

Our General Philosophy of Youth Ministry...

Biblical Imperatives

There are five elements that continually drive every aspect of our youth ministry. Each of these elements undergoes constant evaluation and re-evaluation followed by appropriate revision in order to reach the highest potential of effectiveness. These elements can best be described as “**Living to Grow, Serve, Worship and Share.**”

1. Living: *Fulfilling God's purpose of Fellowship (Eph. 2:19)*

God made humans very relational. A large majority of effective ministry takes place within the context of personal relationships with students. We believe it is vitally important for students to be plugged into a group of peers and adults where they can establish relationships of godly influences. Part of our purpose is introducing students to such influential people.

2. Grow: *Fulfilling God's purpose of Discipleship (Heb. 6:1; Matt. 28:18-20)*

Every student needs to grow spiritually. God desires to spit out of His mouth those who are stagnant and lukewarm (Rev. 3:15-16). Part of our purpose is to provide students with an environment where they will be encouraged and aided toward hot spiritual maturity in Christ.

3. Serve: *Fulfilling God's purpose of Ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12)*

Every student has been blessed with spiritual gifts provided by God for the edification of others. Students of any age are able to use those gifts in service to God and others. When each of their unique gifts are implemented, both the ministry and the student will grow.

4. Worship: *Fulfilling God's purpose of Worship (Romans 12:1)*

Worship, often thought to be synonymous with singing, includes many aspects. It includes praying (Ps. 95:6), hearing the Word (John 17:17; Deut. 31:11), giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2), baptizing (Rom. 6:3-4), meditating (Hab. 2:20), partaking of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26), and more. Each of these are just as important as musical worship and need to be approached and implemented as such since worship is more accurately an approach to life than an act on Sunday mornings.

5. Share: *Fulfilling God's purpose of Evangelism (Matthew 28: 18-20; Acts 1:8)*

A huge part of our heart and passion for ministry lies in unsaved students. These students, though often overlooked, are just as important to the Lord as godly students. We believe it is essential for our ministry to focus on this un-reached group, present the gospel to them through relevant means, and introduce them to a saving belief in Christ.

Core Values

Our core values reveal what is important to our ministry. In no particular order, these are the values we desire our ministry to reflect. Each is strategically planned and implemented into the ministry as much as possible.

1. Prayer: (*Romans 12:12; 1 Thes. 5:17*)

Prayer and devotion is a vital aspect of our ministry's atmosphere. Not just prayer that is flippantly thrown to the ceiling, but rather prayer that comes from a heart of devotion to God.

2. Unconditional Love: (*John 15:12-13; Romans 12:9-10*)

There are many unconditional attitudes we seek to demonstrate through this: unconditional acceptance, caring, compassion, and a sense of security. It communicates to students that this is a place where they know they are genuinely loved without any prerequisites – they are welcome no matter what.

3. Trust: (*James 5:16*)

In order for students to accept the messages we present to them, there needs to be an element of trust established between us. This includes the idea of trusting each other in such a way that hypocrisy is unnecessary and easily put aside allowing us to be real, honest, and genuine with each other.

4. Respect: (*1 Peter 2:17*)

Everyone has different opinions and perspectives. Although we have differences, we agree to respect each other and not allow it to affect our relationship. We do not push students to Christ -- we respect their wishes and let them discover Him on their own pace. There is also a general respect for people's time, efforts, and values.

5. Encouragement: (*Hebrews 3:13*)

No one likes walking down a hard unknown path without support. Neither do students enjoy walking down an unfamiliar spiritual road without support and encouragement. Our ministry is built on motivation and support through encouragement in every area of a student's life.

6. Fun: (*Ecclesiastes 3:4*)

We value a light atmosphere of fun and laughter when appropriate. God made humans with the ability to laugh and have fun, so that ability should be implemented into ministry. No one enjoys or feels attracted to a strict and solemn environment. This joyful atmosphere can be used to enhance relationships by allowing students to relax and feel more comfortable. It can also allow for them to be more receptive to our message of Christ.

7. Challenging: (*Eph. 4:1ff; 1 Thess. 4:1; 1 Pet 2:11*)

The balance to fun is in the challenging aspect of our ministry's core values. We challenge the students in different aspects of their lives, but most importantly challenge them in a deeper understanding of the Bible's content and its application to their daily lives.

8. Hospitality: (*Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:9*)

We extend ourselves and our resources to each other. This includes material hospitality, but it also involves creating an environment that is seeker sensitive and comfortable for unsaved students.