holy Spirit has a great impact upon how one views finding the will of God; it is necessary to understand how the Holy Spirit guides Christians to God's will.
- 6) The purpose of the New Testament church—having a biblical view of God's purpose for the church can significantly impact the individual who is unsure of the value of attending a local church.

b. Examples of applying apologetics

- 1) Creation vs. Evolution—it is necessary for the believer to understand the benefits and limitations of science in formulating conclusions and convincing other people of the Bible's accuracy.
- 2) The trustworthiness of the Bible vs. alleged discrepancies in the Bible—critics have long targeted the supposed “mistakes” in the Bible; believers need to know how to be able to answer such critics.
- 3) Biblical Christianity vs. other religions—all believers deal with some level of contact with organized cults (Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Islam, Catholicism) as well as unorganized false religions (Open Theism, Postmodernism, The Emerging Church).
- 4) The validity of the Bible vs. modern critical attacks—e.g., finding the tomb of Jesus, the Da Vinci Code, and higher criticism.

CONCLUSION

Having a focus on theology and apologetics in your teaching ministry does not necessarily mean an immediate overhaul of your entire curriculum. Nor is it necessary to teach on something deep at every teaching opportunity. But it should be something that is a consistent part of every teenager's instruction. Often, the

need is to take the things we are already teaching, make sure our theological basis is sound, and focus on communicating the theological basis—along with the principles and applications—to teens. And oftentimes, applying your teaching to an area of apologetics is very natural. At the same time, you may want to consider expanding your teaching repertoire to include some specific areas of theology or apologetics. It is sometimes helpful to have a specific teaching time dedicated to that or to do a series of Sunday school lessons or youth group messages on a particular topic. Do not be frustrated if the teens do not always get everything. Remember that just like a little baby gets a lot more than we often realize, the same can be true for teenagers who are just beginning to be taught these things. The end result of a properly focused emphasis on theology and apologetics is teenagers with a greater love and appreciation for their God who are better equipped to defend the faith and evangelize the world for Christ.

Resources for Apologetics

Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties by Gleason L. Archer, (Zondervan, 2001)—an excellent analysis of supposed discrepancies found in the Bible. (ISBN 0310241464)

Hard Sayings of the Bible by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce, and Manfred T. Brauch, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996)—a helpful handbook in dealing with some of the more difficult passages in the Bible. (ISBN 083081423X)

The Kingdom of the Cults by Walter Martin, ed. Ravi Zacharias (Bethany House, 2003)—a review of various cults that exist throughout the world. (ISBN 0764228218)

Resources for Theology

Basic Theology by Charles C. Ryrie, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1988)—a general work on systematic theology. (ISBN 089693814X)

Major Bible Themes by Lewis Sperry Chafer, revised by John F. Walvoord, (Zondervan, 1974)—an overview of the doctrinal themes of the Bible. (ISBN 0310223903)

What the Bible Teaches by R. A. Torrey, (Hendrickson, 1998)—an overview of the major teachings of the Bible. (ISBN 1565639014)

General Resources

The Journal of Modern Ministry ed. Jay Adams—this journal provides many helpful ministry articles, and each issue has a section on cults with articles that are a great help in teaching apologetics.

www.bjupress.com—sells *Bible Modular Series* which has several books that deal with various theology and apologetics issues and is written with teenagers in mind. (Click on “Books” link and look for “Bible Modules for Teens and Adults” on next page.)

TALKING IS NOT TEACHING

Effective teaching does not happen by accident. It is preceded by time to pray, time to prepare, and time to plan.

“The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts. The right defense against false sentiments is to inculcate just sentiments. By starving the sensibility of our pupils, we only make them easier prey for the propagandists when he comes. For famished nature will be avenged and a hard heart is no infallible protection against a soft head.”¹

What does it mean *to know* something? Write your own definition in the following blank. _____

1. Discernment between good and evil (Proverbs 2:11).
2. Perceive accurately (Genesis 19:33).
3. Growth that comes through experience (Psalm 51:5).

“Teaching and learning are not synonymous.”²

THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

What We Think We Are Teaching

Big doses of God’s Word
in a lengthy sermon.

Clever word puzzles that
teach God’s eternal truths.

Students become pleasing to God by
sitting still, being quiet, and listening
to the teacher talk.

What They *May* Be Learning

If God is as boring as my teacher,
count me out.

The Bible is confusing, and God
hides the truth from me.

Church is a place where I do not
have to think because other people
do it for me.³

PRAY

1. There is a lot of information about learning channels, however one channel that cannot be neglected is the prayer channel.
 - a. This is the channel in which we receive power, strength, and guidance from God.
 - b. The first step in effectively teaching is to fall on our knees in complete dependence on God.
 - c. If you plan well and prepare adequately, you can still fail because everything will be done in your strength and will glorify your efforts.

2. Things to pray for include the following:
 - a. What to teach.
 - b. How to teach.
 - c. Connection with each student.
 - d. Students themselves.
 - e. All aspects of the class.⁴

PLAN

1. Where learning takes place.
 - a. In the context of the lesson.

Hook, Book, Look, and Took method applied.⁵
 - b. In the context of the ministry.
 - c. In the context of life.
2. Our teaching should model effective teachers—no other teacher has been as effective as Jesus, because He
 - a. understood the learner;
 - b. taught based on the development of the individual;
 - c. took advantage of teachable moments;
 - d. was sensitive to time;
 - e. began with the learner's context;
 - f. allowed the learner to discover truth—appealed to mind, emotions, and behavior;
 - g. provided opportunities for the learner to practice what he had learned.
3. Has learning occurred?
 - a. **Knowledge**—students can recall. The teacher will know that they have learned when students repeat or answer *who, what, when* or *where*.
 - b. **Comprehension**—students can put the lesson into their own words. The teacher will know that students have learned when they restate, describe, paraphrase, put into their own words, compare, contrast, or explain the main idea.
 - c. **Application**—students can choose one correct answer to solve a problem. The teacher will know the students have learned when they tell a Bible account selecting the right flannel-graph characters. Students can make a selection, give one right answer, choose from several options, write an example, and apply/organize information correctly.

- d. **Analysis**—students can identify reasons, motives, or causes. The teacher will know that the students have learned when they answer *why*, debate, distinguish, analyze, identify reasons, look at causes, draw conclusions, find-supporting evidence, and identify motives.
- e. **Synthesis**—students can solve problems. The teacher will know that students have learned when they write their own story, complete this story, plan, design something original, find supporting evidence, and identify motives.
- f. **Evaluation**—students can judge. The teacher will know that the students have learned when they decide which is better, give an opinion, agree or disagree, and evaluate which is the best solution to a problem.⁶

PREPARE

Whether studying a curriculum or preparing your own sermon, remember one important rule—it is best if the preparation takes place early in the week. Final touches can be made later in the week and even on the weekend, but effectiveness is best fostered when you can begin early.

Notes

1. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, quoted in Clyde S. Kilby, ed., *A Mind Awake*, (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1968), 241.
2. Thom Schultz and Joani Schultz, *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: And How to Fix It* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2004), 29.
3. *Ibid.*, 31.
4. LaVerne Tolbert, *Teaching Like Jesus: A Practical Guide to Christian Education in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 95.
5. *Ibid.*, 106–108.
6. *Ibid.*, 104.

PITFALLS TO AVOID WHEN CREATING BIBLE MESSAGES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

Let's begin by defining what I am talking about when referring to Bible messages. This is not a Sunday school lesson or a small group discussion. In other words, this is not a lesson where the primary purpose is discussion or learning. This would be the type of message that would be given in children's church, Vacation Bible School, AWANA counsel time, school chapel, youth group, or in a camp setting. This is a message that has a decision-oriented purpose. The goal is the invitation and is aimed at leading a young person to make a decision for salvation, baptism, surrender, or getting right with God on any number of sin or dedication issues. While Sunday school lessons do not exclude the application of truth or the making of decisions, the primary purpose is generally doctrinal education. Much of this discussion may also be applicable for a teaching time, it will primarily focus on the decision-oriented Bible message.

These type of messages would certainly include preaching, but I don't want to limit it to just that. In many of the programs listed above (especially with children), those preparing and giving the lessons are ladies. And while we think of ladies as teachers rather than preachers, the teaching that ladies do in these ministries must go beyond just conveying Bible content. There needs to be an application of the biblical truth and a call for decisions.

The following contains some material that you would ordinarily find in a homiletics (principles for preparing and presenting Bible messages) or hermeneutics (principles for interpreting Scripture) course in Bible college. My goal is not to exhaustively cover these topics, but rather to give you some of the things that have been most practical for me as I have prepared messages over the years.

While these principles will be applicable regardless of what age group with which you are working, they are most often neglected when working with younger people. Somewhere we have gotten the false idea that we don't need to do these things when preparing a message for elementary, junior high, or high school young people. In fact, sometimes we have been led to believe it is counterproductive—that if we do these things, our messages will come across as preachy and turn off young people. So, much more time is put into finding hip, cool illustrations or coming up with snappy, provocative introductions. Don't get me wrong; great illustrations and introductions are important. However, what tends to happen is that we approach these messages backwards: we find a great illustration, object lesson, or story and say, "How can I use this in a message?" This leads us to build a message around a story, object lesson, or illustration rather than allowing these things to supplement and help illustrate the truth of God's Word. Following are some pitfalls to avoid when preparing Bible messages.

PITFALL 1—FAILING TO PREPARE YOUR OWN HEART

The most powerful Bible messages are the ones that are personal. Allow God to "work you over" with the truth of His Word before you ever present it to others. If you are not right with God or have any ounce of self-reliance, God will not bless your efforts. *James 4:6* says, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Did you get that? God will actively work against you if you are proud! Depend completely on Him, confess sin, and meditate on the Scripture that you are using.

PITFALL 2—FAILING TO CALL FOR A DECISION

1. Give an opportunity for decision.

There is a place for teaching Bible content in ministry. There is a need to develop methods to systematically teach the content so our young people are getting a foundational knowledge of the people, events, and doctrines of Scripture. In fact, good Bible messages will teach. So much of what I see in ministry—and especially children's ministry—teaches good content or tells a story in a new, fresh, and exciting way; but falls short of leading a young person to make a decision. It reminds me of the man that spends his life courting a young lady but never asks her to marry him. Let's stop courting our young people and seal the deal. On numerous occasions I have heard great stories or lessons, even ones about salvation, that have ended something like, "Well, I hope you will think about these things . . . let's pray." Always give an opportunity for decision.

This has been one of my frustrations with children's church curriculum. In many cases it is just recycled Sunday school curriculum. There is good teaching material and activities, but the focus on the moment of decision is missing. We will talk in more detail in the next pitfall about this, but the invitation is not something we tack on the end of a story. Everything we present has the purpose of moving toward that decision we want the young people to make.

2. Be precise in your invitation.

It is God who works in hearts and draws people to Himself. So, I am not advocating a man-centered, emotional appeal. We need to be very clear in our invitations—the younger the children are, the easier it is to manipulate them. I know that you would never intentionally try to do this, so be precise in your invitation.

Be especially careful of how you handle a gospel invitation. As you are preparing the message, also prepare the invitation. Write it down. Choose your words carefully. Do not give general invitations: "Everyone who wants to go to heaven come forward." Do not overemphasize fear: "The fires of hell are burning at your feet. You can almost feel it. Come to Jesus or you'll burn, burn, burn."

- a. Explain the seriousness of the invitation.
- b. Ask them to remain quiet, listen carefully, and keep their eyes closed.
- c. Give simple, clear instructions on what you want them to do.

The following is how I do a salvation invitation with children. I usually start with a positive response.

If you are here tonight and know you are saved—you know there was a specific time in your life when you realized you were a sinner and trusted Jesus to save you from that sin, raise your hand.

Now I saw some that did not raise your hands. If you are here tonight and know you are a sinner—there has never been a time when you trusted Jesus to save you from that sin, and you would like to do that tonight, would you raise your hand?

Those of you who just raised your hands look up at me. Everyone else keep your eyes closed. Do you know that you are a sinner? Do you want to ask Jesus to save you from that sin?

In just a moment, I am going to ask you to do something hard. If you know that you are a sinner and know that Jesus died for you and want to ask Jesus to save you from that sin, I am going to ask you to step out from your seat and come forward to talk to one of the leaders. Don't come because your friends do. But if you want to be saved, come.

I am always amazed at the responses I get to messages. I have had young people get saved when the message had nothing to do with salvation. This is a testament to the fact that it was God working in hearts. Proclaim God’s Word and allow Him to work, but please give an opportunity for a response to God’s Word. This may not always be a “come forward” invitation or even always a “raise your hand” invitation, but please give your young people an opportunity to respond to God’s Word. This is an act of worship. The young people will hear God’s Word, and they have a choice—will they bow the knee and submit to God’s Word or choose to reject it and keep doing things their way? They will not always make the right choice, but it is our responsibility to lay the choice before them.

PITFALL 3—FAILING TO GIVE YOUR MESSAGE STRUCTURE

Giving your message an outline—giving it structure—does not necessitate giving a boring lecture. Structure and organization have nothing to do with how boring or exciting your message is. The outline and the structure of the message is more for you than it is for your audience. You need to outline your message even if you never tell your audience what that outline is. By outlining your message, you are forcing yourself to be consistent—to organize your thoughts into a logical pattern.

Young people crave structure and organization, even in messages. If you are preparing a message for young people, prepare it first as if you were speaking to adults; then choose illustrations and stories that illustrate these truths that are appropriate for young people. Don’t neglect the structure just because you are talking to kids.

Close to fifteen years ago in Bible college, I learned a simple explanation of a method. I have used it since then, and it has helped me to organize my thoughts. The outline consists of the following:

1. A proposition
2. An interrogative
3. A keyword
4. The main points of the outline

	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Proposition	You must obey your parents with honor.	You must obey your parents biblically.	You must obey the God-given authorities in your life.
Interrogative	Why?	How?	Who?
Keyword	Reasons	Ways	Authorities
Main Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Because God commands it. 2. Because it is right. 3. Because blessing follows obedience. 4. Because long life is promised. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By obeying the first time you are told. 2. By obeying completely. 3. By obeying with a good attitude. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents. 2. Pastors and spiritual leaders. 3. Government authorities.

Proposition

The proposition is the thrust of your message. This is the single most important part of your message. It is the clear, authoritative statement of what you want your audience to do. I like the action statement, "You must _____." You may struggle with the terminology *you must* at first; I know I did. You don't have to use these words, but understand the reason for them before altering them.

1. The authority of God's Word

When presenting Bible messages, you must present it with the authority that Scripture carries not the authority that you carry. Let that sink in. Whether you are fifteen or fifty and whether your audience is children or theologians, the authority of your message does not come from your wisdom or genius; it comes from the power of Scripture. Notice the difference between the following two statements: "We need to try to get along with our siblings"; "You must get along with your siblings." One statement is softer, and the other is authoritative.

2. First person (*I, we*) vs. second person (*you*)

Aren't I a sinner, too, and shouldn't I include myself in the proposition with the term *we*? Yes, we are sinners, and the messages we speak need to include ourselves; but what you need to remember is that you are proclaiming the truth of God's Word not your own truth. Does God's Word say, "We should try not to take things that don't belong to us," or, "Thou shalt not steal?" Let the tone and authority of your message come from Scripture. Even if the points of your message are things you want your listeners to know, you can still say, "You must understand _____."

3. Precision

Be precise in your proposition. Take a laser-beam approach rather than a shotgun approach. Sometimes we try to do too much with a message. We try to make it more general so that it will include more people, more topics, or more sins. Or we even (yes, I have done this) make our proposition broader in scope so that we could include an illustration we really like. "You must stop sinning," "You must try harder," or "You must obey God's Word" are too general. When your proposition is too general, it lacks focus and passion. Generality flows off listeners like water off a duck's back, but specific statements are like daggers that pierce the heart. Imagine a stream of water coming out of a garden hose. To make the stream more powerful and go further, you put a nozzle on it that makes the hole the water is coming out smaller. The volume of the water has not changed, and the pressure of the source has not changed, but you have focused the stream more precisely.

Interrogative and Keyword

The interrogative and keyword are the connection between your proposition and your main points. Your interrogative is the question that your main points will answer. *Who, what, when, where, why, and how* are all possibilities; but most of the time, you will use *what, why, and how*. The keyword is the description of the main points that answer the interrogative. In the earlier examples,

1. example 1 lists four reasons (keyword) why (interrogative) you must obey your parents with honor (proposition);
2. example 2 lists three ways (keyword) how (interrogative) you must obey your parents biblically (proposition);
3. example 3 lists three authorities (keyword) whom (interrogative) you must obey (proposition).

Make sure your keyword is descriptive. Don't use the keywords like *things* or *stuff*; keywords like *reasons, responses, truths, values, ways, or steps* would be much more descriptive.

Main Points

The main points are the elements that answer the question in the interrogative. Work to make your points parallel: make the statements grammatically similar as in the examples given. If your first two points are statements of action, make sure the others are as well. If you have done a good job with your keyword, this will be much easier.

For illustration, look at Example 2 given earlier. You would not want to have points such as the following:

1. by obeying the first time you are told;
2. by obeying completely;
3. you need to have a good attitude.

To make the third point parallel, it should be phrased “by obeying with a good attitude.”

Take the time to give your message structure. You will find your messages being more precise, and you will find your audience following you more closely even if you never say, “Okay, here is my first point . . .,” “Point number two is . . .,” etc. By forcing yourself to be consistent and logical, you will find that your message flows more easily, and that people remember your message more clearly.

PITFALL 4—FAILING TO DO THE RESEARCH THAT LEADS TO PROPER INTERPRETATION

2 Timothy 2:15 Study [be diligent] to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing [correctly handling] the word of truth.

We must strive in our Bible messages to rightly handle and interpret the Word of God. Interpreting God’s Word incorrectly is not something that I believe most Christians, especially those in ministry, would ever do intentionally. But we all lead busy lives. We get in a hurry, sometimes preparing at the last minute and cutting corners. Sometimes in our zeal and excitement we bend Scripture ever so slightly to make it fit nicely into our message. Most of the time this is not malicious, and the things we say are true, but the Scriptures we use to support our points just don’t say what we present them to say. The following principles will help properly interpret Scripture.

1. Read the passage in Scripture.

This may seem like it is stating the obvious, but hear me out. This is a real danger with the proliferation of lesson books, children’s curriculum, and written stories that go with children’s visual packets. When reading a lesson, it is easy to take what the author says at face value about the passage in question. Isn’t that why we have the lesson in the first place—to make our study easier? Doesn’t the author usually know more about the passage than I do? Lesson material is intended to be a supplement to your Bible study. Before you ever crack open a lesson book, read the passage. Read it in context (we will discuss this in more detail later)—what is the passage talking about? what is the overall theme or purpose? After reading and studying the passage, go back and look at the lesson. How does the lesson correspond with what you just read? The lesson material may correct or offer a different view than what you originally thought, and you will need to do further study to determine what is correct.

Numerous times when I read a passage of Scripture I have been struck with the thought, “Wow! I have never seen that before,” or, “I never knew it said that.” This reaction usually comes from remembering the passage or story from Scripture as it was told to me. At times, details get propagated through storytelling that just are not there. So, read the Scripture first before reading any supplemental material.

2. Don't read into Scripture (exegesis vs. eisegesis).

The term *exegesis* refers to “reading out of” while the term *eisegesis* refers to “reading into.” I have hinted at this at several places above, but there is a real danger when we come to a passage of Scripture with a strong desire for what we want it to say. Sometimes we will go through some real grammatical gymnastics to prove our point. Again, this is not usually malicious; but when we are looking for a verse to be a proof text for a pre-conceived point in our message, this is a real danger.

This is especially true when we present topical messages as opposed to expository messages. A topical message would be one that has a topic that would need more than a single passage of Scripture to support. The second and third examples mentioned previously are examples of topical messages. Support for obeying immediately, completely, and with a good attitude would come from different passages. Also, the passages that deal with different authorities that we should obey would come from different passages. The first example is an example of an expository message. Expository messages try to examine what a passage is saying and let the passage determine what the proposition and points should be. The first example could be a topical message if different passages were used to support each point. If you look at Ephesians 6:1–3, you will see that the first point comes from verses 1a and 2b, the second point from verse 1b, the third point from verse 3a, and the fourth point from verse 3b. The passage does not just support the outline, the outline and proposition are drawn from what the passage says.

I am not against topical messages (in fact, the majority of what I preach are topical messages). But you really have to work hard not to fall in to the eisegesis trap with them. I have designed our children's ministry to have a monthly theme—all the messages that month (eight to ten distinct messages) are on that theme. This is good for children. They forget so much from week to week that spending a month on a topic helps them really get it by the time we approach the end of the month. This structure leads messages to be very topical in nature, so I am often in a situation where I have a point or theme and am searching for scriptural support for it. It takes patience and discipline not to fit Scripture into that point. At times I have had to exclude a passage or story that I thought would be cool to use: when I looked at it honestly, my theme was not the point of the passage.

3. Interpret Scripture in light of the context.

If I were to only give you one principle of interpreting Scripture, it would be this one. A verse must be interpreted based on the passage around it. A good number of “difficult” verses in Scripture can easily be interpreted if you look at the surrounding verses. To whom was the author talking? Were they saved or not? Were they Jews or Gentiles? What was the purpose of the passage? What was the main point? What do parallel or repeated statements around it say?

If I were to say to you, “John is over the hill,” what would that mean? If we were talking about John turning fifty, it would probably mean he was old. If we were in a pasture with rolling hills, it would probably mean that he is on the other side of a nearby hill. If we were talking about flying a helicopter, it would probably refer to John being above the hill. If this were in the context of government, it could refer to John ruling over a place referred to as the Hill.

In *Matthew 24:13* Christ says, “*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*” What does this mean? Is this referring to a means of salvation? This verse needs to be interpreted in light of the context, which is speaking about Jews during the tribulation.

In addition to the immediate context, there is the greater context to consider. When was the book written? To whom was the book written? What was the historical and cultural significance of the book?

You must also look at the even greater context of the Bible. “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*” (2 Timothy 3:16). So when verses in Scripture are unclear, they must be interpreted based on other passages of Scripture that are clear.

4. Scripture means what it meant.

Scripture was written to people, who were intended to read it and understand it along normal, logical, and grammatical lines. Individual verses do not contain hidden, secret, or magical meanings that are outside the context that surrounds them. Hearers did not always understand the significance or symbolism in the Scripture—especially when it came to prophesy, but the meaning of words has not changed over time. God did not place words in Scripture that would have a twenty-first century meaning that was unknown to the original hearers.

This is an extreme example, but consider the following examples in light of the internet, a.k.a. net. *Micah 7:2* says, “*The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.*” Some people may try to destroy you through the internet, but this is not what this verse means. *Mark 1:18* says, “*And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.*” An unhealthy obsession with the internet can keep you from serving and following the Lord, but Christ is not telling you to forsake the internet in order to follow him. Things like this sometimes come up when speakers are trying to be cute, hip, or intentionally provocative.

5. Be careful with word studies.

The study of words is important. The root of a word, its etymology and usage and other similar words can shed light on how a verse should be interpreted, giving deeper and clearer understanding of the meaning of the text. With the proliferation of word study resources, it can be easy to force a meaning of a word that is not there. Never jump to the conclusion that an obscure meaning of a word is the right choice without careful study and research, and remember to always go back to the context and interpret words in the light of it.

The etymology of a word can be interesting, and sometimes insightful; but be careful how it is applied. Consider *Romans 1:16*: “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*” The Greek word here for power is *dunamis* from which we get our modern English word *dynamite*. While this is interesting, can we push the modern word back into the meaning of this verse? Is the gospel the dynamite of God unto salvation? Dynamite is destructive, explosive, and volatile, and is usually used to pull down buildings and put holes in mountains. Can we say that this is the kind of power that the gospel has? Would the Christians of the early church have understood it this way?

Do you have a good Bible commentary, Bible encyclopedias, Bible dictionary or lexicon, concordance or other Bible search mechanism, a good study Bible, or study software? If not, www.e-sword.net has a powerful, absolutely free Bible program that contains tons of tools to help you in your research. Never stop searching and studying Scripture. Take time to research the Scripture and pour depth and understanding into your messages.

PITFALL 5—FAILING TO ILLUSTRATE THE TRUTH OF GOD’S WORD

The last two pitfalls have been intense, have included much work, and have been more academic. What will keep messages from being boring and sounding like a college lecture? (My apologies to any college professors that might be reading.) If you have done your work to properly interpret Scripture and have logically

organized your thoughts into an outline, you have only fought half the battle. The goal of your message is to communicate the truth of the Scripture you have just studied and to motivate and inspire your listeners to action. It is not enough that through your study you now have a better understanding of Scripture; you must now deliver that to others in a way that they can understand. Illustrations can be a great tool for doing this, but notice that you only illustrate the truths of Scripture after you have done the work to properly and clearly understand it. We often get this backwards.

1. You can only teach something simply if you understand it profoundly.

One of my homiletics professors made that statement and it has stuck with me. Think about that for a moment. Have you ever heard a pastor or evangelist teach something difficult and make it sound so simple? He even has a great illustration to illuminate that truth. When you try to explain the same thing, it sounds so complicated. Being able to clearly articulate Scripture in a precise, simple way takes a tremendous amount of work. The reason that pastor can explain that topic with such precision is that he has studied it so thoroughly that he understands it in minute detail. Because of this deep understanding, he is able to find correct and consistent illustrations to illustrate that truth. Don't miss this. It is not the power of the illustration that makes the pastor's message so clear; it is the power of the precise understanding that allows the pastor to choose the correct illustration.

2. You can have what you think is the perfect illustration; but, if your audience does not get it, it is worthless.

Jesus was a master at illustrating truth through stories, examples, and everyday objects. In looking for illustrations, you need to consider the age, culture, gender, and background of your audience. Using an illustration about baseball statistics in a room full of elderly women won't do you any good. While a couple might get it, the majority will not.

3. Properly interpreting Scripture takes research into the Bible, and properly illustrating that truth takes research into your audience.

What do they like? What words and phrases do they use? What is important to them? What do they understand? The importance of knowing your audience is especially true when illustrating truth to children. Read books kids like, watch cartoons, or talk to a young person. Yes, that is correct; I said talk to them. You will be amazed at how much you learn about the way a five-year-old thinks if you spend thirty minutes with one. For example, kids get slapstick comedy. Don't use slapstick comedy for the sake of slapstick, but you can have a puppet do and say things that you couldn't get away with that will illustrate, in an exaggerated way, things that the children themselves do.

4. Stories, object lessons, puppets, gospel illusions, and balloon animals can all make great illustrations.

These are not just add-ons to pep up your message. Be purposeful in your choice of illustration; if it doesn't fit, don't use it—regardless of how cool you think it is. This has become one of my pet peeves with gospel illusions—many times the connection between the truth and the illusion is so thin that it lacks purpose: it is more about the trick than the truth. Take the time to pack your message with illustrations that clearly depict the truth of Scripture.

PITFALL 6—FAILING TO APPLY THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD

I almost included this as part of illustrating the truth, but it really is different. Now that you have illustrated truth, you must take the next step and apply that truth to the lives of your hearers. This again takes an understanding of your audience; the truth of Scripture is universal, but the application of that truth changes from

group to group. The biblical truth “be ye kind one to another” can have the following applications, depending on the audience:

Pre-elementary Sharing toys

Elementary..... Getting along with siblings, including younger siblings in play,
putting siblings desires above own

Pre-teens Stop treating others in a nasty way with words

Teens Avoiding cliques, reaching out to the unpopular

Men Driving (I don't think I need to explain this one.)

Women Stop gossiping

The application of the biblical truth gets back to the specific and authoritative nature of your proposition. It points the hearer back to what needs to be done with the truth and points to the moment of decision. Don't let the fear of stepping on someone's toes keep you from applying truth. Have you heard your young people talking about a movie or television show that no Christian has any business watching? Have you heard them talking about worldly music or their favorite pop/rock/rap/grunge “artist”? Be specific. Make sure you clearly back it up with Scripture, but take a stand. Passionately call your audience to holiness and a God-honoring lifestyle. Lay out the decision before them and give them an opportunity to respond.

CONCLUSION

Preparing and delivering a solid Bible message is by no means easy. It is an investment. If you will invest in preparing your own heart, properly interpreting biblical truth, giving your message structure, illustrating the truth that has been interpreted, applying that truth passionately, and calling for a decision; the return on that investment will be of eternal value.

PREACHING WITH PURPOSE

DEVELOPING A PREACHING CALENDAR

INTRODUCTION

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he made this well-known and oft-quoted statement: "*Let all things be done decently and in order*" (14:40). The context of this passage is specifically focused on conduct of believers during worship services. The basic principle behind the entire passage (though it is specifically addressed to a specific church to deal with specific problems) is that worship and church ministry ought to reflect the character of God—a God of order. Those in ministry understand that things come up that force last minute adjustments, etc., but those participating in church ministry should be seeking excellence in the things they are doing. And the best environment for excellence to thrive is one that has some semblance of order.

Keeping this principle in mind, it is necessary that those participating in youth ministry take this same approach, especially when it comes to preaching and teaching the Word of God. A haphazard approach to this task does not reflect the character of God, neither is it a good testimony of worship to the teenagers to whom we are ministering (remember that your youth time is also a time of church worship). One of the best ways to have an orderly youth ministry is to have a plan for your preaching and teaching ministry.

When developing a plan for preaching and teaching, there are a few considerations to keep in mind. First, there is not a one-size-fits-all scheme. Each church and youth group situation is different in its strengths, weaknesses, and particular needs. Second, no curriculum can ever know your teens the way you do. This fact does not preclude you from using published curriculum (as will be seen shortly), but you must view it for what it is—a tool, to be used however the owner deems appropriate. Finally, it is possible that in theory, different leaders can do different things with the same group and have positive results. While the truth of God's Word is solid and unchanging, various methods and strategies for communicating that truth are appropriate as long as they stay under the ultimate authority of the Word and do not distort the Word. Determining which strategy to use is often colored by one's personality, skill, and passions, which are not exactly the same among youth leaders. It is crucial to be yourself and allow God to use the strengths, abilities, and thoughts that He has entrusted to you.

The following is a general outline to follow for those seeking to develop or improve the structure of your preaching ministry.

ANALYZING YOUR AUDIENCE

This first series of questions will give you some guidance concerning the subjects you need to address and the techniques you will want to use with your group. Groups of teenagers will normally have certain similar characteristics that you can expect, but there can be some significant differences in groups as well. And while certain aspects of your preaching ministry will be unchanging based upon biblical principles and church philosophy, it is important to leave some flexibility to account for the differences that are often present among various groups.

1. What is the size of your group?

The size of group will help you decide what methodologies to use in preaching. With a larger group, you may tend away from discussion and focus more on delivering the content in a traditional manner. If you have a smaller group, it may provide you with other options, including the use of discussion and

even sitting in a circle with you as the preacher/teacher sitting down as well. Even with the smaller group, though, variety in methodology can be a great help.

2. What is the age range of your group?

This question is one of the most important you will answer from a practical standpoint. Having seventh through twelfth graders will generally force you to be more principled in your teaching and general in your application, whereas preaching to a group of tenth through twelfth graders will allow you room to be more age specific with the application. Also, a smaller age range provides opportunities to deal with age-specific topics. Junior high teens have different needs and problems than senior high teens; ninth and tenth graders will even have differences from those who are in eleventh and twelfth grades. Accounting for the age grade of your group will guide your thinking about topics to deal with as you plan your preaching calendar.

3. Do you ever sub-divide your group for teaching purposes? Are you able/willing to?

This idea is not absolutely necessary, but you may want to consider doing this on occasion if possible. The ages of your teens or a lack of staff may limit your ability in this area. The advantages of dividing teens into smaller groups are many. First, it allows you to make the age range smaller to allow you more flexibility in dealing with age-appropriate topics and application. Second, you can sometimes deal with gender-appropriate issues as well by splitting up the guys and girls. Third, if you have youth staff members who are hesitant about teaching, giving them a small group and a lesson is a way to help them grow and expand their ministries. It is not necessary to sub-divide all the time, but as you consider the subjects with which you wish to deal and the needs of your group, it could be a helpful tool for your ministry and a way to add some more variety.

4. What are the particular spiritual needs of your group as a whole?

Certain topics are needed by all Christian teenagers, but particular issues may affect the atmosphere and attitude of your group. Keep these in mind as you determine any topics with which you will deal.

5. What are your personal spiritual goals for your group (be specific)?

What do you want the Lord to accomplish in your group? Better yet, what do you believe that God wants to accomplish? Do not be general and clichéd. It is important for you to have a target for which you are shooting. While the spiritual results in the hearts of teenagers is up to God, Who alone can change hearts, asking these questions will help you focus your passions and energies in such a way that your preaching ministry will have life and not be haphazard.

ARRANGING YOUR PREACHING

Using the information gleaned from the questions above, you can now begin to organize a plan that will take into consideration as many areas of need as possible for your group. Here are some helpful ideas for consideration.

1. Learn and use a variety of methods in your preaching ministry.

There are many methods of preaching you can use. You may use a story-telling method, a topical approach to different issues teenagers face, or you can systematically take them through a larger portion of Scripture. You will probably find a method with which you are most comfortable. That is great, but do not limit yourself. Practice at other methods. This will help you expand the breadth of your ministry.

Each method has specific strengths that should learn to utilize in your ministry. For instance, the story-telling method allows you to catch the attention of listeners by pulling them into the emotional flow of the story. Speaking topically allows you to deal with specific things that you know your teenagers are facing. Systematically working through a passage of Scripture will help the listeners with their general Bible knowledge as well as helping them understand how specific biblical authors were dealing with particular issues with their audiences. It is also possible for you to have some overlap between methods in the same lesson. The key is that you focus on being biblical; the methodology must not change or distort the message. Especially when speaking topically, make sure you understand the context of the passage so the verses that you choose for your topic are used correctly.

2. Plan your calendar well in advance.

This step may be the most intimidating part of creating a preaching calendar, but the work you do in advance in this area will reap many rewards later. Two things may be helpful here. First, have a general idea of what you want to accomplish in at least the next six months if not more. It is even helpful to get a calendar out and write down the topics and passages of Scripture that you want to use and when you plan to teach them. Second, depending upon the age range of your group, it is helpful to have a scope and sequence of what you want to accomplish with them from a preaching perspective during the time you will have them. For instance, if you have the junior high teens by themselves for a Sunday school class or youth group setting, you will want to have a basic idea of what you want to accomplish within those two years. This approach will help you guard against constantly wondering what you should do next.

3. Leave some flexibility in your calendar.

As helpful as a calendar is, situations arise that force a change. It may be that you are sick or that a tragedy has happened in one of the teen's families, etc. Or it may simply be that a particular issue has arisen that needs to be immediately addressed from a biblical perspective. To account for this in such a way that it does not drastically change your teaching calendar, you will want to leave occasional blanks on the calendar (maybe one out of every eight to ten weeks), which will allow you flexibility when necessary.

4. Determine the role that published curriculum will play in your preaching.

It is important to make sure that your curriculum is not the primary decision-maker in your teaching ministry, so you need to decide what role it will play. Having a written church or youth ministry philosophy for using curriculum may set some guidelines. While having curriculum is very helpful, it can present the danger of getting into a rut in your preaching ministry.

ACTIVATING YOUR CALENDAR

A calendar will do you no good unless it is put into action, so here are some final suggestions concerning how to turn the calendar into an effective preaching ministry.

1. Take seriously the task at hand.

Preaching the Word of God is not a responsibility to take lightly. The words you speak must be an accurate reflection of God's Word, and the attitude with which you approach preaching must accurately reflect that God. Any weaknesses in this area must be confessed and forsaken before the throne of grace.

2. Pray for wisdom and power both during the preparation and also in the delivery of the message.

The task before you is impossible if you seek to tackle it on your own. It is important that as a minister of the Word of God, you are completely dependent upon God.

3. Set aside uninterrupted time as much as possible for message preparation.

This part may be one of the most difficult. It is easy to speak idealistically in this regard and yet very difficult to get this time in our fast-paced world. But this is something you must prioritize. This time is what will give depth to your preaching ministry because you will not only be preparing what you will bring, but also meditating upon it.

4. Preach with boldness the authoritative Word!

There is no need for timidity. God's Word is powerful. You have all of the power of God's Word behind you when you have dedicated yourself to accurately presenting it. It will never fail you.

CONCLUSION

There is no magical solution to preparing a preaching calendar for your ministry. It will take some initial time and thought, and it will require dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Shortcut methods will give birth to shortcut messages. God's calling to preach the Word is a high calling, no matter the age of our audience. May God use this tool to help sharpen our preaching ministries.

PRINCIPLES OF MISSIONS GIVING FOR TEENS

PROPOSITION

Teenagers should be involved in missions giving through their local church.

INTRODUCTION

You might be pretty used to your church talking about faith-promise missions or some similar giving program. But do you think of that as something for you to be involved with? As a Christian teenager, do you have any responsibilities in this area, or is this just something to worry about when you become an adult?

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

Several helpful truths that can be gleaned from Scripture concerning finances, giving, and missions. Taken together, you can make some safe assumptions concerning God's expectations for you concerning missions giving.

1. Every financial resource that you have is actually owned by God (*Psalm 24:1*).

This truth can be seen throughout Scripture. The Christian is simply a steward of what God has given him. He is responsible to accomplish God's will with his finances. There is no such thing as "God's part" and "my part"—it is all God's.

2. Giving financially is an outward way to demonstrate inward trust in and submission to Jesus Christ (*Mark 10:23–27; 2 Corinthians 8:1–5*).

After the rich young ruler rejected Christ's salvation because he did not want to give up his great wealth, Christ reminds His disciples of the impossibility of trusting God completely while also trusting in one's financial situation. The rich young ruler and many like him fail to trust Christ and show it by their dependence upon worldly possessions. On the other hand, in *2 Corinthians 8*, Paul commends the churches at Macedonia of their great faithfulness in giving to him and his ministry (v. 1). Then he explains that the reason they were able to give so freely, despite the fact that they were quite poor, was because they had given of themselves to the Lord. These Christians were completely trusting in God, and it showed in their submission to Him. They could have made excuses for not giving, saying that they did not have a lot of money. But they did not. They knew that submission was the only option and that God always rewards it.

3. Missions giving is part of fulfilling the Great Commission (*Acts 1:8*).

If you notice the details of the Great Commission, it is quite obvious that the mission of the church was to begin at a local scale and spread broadly throughout the world. This commission was given right before the founding of the church, and it was understood that it would take some time to spread. But there was one certainty—there was no way that any one person could reach all of these regions. It would take a unified body helping and supporting each other for this to work. Part of that support was prayer and help support, but part of it was definitely in what we would now call missions giving.

4. Giving financially to the work of God brings blessing (*Luke 6:38*).

5. The Bible does not differentiate between adult and child Christian responsibilities.

It is interesting that outside of specific relationship expectations between Christians of different ages, the Bible does not treat Christians differently based upon their ages. Expectations are given for all believers, regardless of age. Therefore, it is completely inaccurate for teenagers to assume that they do not need to worry about giving until they are adults. God has clear expectations of faithfulness for you right now.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS

Here are some practical ideas to help you think and pray through how God would have you give to missions.

1. Talk to your parents about how they give to missions and ask for their suggestions for you.

There is a two-fold purpose in this. First, you are seeking the wisdom of those who know more than you do. And second, you are involving them more in your spiritual life, which is something that you should cherish. Ask them how they make decisions about giving in general and missions giving in specific.

2. Consider giving a certain percentage of all money that you earn or receive to missions work around the world.

Almost every teenager has some source of income—job, gifts, allowance, etc. Just like a tithe, commit to giving a certain percentage of everything that you receive to missions work. Remember that this is money that should be given above the amount that you give as a tithe to the Lord.

3. Commit yourself to giving a particular amount of money a week/month/year as God provides.

Your church might have a structured faith-promise giving focus where you fill out commitment cards every year. This is not some pie-in-the-sky type of thing, but rather, prayerfully considering the Lord's face concerning your missions giving and asking Him to provide.

4. Pray that God will provide in such a way that you will be able to give even more than you committed.

One of the neat things about God is that He often blesses us with more than we can even imagine. Do you want to see God work through your prayers? Ask Him to provide you more means to be able to give, and then commit to increase your giving as He increases His financial blessings.

CONCLUSION

Giving should come from a willing heart. This does not mean that you should not give if you are not willing; rather, like with any other command in Scripture, you must conform your mind to God's will and then obey it. The same is true for missions giving. Are you fulfilling your part in the Great Commission in this way?

DEALING WITH ANGER

WHO HAS ANGER?

1. God.

- a. Exhibited by God the Father.

Over sin, apostasy, idolatry, unbelief, disobedience (multiple references).

- b. Exhibited by Jesus Christ.

Mark 3:5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.

John 2:15–16 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

2. Man.

- a. Righteous (atypical)—is not ugly (e.g., spiritual, controlled, helpful, forgiving).

Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

- b. Unrighteous (typical)—is ugly (e.g., fleshly, uncontrolled, hateful, vengeful, hurtful).

Galatians 5:19–20 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath.

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Proverbs 22:24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go.

WHAT IS UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER?

1. Conception—the result of a perceived injustice to self: “I did not get my way.”

Dr. Michael Sproul defines anger as “the emotion of an unfulfilled expectation of fairness.”

2. Composition—thoughts, emotions, and action.

WHEN IS ANGER WRONG?

1. Unrighteous anger.
 - a. At the core it is selfish and always wrong.
 - b. There may be an attempt to excuse it, but it can never be justified.
2. Righteous anger—the initial thought and emotion is not wrong.
 - a. If the resulting thoughts and actions are biblical, then it continues to be righteous.
 - b. If the resulting thoughts and actions are unbiblical, then it becomes unrighteous.

WHAT IS THE END RESULT OF UNRESOLVED, UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER?

1. Unresolved anger—leads to bitterness.
2. Unresolved bitterness—inward self-absorption (*Hebrews 12:15–16*).
 - a. Troubles self and defiles others.
 - b. Leads to outward self-absorption.
 - 1) Fornicating lifestyle—fulfills lusts.
 - 2) Profane lifestyle—disregards the blessings my Creator brings into my life.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO CONQUER UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER?

1. Recognize the real problem.
 - a. The external cause—the disappointments—what it seems to be.
 - b. The root cause—the heart/mind/thoughts—what it is.
2. Realize that it is sin and remember.
 - a. God forgave you all—you must also forgive (*Ephesians 1:7; Matthew 18:23–35*).
 - b. God loves you unconditionally; His love cannot be earned and cannot fail—you must also love God and others unconditionally (*Romans 5:6–8; Matthew 22:37–39*).
 - c. God has a specific plan/path for your life—you must trust Him (*Psalms 119:104–105; Psalm 18:30; Proverbs 3:5–6*).
 - d. God uses conflict to conform you to the image of His Son; God is talking (*Romans 8:28–29*).
 - e. God wants you to have great expectations of Him—you must have realistic expectations of yourself and others (*Psalms 37:3–5; Matthew 7:1–5*).

Victory over anger will never come outside of God's strength and the work of the Holy Spirit.

DEALING WITH AUTHORITY

INTRODUCTION

One major issue with which teenagers must grapple is responding biblically to the authorities that are in their lives. While the concept of obeying authorities is not complicated, actually doing so is quite difficult, especially considering the tendencies of your human flesh. As you consider potential difficulties and stumbling blocks to obeying the authorities in your life, a little perspective might be in order. Just remember that your situation is not as bad as you think, and it could be much worse.

- Consider Joseph, who while being an excellent worker with good character far from home is unjustly cast into prison. His authority, Potiphar, chose to listen to the testimony of a single witness, his wicked wife, who falsely accused Joseph of attempted rape (*Genesis 39:10–20*). That is not a lot of thanks for being a faithful worker!
- Consider David, who while being a faithful servant is forced to flee for his life from the presence of his authority. King Saul, David's authority, chose to reward David's faithful service by trying to pin him to a wall with javelins (*1 Samuel 18:6–11*).
- Consider Daniel, who while being a loyal worker is wrongfully sentenced to execution. Because of a stupid law made in a moment of pride, Daniel's authority, King Darius, is forced to throw Daniel into a den of lions (*Daniel 6:1–16*).
- Consider Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who were faithful servants to their authority, only to be wrongfully sentenced to death by that same authority. In a moment of pride, King Nebuchadnezzar angrily cast them into a furnace of fire (*Daniel 3:1–20*).
- Consider early church Christians, many of whom were slaves during New Testament times (*Colossians 3:22–4:1; Ephesians 6:5–8; Titus 2:9–10*). In some cases, their masters were other believers, the people they went to church with (*1 Timothy 6:1–2*)!

There are certainly other examples, but these give us an idea of some of the difficulties other believers have faced in the past, and it reminds us that most of our situations are quite minor in comparison. In the majority of these situations, the character of the individual under authority is blameless whenever it is revealed. This does not mean that these individuals never sinned against their authorities, but in the most trying situations, their tendencies certainly were visible. It is also clear that there is some unreasonableness in the responses of these authorities, regardless of the motivation. It is also interesting that in most of these examples, the authority had a generally favorable opinion of the "subject" before the incident in question.

It is quite clear that there will be times when obeying authority is difficult. In some cases (as in those mentioned above), the authority bears most of the responsibility, while in other cases, the real issue will be your own heart.

WHAT MAKES OBEYING AUTHORITIES SOMETIMES DIFFICULT?

As the old adage says, "Perception is reality." Such is often the case with personal conflicts with authorities. The following are some common personality issues that cause teenagers to have issues with their authorities. The validity of each of these arguments must be examined. Are they legitimate excuses for disobedience and/or "obeying" with a bad attitude? Let's examine them.

1. My authorities have a different view of life and/or faith.

The basic argumentation here is that the authority in one's life does not understand where you are coming from for whatever reason (age differences, different likes and dislikes, etc.). It then seems justifiable

in your mind for you to either obey under protest at the least, or blatantly disobey at the worst, based upon those differences. Sounds reasonable at first, but here are some logical problems to such thinking:

- It is dangerous and arrogant to assume that your view of life is better than your authority's.

As will be the case with many of these arguments, using this one as an excuse for disobedience or begrudging obedience says much more about you and your flaws than it does about the perceived, and even the genuine, flaws of your authorities. It takes a certain level of arrogance to assume that because an authority sees a given situation differently than you do that they must be wrong and you must be right, especially if that authority is seeking to take a biblical approach to the issue. Some of the areas of conflict are focused on issues that are not even related to what is morally right or wrong, and yet, it is so tempting to get angry when your view is not heard or followed. Such arrogance must be eradicated if you are to have victory in your relationships to your authorities.

- The "world" in which your authorities operate is much larger and more complex than yours.

This fact is one of the most difficult and yet undeniable truths that you must consider. It is difficult because you do not have all of the information or answers. What generally happens is that a situation will arise where it is impossible for you to understand the situation the way your authorities do. In fact, if you regularly expect complete understanding of everything you come in contact with, you will be sorely disappointed for the rest of your life. You cannot possibly understand all the things your parents are dealing with in the decisions they are making about you. You often will not even know how much money they spend on you on a daily basis. The same is true with a boss, who knows a lot more about the whole business than you do. This does not mean that these authorities will always make the best decision. But it is grossly unfair and arrogant for you to see their world from the *limited* perspective of your desires, forcing them (in your mind) to make decisions that regularly please you in order for them to be successful in your eyes. It puts the authority in a no-win situation: either they please you and sacrifice their principles, or they do not please you and then they have to deal with your attitude. And all because you think more highly of your view of life than you ought. This attitude can be destructive to your relationships with authorities.

- Age differences between you and your authorities generally work to their overall advantage, not yours.

Those who have been down the path of life can see life better than you can. They see the whole context of situations because they have been there (they have oftentimes made the same mistake that you are getting ready to make). Is it valid to say that the world in which you are living your teenage years is different from that in which they lived? Sure. But for all the things that are different, the basic truths are the same (and they are revealed in Scripture). It is foolish to assume that your authorities are deficient based upon a few changes in the world since the time they were teenagers; it is equally foolish to ignore their wisdom in that which is timeless.

- Likes and dislikes are not simply genetic; they can be learned and unlearned.

Not wanting to do something an authority requests or demands is often excused because you are just not as interested in it as they are. The assumption is that you like the things you do, and they like the things they do because that is just who each of you are. Certainly, your personality is going to make it likely that you will like some things more than others, but it does not mean that your likes and dislikes are written in stone. Everybody learns to like things more or less. This truth is seen in the fact that you no longer play with the same toys that you did when you were five. Spiritual growth in many ways works the same way, and many of the spiritual things that do not seem exciting to you now are worth learning to like!

- Christians having authorities who have a different view of life from them is the norm, not the exception (see the biblical examples in the introduction).

Any authority that is pressuring you to disobey the Bible in order to be obedient to them is wrong, and you are under no obligation to obey in such a case (as will be demonstrated later from Scripture). But even when working for an unsaved boss or living in the house of an unsaved parent, such situations are not the norm, and you should not have an expectation that it will be in order to excuse your disobedience. Your goal should be obedience in every area biblically possible, especially since this kind of situation presents you with a tremendous opportunity to have a life-changing impact in the life of an unbeliever for eternity.

2. I do not like my authorities.

We all know that it is easier to submit to authorities that we like. But is whether we like our authority or not really relevant to our submission to them? Besides the biblical teaching which refutes such thinking, consider the following:

- The fact that you do not like your authorities does not necessarily mean that there is any problem with them at all.

In reality, the problem may rest with you, not your authority. This is especially true if you find yourself regularly disliking authority. If such is the case, maybe you should evaluate whether or not you are the real problem. Certainly, it is possible for authorities to be overly harsh and ungodly in the way they treat you (our biblical analysis will deal with this issue later). But most of the time, people tend to dislike authorities because they ask them to do things they do not like. Please remember that in order for your authorities to do what is best for you, they must necessarily do things at times that you do not like. You must resist the temptation to conclude that because the authority has a hand in something that I do not like, it is justifiable to dislike them. Examples of contexts where this often happens include parents, teachers, bosses, coaches, drill sergeants, etc.

- The criteria that you use to determine whether or not you like an authority may be invalid.

What makes a “likeable” authority in your eyes? Do they have to let you do what you want, never punish you, etc.? Do they have to think like you in order to be legitimate? It is not that there are never characteristics in authorities that are less than desirable—rude facial expressions, poor handling of conflict, anger, etc.—but are those really the reason you dislike the authority? Most people are willing to let these character flaws pass in their own lives, and even in the lives of their authorities when they are getting their way. You probably have friends that struggle with each of the character flaws mentioned, but that does not bother you because they are not the ones disciplining you. Such a double standard proves that your criteria for liking authority may be invalid.

3. My authorities do not like me.

This argument is emotionally charged and thrives by making issues between you and your authorities personal instead of based upon submission and obedience. When the authority is involved in bringing about something in your life that you do not like, the tendency is to assume that you are being picked on because they do not like you. It is an easy escape path, but it puts you in a potentially dangerous position. Making such a charge is serious before God, especially if made against a Christian authority God has put in your life to give you direction in His ways. If you make such a claim, you had better be right. Here are some things to consider before going down that dangerous path:

- Regular disobedience to authorities will consistently put you in a position of conflict with them.

It is amazing to hear young people claim that one authority after another does not like them. If such is the case for you, you should take a step back and consider the extent of what you are saying. It is certainly possible that you may at some point have an authority or two who do not particularly like you. But if you are tempted to use this argument against the majority of your authorities, you might want to consider the possibility that you are the problem instead of the authorities. If such is true, then it would explain why you have trouble with all or almost all of your authorities. You are constantly in conflict with them because of your sinful choices, making it appear to you like they are out to get you.

In order to overcome such thinking, you must have complete dependence upon God to help you change your attitude and actions toward authorities. You should also pursue quality relationships with the authorities you have personal struggles with (even the ones who may truly not like you). Think about it: when was the last time you initiated relationship improvement between yourself and an authority with whom you are in conflict? Taking such “extreme” action might turn your world upside down when the authority responds in a positive way and all of a sudden does not seem to dislike you any more. Unfortunately, that is not the easy way out that most teenagers opt for. Instead, they often choose to make the authority the enemy while never making any attempt to get things right.

- You are not as important to the rest of the world as you think.

This statement is not meant to diminish the obligation that God gives human beings toward one another. Still, it is quite self-absorbed to think that an authority has nothing better to do than to focus on getting you in trouble. This does not mean that authorities cannot be vindictive or look for fault, but such is the exception, not the norm. If you have the view that your authorities have nothing more important to do in their day than to try to make your life miserable, you have a twisted view of the complexity of your authorities’ “world” and of your own self-importance.

- Some appearances of dislike by authorities are simply problems of communication, not intent.

This lack of communication on your part and/or on the part of the authority may involve sin on both sides, which is not excusable. However, it is important to understand that authorities can struggle with communication, which leads to your thinking that they do not like you. This assumption is more likely when you refuse to give the authority any mercy—you expect perfection out of them while not demanding the same of yourself. Such is the opposite of being longsuffering (*Galatians 5:22*).

4. My authorities have a superiority complex.

The idea being communicated here is that the authority is simply seeking to demonstrate his/her power to show that he/she has the ultimate upper hand. While this is certainly a temptation with which authorities must deal, is such an accusation really the case as often as you think it is?

- Your interpretation of your authority’s superiority complex may be wrong.

This wrong interpretation is likely when you are on the receiving end of negative action by the authority. An authority responds to your action (maybe even sometimes in a strong way), and you immediately assume that they have a superiority complex. But is that really the case? In some cases, the “strong” reaction is completely warranted (and in some contexts, it is even expected). Also, it is also quite possible that your action has led to an escalation of the situation, which put your authority in a position where they were more likely to react strongly. Just because an authority acts in a

strong way does not necessarily mean that he/she has a superiority complex. To assume wrong on their part every time you do not get your way is simply arrogant. It is foolish to rarely if ever give your authority the benefit of the doubt while always giving yourself that same benefit of the doubt.

- You may be the one with the superiority complex.

While this is rarely considered by the individual under authority, it is often true. The truth is that you see yourself as superior—at least in some way—to your authority. This does not mean that you see yourself as superior in every way, but you are sure you know better, and that pride has even led to the situation of conflict that you have with your authority. Every time you are tempted to charge your authority with having a superiority complex, you would be wise to see if the complex actually rests with you.

5. My authorities are not adequately qualified.

This is another area where you have to ask, “Is this excuse even relevant?” Even if you are technically right in any aspect of your analysis, the fact is that your opinion in this area is not generally going to change the situation. In most cases, though, such a critique is simply not correct.

- You may not be “adequately qualified” to determine whether or not your authority is adequately qualified.

Remember that your authorities are operating with much more information than you have. There are some basic things that make a person qualified to be your authority (e.g., parents) that unless utterly abused, will continue to qualify them to operate in that position of authority. What makes you think that you are qualified to make such a judgment?

- You may not be “adequately qualified” to be under an authority.

We rarely consider being under authority as a privilege. We also rarely expect to be under any scrutiny in the relationship if we are not the authority. But in at least some cases, you should ask if your authorities are not giving you a measure of grace by still allowing you to be under their authority, especially when you consider your failures against them. Certainly, there are authorities who do not have the liberty to remove you from their authority (like parents), but there are plenty that do (like schools, teachers, bosses, etc.). When you consider this issue the other way around, it might change your perspective.

6. My authorities play favorites.

This belief is frustrating, because you never seem to get away with anything but others appear to get a pass for the things you get in trouble for under the same authority. It is true that some authorities might unrighteously play favorites, but again, if you are making this charge, you had better be right because it is a serious charge. In most cases, this is simply another excuse for sin that you do not want to deal with biblically.

- The problem may be that your peers simply cause your authorities fewer problems than you do.

Much like the argument that your authorities do not like you, this approach fails to consider that your authorities' reactions toward you and others are at least partially based upon your own attitude and actions. While it may appear that certain peers tend to receive preferential treatment, such is normally caused by the fact that those peers are generally more submissive to the wishes of their authorities than you are. It is not uncommon for an authority to give grace when an individual who

normally does what is right sins against them or others. Yet, for the same offense, another individual receives no grace. On the surface, it seems like favoritism. The authority simply likes the good kid. However, such an analysis is quite unfair in most cases. It is not that the authority is unwilling to show grace to you—they have shown grace to you! It was just so long ago since you used up your grace, and you were so ungrateful for it to begin with that you have not even let that enter into the equation of your thinking. In the meantime, you have done nothing to reestablish trust with the authority. So in many cases, what appears to be favoritism actually is consistent discipline.

- You may play favorites with your authorities too.

Playing favorites is not one-sided. Many individuals who have multiple authorities in various contexts treat them differently based upon whether they like them or not instead of giving them the respect their position deserves. And the motivation for such favoritism is often (though certainly not always) based upon who gives you the most freedom to do what you want.

These common pleas have been examined logically and been revealed to be what they truly are—excuses for sin. They simply reveal the existence of much self-centeredness on the part of the individual under the authority. To this point, the goal has been to simply till the soil. But the ultimate authority—God's revelation through His Word—has yet to be considered. It is time to sow the seed of God's Word in the tilled soil. While the Bible often asks of us things that do not necessarily make sense, hopefully you realize now that these admonitions from Scripture that you may be very familiar with make more sense than you originally thought.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT DEALING WITH AUTHORITY?

Several passages in Scripture make a clear case concerning every believer's responsibility toward authority, regardless of the context.

Romans 13:1–7

The Context: The Roman Empire was not an ideal authority to be under. We cringe today when we imagine what it would be like to be under that type of authority. Here are some of its characteristics:

- Roman citizens received favoritism under this rule.
- If anybody had a superiority complex, it would be caesars; they get what they want by merely speaking a word.
- These wicked, heathen Romans were certainly not qualified to spiritually govern God's people.
- The Romans were not very fond of Christians, as biblical and extra-biblical history bears out.

The Command: Be subject to the governing authorities in your life.

Considering the context, the question one might naturally ask is this, "Why should a Christian submit to such wicked governing authorities?" This passage provides the answers.

1. Those in authority receive that authority from God (vv. 1–2).
 - God institutes all authorities in His sovereignty (v. 1).

Every authority that arises in this world is ordained by God—even the wicked Roman empire. There is no distinguishing here between good and bad authorities, godly or ungodly, reasonable or unreasonable.

- Resisting authority = resisting God (v. 2)

The heart issue in submitting to authority is one's personal submission to God. Are you personally submitted to God? If you are, submission to authority will be a normal part of your life, even if it is not easy.

2. Authorities generally promote good conduct, not bad (vv. 3–5a).

Even in the context of a wicked authority, this general statement concerning authority is true.

- Those who do good receive approval (vv. 3–4a).

In most authority situations, you have nothing to fear when you are doing that which is right.

- Those who do wrong have reason to fear (vv. 4b–5a).

Those in authority administering justice upon evildoers are called in these verses a “minister of God.”

3. Those under authority are expected to give authorities their due (vv. 5b–7).

This includes, but is not limited to money and taxes. Those under this Roman authority were expected by God to give their authority honor and fear.

Even while living under one of the most ungodly and unreasonable authorities one can imagine, God's expectations of His people in relationship to authority is consistent subjection.

1 Peter 2:13–25

The Context: This letter is written to Christians in churches in the Roman Empire shortly before the great persecution of believers by Nero.

The Command: Obey, submit, and honor every authority in every context (vv. 13, 17–18).

1. Submitting to all your authorities is how you demonstrate your trust in God (vv. 13–14).

How you treat your authorities is how you treat God. The emphasis here is upon trusting God. Some think it necessary for their authorities to prove trustworthy before submission is granted, but never in the Bible are believers told to trust any human being. Rather, the object of trust is God. By submitting to your authorities, you are not trusting them; rather, you are trusting God to use each and every authority that He has sovereignly ordained in your life. This does not preclude having any trust in people—such can be earned to an extent over time. It does, however, focus the attention of your submission to authorities from the specific earthly authority to God Himself, your ultimate authority.

2. Submitting to all your authorities is an extremely powerful testimony to a lost world (vv. 15–16).

- It demonstrates the foolishness of the unsaved individual's way of thinking (v. 15). Over time, obedience to authority will prove to work best, which is contrary to the thinking of many unsaved people.
- It demonstrates what true freedom is really all about (v. 16).

3. Submitting to all your authorities illustrates the sacrifice of unconditional love (vv. 18–23).

What a beautiful, biblical picture! How the cross truly impacts every aspect of life!

Are you willing to trust God's choice and use of every authority He has placed in your life for your good and His glory?

Hebrews 13:17

The Context: Christians in unidentified locations are operating under individuals in authority in their church.

The Command: Obey and submit to spiritual authorities God has given you.

The word *rule* carries the idea of leadership instead of the typical monarchical thoughts that are associated with our use of the English term.

1. Church leaders carry the responsibility to guard the souls of those under their leadership as much as is humanly possible.

Of course, while exerting such effort, these authorities must be completely dependent upon God for success in this area.

- The word *watch* indicates being sleepless, if necessary, to see to the spiritual safety ("soul") of those under the care of the authority.

Would it not be a shame to waste that kind of passionate protection? The reality of this care and concern for you by your spiritual authority is another reason you must be careful before you say negative things about that individual. While they will make mistakes, your thoughts and words about them may be slanderously inaccurate. Thankfulness to God is in order when you have authorities who care about you spiritually as this passage indicates.

- Those in this position will give an account to God for the way they lead ("*as they that must give account*").

This is a powerful motivation for the authority to do right before God Who graciously gave them this authority. Any authority sensitive to the will of God has this thought constantly in his mind, which drives him to further dependence upon God.

2. Church leadership is more valuable to those under authority when there is no conflict between the two ("*that they may do it with joy, and not with grief*").

Conflict—created by the sin of one individual and confrontation of that sin by another—naturally places a negative feeling on a relationship and on the ability of both to worship and minister effectively.

- A good working relationship between the authority and the one under authority brings joy to authority, who can then lead by encouragement instead of constant correction.
- The result is joy from both parties and the ability to effectively minister together.
- Constant conflict makes it difficult for profitable leading to take place due to the conflict ("*for that is unprofitable for you*").

While confronting sin is necessary work for the authority in obedience to God, so many more profitable things can be happening if the one under authority is working with and not against the spiritual authority in his or her life.

God is very concerned about how you respond to those He has placed in spiritual authority in your life. This fact is something that should be of great importance to you the next time you are tempted to disregard or slander your spiritual authorities. God takes such action very seriously.

Other Miscellaneous Passages

A few other passages deal with some key issues that will help us round out a biblical view of how we should deal with our authorities.

1. *1 Timothy 6:1–2*—those who have authorities who are believers should consider that to be a blessing instead of succumbing to the temptation to despise that.
2. *Acts 23:2–5; 1 Samuel 26:9; Daniel 1*—disobedience to authority is biblically authorized whenever the authority gives instructions that would cause you to disobey Scripture. But even in these cases, a submissive attitude toward the God-given authority is required.
3. *1 Timothy 2:2*—you should always lift up your authorities in prayer to the Lord. Keep them ever before the throne of grace.

CONCLUSION

As we bring this discussion about authority to a close, here are some thoughts that will hopefully help you keep all of the biblical data in its proper context. First of all, the real issue here is your willingness to be personally submissive to the Bible. If that is your consuming passion, then you will have the strength, wisdom, and desire to submit to the authorities that God has placed in your life. You do not always get to choose your authorities. Are you willing to trust God's sovereignty that the authorities He has brought into your life are indeed best? Remember that the issue is not really about trusting authority. The Bible never commands you to trust men. But you are required to trust God to use the authorities He has ordained in your life for His glory and your good. This is faith.

Second, you need to have an understanding of what exactly is the cause of your problems with authority. Pride is the primary thing. Most human beings are convinced that they know what is best in most situations, and you are probably not an exception. In conjunction with this, we clearly saw that a major issue of pride is the assumptions we are willing to make about the character, motivations, or intentions of our authorities based upon an isolated interaction. Such can easily lead to slander. Even when we have accurately identified a biblical problem with an authority, you may fail to see your own sin in the interaction if you are consumed with what the authority did. You have a biblical responsibility to exercise biblical patience toward your authorities. Expectations of authorities should be a two-way street—you should not have expectations for them that you are not willing to meet yourself. Also, consider how you would like to be treated as an authority when the time comes. Would you like to be treated the way you treat your authorities?

Third, avoid having an unbiblical attitude toward the concept of authority. Submission is seen as a necessary thing in Scripture, even before sin entered into the world. (Notice how everything submits perfectly to God during the course of *Genesis 1–2*.) Also, the biblical command to submit does not necessarily mean inferiority to the authority. Having such an inferiority complex often leads to unbridled pride, and you know the rest of the story. Even Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, though not inferior to God the Father, are seen in Scripture as submitting to Him. The issue with biblical authority does not even take into consideration thoughts of superiority and inferiority. (Understand that realistically, many authority situations do naturally entail some sort of superiority of the authority. That is not being denied here. Rather, the goal is to get our minds off of the concept that we know better than our authorities, which leads to our justification of our lack of submission to them.)

Consider one last thought about authority: Think about the illustration of a house. A house offers you many important benefits. It gives you protection from inclement weather. It allows you a measure of climate control and offers you a nice place to sleep. These are all things we often take for granted. But consider this, you can only partake of the advantages of a house as long as you choose to confine yourself inside its walls. Is your freedom limited if you stay inside those walls? Absolutely. But the benefits of staying inside those walls and under that roof far outweigh the disadvantages, especially during a storm. God has designed authority in a very similar way. Will authority restrict you at times more than you wish to be? Yes. But is it worth the restriction for the protection it provides? Absolutely! Trust God that He will work in your life perfectly through your imperfect authorities.

See "Being an Authority That Pleases God" in Lobe 4.

BOOKS

APOLOGETICS

Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties by Gleason L. Archer, (Zondervan, 2001)—an excellent analysis of supposed discrepancies found in the Bible. (ISBN 0310241464)

Hard Sayings of the Bible by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce, and Manfred T. Brauch, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996)—a helpful handbook in dealing with some of the more difficult passages in the Bible. (ISBN 083081423X)

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DISCIPLESHIP

Bread: For Hungry Christians by Frank Hamrick, (Rocky Mount, NC: Positive Action Bible Curriculum, 2002). (ISBN 1929784414)

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Mentoring and Modeling: Developing the Next Generation by Dr. John Goetsch and Dr. Mark Rasmussen, (Lancaster, CA: Revival Books, 2002).

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Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church by Mark H. Senter III, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001).

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Introducing the 21st Century Teenager by Allen Jackson and Dwayne Ulmer, (Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2001).

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Purpose Driven Youth Ministry by Doug Fields, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998).

Reaching a Generation for Christ by Richard R. Dunn, and Mark H. Senter III, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1997).

The Youth Builders by Jim Burns and Mike DeVries, (Gospel Light, 2001).

SHADOW PUPPETS

Worlds of Shadow by David and Donna Wisiewski (Englewood, Canada: Teaching Ideas Press, 1997).

Making Shadow Puppets by Jill Bryant and Catherine Heard (Ontario, Canada: Kids Can Press, 2002).

THEOLOGY

Basic Theology by Charles C. Ryrie, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1988)—a general work on systematic theology. (ISBN 089693814X)

Major Bible Themes by Lewis Sperry Chafer, revised by John F. Walvoord, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974)—an overview of the doctrinal themes of the Bible. (ISBN 0310223903)

What the Bible Teaches by R. A. Torrey, (Hendrickson, 1998)—an overview of the major teachings of the Bible. (ISBN 1565639014)

GENERAL RESOURCES

The Journal of Modern Ministry ed. Jay Adams—this journal provides many helpful ministry articles, and each issue has a section on cults with articles that are a great help in teaching apologetics.

WEB SITES

These websites are recommended, but please use these resources with discretion. Ironwood does not support the views or philosophy of each website.

BOOK SELLERS

www.bjupress.com—*sells Bible Modular Series which has several books that deal with various theology and apologetics issues and is written with teenagers in mind. (Click on “Books” link and look for “Bible Modules for Teens and Adults” on next page.)*

www.christianbook.com

www.positiveaction.org—*sells Positive Action for Christ materials*

www.strivingtogether.com—*sells Mentoring and Modeling and Daily in the Word Discipleship Manual.*

GAME AND CRAFT SUPPLIES

www.orientaltrading.com—*sells gallons of glue that can be used to make slime . . . or crafts*

GAME IDEAS

www.creativebiblestudy.com

www.kidzplace.org

www.thesource4ym.com

GENERAL

www.e-sword.net—*powerful, absolutely free Bible program that contains tons of tools to help you in your research*

www.jofmm.com—*The Journal of Modern Ministry website*

STORIES

www.aesopfables.com

Both of these websites have short stories on a number of topics:

cbh.gospelcom.net/kfk—*Keys for Kids (Please note that there is no www at the beginning of the URL.)*

www.rbc.org/odb—*Our Daily Bread*

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BOOK REVIEW

BACK TO THE HEART OF YOUTH WORK

BY DEWEY M. BERTOLINI

Publisher: Victor Books (Wheaton, IL)

Date: 1989

ISBN: 0-89693-662-7

Availability: Out of print—available used online at www.bookfinder.com or www.allbookstores.com)

As I was completing my seminary education and preparing to embark upon the challenge of being a youth pastor, I asked one of my professors (who also served as a youth pastor in a local church) what single book he would recommend for me to read about youth ministry. I specifically asked him for only one. It is easy to give people a list of books, but I wanted to know what he thought the best one was. His recommendation was *Back to the Heart of Youth Work*.

Upon arriving at my new ministry, I ordered a copy of this book. I was surprised to find that it was out of print, so I had to order a used copy from the internet. While it may not have been the “hottest” thing going in youth ministry, I am so thankful that I read it.

In *Back to the Heart of Youth Work*, Dewey Bertolini has carefully blended pastoral and practical counsel based upon God’s Word into a handy resource for all youth leaders. Drawing from many years in active youth ministries of all sizes, the author focuses on the heart of the youth leader as the starting point for developing a biblical concept of youth ministry. That emphasis is a great encouragement and challenge to youth leaders who desire God’s blessing upon their endeavors.

CONTENT

The backbone of this book is based upon the challenges Paul gave in his two epistles to Timothy. Other Scriptural challenges are given throughout. With all of the challenges faced by teenagers in Christian circles today, it is vital that youth leaders develop not only a pattern of ministry or even a philosophy of ministry, but also a *heart* for ministry. For this reason, the first couple of chapters in the book focus on the hearts, not of teenagers, but of those who are the leaders in the youth ministry. Bertolini points out that it is hypocrisy for youth leaders to attempt to help teenagers with their spiritual needs while neglecting their own. He follows this up with a challenge for youth workers to make sure the focus of ministry is to please God alone in everything. He is the primary audience. While the time pressures of youth ministry may mount, youth workers often must lay aside the calendar or stop working on the next lesson, and instead, seriously evaluate their own spiritual lives. According to Bertolini, that is the beginning of effective youth ministry.

The next area of emphasis is the ministry of the Word of God. Bertolini highlights the importance of committing time to solid preparation of material in order to give teenagers valuable insight into God’s Word. Haphazard preparation generally leads to haphazard lessons. When the spiritual stakes are so high, we cannot afford to cut corners in this area. The author then provides many helpful ideas for preparing and presenting biblical material to young people.

One of the most encouraging and challenging parts of this book is Bertolini’s focus on the necessity of knowing the genuine needs of the people to whom we are ministering. He accomplishes this by giving a

brief overview of the culture that teenagers must navigate today, and then he offers several ministry principles that help the youth worker meet the spiritual needs of teenagers. In a time when adults may often be tempted to look down upon the immaturity and oftentimes foolishness of young people, it is important to remember that such foolishness and immaturity does not exist in a vacuum. Teenagers have genuine needs. Those needs do not excuse sin, but they help the youth worker understand how to better minister to the young people in the church youth group and beyond.

The remainder of the book focuses on particular areas of application in youth ministry. Bertolini has a fascinating chapter on cultural penetration as a means of fulfilling the Great Commission. He begins with his opinion that the best place for this to happen is through penetrating the school campuses in the area. While seemingly a daunting task, he lists several principles that can make this happen. Then, the basic strategy he recommends is creating legitimate reasons for the youth worker to be on the campus of a school, including but not limited to sporting events, plays, etc. The goal is to build relationships, and he gives several practical examples of how to do this. This kind of cultural penetration and relationship building becomes more natural when the youth leader views the students in their various and natural people groups within the school instead of tackling the entire school at once.

Another thought provoking chapter deals with what the author calls the “personal touch,” which focuses on the individuals of the youth group instead of just thinking about them as part of a group. According to Bertolini, a personal touch as something that “takes place every time a youth worker singles out a young person as an individual apart from the mass” (p. 88). He offers several ideas throughout the chapter for maintaining this personal touch aspect of ministry. He focuses on many small things that make a difference in the lives of teenagers like sending them birthday cards and making an attempt to speak to every teen each time they are at a youth meeting. He emphasizes correctly that teens are more likely to listen to those whom they know care about them. He concludes with a caution against seeing the personal touch as simply a part of ministry: “Maintaining personal touch is ministry” (p. 90).

Bertolini’s emphasis on the need to minister to parents could not be clearer. He correctly identifies the parents as having the primary responsibility in the raising of their children and the church’s secondary responsibility to support the parents, not replace them. He provides several great ideas for ministering to parents as a youth minister, highlighting regular meetings with parents as the most important of these ideas. And for those who have not actively promoted a ministry to parents in the past, he recommends a gradual growth in this aspect of ministry instead of trying to make drastic changes all at once.

Several chapters focus primarily upon specific relationships the youth leader will encounter: volunteer youth workers, the senior pastor, and critics of all ages. The author focuses on proper roles, encouraging others, and especially, dealing with even the smallest sins that can possibly hinder any of these relationships. Giving specific applications throughout, he warns of the dangers of viewing these individuals in a wrong light, ignoring what they say, or responding in pride. Each of these individuals is an opportunity for ministry, and youth leaders must give themselves wholeheartedly to this aspect of the ministry as well.

Another helpful chapter focuses on having a purpose behind youth activities. It is easy to get caught up in the activity coordination part of youth ministry and ignore the *ministry*. Bertolini points to the need for quality over quantity, and the necessity that each activity have a purpose/goal. Scheduling an activity for the sake of the activity alone is simply not a good enough reason for having it. He provides several helpful ideas for making activity choices and planning more effective, including having meetings where delegation takes place among others interested in helping with the teen ministry.

The closing chapter of the book encourages the often weary youth worker to constantly examine personal priorities. Bertolini gives hints for identifying burnout and gives some reasons why so many in ministry experience it. Then, he takes the reader through some principles to help reprioritize one’s own life in order to please God and sharpen ministry focus.

EVALUATION

As is already apparent, I believe this book is an invaluable resource to those in youth ministry. It begins with a theological foundation, focuses on the youth worker's personal relationship to the Lord, and then provides thought-provoking ideas related to youth ministry. One particular strength of Bertolini's work is the help it offers to those who have little or no Bible college or seminary training. For instance, in his chapters on preaching, he provides an explanation of expository and topical sermons and then provides help in crafting them. The appendix of this book includes some sample outlines for both expository and topical messages, as well as sample teaching schedules. Also helpful are his tips for delivering the message in public. While not equivalent to classes on these subjects in Bible college, they provide much assistance for the youth worker who wants to improve in these areas. In fact, reading this portion is actually a motivation for all youth workers to improve in message delivery, regardless of previous experience or training.

The other great strength of this work is its emphasis on maintaining and nurturing the various relationships that the youth worker will encounter. He correctly understands the need for those working with youth to be on the same page as the pastor, and his heart for the parents of teenagers is also readily apparent. By focusing on the "personal touch," Bertolini has tapped into what makes youth ministry more than simply lecturing and preaching to teenagers—genuine, caring relationships.

One of the most helpful and yet challenging aspects of this book is the chapter about dealing with criticism. Since all human beings have flesh, nobody in ministry is immune to the temptation to take things personally, whether criticism is only alluded to in passing or aimed directly at the individual. Inevitably, most view criticism as a negative thing. But one of the first things Bertolini does in dealing with this issue is point out the benefits of receiving criticism. This emphasis lays the groundwork for the biblical instruction that follows it.

A practical advantage that is of help to the youth leader reading this book is what Bertolini calls a Personal EKG. Keeping the "heart" theme in mind, Bertolini includes one of these at the end of each chapter to help the reader apply what has been read in the chapter. The Personal EKG contains thought-provoking questions and exercises for the youth worker to evaluate his/her spiritual life and ministry.

With all of the positives from this book, the sometimes glaring weakness is the age of the book. As a result, a few things are outdated. First, the appendix of the book has a bibliography that provides some assistance for the youth worker today, but it is pretty out of date as far as giving some of the best resources that are currently available. Also, some of the ideas concerning keeping contact with teenagers will seem unpractical with advances in technology since the publishing of this book. Still, even the ideas that he gives in these areas can provoke thought concerning the use of modern technology toward the same ends.

CONCLUSION

Despite any weaknesses, the positives of this book far outweigh the negatives. In many ways, *Back to the Heart of Youth Work* is timeless, and therefore, a great help to any youth worker with any size youth group in any location. You will enjoy reading it from cover to cover. But it is also written in such a way that you may reference a particular chapter as you face certain situations in youth ministry. After reading this book and several others on youth work, I would have to agree with my seminary professor that if you are going to buy one book on youth ministry, make this the one. The philosophy is biblical; it covers the wide range of issues faced in youth ministry (where other books often focus on a more narrow slice of youth ministry); and it is an encouragement for the youth worker to keep fighting the good fight of faith, both in one's personal life and as well as in church youth ministry.

BOOK REVIEW
SPIRITUAL JUNK FOOD:
THE DUMBING DOWN OF CHRISTIAN YOUTH
BY CATHY MICKELS AND AUDREY MCKEEVER

Publisher: Winepress Publishing (Enumclaw, WA)

Date: 1999, 2003

ISBN: 1-57921-169-0

Availability: \$16.99 at www.christianbook.com

Any youth worker has faced that moment of crisis: you just cannot think of the right game or lesson for the coming Wednesday. At that moment, you go over to your stash of lesson curriculum or books that have games and begin fingering through them looking for just the right thing.

Having such tools available at your fingertips is an incredible blessing for the youth worker in many ways, not just in those crisis moments. But what attitude do you take when you beginning looking for ideas in various books? Unfortunately, it is all too easy to get into the “is it fun?” or “is it catchy?” mode and judge curriculum lessons and games accordingly. Such thinking is not necessarily a problem unless you fail to apply biblical discernment to your choices. Why are you choosing that game? Does this activity help you accomplish anything eternal in the lives of young people? Is that innovative lesson biblically accurate?

Cathy Mickels and Audrey McKeever, both well experienced in education and related issues, have written *Spiritual Junk Food* because of dangers they have observed in much popular youth curricula that is available to churches today. Your first thought might be, “Why should I be reading a book by individuals who are in education instead of youth ministry?” It’s a fair question, but the oddity quickly makes sense as you begin to read their book. Both Mickels and McKeever have seen much in the context of education. Over time, they made a very discerning discovery: many humanistic ideas they have witnessed being test-driven in a public school setting have been showing up in major church youth curricula in recent years. This book is an attempt on their part to warn churches and youth leaders to use biblical discernment when choosing and using games, lessons, and activities found in the wealth of resources currently available. It is also a call to make sure our church youth ministries are being guided by a biblical philosophy.

CONTENT

Mickels and McKeever begin by pointing out the dangers connected with various education techniques that are primarily dependent upon psychology and humanistic thinking. Having seen the disastrous results of some of these ideas (e.g., see their discussion of the Hatch Amendment on pp. 56–57), they have been horrified watching many of these same ideas gradually work their way into church youth programs. The authoritative preaching and teaching of the Word is often replaced with youth leaders serving as mere facilitators of teen discussion groups. Certain activities and games that are being presented as unique ways of teaching biblical truth often contradict the very teaching of God’s Word. It appears that many youth publishers are more interested in trusting their clever methodologies in order to teach young people instead of trusting in the sufficiency of the Word (2 *Timothy* 3:16–17). These methods are promoted as “must haves” if your youth ministry is to be relevant, leading the authors to wonder aloud how in the world centuries of believers ever were able to be effective Christians before the existence of such innovation in ministry. Churches need to exercise caution as they evaluate what they will use in their ministries.

After introducing their concerns, Mickels and McKeever briefly overview how the psychological theories of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers laid the groundwork for the humanistic thinking that is now becoming so prevalent not only in public schools, but in modern Christian youth curricula. The emphasis of this philosophy is based upon subjective feelings instead of objective truth. The biblical idea of contending for the faith (*Jude 4–5*) has been replaced with unconditional tolerance of others. This tolerance is evidenced specifically in the area of group encounters, which the authors are careful to distinguish from group discussion. Group encounters encourage mutual trust in others for the individual who opens up to the group in order to affirm his or her thoughts. The authors provide helpful lists of encounter group lingo (p. 44) and other buzz words or phrases that are regularly used in Christian circles (p. 59). When such “encounters” are promoted, no real teaching or learning can take place, for these groups are designed in such a way that a teenager is never to be corrected as being wrong or unbiblical in a response. It is argued such tolerance helps promote self-esteem in the individual. In typical postmodern fashion, the authority is removed from the objective truth of God’s Word and instead placed upon the subjective feelings of the teenager, regardless of biblical validity. In the end, true spiritual fellowship among teenagers is sacrificed for artificial fellowship created by various psychotherapeutic techniques (p. 51). The authors give several examples of such practices in chapters three and four. While the terminology of encounter psychology is noticeably absent from the Bible, biblical emphases upon sin and salvation receive the silent treatment in much youth curricula today (p. 57). Instead, Christian teenagers must be challenged to resist the temptation to prioritize one’s horizontal relationships with others above their vertical relationship with the Lord (p. 59).

Chapter five is probably one of the most important chapters in the book, as it addresses the common rallying cry for believers to “judge not.” No doubt, *Matthew 7:1* is one of the most taken out of context verses of all time by believers and unbelievers alike. Under the guise of appreciating other people for their individual areas of uniqueness, modern teen curricula for churches are advocating a “judge not” approach to the ideas of teenagers. Biblically, though, respecting others who are made in God’s image is not mutually exclusive with making righteous judgments concerning truth and error, right and wrong (p. 83). The authors identify “value clarification” (a common innocent sounding buzz phrase in current youth material) as dangerously promoting unbiblical responses toward authority (pp. 86–89). The result is a destruction of absolutes (common in this postmodern age), an exaltation of indiscriminate tolerance, and a promotion of acceptance and catering to feelings instead of doing what is right.

Next, Mickels and McKeever address the idea of teaching young people the need to trust each other, which is contrary to the biblical focus of placing one’s complete dependence upon God for everything. The authors question the validity of using “trust” activities like the “trust walk” (pp. 98–100) or “trust fall” (p. 103) that are typically followed by “feeling” questions for the teens to answer (another secular idea making its way into the church). They also point out that some trust exercises even promote indiscriminate touching among teenagers, which can have many negative effects (pp. 104–105). The promotion of trusting other people is something the Bible never commands or encourages.

When seeking to teach faith, some curricula encourage various outdoor adventures and expeditions that create environments where teens are made to feel vulnerable and fearful. The authors give several examples in chapter eight. Of course, the emphasis is placed on the experience, which as the authors point out is contrary to biblical faith (pp. 133–134). The similarities with secular humanism are alarming. Mickels and McKeever oppose the common desire to create a Christian life that is some sort of high risk adventure by accurately differentiating between risk and cost (p. 151).

Another issue of concern for the authors is the promotion of “self-worship” that naturally accompanies aspects of the self-esteem movement encouraged in much youth curricula today. Such emphases betray an anemic understanding of biblical theology and anthropology. Whether it be activities that promote an obsession with one’s appearance (pp. 114–115) or those that focus teens on the things they do not like about themselves (pp. 116–117), the focus is clearly taken from a focus upon God to focus upon self. The result is

pride and subtle idolatry. “If the worship of self was to replace the worship of God, our idolatry would be easier to identify; but the world has encouraged us to worship self *in addition* to God, making our idolatry more difficult to recognize” (p. 123, authors’ emphasis).

Mickels and McKeever also address the area of interactive learning. Because some commonly mentioned statistics say that people remember more of what they do than what they hear, modern youth curricula is always promoting the need to use more hands-on learning activities or “teaching” times, even though God specifically chose to give us His infallible Word through the means of written revelation (p. 158). While this does not preclude any creativity in presentation, the focus of such thinking is necessarily experiential “truth” instead of objective truth. Curricula authors do not address what happens if that which is experienced contradicts God’s Word.

The authors conclude their book with a call to get back to the basics. Adults are encouraged to learn the Bible—learn theology—so they may be able to accurately teach it and apply it to young people. Such an approach is necessarily contrary to the watered-down, entertainment focused youth ministries popularized in today’s Christian culture.

Chapters ten and eleven and some appendices certainly add to the book, but to a certain extent have stand-alone value and will only be briefly mentioned here. Chapter ten is a thought-provoking chapter about the validity and value of “youth ministries.” Primarily, it is a summary of *Critique of Modern Youth Ministry* by Christopher Schlect, a youth minister himself. Chapter eleven gives an actual local church philosophy statement of youth ministry. You may agree with some things and disagree with others, but it is thought-provoking and challenges the status quo thinking among many youth ministries today. The appendices include a brief article about “Christian” music, a critique of a particular youth curriculum, and a helpful list for evaluating curriculum to be used with teenagers, giving both positive and negative characteristics.

EVALUATION

It is obvious that Mickels and McKeever are passionate about truth. They have prioritized submission to the Word of God in their evaluation of much modern youth curricula, which is refreshing in an age that generally promotes the value of something based upon whether it “works” or not. Their personal experiences in the arena of public education are invaluable, for they are able to provide insight and identify “red flags” that might be missed by youth leaders who are unaware of the origins of some of the activities being promoted.

Due to the nature of the book, the authors necessarily engage in confrontation of the philosophies of various publishers of youth curricula. What I appreciate, as a youth pastor with resource books from some of these publishers, is that the authors identify *many* specific examples to back up what might otherwise seem to be sweeping generalizations. They are not afraid to name names like the apostle Paul did. But the motivation that is regularly before the reader is a passionate desire for truth, not a vendetta against particular publishers.

In reading this book, I found myself in agreement with much of what is presented. They have certainly identified the heart issues and sounded the warning to youth leaders. However, a few negatives observations must be made as well. While I believe the authors try to be fair in their presentation, their passion for truth (which cannot be criticized) often leads to the proverbial throwing the baby out with the bath water. For instance, when discussing certain icebreakers (p. 78), they contend that these are used to get teenagers to open up and reveal details about themselves in some sort of a psychological sense. No doubt, many icebreaker questions may seek to play mind games with a teenager, but such is not the case with every one by any stretch. Icebreakers can do much to help the atmosphere of a particular youth activity if chosen carefully and used properly. For instance, some icebreakers can help teenagers in a group think about others instead of themselves or their clique of friends. When having an activity where you have many visitors, a “Getting to Know You” type of icebreaker can be very helpful to the atmosphere, setting the stage for the

preaching of the Word later on in the activity. But because the authors paint with such a broad brush at times, it is unclear if they see anything that is called an “icebreaker” as dangerous or unbiblical. If that is the point they seek to make, their foundation is weak.

A similar type of issue is found in their criticism of one usage of the old children’s game “Duck, Duck, Goose” and other children’s games (pp. 66–67). Their contention is with a publisher who promotes these games as positive because Christ commands people to become like little children (*Matthew 18:3*). Certainly, to rip such a verse out of context and try to act as if there is some spiritual value by reverting back to one’s childhood is ridiculous. And the particular publication being critiqued uses this activity as a starter to probing questions about one’s childhood that follow. But does that make it wrong for teens to play a game traditionally used for children at a youth activity? The authors do not really say, but you get the impression that the answer to that question might be yes.

A couple other examples show a lack of specificity on the part of the authors in their critique of certain activities. For instance, a “trust walk” activity might be used by some in ways that undermine biblical teaching (pp. 98–100). But again, depending upon what the purpose of games is for your teens, having a blindfolded game where students have to exhibit teamwork does not have to be any different than, say, a three-legged race. If you are simply having a fun game to enjoy without trying to teach some psychological lesson about trust in God, that changes the whole dynamic when using the game or activity. The same could be said of their critique of a ropes course (pp. 132–133). Are adventure games or activities necessarily equated with humanism in and of themselves? In some cases like these, the authors could have made a clear distinction between philosophy and activity. Is a ropes course inherently wrong? What about having an activity that includes a rock climbing wall? More clarity here would have been preferred. What I believe the authors could have avoided is the implication that every game or activity that has been or could be distorted in an unbiblical way must necessarily be evil, unbiblical, and unhelpful.

CONCLUSION

Overall (and despite the negatives noted above), *Spiritual Junk Food* is a needed, thought-provoking book for youth leaders. It will encourage you to constantly be evaluating what you do and why you do it. You will receive the most value from it if you read with an open, teachable mind. You might not agree with every single conclusion, but the authors’ challenge will naturally encourage you as a biblically focused youth leader to regularly be on your knees before the God you serve as you make decisions concerning games, activities, and Bible lessons. Do not assume your methods please Him—search the mind of God in His Word in order to make sure your methods do please Him. The hearts and souls of teenage lives are ultimately at stake.

Youth Leaders Right Brain

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Bold items are 2008 additions.

FUNDRAISERS

Where's Waldo?	3
----------------------	---

GAMES FOR A LARGE GROUP

12-base Kickball	5
Driver-Shotgun Dodge Ball	5
Epic Destruction	5
Firing Line Dodge Ball	6
Fresher	7
Gargantuan Matching Game	8
One to Fifty	8
Super-sized Spoons	9
Tunnel Out	10
Water Balloon Knockout	10

GAMES FOR A SMALL GROUP

16 Square	13
\$1000 Bill Exchange	13
10,000	13
Atlas	14
Balloon Toss	14
Beanbag Basketball	14
Couch	14
Dollar Surprise	15
Downhill Ice Blocking	15
Do You Love Your Neighbor?	15
EGGstra Ordinary Noodle Sword Fight	16
Getting to Know You	16
Hot Spot	17
Human Battleship	17
One to Fifty	17
Pillow Basketball	18
Ping-Ball	18
Poop Deck	18
Quick, Goofy Competitions	18
Ricochet	19
Rocketball	20
SPUD	21
Sticky Side Out	21
Survival	21
Water Balloon Launch	21

SKITS

Chinheads23
Crime Reporting.....**24**
Dyslexic Song.....26
Got Another Quarter?27
The Old Couple.....**28**
Skit Takes29
Sportscaster.....**29**
To Jump or Not to Jump.....**30**
Vending Machine Punks**31**

STUNTS

I Reckon.....**35**
This Little Light of Mine36

TEAM BUILDERS

Gridlock.....**37**

THEMES

Youth Crasher Night.....**39**

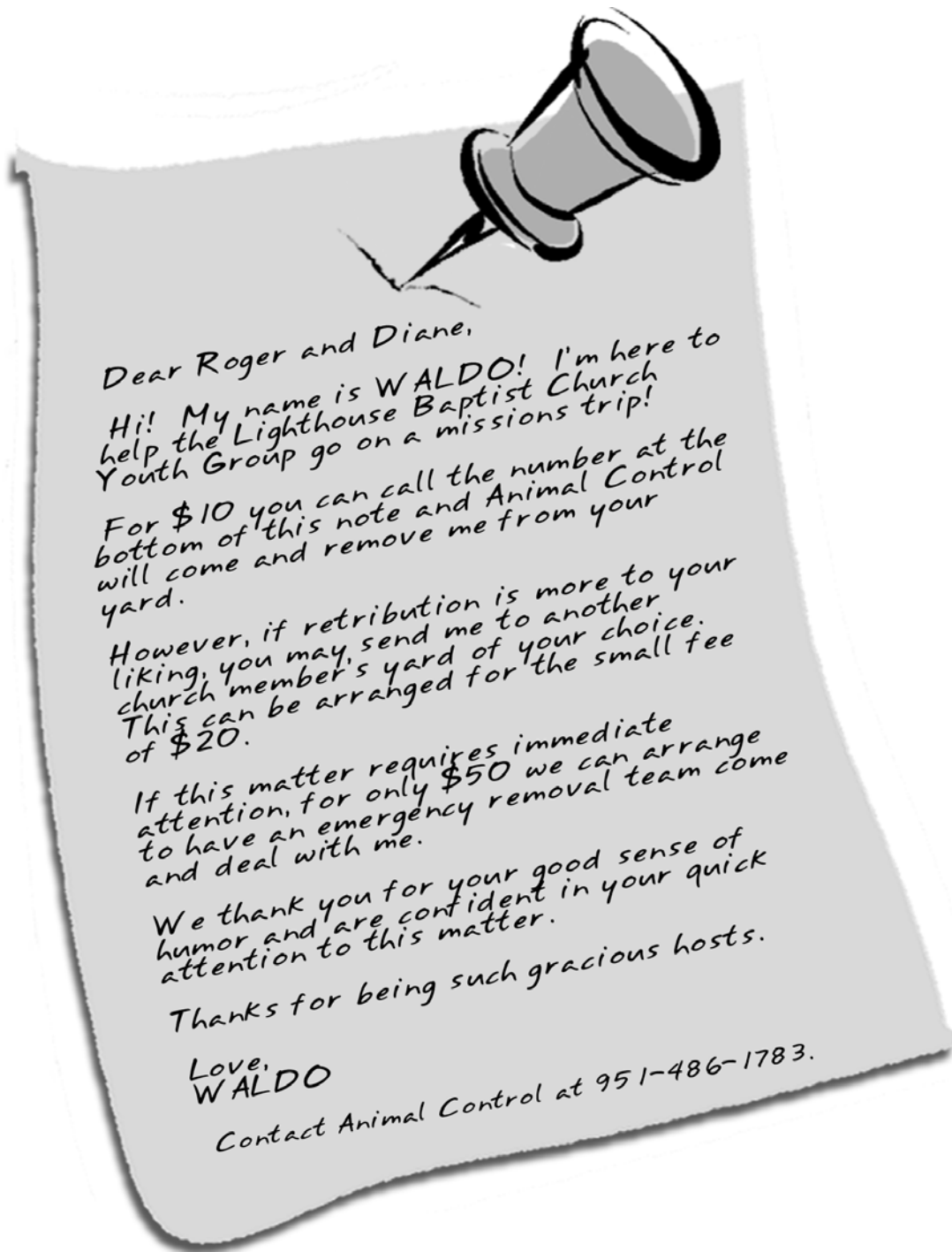
UNIQUE PROPS

Balloon Pump.....**41**
The Dunk Shower42
Hot Spot Court.....44
Ricochet Court.....45
Rocketball Table.....46
Slime.....47
Smoke, Sparks, and Fire48

FUNDRAISERS

WHERE'S WALDO?

Find the most hideous lawn ornament you can find and decide whose lawn it goes on first. Next, attach to it a note like the one below. Have "Animal Control" dressed in a uniform (e.g., orange vest, hard hat, and a net) and make sure they are prompt to remove Waldo from lawn.



LARGE GROUP GAMES

12-BASE KICKBALL

Brain Vitals Key
 \$=props cost only
 \$\$=low individual cost
 \$\$\$=high individual cost

Supplies

1. 12 large cones as bases
2. Many game balls
3. Cones to set up buffer zones

Object: Get to the farthest base or score the most points.

Preparation: Set up the twelve large cones (bases) in a large arch around the field and set up two buffer zones that the defensive team is not allowed into—one around the kicking area and one between twelfth base and home.

How to Play: The kicking team should have a large supply of game balls and a single file line of kickers. When the inning starts, the single file line of kickers kicks continuously and the runners keep running to the farthest base they can. A caught ball does not make an out; the runner has to be tagged to be out. Players who are hit with a ball need to pick it up and run it back in to be kicked by their team. The receiving team can only tag one person with a ball before returning it to the kicking team.

Variations

1. Make a guys and girls kicking line.
2. One person kicks, and two people run.

DRIVER–SHOTGUN DODGE BALL

Supplies

1. Cones or lines to define the boundaries
2. Colored head bands
3. Many playground balls

Object: Knock out the other team.

How to Play: Each team should pair team members; one is the driver, and one is the shotgun. The driver is allowed to catch balls, pick up balls, and block balls; his main job is to feed ammo to his shotgun and to protect his shotgun from being hit with a ball. The shotgun cannot touch a ball for any reason unless his driver hands it to him, and the shotgun cannot block with a ball or pick up a ball. Shotguns, wearing team-colored head bands that are fully visible, are aiming for the shotguns of the other team.

Variations

1. To encourage strategy and flanking, remove boundary cones or expand to a larger field of play.
2. Add a rogue sniper on a rooftop.
3. Have rounds of two all-star pairs from each team to play two-on-two.

EPIC DESTRUCTION

Supplies

1. Cones for the center line

2. Two jails, and eight safety zones
3. Eighty-six buckets
4. Many water balloons
5. Way to fill water balloons.

Object: Destroy all of the enemies' walls.

Preparation: Each team has three bucket walls consisting of ten buckets (bottom row of four, then three, two, and one) set up on their side of the field. Each bucket wall has a large, coned off circle in front of it with one bucket in the middle of the circle. These circles prevent people from standing directly in front of the wall to protect it from incoming water balloons and provide a safety zone for raiders to drop their water balloons (bombs) into the center bucket. When all three walls are knocked down, the round is over. Points can be awarded for winning the round, how many walls were knocked down, as well as for jail breaks.

How to Play: Each team has a number of water balloon launchers; the bombers try to launch balloons to knock down the enemy walls. Raiders go into enemy territory and drop one balloon at a time into the center bucket in front of the wall, trying to reach a total of six. Once six balloons are in the bucket, the wall is destroyed. Ammunition Construction Personnel are filling water balloons to supply their bombers and raiders.

Guards protect their walls from raiders; if they tag someone, they send him to jail (a circle of cones with a ten-bucket wall set up in front of it in enemy territory). Jail has a safety zone set up in front of it to prevent guards from too easily blocking the wall from incoming water balloons. The only way to have a jail break is to knock down the wall via bombing.

FIRING LINE DODGE BALL

Supplies

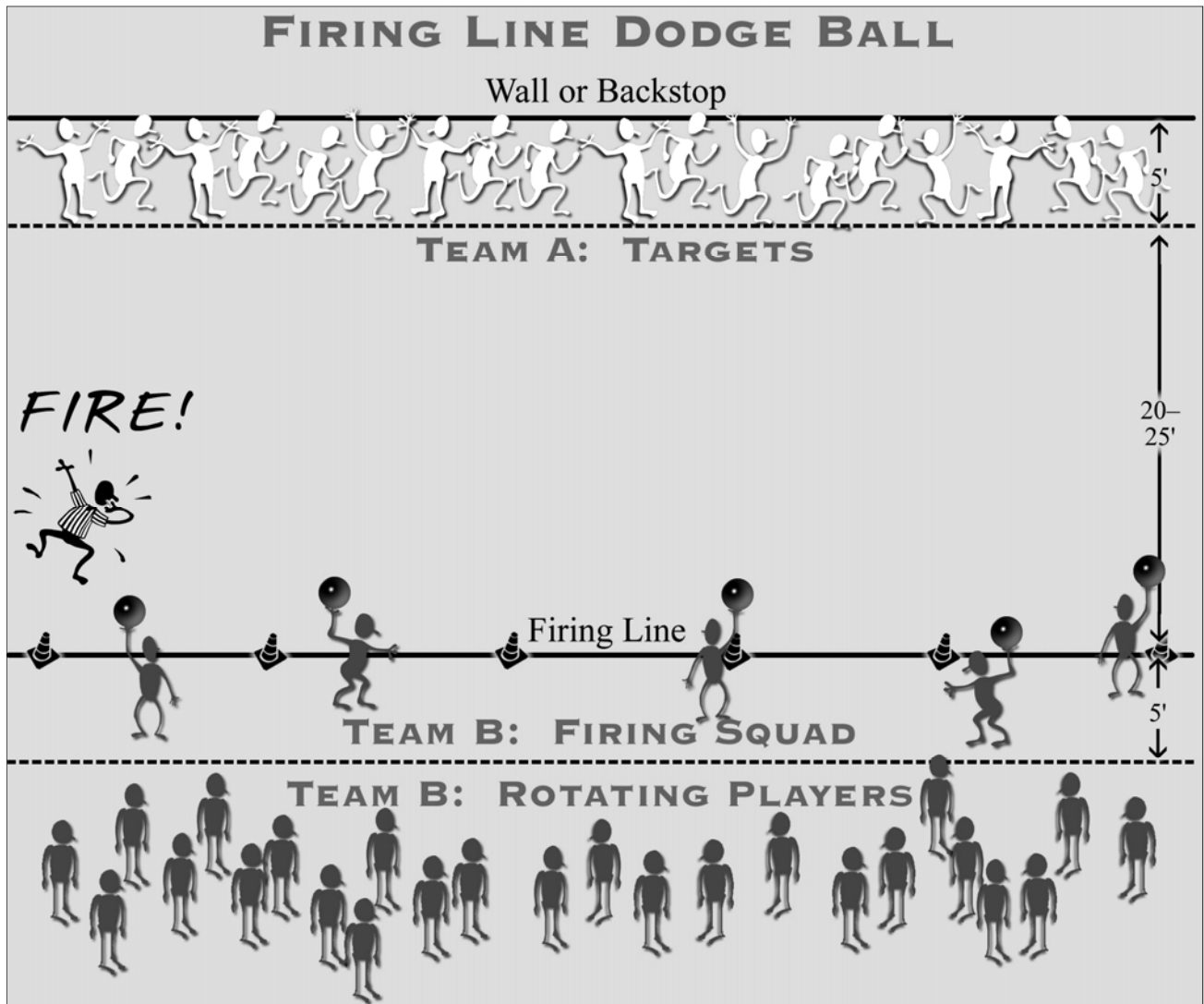
1. Three to five dodge balls
2. Cones
3. Tape to make lines
4. A place to play with a wall (or backstop)

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	15–100
Props	Some
Cost	\$
Type	Dodge Ball
Time	15–20 min.
Referee	1

How to Play: Divide your group into two even teams. Each team will take a turn at being the targets and firing squad. The firing squad will send up to five players at a time to the firing line, and each player will be given a ball. Their goal is to hit the targets by throwing or bouncing the balls; they may not roll them. A player on the firing line may move around within the firing line zone but must throw his ball when the command to fire is given; no firing may be done without a command. After the first five players on the firing squad throw their balls, they switch places with other players on their team. The firing squad will have ten rounds—throwing five balls each round—to eliminate the targets. (Note: Adjust the distance between the firing line and the targets depending on the strength of your firing squad—closer for elementary young people, farther away for teens.)

The targets can protect themselves by moving around but must stay within five feet of the wall. If one of the targets catches a thrown or bounced ball, the member of the firing squad who threw it is out for the rest of the time that his team is on the offense. Balls that ricochet off the wall are dead and cannot get any players out. Targets should help return balls to the firing line to keep the game moving. Targets win by having more survivors than the opposing team in a complete game (when both teams have been the firing squad and the targets).

Variation: Assign the five members of the firing squad to a designated spot on the firing line and don't allow them to move around.



FRESHER

Supplies

1. Large cones to set up at the corners
2. Medium cones to set up the side lines
3. Dome cones or field paint to set up the fresh lines
4. Inner tubes

Object: Score as many points as possible by getting the opposing team members into jail.

How to Play: Each team starts on their “fresh” line—the opposing end lines of a basketball-court-size field. When you step across your fresh line, you are becoming stale; each time that you step back to your fresh line you become refreshed. If a player steps off of his fresh line before an opposite team member steps off of his fresh line, the second player is fresher than the first. The fresher (second) player can then tag the first and take him to jail to score points.

The jails are in opposing corners of the field on one end of a team’s fresh line. The newest person in jail is the anchor to the cone that represents jail.

The players in jail can form a chain that stretches down the sideline; the farther they stretch, the easier it is for their team members to run and tag the team member at the end of the line (only one person can be tagged at a time). The person tagged (freed from jail) gets a free walk back to his fresh line.

Variations

1. Each team has an inner tube placed about two-thirds of the way down the field, on the side opposite of the jail from which they are trying to rescue their team members. The tube represents an extension of the team's fresh line. This throws a wrench into strategy; players must watch behind them for fresher players.
2. Score points by counting the number of people jailed throughout the whole round or how many were left at the end of the round.

GARGANTUAN MATCHING GAME

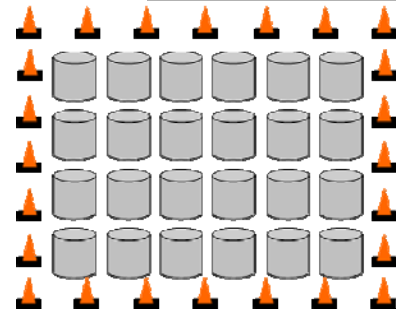
This is a great indoor or outdoor game. It keeps the players' attention even when they are not in the square themselves, since they will be watching to know where matching pairs may be on their turn.

Object: To be the team that get the most matches.

Supplies

1. *24+ five-gallon buckets (cones, etc.—anything an object can fit underneath)
2. *12+ pairs of objects (e.g., golf balls, colored paper, shoes) to go under the buckets
3. Cones (tape, ribbon, etc.) for boundaries
4. Two stopwatches

* Increase the number of buckets and pairs of objects if you have a larger group or more time.



Preparation: Set up the five-gallon buckets upside down in four rows of six. While the players aren't looking, place an object under each bucket. Make a boundary around the buckets.

How to Play: Divide the group into two teams and have the teams line up on opposite sides of the playing area. The first player in line from each team enters the playing area at the whistle. (Players shouldn't enter the playing area until it's their turn; only one person from each team may be in the playing area at a time.) Players have ten seconds to lift two buckets. If the players on opposing teams each find one half of a pair during their turn, it cannot be claimed by either team. At the end of ten seconds, players take matches to the referee. After a player's turn, he should go to the end of the line whether he found a match or not. The next player in line will enter the square at the next whistle. This continues until all matches have been found.

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	10–100
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Matching Game
Time	20–45 min.
Referees	1–3

ONE TO FIFTY

See Small Group Games for a variation of this game.

Supplies

1. One cone for each team (up to nine people per team)
2. A large bucket
3. A large die
4. A jumbo marker (duct taped in a pool noodle)
5. One large piece of paper for each team per round

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	9 per team
Props	Some
Cost	\$
Type	Race
Time	20–30 min.
Referee	1

Object: Be the first team to write each number from one to fifty.

Preparation: Arrange the cones in a circle large enough to accommodate all of your teams; place the bucket with the large die in the center of the circle.

How to Play: Each team (can be played with any number of teams) lines up behind a cone. One player from each team runs to the center of the circle to roll the die once. If he rolls a number other than six, he returns to his team's cone and sends another team member to the center to roll the die. If the player rolls a six, he grabs the marker from the referee (or from the team that is currently writing) and runs to his team's cone. The team begins writing *1, 2, 3, 4*, and so on—a different player writing each number. The team continues to write numbers until another team rolls a six and takes away the marker. The next time the die comes around to the first player and he rolls a six, he continues to write numbers from where he left off in the count. The first team to write all the numbers from one to fifty wins.

Tips and Tricks

1. Teams should rotate so that each team member has a turn to roll the die and write numbers.
2. Teams cannot hold onto the marker or block another team when that team comes to take it.

Variations

1. Add multiple rolling buckets.
2. Add multiple markers.
3. Do speed rounds of one to twenty-five.

SUPER-SIZED SPOONS

Supplies

1. One cone per team (up to nine girls or guys per team)
2. One bucket per team
3. A variety of cards with different pictures to make four of a kind
4. Large tarps
5. Soap
6. Water hose
7. Someone to keep things soapy and wet
8. Inner tubes
9. Inflatable rafts

Object: Get as many inner tubes from the center as possible to score the most points.

Preparation: Arrange the cones in a large circle. In the center of the circle, lay out the tarps and cover them with soap and water; pile the inner tubes on top of the tarps. About ten paces in front of each cone, place a bucket and put a pile of cards in it.

How to Play: Each team stands behind a cone. Set a time limit. When the round starts, each team sends one player at a time (teams should rotate through all of their players) to get a card from their bucket, trying to get four of a kind. Teams can only hold five cards at a time; team members take turns discarding cards to the team's bucket that is next to them. When a team gets four of a kind, all of the team members run to the tarps at the center to bring back an inner tube. If a guys' team goes, all the guys' teams should go; if a girls' team goes, all the girls' teams should go.

Variations

1. Find five or six cards of a kind.

2. Call out just a few teams.
3. Call out just the team captain.

TUNNEL OUT

Supplies

1. Cones for the center line, two dungeons, and a jail
2. Many small flags
3. More buckets than flags
4. Game balls

Object: Break free your captured team members from the dungeon.

How to Play: Each team has a dungeon (in the shape of a circle or a long rectangle) in the back of their half of the field. In each dungeon is a group of players from the opposite team. A player can break out of the dungeon by making a run for it or waiting for his team to build a tunnel for him. Players score points for their team by successfully escaping from the dungeon.

In addition to the dungeon is a jail. Players can be sent to jail in two ways—they can be tagged or hit with a game ball (no blocking with a bucket) in enemy territory. The warden will periodically release players from jail.

Each team has six rows of small flags. There should be an even number of flags making up each row, and they should also be spaced evenly. These six rows form three potential tunnels. To build a tunnel, players must enter into enemy territory and place a bucket on top of a flag. When a team places a bucket on a flag on either side of the tunnel, the territory between the buckets is now safe, but the opposing team can freely move in the rest of the tunnel. Any portion of the tunnel where flags haven't been covered by buckets is open to the opposing team. After all the flags have been covered, the tunnel is safe to run through—the other team can't tag players in the tunnel and send them to jail. However, players in a tunnel can still be hit with a game ball.

Variation: Instead of setting up tunnels, have a group of people with team-colored head bands on that can run into the enemy dungeon and rescue a prisoner. Both the prisoner and the rescuer get a free walk back. Prisoners can still try to run for it.

WATER BALLOON KNOCKOUT

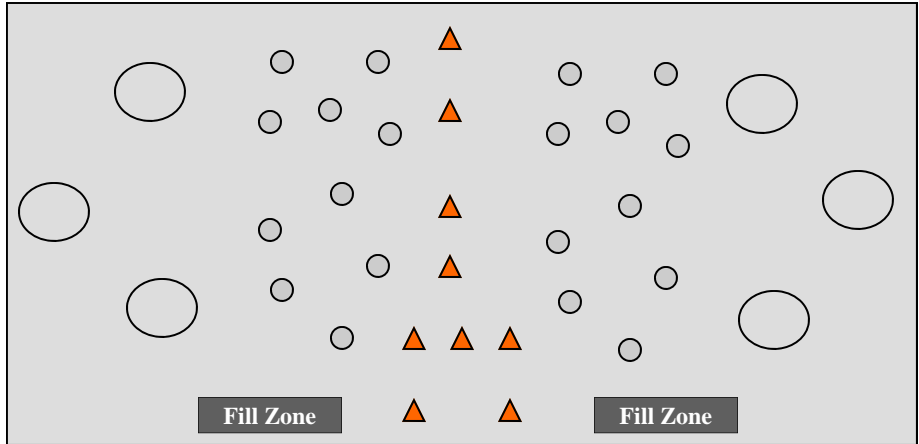
Supplies

1. Five to ten water balloons for each player
2. Markers to divide the field
3. Cones or buckets to put the water balloons in and to be a safe base in enemy territory
4. Hula hoops or markers to make the circles for the targets to stand in
5. Water source to fill balloons or a place to receive filled balloons
6. Cones for a jail

BRAIN VITALS	
Group Size	20–200
Props	Many
Cost	\$
Type	Capture the Flag
Time	20 min. per round
Referees	3

Object: Be the first team to knock out enemy commanders by capturing unfilled balloons (or markers to trade for filled balloons) which are filled in a teams filling station and then returned to throw at the enemy targets. Targets hit with a spot the size of a quarter are knocked out.

How to Play: Teams start on their own side. Balloons are located in the buckets on the enemy's side; teams retrieve balloons to inflate from the other teams side. Buckets are a safe base when a hand is placed inside. Teams may guard buckets and players on base. Teams cannot take balloons from their own buckets for filling (using different colors prevents cheating). Teams cannot step into the target's circle when throwing; targets may move to avoid being hit but cannot step outside their zone or circle. A tagged person must go to jail and must give back any empty balloons but may destroy filled balloons on the ground. Prisoners are released periodically by the prison warden. Teams win by eliminating the other team's leaders. Buckets may not be moved but remain stationary. Two to three rounds of play is very enjoyable and allows teams to develop strategies.



SMALL GROUP GAMES

Good board games that convert to group games: Moods, What If?, and Would You Rather . . .

16 SQUARE

Supplies

1. Sidewalk chalk
2. A playground ball

Object: Make it the number-one square.

<i>Easier</i>				<i>Harder</i>			
1	2	3	4	16	15	14	13
8	7	6	5	5	4	3	12
9	10	11	12	6	1	2	11
16	15	14	13	7	8	9	10

Preparation: This game is much like the game of four square. Chalk off sixteen large squares (about 5' x 5' each) and write a number inside each square. The numbers should be sequential but could be arranged to make staying in the number one square harder.

How to Play: The ball can start at any square. Players must serve or hit the ball to an adjacent square. If the ball bounces in a player's square, he must return it to another square. If he is unable to return the ball, he is out and everyone advances up a square. If a player hits the ball and it hits a line, he is out. If a player hits it to a non-adjacent square, he is out. If the ball bounces twice in a player's square, he is out.

\$1000 BILL EXCHANGE

Preparation: Make your own money on your computer. (Be sure it's clearly phony, or it might be a federal offense.)

How to Play: Give each player ten of the bills. Players try to win as many bills as possible from other players by challenging them to do one of three things: thumb wrestling; Rock, Paper, Scissors; or flipping a coin. A player issued a challenge must accept it. Challenges are sudden death, no best two out of three. The challenger has to have a coin and is "heads" on the coin toss.

"Games & Icebreakers: Anywhere Games," The Source for Youth Ministry, <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/anywhere.asp>.

10,000

Supplies

1. Five dice
2. A scorekeeper

Object: Be the first player to 10,000 (or any other point value you choose)

How to Play: A player starts his turn by rolling all five dice and looking for dice worth points: ones (100 points each), fives (50 points each), and three of a kind (worth 100 times the number on the dice—three 2's would be worth 200 points, three 3's would be worth 300 points, three 4's would be worth 400 points, three 5's would be worth 500 points, but three 6's are worth 1,000 points). The player sets aside any dice that he wants to keep for points (he must keep at least one) and rolls the remaining dice. If the player rolls and has

no points on that roll, he loses all of his points from that turn (points from any previous turns are still good) and passes the dice to the next player. If a player has points from all five dice, he tallies his points and continues rolling with all five dice. The player can keep rolling until he decides to stop or he rolls a hand with no points.

ATLAS

Either in seat order or in a circle, the first person says the name of any city, river, ocean, or mountain that could be found in an atlas. The next person must say another place that starts with the last letter of the place previously said (e.g., Denver → Rhode Island → Denmark → Kenya). There is a ten-second time limit, and no place can be repeated.

“Games & Icebreakers: Anywhere Games,” The Source for Youth Ministry, <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/anywhere.asp>.

BALLOON TOSS

Stretch a piece of gardeners' tape or rope at least six feet off the ground from a couple of posts. Have the players pair up with one of the pair on each side of the tape. Give all the players on one side a water balloon. The players toss the balloon over the tape to their partners on the other side. If the balloon breaks or does not go over the tape, the pair is out. After each toss, players should take one or two steps backward. Continue this until you have a winning team.

BEANBAG BASKETBALL

Supplies

1. Two large (35-gallon) trash bins (clean, of course) to use as baskets
2. One bean bag
3. Play area of 30' x 15' or so (You can enlarge or shrink the area based on the size of your group.)

How to Play: Split your group into two teams. Just like basketball, the teams are trying to get the beanbag into their respective baskets. Since dribbling is not possible, it's really a game of passing. Players can take two steps when they get the beanbag. If the beanbag hits the ground or a basket is made, it goes to the other team. Begin the game with a tip-off and let them go! First team to ten wins.

COUCH

Supplies

1. Couch (a couch that seats four or four chairs)
2. Chairs for everyone in the game plus one empty chair
3. Slips of paper with one player's name on each

Object: To get your team of four players on the couch

Preparation: Set up chairs in a circle that includes the couch. Divide the group into teams of four, give each player a slip of paper with a name on it (it is okay if a player's paper has his own name), and have players sit in the circle.

How to Play: The player to the left of the empty chair calls a name. The player holding the slip of paper with that name goes to sit in the empty seat and exchanges papers with the player who called the name. The person to the left of the new empty seat calls a name, and the process is repeated.

Tips and Tricks

1. Do not allow players to call the same name twice in a row or to send signals (verbal or nonverbal) to the player calling the name.
2. It helps if players have been introduced to each other, especially if you play with smaller groups.
3. If the game goes too long, call time; the team with more players on the couch wins.

DOLLAR SURPRISE

Play music during this mingling game. One or two players have dollar bills, and everyone goes around shaking hands. A player with a dollar passes it off to the tenth person with whom he shakes hands. The player who now has the dollar does the same. When the music stops, the player with dollar keeps it.

Young Life, "Games & Icebreakers: Anywhere Games," The Source for Youth Ministry, <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/anywhere.asp>.

DOWNHILL ICE BLOCKING

Downhill ice blocking works just like sledding on snow, and it is also very fun to watch. We've heard that this works on grass (trimmed like a golf course is best); however, we got it to work in the sand. All you need is a steep hill and a huge roll of plastic. If wind is an issue, you can secure the plastic by piling sand on the edges.

Preparation: We greased the bottom and sides of table bus tubs (grey, rectangular, heavy-duty plastic tubs) and filled them with water to a depth of three inches. We found that greasing the sides was especially important, because it kept the bottom of the tub from buckling downwards (which makes for a lopsided block). Greasing the sides evidently allows the frozen water to rise, leaving you with a flat surface on the bottom of the block; it is also easier to remove ice from the greased tubs. Remember to fashion handles for your ice block. We accomplished this by using ½- to ⅝-inch thickness of rope that we cut twelve to sixteen inches long and knotted with a half hitch on both ends. We placed the knotted ends in the water (all the way to the bottom of the tub), leaving the loop sticking out—just enough to hold onto. It takes a good while to freeze solid (at least two hours—times will vary based on the size freezer, space in the freezer, and the number of tubs of water you want to freeze). About fifteen minutes before you want to use them, remove the ice blocks to allow the surface ice to melt a little, which should ease the edges (removing sharp corners).

Tips and Tricks: Dump a bucket of water down the hill just before each rider. As the path becomes worn and more wet, the riders should go further and further. The riders will get wet, and perhaps muddy, but they WILL have fun.

DO YOU LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR?

Preparation: Set up a circle of chairs with one less chair than players.

How to Play: Have the players sit in a circle; the extra person stands in the middle. The person in the middle approaches someone who is seated and asks him, "Do you love your neighbor?" The seated person can

answer in one of two ways. If he says no, the people seated on either side of him have to switch seats as quickly as possible so that the standing person doesn't get one of the seats. If he says yes, he must add a qualifying statement such as, "But I don't like people who have blue eyes." Anyone who matches the description must get up and find a different seat. The player left standing is the new asker.

Sheri Blaise, "Games & Icebreakers: Anywhere Games," The Source for Youth Ministry, <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/anywhere.asp>.

EGGSTRA ORDINARY NOODLE SWORD FIGHT

Supplies

1. Eight pool noodles
2. Duct tape
3. 55-gallon garbage bags
4. An egg for each player

Preparation: Tape four pool noodles together at the ends to create two giant swords. Each player puts on a garbage bag (cut holes for the head and arms); this is his shield. Duct tape an egg in the middle of each player's chest or belly; make an X with the duct tape to hold the egg in place.

How to Play: Two players at a time battle until one of their eggs breaks. The winner then fights another player, and the loser is out of the competition. The last one with an unbroken egg is the champion.

Tips and Tricks

1. Have a fighting circle outlined so the players know where the battlefield is.
2. Set some rules before hand, e.g., like only use the noodles and no hitting the head.
3. Have a set time limit or mercy rule.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Supplies

1. A wide blanket or canvas
2. Two chairs

How to Play: Divide the players into two teams. Put the two chairs (one for each team) about two yards apart facing each other. Assign two people to hold the blanket up between the two chairs, so the people sitting in the chairs cannot see each other. Team members take turns sitting in their chair. At the count of three, the two people holding the blanket release it, causing it to fall down and reveal who is sitting on the chairs. The two people sitting on the chairs will immediately say the name of the other player. The first seated player who names the other player scores a point for his team. This game is great for getting a new group of students to know each other's names.

Variations

1. Play without chairs.
2. If you have a small group of regulars, have them come up with nicknames that everyone else has to remember. You can have players make up their own or choose from categories such as body parts (e.g., Twinkle Toes or Pretty Eyes), animal names (e.g., Ape, Moose, Kitten), or cars.

Youth for Christ, "Games & Icebreakers: Anywhere Games," The Source for Youth Ministry, <http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/anywhere.asp>

HOT SPOT

Object: Be the first team to score eleven points. Points are earned every time a ball is dropped or hit out of bounds.

Preparation: Construct Hot Spot Court (*see Unique Props*).

How to Play: Teams (one to six players per team) can serve the ball from any spot on their side. When a point is scored, the team with the ball serves. A served ball must go through one of the six spots on the other team's side of the court. Once a ball goes through a hole, it must go up through that same hole and back to the other side. If a team sends the ball through a wrong hole, the other team scores a point. A player who drops or misses the ball must sit out until a point is scored by either team.

See "Survival" for another Small Group Game with the Hot Spot Court.

HUMAN BATTLESHIP

Supplies: One or two referees, two small rubber or nerf balls, sheets (or tarps), and an area large enough for people to lie on the ground on each side of the "game board" (i.e., outside on a volleyball court or inside using two rows of chairs placed back to back for your divider).

Object: To sink the other team's ships by hitting them with the ball

How to Play: Cover the net or chairs with the sheets and have each team get on the ground on their side of the net, arranging themselves in any location on their side of the game board. Give one ball to each team and let them begin tossing it over the net. Anyone who is hit twice directly by a thrown ball is out (bounces don't count, but flinching does count as a hit). After a player is out, he can help his team by retrieving the ball and guiding the shots.

Tips and Tricks

1. Be sure the teams can't see each other get into place.
2. Players must throw the ball from flat on their backs.
3. Players cannot move to get away from an incoming ball.

Variations

1. Give different values to certain players so it takes more hits to sink them.
2. Use more than two balls for a quicker game.
3. Make walls and ceiling "in play."

ONE TO FIFTY

See Large Group Games for a variation of this game.

Supplies: Paper for each player, one pen, and one die

Object: To be the first player to write each number from one to fifty

How to Play: The first player rolls the die once. If he rolls a number other than six, he passes the die to the second player. If the first player rolls a six, he grabs the pen and begins writing 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on. The first player continues to write numbers until another player rolls a six and takes the pen from him. The next

time the die comes around to the first player and he rolls a six, he continues to write numbers from where he left off in the count. The first team to write all the numbers from one to fifty wins.

Tips and Tricks

1. Keep the playing area small enough so that everyone can reach across to grab the pen.
2. Players do not have to hand the pen over when they lose their turn, but they cannot hold onto it when another player grabs it.

PILLOW BASKETBALL

Supplies: Basketball, five pillows in pillow cases, and a basketball court (half court is preferred)

Object: To be the team with the highest score after a set number of rounds.

How to Play: This can be played with any size group, since it is played in rounds. The guys like it, because it's just basketball; the girls LOVE it, since they get to cream the guys! Split the group into two teams, with boys and girls evenly divided between the two. Choose five boys from the first team to play regular basketball—regular rules, two points per shot, etc. Choose five girls from the second team to play “defense” with the pillows (using pillows only, their goal is to keep the boys from scoring by any means possible—e.g., hitting the players or hitting the ball out of bounds). Each round lasts for three to five minutes, according to your group size. For the next round, the second team sends out five boys to try to score, and the first team sends out five girls to play defense. If your group is large, be sure that each round has a different ten people playing.

PING-BALL

Play regular baseball rules but substitute a ping-pong ball for the baseball and a ping-pong paddle for the bat. None of the players need gloves, and the game can be played in a small area. If you have a very small group, eliminate one or two of the bases. If playing in a really small room, play no foul balls.

POOP DECK

Separate an area into three sections—the center area is the Main Deck, the right is the Quarter Deck, the left is the Poop Deck, and outside the area is Overboard.

Begin by having all the players line up in the center of the Main Deck. From there proceed to call out Poop Deck, Quarter Deck, and Overboard, in any sequence. Throw the players off by pointing one way and saying something else. If a player flinches to go the wrong way, steps in the wrong deck, or is the last one to the correct deck, he is out. The last person in is the winner.

QUICK, GOOFY COMPETITIONS

The following can be used for a several short team games, transitions, or mixers. The key to making them a success is to just shout out what to do and not give the teams a chance to think about it.

1. Count as far as you can with a single breath.
2. Recite the alphabet backwards.

3. Say four very complimentary things about yourself.
4. Sing a verse of a song.
5. Blow out a candle blindfolded.
6. Imitate a donkey.
7. Yawn until you make the another player yawn.
8. Eat a yard of string, rabbit fashion, nibbling it into your mouth.
9. Try to sell your left shoe to someone while holding it in your hands.
10. Eat a jalapeno without drinking any water.
11. Act out the entry of a burglar into your house.
12. Spell your full name backwards.

Bible Alphabet

Each team needs a sheet of paper and pen. Give them two minutes to write a name from the Bible for each letter of the alphabet. Each correct name is worth five points; the team with the most gets a 100-point bonus.

Group Theater

Call out one of the following items: helicopter, CD player, toaster, school bus, personal computer, bulldozer, outdoor garden fountain, or any other item that can be imitated. The winner is the first team to make their whole team (everyone must participate for the team to win) look like or act like the item.

All Tied Up

Have each team tie all of their shoes together while they are wearing them. (If a player is wearing flip flops or shoes without laces, have him stand on one leg the entire time.) The first team to succeed wins. Add an extra twist by giving the teams a task to complete while they are all tied up—e.g., touch a wall, touch the youth pastor, run around the room.

RICOCHE T

Preparation: Construct a Ricochet Court (*see Unique Props*).

Object: To score on the other teams and prevent them from scoring on your team

Set Up: Ricochet is a four-sided soccer game with three to a team, so a total of twelve can play at one time. Each player holds on to the loop of the strap which is connected by a carabiner to his two teammates' straps; each team has two forwards and a goalie. The goalie's strap is shorter than the forwards' straps.

How to Play

When teaching the game, start play with one ball, adding two more balls as players get the hang of it. Playing with three balls makes the game faster and more exciting by creating more scoring options.

1. Players may not let go of their straps, unless they are retrieving an out-of-bounds ball.
2. Goalies are the only players allowed to pick up the ball and to score by throwing it; goalies may not hold the ball longer than five seconds.
3. Scoring
 - a. Teams try to give other teams points by putting a ball in any one of the other three goals or kicking a ball out of the court. In addition to scoring a point, the person who kicks a ball out of the court must run for the ball, exiting through his goal and returning the ball to play.

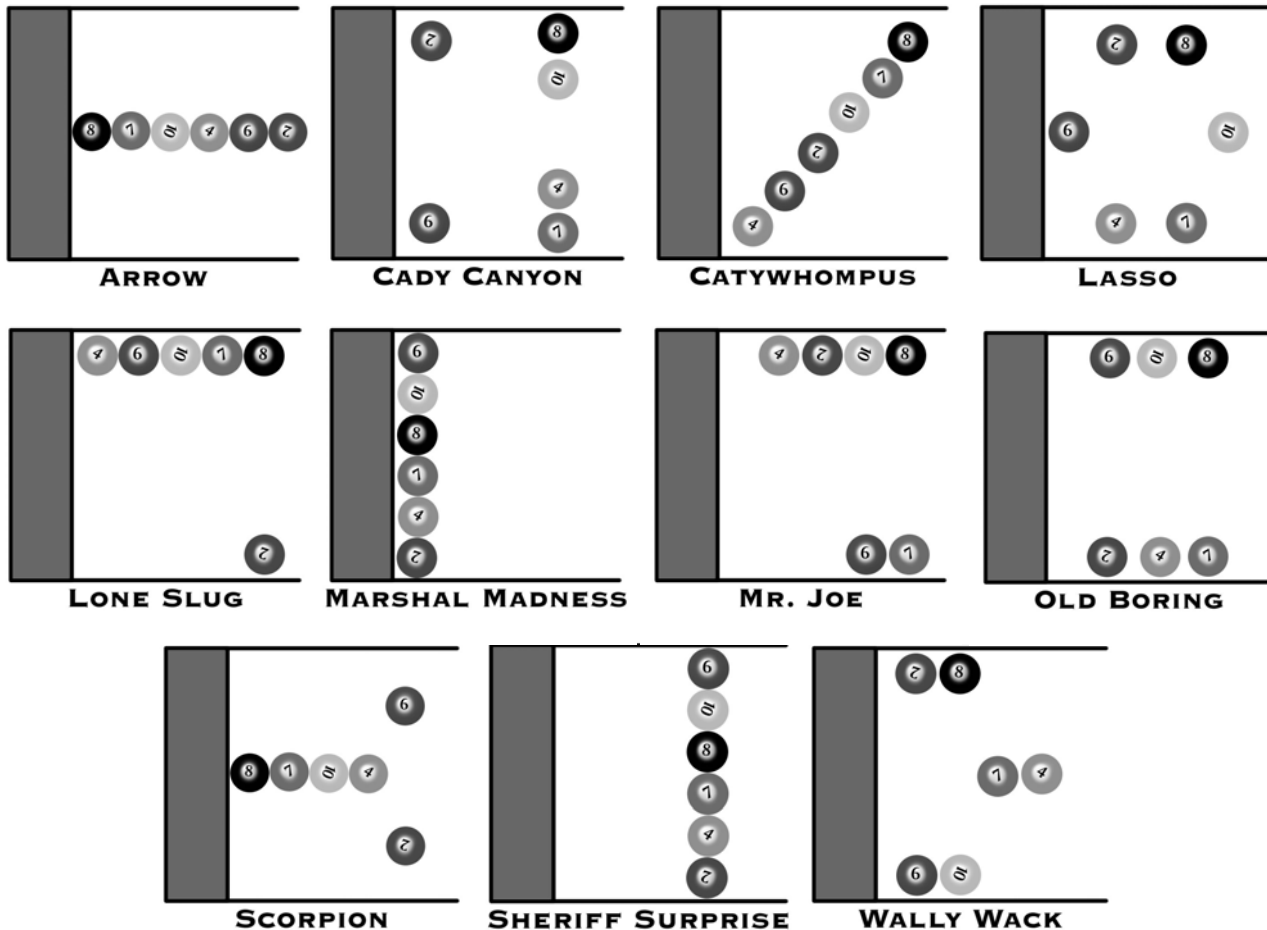
- b. When a team reaches five points, they are eliminated from play; and a new team may join the game. It is up to the discretion of the person running the game as to whether the remaining teams reset to zero or continue with their previous score. Keeping the score is helpful to rotate through more players while resetting the score makes it feel like a new round and is good for a tournament style game play.
- c. You can run a tournament by having teams play to the last one. When one of the four teams is eliminated, play with three teams and leave the fourth goal open; this does not hinder play. When two teams remain, divide the two extra goals between the two teams; put two players on one of the team's goals and one player on the other goal. (Each team will have two goals next to each other, rather than two goals opposite of each other.) The final round goes quickly and will often be decided by a goalie kicking out a ball, leaving his goal unprotected.

ROCKETBALL

Object: To be the first player to knock down your opponent's pool balls.

Preparation: Construct Rocketball Table (*see Unique Props*).

Set up the balls in one of the patterns. Players take turns rolling the cue ball at their opponent's balls, trying to knock them into the pocket. After one player has knocked down all of his opponent's balls, the opponent gets one mercy shot to tie the game.



SPUD

Supplies: One playground ball

How to Play: Have the group stand in a circle while you count off the players. Designate one player to be “it” and have him stand in the middle of the circle. “It” tosses the ball up into the air as high as he can and calls out the number of another player. The player whose number was called tries to catch the ball, and all of the other players scatter. When that player gets the ball, he yells “SPUD!” and all of the other players freeze. The player with the ball is allowed to take two giant steps before throwing the ball at another player. Players can avoid being hit by ducking or leaning but not by moving their feet. The first time a player is hit, he gets an *S*; the second time a *P*; when he earns *SPUD*, he is eliminated. If the person throwing the ball misses his target, he earns a letter. The player who earned a letter (unless he was eliminated by earning the last letter *D*) is “it” for the next round.

Variations: If you have a large group or are short on time, you may need to make the game single elimination. Playing inside a gym limits the distance that players can scatter and keeps the ball close.

STICKY SIDE OUT

Supplies: Duct tape, lots of cotton balls, little Nerf balls (optional)

Object: To get the most cotton balls or Nerf balls stuck on the target

How to Play: Divide the group into two teams and choose one player from each team to be the sticky target. A youth leader wraps each player in duct tape with the sticky side out. Each sticky target should sit in a chair with a perimeter that the other team members must stay outside of while they are throwing cotton balls and Nerf balls. Set a short time limit.

SURVIVAL

Object: To be the last player standing

Preparation: Construct Hot Spot Court (*see Unique Props*).

How to Play: Play begins when a player picks up the ball and throws it to another occupied spot (square) on the court; players may not spike the ball into a spot that borders theirs. A player is out of the game if he drops the ball or throws the ball out of bounds, back up through the wrong spot, or to an unoccupied spot on the court. Before any serve, players may move to a new spot on the court. When the server calls “Lock,” players must stay in the spot where they are until the next serve. The last player standing wins.

See “Hot Spot” for another Small Group Game with the Hot Spot Court.

WATER BALLOON LAUNCH

Supplies: Water balloon launcher, balloons, water.

Object: To catch an unexploded water balloon.

How to Play: The group trying to catch balloons should stand about thirty feet away from the water balloon launcher. Balloons should be launched high into the air not straight at the group.

Variations

1. Make the balloons a variety of different sizes and fill them with random things such as shaving cream.
2. Declare the winner to be the wettest player.

SKITS

CHINHEADS

This skit is best accomplished by going all out with outfits for the chinheads and using a mini-stage that is elevated high enough (e.g., stacked stage risers) for a seated audience to see well.

1. Outfits should include arms, legs, and a full wardrobe with footwear and many details. Headgear can include hair, hat, and plastic white eyes with black pupils, and even glasses (all attached to the hat). Attach a band of elastic to the hat (like a kid's party hat); it will be hidden by the hair.
2. The stage needs to accommodate actors prone on their backs (for three actors, the hidden portion of the stage is about 7' to 8' square).
 - a. A narrow base placed lower than the heads helps avoid the dangling look. (We wedged a piece of plywood between two of the stage risers.) On the base, you can construct a set to match the theme of your chinhead costumes.
 - b. Side curtains are essential.
 - c. A double, front curtain is used to greatest effect. The curtain away from the audience has a slit for each chinhead to fit through, while keeping the actors' bodies concealed. The second curtain, visible to the audience, hides the back curtain and the set; remove it as a great unveiling when the skit begins. Actors get on their costumes then get in place through the back curtain; hiding their entrance helps disassociate the preparation with the skit.
3. Take a classic skit and go EXTREME with it. Chinheads has been done so poorly so many times, that you'll want to avoid the negatives and anything less than awesome.
 - a. Overcome the negative of "They're so small; I can't see!" by performing close in front of a small group OR doing a live feed on a projector screen.
 - b. Overcome the negative of "They're just sitting there not doing anything!" by rehearsing a script OR learning a lip sync and speeding up the recording to sound like chipmunks (e.g., "The Lonely Goatherd" from *The Sound of Music*.)
 - c. Overcome the negative of "It looks like someone upside down with eyes penned on" by completely hiding the rest of the actors' bodies AND/OR going all out with awesome outfits that complete the illusion. The combined illusion of the stage, outfit, and curtains helps the audience forget that real people are backstage.
 - d. Overcome the negative of "It was okay at first, but it got boring!" by making it short. Make the big visual splash and end it while the audience wants more.



CRIME REPORTING

Two less-than-intelligent guys come walking in only to discover a body lying in the middle of the stage.

BOY 1. Hey, what's that over there?

BOY 2. Over where?

BOY 1. Right there?

BOY 2. Oh, you mean that fella sleeping on the sidewalk.

BOY 1. He don't look like he's sleeping to me!

BOY 2. Sure he does. See, he's laying there all quiet like and perfectly still. Not moving a muscle. Why he ain't even breathing.

BOY 1. That's what I'm saying. I don't think he's sleeping. I think he's D-E-D dead.

BOY 2. Well, maybe we should go poke him with a stick.

BOY 1. You don't go around poking dead bodies with a stick.

BOY 2. Well what should we do?

BOY 1. Don't worry, I know exactly what to do. I have seen every episode of Dragnet.

BOY 2. Goody, can I be Wednesday?

BOY 1. It's Friday, you idiot.

BOY 2. No, it's Saturday.

BOY 1. No, the policeman on Dragnet was Friday.

BOY 2. Oh! Well, I'm him. What should we do first?

BOY 1. Well, we start by screamin'.

BOY 2. Screamin'?

BOY 1. Yep, that's the first thing they always did whenever they discovered a dead body.

BOY 2. Well, I'm not screamin'!

BOY 1. You have to. The only ones who never screamed were the ones who did the killin'.

BOY 2. Are you accusing me of killin' this guy?

BOY 1. Did ya?

BOY 2. No!

BOY 1. Then ya gotta scream.

BOY 1 and BOY 2. AAAAAgh!

BOY 2. Now what?

BOY 1. Now we gotta call the police.

BOY 2. What are they gonna do?

BOY 1. Well they're gonna ask us some questions.

BOY 2. But I hate tests.

BOY 1. Not a test, dummy. Questions about the body.

BOY 2. But we don't know this guy.

BOY 1. They're just gonna ask us stuff like, "What happened?"

BOY 2. But we was just walking along and found him lying here.

BOY 1. Then they will ask us where we found him.

BOY 2. Right here.

BOY 1. They will want better directions than that. Let's see, we are on Westchester and Montgomery.

BOY 2. What if they ask us to spell them names?

BOY 1. Then we'll just drag him over to King and Elm to make it easier.

BOY 2. You sure are a good thinker. What happens next?

BOY 1. Well, they'll ask us if we administered Ceepar.

BOY 2. You mean CPR?

BOY 1. I know how to spell it.

BOY 2. But we didn't give him Ceepar.

BOY 1. Well then, that's what we need to do right now.

BOY 2. Alright, go ahead.

BOY 1. I'm not doing it; you have to.

BOY 2. Why do I have to do it?

BOY 1. 'Cause you're more qualified.

BOY 2. Your cousin is a nurse.

BOY 1. Yeah, but you watch all them medical shows.

BOY 2. Alright, but you have to get the next one.

BOY 2 kneels down next to body and says a last-minute prayer before reaching for the nose and leaning over the body. All of a sudden the BODY stirs and sits up. BOY 2 faints. The BODY stands up and walks away.

BODY. Good night! It's getting so bad you can't sleep anywhere these days.

BOY 1. Wake up, man. Wake up!

BOY 2, *sits up and looks at his hands.* It's a miracle!!

BOY 1. No, man. He was only sleeping; it wasn't no miracle.

BOY 2. He was only sleeping? I told ya we should have poked him with a stick.

DYSLEXIC SONG

What a wonderful name Kathy

Y H T A K.

And as I spoke her name one last time Kathy died and went to heaven,

But then without warning she became gravely ill.

We were so happy then.

We had a boy then a girl. Soon we were expecting our first.

Finally, we bought a home then moved into our first apartment.

So off we went on our honeymoon.

Soon she was dressed in white walking down the aisle.

The next day I asked her to marry me.

Y H T A K.

And as we sat and talked the night away, I said, "Is this seat taken?"

"Oh, hello. My name is Paul."

Then she asked me, "What's yours?"

"My name is Kathy with Y and a K."

It was love at first sight. Then I saw her.

All my life I've felt so alone.

It's not dyslexic being easy.

Y H T A K.

GOT ANOTHER QUARTER?

Props: Two folding chairs

This skit is easier for the audience to see if the actors are on a slightly elevated stage.

The skit begins with two actors walking up, deciding who gets to drive, and one taking the reins. They sit down, facing the audience, and begin to bounce up and down, simulating a stagecoach ride. Actors must bounce the entire time, only pausing for dramatic effect. Use background music to help fill in dead air.

Embellish this perennial stagecoach favorite by adding more gags. Anytime you can draw in unique elements from the outside, it increases the appeal by drawing the audience in, making them feel like it's the real thing.

1. Classic gags of faster, slower, up hill, etc.
2. Going through water—actors turn their chairs sideways, lie down, face the audience, and begin synchronized swimming.
3. Go over a bump—actors come off their chairs.
4. Duck when a low branch is coming.
5. Stand on chairs and leap over an even lower branch—when one actor doesn't land on his chair, he begins running in place beside it and has to be pulled back on by the other actor.
6. Make sharp turns—twist chairs at the same time in the same direction.
7. Reach out and grab something as it comes flying by—e.g., Chinese take out.
8. Go through any place that seems impossible for a stagecoach, pantomiming accordingly—e.g., flying over the Grand Canyon, orbiting in outer space, and exploring inner Earth.
9. Go through a jungle—simulate swinging on vines.
10. Go over an icy patch—actors grab their chairs, hold them to their seats, stand up, and spin around; while still standing with, they begin ice skating (again synchronized works well).
11. Go over a big cliff or waterfall—actors stand up with hands in the air and scream; while falling, the actors pause to take pictures of themselves, the scenery, etc., and then resume screaming.

The skit ends well by actors completing the cliff fall into their seats and stopping; the music should be stopped, too.

One actor says to the other “That was fun! Let's do it again!”

The other actor says “Got another quarter?”

THE OLD COUPLE

The skit begins with two people sitting in a car.

OLD WOMAN. Slow down, Harold! You're driving too fast.

OLD MAN. I haven't even started the car yet.

OLD WOMAN. Well, don't start it too fast.

OLD MAN. Just hold on to your teeth and let me drive. *(They drive for a little and man pulls over to get some gas.)*

GAS ATTENDANT. Can I help you?

OLD MAN. Fill'er up.

OLD WOMAN. What'd he say?

OLD MAN. He asked if he could help us.

OLD WOMAN. Well, tell him to fill it up.

OLD MAN. I did tell him to fill it up.

GAS ATTENDANT. Where are you two headed?

OLD MAN. We are on our way to ____ *(can be anywhere)*.

OLD WOMAN. What'd he say?

OLD MAN. He asked us where we were headed.

OLD WOMAN. Well, tell him we are going to _____.

OLD MAN. I did tell him we are going to _____.

GAS ATTENDANT. Where are you two from?

OLD MAN. We are from _____.

OLD WOMAN. What'd he say?

OLD MAN. He asked us where we are from.

OLD WOMAN. Oh, tell him we are from _____.

OLD MAN. I did tell him we are from _____.

GAS ATTENDANT. I used to know a girl from _____. She was dog ugly, though.

OLD MAN. Oh, yeah?

OLD WOMAN. What did he say?

OLD MAN. He said he's met you before.

SKIT TAKES

No props needed.

This is a classic skit idea tweaked to include the impromptu element. Actors perform a short piece of any scenario several times in different ways, with a director yelling “Cut!” and making suggestions for the next take. Controlled spontaneity is accomplished by the actors knowing only a few of the possible take suggestions ahead of time and introducing the scenario mere moments before performing (e.g., ask the audience for a memorable incident from elementary school or kindergarten).

The first take is performed with little instruction from the director. He gives specific suggestions for following takes, hoping for the actors’ improvement. Suggested takes may include the following:

1. Slower—“slo-mo”
2. Faster—“incredibly fast motion”
3. With more feeling—exaggerated emotions
4. With better characters—e.g., the Muppets, Superheroes, and sci-fi
5. Shakespearean
6. Something that flows better—a musical
7. With more energy—cheerleading style

The director for this skit must really be sharp. He’ll be asking for scenarios that he hopes the skit team can make funny, but he must avoid and/or downplay questionable or off-color scenarios suggested by the audience. What has worked really well is to ask for a tragic kindergarten or lower elementary experience (any older and the scenarios can get pretty questionable unless you are very sure of your audience). This also avoids contemporary experience that may unduly embarrass (kindergarten was a pretty long time ago for most of us).

The director will probably need to get a few scenarios before his skit team decides which one they want to perform. When he gets the okay signal from his skit team, he will then ask further questions from the audience member who gave that scenario. This is to give the skit team more material to work with, time to decide what to do, and assign who is playing which part.

The skit’s wow factor is in how well the actors can perform something they heard moments ago, AND the impromptu way they respond to the directors take suggestions.

SPORTSCASTER

SPORTSCASTER. Well, it’s the end of the season for the local football team, and that means its time to look back over the season and see what went wrong and what went right. Here, joining us today is Coach Johnson. Thank you for joining us, Coach J.

COACH: Thank you. I’m very glad to be here.

SPORTSCASTER. Now, Coach, your team finished the season on an eleven-game losing streak. Looking back over that span, can you tell us one thing that caused you to lose so many games?

COACH. Yeah, the score.

SPORTSCASTER. You finished the season by losing 90-0. How do you explain that?

COACH. We confused them with our stifling defense; it could have easily been 190-0.

SPORTSCASTER. Now, is it true that the other team outweighed our boys by an average of 150 pounds?

COACH. Yeah, and that was just the cheerleaders. I do want to thank the other coach for not running up the score too much. In the second half, he put in his fifth string and four members of the marching band.

SPORTSCASTER. Coach, despite your tremendous amount of losing, the morale of your players is really high, how do you achieve that?

COACH. I told them football is like golf, lowest score wins.

SPORTSCASTER. How do you explain to them why they aren't in the playoffs then?

COACH. I buy them all trophies and tell them everyone else is playing for second place.

SPORTSCASTER. Interesting! Can you tell us what you have in store for next season.

COACH. Sure, we are working on a new play called the forward pass. I am very optimistic about next season, because we will start out the season with no losses, I hope.

SPORTSCASTER. Thank you for joining us, Coach J, and good luck next season.

TO JUMP OR NOT TO JUMP

The skit begins with a person (a reporter) with a notepad sitting on top of platform looking dejected. A young person comes in limping and stands next to the reporter.

PERSON 1. What's your problem?

REPORTER. All my life I've wanted to be the world's greatest reporter, and now I have nothing—not even a story. I don't have anything to live for, to be honest I was thinking about jumping out of that window over there.

PERSON 1. I know what you mean. All my life I wanted to be the best running back in the NFL. I just got an ingrown toenail. I'll never play football again. I'll jump with you.

REPORTER. Alright.

The reporter stands, and they both walk to the window.

BOTH. One, two

PERSON 2. What are you guys doing?

REPORTER. I am a reporter without a story, and he's a running back who can't run. We have no reason for living, so we were both about to jump out this window.

PERSON 2. You think that you have it bad? I'm a comedian, and I couldn't get a hyena to laugh at me. I might as well jump, too.

ALL. One, two

PERSON 3. What's going on here?

REPORTER. He's comedian who can't get a laugh, he's a running back who will never run again, and I am a reporter without a story. We have nothing to live for, and we were all about to jump out of that window.

PERSON 3. Well, wait for me. I was going to be the first person to eat ice cream in every country in the world, and I just found out I am lactose intolerant. I'm jumping, too.

ALL. One, two, three (*PERSON 1, PERSON 2, and PERSON 3 jump; the reporter steps back and begins to write on his note pad.*)

REPORTER. Now I have a story!

VENDING MACHINE PUNKS

Props: a handful of coins, two packaged snacks, a dollar bill

The skit begins with four "vending machines" on stage, each holding up a hand as the coin/dollar slot (except SNACKY, whose shirt pocket will be used as the slot)—a Coke machine (COKEY), snack machine (SNACKY), coffee machine (COFFEE), and a change machine (CHANGEY). SNACKY has a snack in each hand and has them hidden behind his back. CHANGEY has a handful of coins.

COKEY. So I said to the guy, "I'm outta order? No, you're out of order!"

CHANGEY. So what'd say he back to you?

COKEY. Come on! What's a guy gonna say after a thing like that?

SILENT MAN walks up rubbing his eyes and yawning.

SNACKY. Wait a minute. Here comes somebody.

COFFEE. Hey, Cokey, what time is it?

COKEY. 3:04 a.m.

SNACKY. What is this guy doing here it three in the morning?

SILENT MAN pulls out a dollar bill and looks at the machines, deciding what he wants.

COKEY. I think I know what he wants—coffee, hot cocoa.

CHANGEY. Dude, you gotta keep his change.

ALL MACHINES. Yeah, keep it, you gotta keep it, *etc.*

COFFEE. Here we go.

SILENT MAN puts a dollar in the slot; COFFEE makes noise as he takes in the dollar (wads it up in the hand he's using as the coin/dollar slot).

COFFEE. Okay, watch this! *(He makes a noise, un-wads the dollar in his hand, and lets the dollar drop to the floor.)*

All the machines laugh.

COKEY. Hey, what's he doin' now?

SILENT MAN picks up the dollar and rubs it on COFFEE'S head.

COFFEE. He's trying the bill rub!

SNACKY. Like that ever works.

COFFEE. Here we go again.

SILENT MAN puts a dollar in the slot; COFFEE makes noise as he takes in the dollar.

COFFEE. I got it. Watch this! Don't burn your mouth on this piping hot cup of NOTHING!

All the machines laugh.

COFFEE. Wait, wait, watch this! *(He makes a noise, un-wads the dollar in his hand, and lets the dollar drop to the floor.)*

SILENT MAN walks toward COKEY.

SNACKY. Hey, Cokey, he's coming your way, man.

COKEY. I hope he doesn't bring me that dollar!

ALL MACHINES. Keep his money, keep his change, etc.

SILENT MAN puts change in the slot (hand) on COKEY and presses a button.

COKEY. Diet Sprite? Perhaps you'd enjoy the clear refreshing taste of NOTHING!

SILENT MAN tries coin return button.

COKEY. The coin return? Like that's even connected!

SILENT MAN pushes COKEY.

COKEY. Oh ho, big man, huh?

SNACKY. Wait a minute! That means all he has is that ratty dollar bill!

COKEY. You know what that means.

COFFEE. He's coming to you, Changey.

COKEY, COFFEE, AND SNACKY. Yeah! *(All chant.)* Change, change, change,

CHANGEY drops his handful of change.

COKEY, COFFEE, AND SNACKY, *all three act disappointed.* Aww, man.

CHANGEY, *acts embarrassed.* Sorry, guys. I got nervous.

SILENT MAN picks up the change and walks toward SNACKY.

COFFEE. He's headed to you, Snacky!

SNACKY. Time to watch the master at work.

COKEY, COFFEE, AND CHANGEY. Yeah get 'em, man; take his money; *etc.*

SILENT MAN puts a change in the slot (shirt pocket) on SNACKY and presses a button.

SNACKY. Oh, good selection! Here it comes . . . it's very nice . . . it's (*SNACKY partially raises one of his hands with a snack in it from behind his back and stops abruptly*) STUCK!

All the machines laugh riotously.

SILENT MAN grabs SNACKY and shakes him.

SNACKY. Hey! What are ya doin'?

COFFEE. Don't shake the machine!

SILENT MAN pulls SNACKY over, and SNACKY drops both snacks. SILENT MAN grabs both snacks and runs off.

All the machines are silent for a brief moment.

COFFEE, *mournfully.* SNACKY!!

STUNTS

I RECKON

This is a good stunt to use with a crowd. Pick a person, usually a youth leader or guest speaker. Use questions like the ones below, and ask the teens to guess which choice they reckon the person would choose. They do this by raising their hands and an appropriate amount of fingers for their answers. Give the teens up to thirty seconds to think about it, and then ask them to finalize their answers. The person will then tell what his choice would be; the teens that do not have that number of fingers raised is out of the game. It continues in this manner until there is only one teen left, who is then the winner.

If he had to give up a food, what would be the hardest?

1. Chocolate cake
2. Carrots
3. Cookie dough ice cream
4. Steak
5. French fries

If he were a power source, what would he be?

1. Wind
2. Gerbil wheel
3. Horse
4. Coal
5. Steam

If he had to pick a job for the rest of his life, what would it be?

1. Astronaut
2. Firefighter
3. Doctor
4. Trash man
5. Waiter

If he were a part of a computer, which would he be?

1. Monitor
2. Graphics card
3. Floppy disk
4. Microprocessor
5. <ESC> key

If he were a display of friendship, which would he be?

1. Big ol' bear hug
2. Pretty wink
3. Lumberjack slap on the back
4. Manly handshake
5. Big kiss

If he worked at Wal-Mart, what would he do?

1. Greeter
2. Cashier
3. Stock the shelves
4. Customer service
5. Collect shopping carts

If he were a type of dog, what type would he be?

1. A yippy dog
2. A loud dog
3. A large dog
4. A small dog
5. A shy dog

If he were a flying object, which would he be?

1. Kite
2. Frisbee
3. Hang glider
4. Cowboy hat
5. Neighbor's cat

If he were a letter of the alphabet, what letter would he be?

1. *a*
2. *x*
3. *s*
4. *i*
5. *j*

If he were a position on a football team, which would he be?

1. Tight end
2. Safety
3. Punter
4. Quarterback
5. Bench warmer

If he were a floating vessel, which would he be?

1. Gondola
2. Speedboat
3. River raft
4. Canoe
5. Fishing boat

If he were a Olympic event, which would he be?

1. Figure skating
2. Ping-Pong
3. 100-meter dash
4. Shot put
5. Beach volleyball

If he accidentally backed over the neighbor's dog, which would he do?

1. Bury it and say nothing
2. Confess
3. Blame the neighbor for inadequate dog control
4. Place it on the road and say nothing
5. Run it over again to make sure it was dead

If he found a piece of hair in his entrée, what would he do?

1. Remove the hair and keep eating
2. Ask for a replacement entrée
3. Simply set the meal aside and say he is not hungry
4. Gag
5. Storm out of the restaurant after giving the manager a tongue-lashing

If he could enjoy a day in the snow, what would he do?

1. Go ice fishing
2. Make the world's largest snowman
3. Hit the slopes
4. Go head-to-head in a giant snowball fight
5. Smash the world's largest snowman

If he were a special vehicle, which would he be?

1. Ice cream truck
2. Wagon
3. Horse
4. Tank
5. Parade float

If he was given \$1.5 million, what would he do?

1. Retire
2. Go on vacation to Hawaii for a year
3. Spend it all on games
4. Save it
5. Bury it and make a map so he could remember where it is

If he were a motto, which would he be?

1. "Put the pedal to the metal."
2. "Stop and smell the roses."
3. "Better safe than sorry."
4. "Love makes the world go round."
5. "Do as I say not as I do."

If he could have a super power, which would he choose?

1. Ability to fly
2. Ability to talk to animals
3. Superhuman strength
4. Disappear
5. Mind reading

If he had to eat a plate of vegetables, what would he choose?

1. Egg plant
2. Asparagus
3. Broccoli
4. Celery
5. Green beans

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

Supplies

1. Two cans of soda
2. Two lighters
3. Two candles
4. Two chairs

Object: Be the first player to finish drinking his soda.

How to Play: Set the chairs facing each other so that when the players sit their knees are about an inch or two apart. What makes this fun is that the players are juggling three items. Each player starts with a candle in one hand, a lighter in the other hand, and the can of soda on the floor beside him.

Players may only drink when their candle is lit. Each player tries to blow out his opponent's candle while trying to drink the soda and keep his own candle lit at the same time. Players may not stand or get out of their chairs during the competition.

Tips and Tricks

1. Make sure players know the rules of the game before hand.
2. If the players are not blowing out each other's candles and just drinking, you can blow out their candles just to keep things interesting.

TEAM BUILDERS

GRIDLOCK

This team-building activity illustrates the benefits of experience, foresight, evaluation, and training. The simplicity of the puzzle may surprise you.

Divide into groups of ten and give each group a small carpet square (paper plates, pieces of paper, or squares of tape on the floor will work just as well) for each member plus one. The groups should be far enough apart that they will benefit from their own process and struggle without borrowing ideas from the other groups. Have each of the groups arrange their carpet squares in a straight line. Everyone in the group should stand on a square and face the middle, where the extra square is. The objective is to have the people from each half of the line move to the other half.



How to Play

1. A person may move into an empty space in front of him.
2. A person may move around one person facing him if this moves him into an empty space.
3. A person may never move backwards.
4. A person must remain facing the same direction that he started.
5. A person may never move around someone who is facing the same direction as he is.

Your groups may ask for paper and pencil to try to visualize the solution, or they may want to step off the squares to see the whole picture. You may want to allow paper and pencil but require them to stay on their squares. If your groups begin to get frustrated enough to stop trying, you can allow a time out that gives them a chance to circle up and brainstorm or discuss the process a bit. You may want to give them the hint that each point of decision has two choices—ask them to discuss the pros and cons of each choice, allowing a one-time correction backwards if they decide that a choice was not the best.

Tips and Tricks

If the group succeeds with time to spare, try these variations.

1. With everyone in new positions (they completed the original objective), have them about-face and repeat the objective.
2. If they succeed a second time (from the opposite side), time the groups.
3. Repeat the objective without speaking.
4. Have them try to do the objective while holding their breath.

YOUTH CRASHER NIGHT

Contact the youth leader of the youth group that you would like to crash. Let him know you would like to crash on a certain date, and ask if that would be alright with him and his pastor. If yes, let him know how many teens will be attending.

For the youth group you are crashing, it should be a regular youth meeting with the exception of a good group of visitors. Find out what time their meeting starts so that you can plan to leave appropriately from your church. The other youth leader should keep it a secret so that his youth group will not know that your group is coming.

Your group should not know that you are in cahoots with the other youth leader. Announce to your youth group that on an upcoming, regular youth meeting night, you will be crashing another church's youth group. You could plan to have shirts made with your youth group logo on it to be worn the night of the crash.

Be sure to communicate with the teen parents that you will be attending another youth group on that particular night. They need to know that you will be returning later than on a regular youth night.

This is a great tool for both youth groups to learn about friendliness, meeting and greeting visitors, and what both groups may or may not have in common. Use this to teach about how others may feel when visitors come to your youth meetings.

UNIQUE PROPS

BALLOON PUMP

By Bryan Miller



This pump is designed for blowing up balloon-animal type balloons quickly and easily. The material used to build this cost about \$40 (similar pumps sell for about \$200). You really only need something like this if you need to make a lot of balloons quickly. It will fully inflate a “260” balloon in one quick pump. Also, because you only need one hand to pump (rather than the two needed for the normal hand pumps) you can use your second hand to control the balloon as it is inflated—stretching it, curling it, or pinching it off at a specific spot you do not want to inflate past.

If you are not going to be doing a lot of balloon work, I would recommend a two-way hand pump. You can find my favorite (QUALATEX 2-WAY HAND PUMP) at www.tmyers.com.

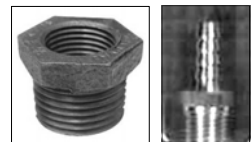
Supplies

PVC can be replaced with ABS if it is more readily available

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. ~3' of 3" PVC pipe | 9. 3/4" to 1/4" brass bushing |
| 2. ~3' of 4" PVC pipe | 10. 1/4" brass hose barb |
| 3. 3" PVC Cap | 11. PVC cement |
| 4. 4" PVC Cap | 12. Screws |
| 5. 3" PVC Coupler | 13. 2"x 2" piece of rubber |
| 6. Closet Flange 3X4 PVC | 14. lubricant (Breakfree gun lubricant works well) |
| 7. 3/4" plywood ~18" x 18" | 15. Teflon tape (optional) |
| 8. 4" OD O-ring approx 1/4" thick | |



Flange



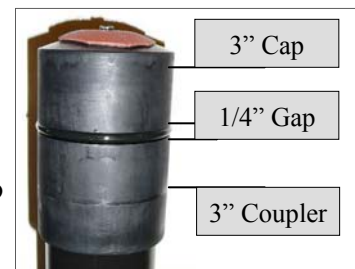
Bushing Hose Barb



Assembling the Pump

The pump is built in two parts: 1) the tube (on the left in the picture) which slides up and down on top of 2) the plunger (on the right in the picture). What makes this work is the fact that the cap and coupling for the 3" pipe will just fit into the inside of a 4" pipe. When purchasing the cap and coupling, make sure they easily slide inside your 4" pipe. Sometimes there are burrs, bumps or other imperfections from the manufacturing process. These can be sanded off (I had to do that on mine), but it is better if they come without them.

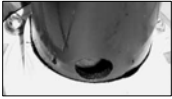
Start by cutting a piece of the 3" pipe to about 3-4". Glue the 3" cap and the 3" coupler to either end of this small piece leaving a gap just larger than 1/4". Dry fit this and make sure the o-ring fits in this gap. (The o-ring is what will come in contact with the inner wall of the tube and form the air-tight seal.) This piece will be mounted on the top of the 3" pipe to form the top of the plunger. The bottom will be glued into the closet flange which is used to mount the plunger to the plywood base. Cut the remaining 3" PVC so that the entire plunger assembly (top-pipe-base) measures about 30" tall. Glue the assembly together.



We now need to add a release mechanism to the plunger in the form of a rubber flap that will allow air in through holes when the tube is lifted but will close when the tube is pushed down. The purpose of this is to make the tube easier to lift before pumping.

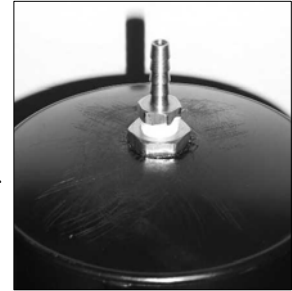


Drill four, roughly 3/8" holes in the top of the 3" cap about 1/4" from the center. Make sure that the piece of rubber you have will cover the holes. Drill a pilot hole in the center for the screw that will attach the rubber piece. (I cut a piece out of a cheap, old rubber ball to use for this flap.)



Next drill a 1" hole near the base of the plunger. This is the intake for the air release. Mount the plunger to the plywood base if you have not already.

For the outer tube, first drill a hole in the center of the 4" cap just smaller than the bushing. (It is better to start with a hole too small and have to drill bigger than to go too big and have to go back and use plumbers putty to get a good seal.) Screw the bushing into the hole you drilled. Then, screw the barbed fitting into the bushing (use Teflon tape if desired). Cut the 4" PVC pipe to 32" or so—you want it to be slightly taller than the plunger. Before gluing the cap on the pipe, clean the inside of the pipe to remove any dust or particles—the inside wall needs to be smooth. Glue the cap in place. Place the o-ring in the gap and lubricate. Place the tube over the plunger to complete the pump.



THE DUNK SHOWER

By Bryan Miller

I wanted to do a do some sort of dunk tank for our annual family fun night, but there were some problems. They are expensive to rent; they take a LOT of water to fill; the dunking mechanism does not always work well; and for safety reasons, sometimes restrictions on weight, height, and age are placed on the dunkees. So, I built a Dunk Shower in which the dunkee sits in a booth and is soaked with showering water when the target is hit. I was able to build this for about half of what it would cost to rent a dunk tank, and it was a huge hit!

The basic idea is to be able to hook this up via a standard garden hose to a water outlet. The target contains a valve to stop the water flow but releases when the target is hit. This releases the water to a shower head placed above the dunkee's head.

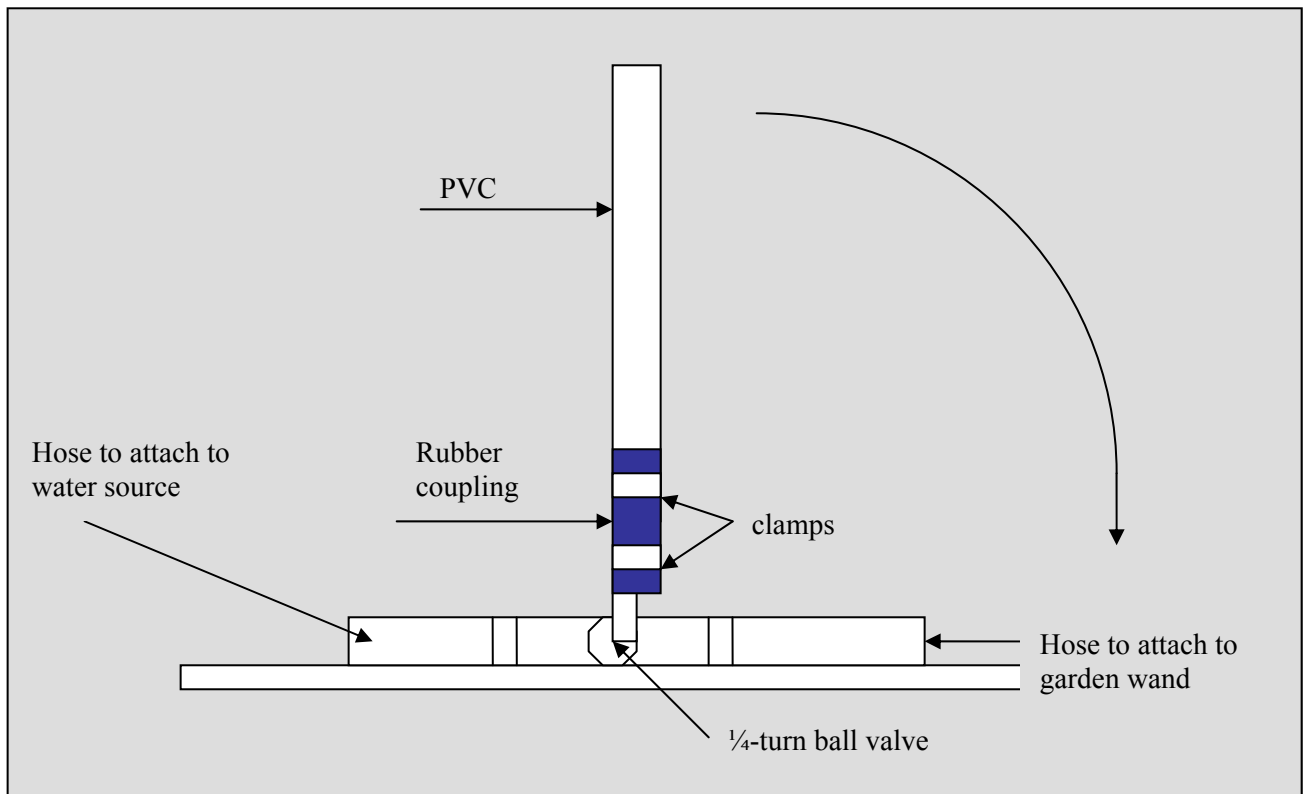
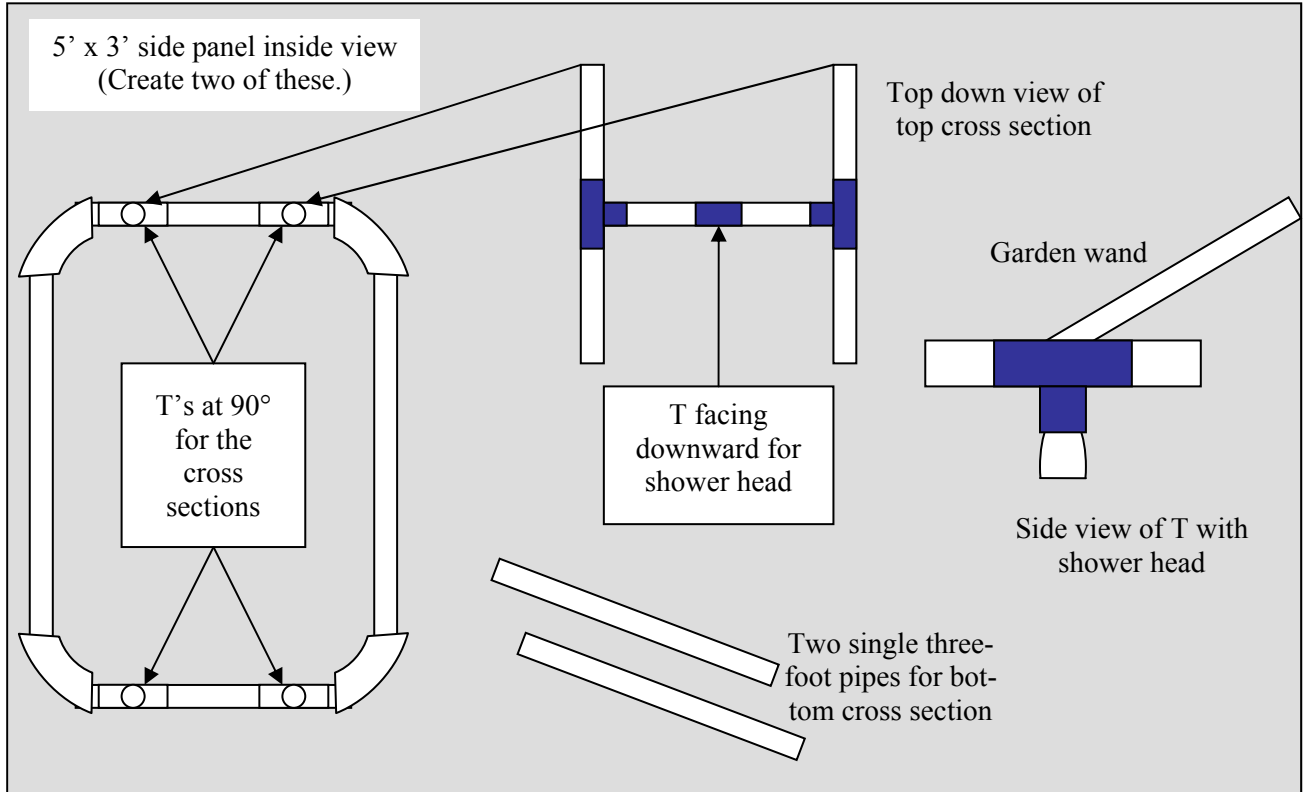
The Booth and Shower Head

I built the booth out of 1 1/4" PVC pipe. Eight elbows, eleven T's, and five 10-foot sections of pipe were used. The finished booth measures approximately 5' high x 3' long x 3' wide. Basically, you have two side sections (5' x 3' rectangles) with two three-foot cross sections connecting the top of the two rectangles, and two connecting the bottom. The top cross section has a bar across the two pipes with a downward facing T that holds the shower head.

The cheapest (and most convenient) shower head was actually a garden wand. It was only \$5 and had several different spray settings. The head unscrewed from the pipe of the wand. I drilled a hole in the top of the T the size of the pipe from the wand, pushed the wand through and screwed the head back on for a snug fit. For decoration, I hung two clear shower curtains around three sides of the booth.

Target and Valve

I was fortunate to find a toy called a dunk seat designed to be a kiddie sprinkler or slip-and-slide type game that had a cool target/valve that I used. (This toy was actually the inspiration for the shower, but I built another valve/target just so I could explain how to do it in the Brain—boy, I must really love you guys.) What you are looking for is a 1/4-turn ball valve. The best one I found was in the garden section at Home Depot. It was designed to be a hose coupler with a shut-off valve. This worked perfectly, because I did not need to



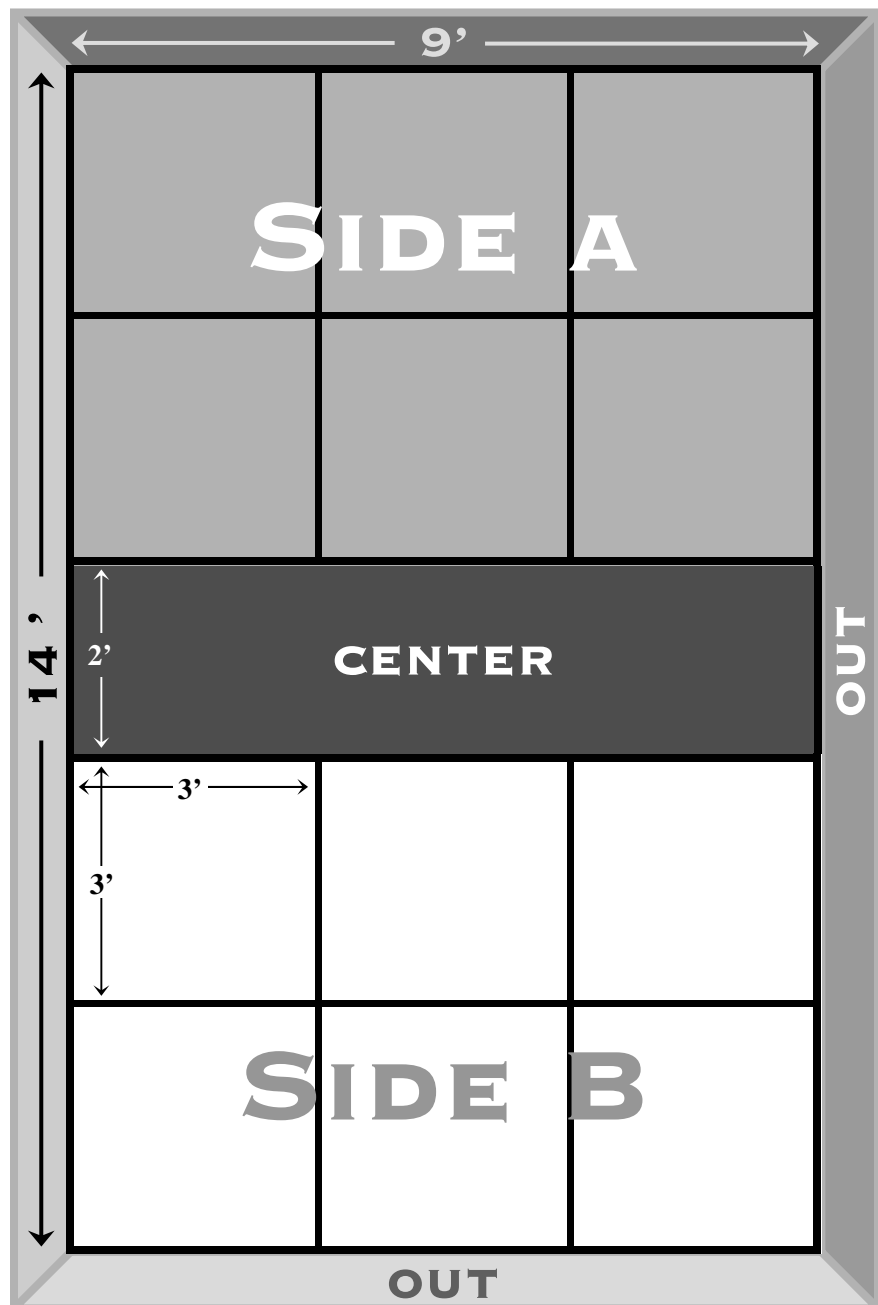
buy extra fittings to attach the garden hoses I wanted to use—it was already designed for this (most of the valves I found in plumbing were too stiff). On the garden coupler, the valve handle was sturdy (needed to support the rest of the target), and the valve opened and closed quite easily. I screwed the valve coupler to a board using two brackets. The valve handle was straight up in the air when in the closed position, and lying flat (parallel with the board) when open. I attached a 2½' PVC pipe (½" works well) to the handle. I used a rubber coupler with some clamps to attach the pipe. A number of things could be attached to the top of the PVC pipe to act as the target, but I found that a plastic dust pan (yes, the kind you use with a broom) works well. So, what you end up with is an arm sticking straight up, perpendicular to the board, with a target on top when the valve is in the closed position. When the target is hit, the arm falls down opening the valve and drenching your victim in water. The target really only needs a nudge, and the weight of the arm does the rest in falling over.

HOT SPOT COURT

The idea of this 9' x 14' playing court is four square meets volleyball. It is divided into six 3' x 3' squares on each side with a two-foot center divider made of nylon material. (The one we constructed of webbing with a nylon divider cost less than \$50.) Attached cords to poles to suspend the court at a height of 7½ feet (we found it beneficial to raise the height of the court by twelve to eighteen inches to accommodate taller players). You can also construct this court out of rope tied together. Options for the center include leaving it empty or crisscrossing a cord between the two sides to make a surface in the middle for the ball to bounce off of.

The games of Hot Spot, Survival, and ball tossing relay games are played on this court.

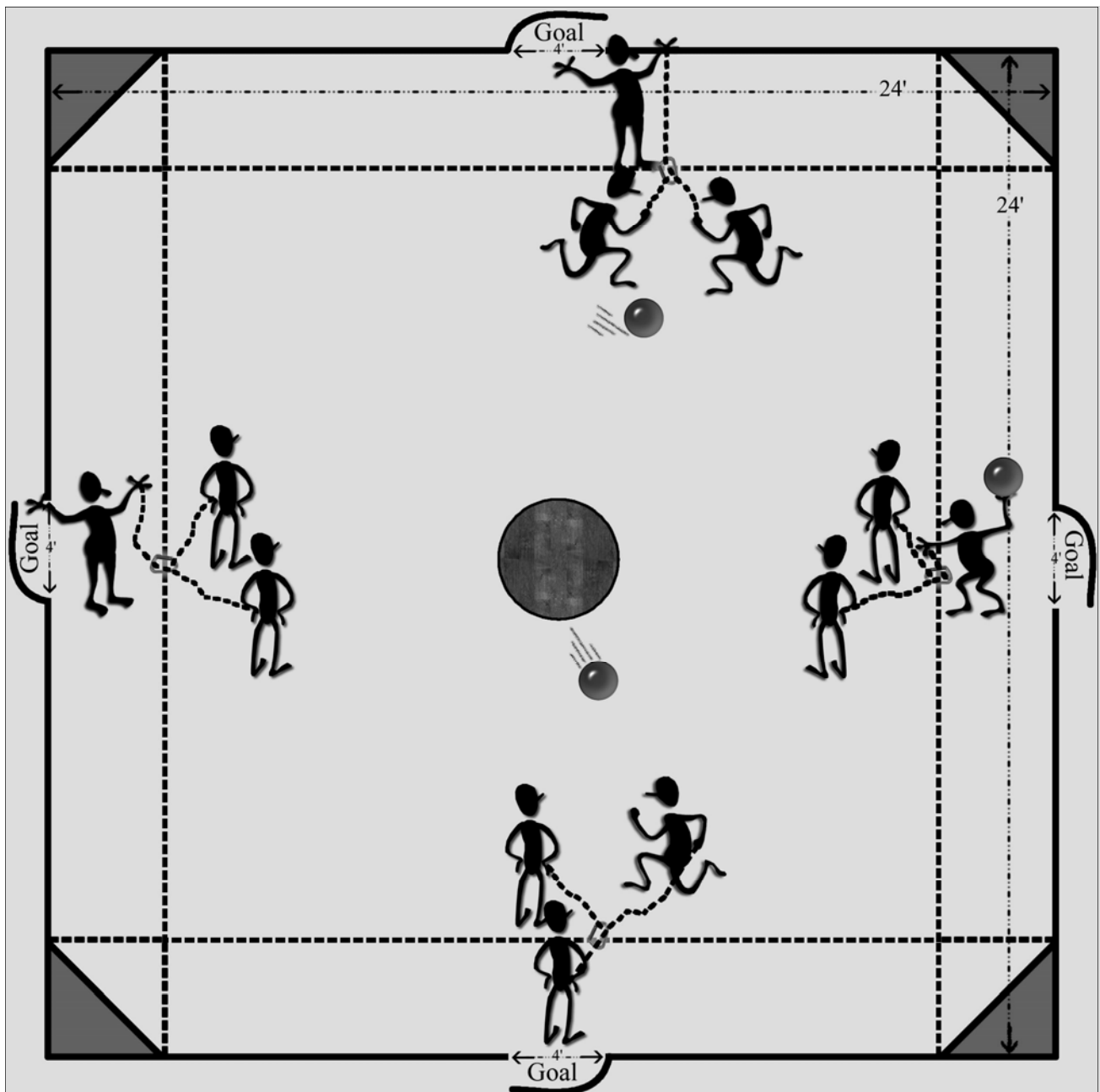
See Small Group Games for instructions for Hot Spot and Survival.



RICOCHE COURT

The Ricochet Court is 24' x 24' x 4'. Sides of the court were made with 4' x 8' sheets of plywood on a 2' x 4' framed wall with a 2' x 6' rail on the top. Each side has an opening in the middle for a goal. A piece of sheet metal works well for the backstop; it stops the ball and makes it obvious when a team has been scored on. The corner pieces (30" x 4' sheet of plywood angled across each corner and capped off) and the barrel in the middle of the court add to the ricochet effect. Donated railroad ties were used for strong corner supports.

The nylon straps (dotted lines in the diagram below) are attached to the side walls by eye bolts. (Each team has three straps attached to a carabiner which is clipped on to the long straps running from wall to wall, allowing the team to move as a unit up and down their side; the goalie's strap is 12", and the two forwards'

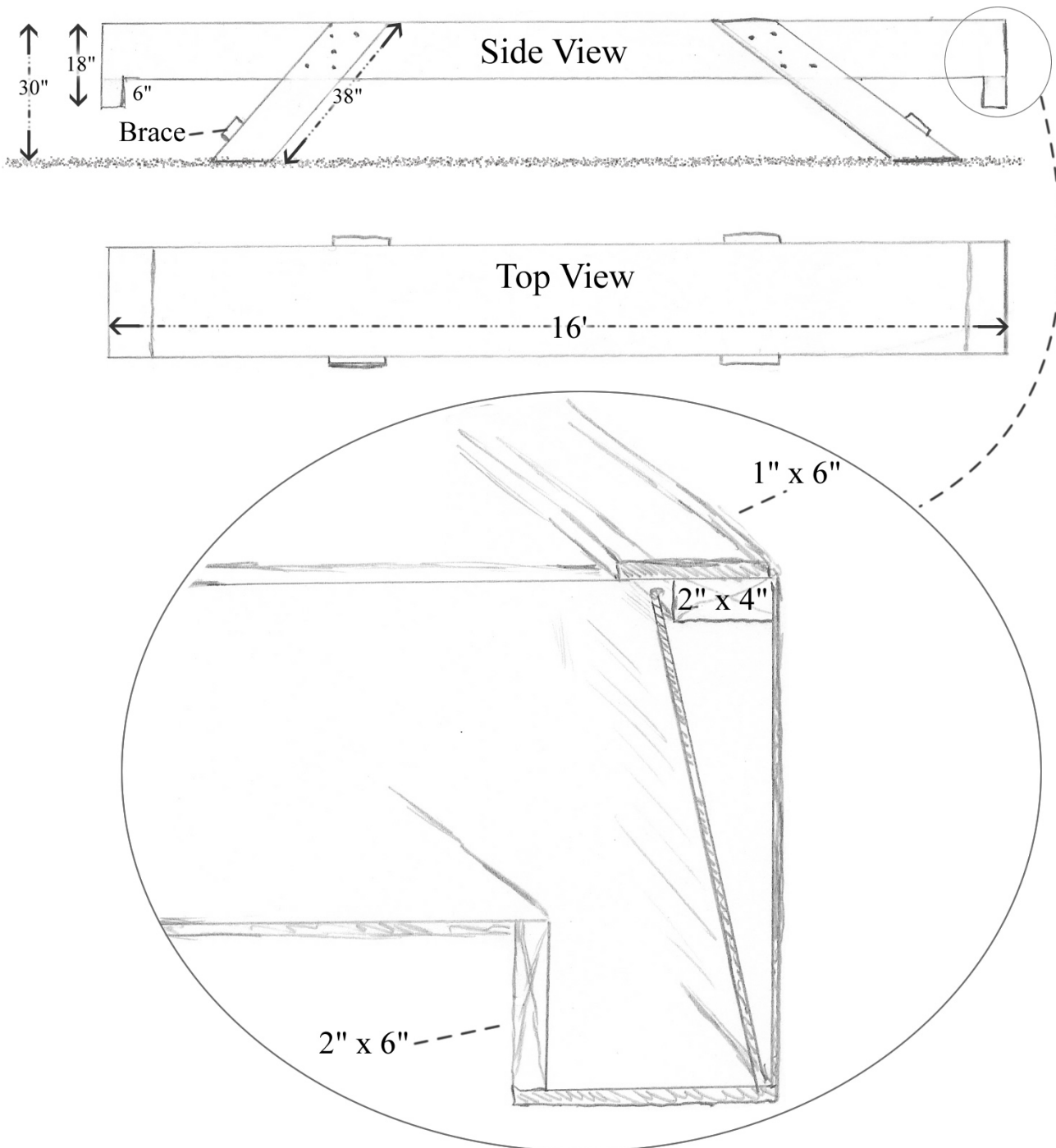


straps are 24". Each strap has a loop on the end that the player must hold on to during play.) The total cost of construction, including nails and screws, was under \$400.

See *Small Group Games* for instructions to play Ricochet.

ROCKETBALL TABLE

See *Small Group Games* for instructions to play Rocketball.



SLIME

Ingredients

1. Elmer's glue (or any standard white school glue)
2. Water
3. 20 Mule Team Borax (found in laundry section of grocery store)
4. Food coloring or craft paint for color
5. Clear plastic cups
6. Plastic bowls (salad size works well)
7. Popsicle sticks or plastic utensils for stirring
8. Ziploc bags for storage

Directions for One Unit

1. Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of glue with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water in a plastic cup and stir until the water is mixed in well.
2. Add coloring and stir.
3. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of Borax to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water in the plastic bowl and stir until the Borax dissolves.
4. Pour the glue solution into the Borax solution. A reaction instantly takes place.
5. Reach both hands into the bowl, pull out the slimy solution, and begin to knead the slime.

The slime will seem too runny at first, but after just a few seconds of kneading the slime firms up to a just-right consistency.

Directions for a Large Group: Pre-mix the glue and Borax solutions in five-gallon paint buckets. (You can buy gallon jugs of glue at craft shops or online from Oriental Trading Company—www.orientaltrading.com.) Mix one gallon of glue with one gallon of water, then portion it out with a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup measure. Mix the Borax in another five-gallon bucket in a ration of $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of Borax to one gallon of water. Portion it out with a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup measure.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

Mad Scientist Theme

Use glow-in-the-dark craft paint to color the slime. Set several black lights in a dark room; the black lights will light up the scientists' lab coats as well as the white glue and glow paint. A fun and a memorable experience for youth.

Flatulation Celebration—Gross Warning: Read on at your own risk.

Novelty stores sell an item called a windbreaker. It is simply a cup with slime in it. When the slime is pressed toward the bottom of the cup, the air trapped under the slime escapes with a shockingly realistic flatulent sound. Have the young people make their own slime then have competitions such as longest sound, loudest sound, most realistic, and most creative. Have groups work together on skits and songs; award prizes accordingly.

Slime Wars

Play a capture-the-flag type game where players are trying to deposit as much of their team's slime as possible in five-gallon bucket(s) in the enemy territory. Set up a slime factory for each team at the back of the field with people producing more and more of their team's colored slime. At the end of a given time period, the team with the most slime in the enemy bucket(s) wins.

SMOKE, SPARKS, AND FIRE

WARNING: The following information regarding Smoke, Sparks, and Fire contains instructions on some basic pyrotechnics. Use these instructions for the intended purposes and **NOTHING** else. Also, be careful! There is a risk of fire hazard and possibility of injury to self and others. Please use discernment and read all warnings on chemicals being used.

SMOKE APPARATUS (A.K.A. SMOKE BOMBS)

When you're at a campfire, you usually try to get away from the smoke. However, when it is smoke with a purpose, it's fun! A rather inexpensive and fun way to use smoke is with a "smoke bomb." The easiest instructions for this at www.instructables.com.

Supplies

1. Sugar
2. Saltpetre
3. Aluminum foil
4. Scale (a food scale would work)
5. Stirring stick (not plastic)
6. Outdoor flame (e.g., grill or camping stove)



Instructions: Mix saltpetre (available online from www.americarx.com) and sugar in a 3:2 ratio. (I started with the recommended 30 grams of saltpetre and 20 grams sugar and suggest that you do the same until you are comfortable using it). The more you use, the longer and hotter—and more dangerous—it burns.

Pour the mix into a pan—a self-made aluminum foil pan (finished size about 8" x 4") works best so that you don't destroy a decent pan (fold in half a piece of heavy duty aluminum foil, then fold it in half a second then third time, then fold up the edges as pictured).

Cook over a flame *outside*: there is the potential of igniting the mixture and producing smoke before you intend to. You can set the aluminum foil pan on a grill or on a camping stove. Stir the mixture as it cooks so that it does not burn.

When the mix looks like caramel and has a similar consistency, it is done! You can scrape it into small balls or pour it into a cardboard tube (e.g., toilet paper roll tube) lined with a couple sheets of foil (everything burns in this one, but it worked).

Make sure to have a wick or something to light (e.g., fuse, toilet paper, or a curl of the solution left over the top after you have poured it into the tube). The mixture will harden as it cools, so put your wick in while it is still warm.

Back away when you light it, as it is *very* hot and the flame's direction is not always predictable.

Applications

1. Sugar and saltpetre are substances that have good uses; however, if used in a certain way, they can have bad results—use talents wisely; don't get mixed up with the wrong crowd.
2. Where there's smoke, there's fire—outward actions can be an indicator of problems in the heart.
3. Sugar melts, but it needs an oxidizer to burn and produce smoke—it is important to work together.

SWINGING SPARKLERS

Sparklers can be fun, but they're usually a side show and not the main attraction. However, the following inexpensive and simply made sparkler can draw quite a crowd.

Supplies

1. Fine steel wool
2. Wire or string that will not burn—at least three feet long
3. Metal binder clip (medium size works well)

Instructions: Clamp your binder clip to the steel wool securely: you don't want it to separate while the wool is spinning. Attach the clamp to the wire or string securely. Light the steel wool (it will not have a flame, but you will see the metal start to burn by the red color) and begin to spin it on the wire. Spinning allows it to burn faster. *Be careful!* The sparks coming off are burning metal.

Applications

1. Keep spinning, and it will keep burning brightly—a Christian should continue serving and not stagnate.
2. A spinning, burning object attracts attention—let your light so shine (Matthew 5:14–16).

FIRE ON WATER

“Stop playing with matches!” “Don't burn that!” These are phrases that most of us have heard before. When you go to a restaurant with a candle on the table, something (or someone) almost invariably ends up getting burned. Let's face it. Most of us are captivated by fire—whether it's a small match or a roaring bonfire.

Supplies

1. Coleman fuel
2. Water
3. Fireproof container (a #10 can works well)
4. Matches

Instructions: Depending on your application at the end, you can either start with about one cup of fuel in the bottom of the container or add it as you begin your illustration. As you add water, do not fill the can past $\frac{3}{4}$ full: you do not want the flame to overflow. The fuel will rise to the top as you pour the water. Light a match and drop it in. Make sure that you are clear, because it ignites quickly and with a good-sized flame.

Applications

1. It only takes a little fuel to ignite—a “little” sin is still sin.
2. Kerosene looks like water—God sees the heart.

