

Philosophy of Youth Ministry for Community Baptist Church

What is the goal of Community Baptist Church's Youth Ministry?

Romans 13:11-14 tells us that it is now high time to awake out of sleep. This was written to the Christians who were living during the time of the Apostle Paul. Today these words are even more invaluable. Daniel 12:4 speaks about the end times, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Certainly when Christians look around them today they see that people are running to and fro! Everyone today seems to know something about everything. This reminds us of the men of Athens who spent their time to tell or hear of some new thing. II Timothy 3:1-5 reminds us that there will come perilous times upon the face of the earth. Those perilous times are here. It is high time to awake out of sleep in regards to working with the lives of the next generation!

Satan is currently working overtime to try to capture the minds and hearts of the next generation. If he succeeds, there will no longer be the church. Once the current generation passes will there be pastors, evangelists, and missionaries? Will there be church members, deacons, and Sunday school teachers? Satan always hunts the precious life! We believe that Satan desires to get ahold of the youth and sift them as wheat. He is using the world and all that it has to offer to gain an advantage and a foothold in these young lives.

Ultimate responsibility of raising the next generation for the Lord is laid upon the parents. They have been blessed with these children by the Lord. They are His heritage. (Psalm 127) It is the parent's obligation to bring up their own children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4) Parents are given the ultimate responsibility of raising their children in the fear of the Lord.

There is an age group within the church that encompasses the teenagers. Many people believe that this is a separate age group that needs their own program and that a Youth Pastor is there to guide them in their spiritual condition. This is only a partially true statement. We recognize that the teenagers are their own age group, but they are not a counter-culture in the church. They are just as much a group as are the adults. Galatians 3:28 teaches us that believers are all one in Christ Jesus. Paul taught this to Jewish believers who were considered adults at age thirteen. Too many "youth programs" focus in on today's idea of what a teenager should be. This is why many youth programs

Philosophy of Youth Ministry for Community Baptist Church

are nothing more than an entertainment focused organization. What you win someone with you will have to keep them with. Many young people leave the youth group and enter out into the main service where they no longer find the “fun and games” or the bigger and better activities each month. Many then leave the church and head off to find this type of philosophy in weaker, non-denominational, neo-evangelical churches. Here at CBC, we do not desire to cater to this philosophy. Much more must, and should be expected from our young people. If we expect nothing, we will get nothing! A teenager is merely a young person that is growing up and heading down the path to being an adult. We must not think that all that he needs is the biggest and best activity that we can provide. To the contrary, the young person needs the sound preaching of the Word of God. He needs to be taught to walk with God when he is young, love God with all of his heart, need God’s Word for himself, learn not to grieve and quench the Spirit of God, realize that church is not just something that we do, and to realize that they are the next leaders of the church. Youth programs around the United States have fallen prey to pragmatism and to the American mindset of what a teenager is.

So what *should* a youth program be like? Are we saying that teenagers should never have fun activities? Absolutely not! Christianity is fun! Serving Christ is fun! Here we find satisfaction and happiness. True joy is never found in the world. Having fun activities should be an integral part of a church’s ministry to young people. They need this outlet to invite their friends and to have a fun time together but this should not eclipse the fact that they are young *adults*. They are positively some of the smartest people that you will meet. They can memorize five times better than most adults! The New Testament drives home the Youth philosophy for the church. I Timothy 3:15 speaks of knowing how to behave in the house of God. I Timothy 4:12 preaches loud and clear that the teenager’s youth is not to be despised. He is to be an example among other Christians. Too many Christians let teenagers “off the hook” by excusing worldliness or immaturity by just saying, “Well, he is a teenager, what can you expect?” My friend, this is contrary to the Scriptures. He is to be an example of what a Christian should be. His words should be above reproach, his testimony ought to be strong, and his love for God and others ought to be hot. He also should have a wonderful attitude about the things of the Lord, be strong in his faith, and he ought to be pure in what he allows in his mind and heart. I Timothy 6:11-12 speaks of fleeing materialism, worldliness, and sinfulness. The young person is to follow after righteousness,

Philosophy of Youth Ministry for Community Baptist Church

godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. The young person is to fight the fight! There is the battle for the teen's heart and soul in which Satan, the world, and the flesh will not rest. II Timothy 2:22 tells the teenager to flee the lusts of youth. There are many foolish and hurtful lusts desired today. The young person must watch out for all that could harm him through the eye, ear, and heart gates! He must follow righteousness, faith, charity, and peace. These things will not happen in the life of the teenager by accident and they will not be produced by having bigger and better activities. They will only be produced by the strong preaching of the Word of God. II Timothy 4:1-2 says, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." It is only the Word of God that will make a difference in the life of the young person. In II Timothy 3:15-17 the Bible says, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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." God's Word has the answer for all of the problems that teenagers face. Teenagers must learn the Word of God but this should be a continuation from his childhood. The Scriptures will bring salvation and spiritual maturity as they are faithfully preached to the young person. The preacher must preach with passion the messages that the Lord lays on his heart. He is a spiritual watchman! Someone needs to sound the alarm and cry after righteousness in these days!

The youth pastor or preacher is not a solve-it-all for the spiritual needs of the teenager. He is there to *come underneath* and *support* the role of the parents as they raise their child for the Lord. He is an under shepherd. The shepherd can lead the sheep to a pasture of green grass, but unless the sheep has been taught to eat the grass, he will starve. Parents must teach their young people the things of the Lord. The young people were not given to the pastor to be raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He is there to help lead the teenagers in the necessary steps that they will now be taking as they become the next leaders for Christ. The pastor is to be a *help* to what has already taken place in the home. The parents must not expect him to fix problems that they have allowed to develop over the years in their child's life. God can use Him to get a hold of the young person's life; but ninety five percent of a child's character has already been instilled in him by the time he is five. Parents must be in support of what takes place at church and the

Philosophy of Youth Ministry for Community Baptist Church

pastor's guidance of their teen. If the young person at all senses that his dad or mom is not in agreement with the authority, he will not be in agreement either. The youth worker can only enforce what is backed up in the home. An example would be: It is hard to preach on the excessive use of video games or movies when this is allowed daily for hours within the home. Praise God for parents that back up what is being preached in the church-house.

Here at CBC we desire to see the next generation of young adults move forward for Christ. We will have fun activities for the young people, but we will not let this eclipse the greater goal of teaching them to be the next generation of leaders for Christ. We will have service activities to help the young people not to look on his own things, but on the needs of others.(Philippians 2:4) We will teach the teens to sing and praise the Lord with all their hearts and (Psalm 100) we will teach them to serve the Lord God out of a pure motive. (I Samuel 12:24) We must teach them that much more is expected from them than the teens of the world. We expect a seriousness of purpose and direction with an end goal for their lives.

Each activity, teaching session, preaching session, or serving session will have a reason for its application. If there is no reason, it should not be done. Here are four goals for the youth of Community Baptist Church:

1. Evangelism of the unsaved young person—Matthew 28:19-20
 - a. Weekly door to door outreach on Wednesdays
 - b. Preaching of the Gospel at activities
2. Edification of the saved young person—Ephesians 4:12
 - a. Follow His Steps weekly sessions on practical Christian living
 - b. "In Service" youth activities
 - c. Yearly youth mission's trip
3. Exhortation of the saved young person—I Timothy 4:2
 - a. Preaching of the Word on Wednesday evenings
 - b. Preaching of the Word at activities

Philosophy of Youth Ministry for Community Baptist Church

- c. Youth summer camp
- d. Summer youth rallies
- 4. Equipping of the saved young person—Ephesians 4:12
 - a. Teaching of the Word on Sunday mornings
 - b. Youth choir on Wednesday evenings
 - c. Hosting of special services and banquets
 - d. Youth usher program
 - e. Monthly ministry helpers
 - f. Youth discipleship program
- 5. Encouragement of the saved young person—Colossians 1:10-11
 - a. Singspiration on the 1st Sunday of each month
 - b. Activities once monthly
 - c. Spring youth campout
 - d. Winter youth retreat

We desire to see our teenagers at CBC, “Turn the world upside down for Christ!” They have the potential and we will give them the tools, **but they must make the choice!**