

Please consider the following facts that I read some years ago. “If the father is saved first there is a 96% chance that the rest of the family will also be saved. If the mother is saved first, there is a 20% chance that the rest of the family will be saved. If a child is saved first, there is only a 3% chance that the rest of the family will be saved.” If this report is true, why is the emphasis on the youth in our churches and not on the fathers? We must reach the fathers of this country with the truth. What would inspire anyone to separate the children from their parents or to remove the youth from the preaching of God’s Word by the pastor? This thinking is hellish and unbiblical. We must return to the old paths (**Jeremiah 6:16**). God calls pastors and anoints them with the Holy Ghost to preach the truth. No inexperienced youth leader can take the place of God’s ordained man. This is God’s way and no one has a right to change that.

In closing, the Bible has a lot to say about youth. In **Ecclesiastes 12:1**, we are told, “*Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth.*” and in **II Timothy 2:22**, “*Flee youthful lust: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the word out of a pure heart.*” Scriptures speak of many young people who did great things for God, for example: Joseph, David, Timothy, and Daniel. We find Jesus in the temple speaking at 12 years of age. May we seek God’s will and God’s way in the training of our youth, Amen.

*“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?
by taking heed thereto according to thy word.”*

Psalm 119:9



Victory Baptist Church
Pastor Robert W. Reed
14473 Bellingrath Road
P.O. Box 257
Codon, Alabama 36523
(251) 873-4422

*“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”*
Acts 16:31

The **RICHIES** OF GRACE

Robert W. Reed
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Youth Groups + A Trojan Horse +

“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.”

I Timothy 4:12

Youth groups have become a Trojan horse in the modern day church. Not only are they doing great harm to God’s young people but they are unbiblical. The best youth leader is the father and the best youth ministry is the family. This should be the model for the church. The youth group movement with age segregation and peer grouping is birthed out of Hell. It has created another cultural group within the church, and has actually divided some parents from their children. It has caused many a young person to look to their peers for counsel rather than their parents.

There is so much emphasis placed on the youth in our churches, and yet we are losing them to the world in large numbers. The church in general recognizes that there is a problem, but responds in a way similar to our government when it sees a problem, more money and more programs. It is time to wake up and realize that churches are not to be built on pizza and Pepsi! Neither is God's house a daycare center or a place of entertainment.

The whole concept of youth groups in the church lead by youth leaders is unscriptural. Most youth leaders or youth pastors are near the age of those they are leading. In the Bible, the elders are to be the model, teaching the younger (**Titus 2:1-4, Leviticus 19:32, Proverbs 16:31**). Maturity needs to be restored back into the church of Jesus Christ. In most churches these days, the youth do not even attend the same services as the adults. The Bible gives us warning, that in the last days people will not endure sound doctrine (**II Timothy 4:1-4**). Most believe that the youth must be separated from the rest of the church in order to relate to them. A wedge is further being driven between families and the church is partly responsible. Not only should there not be youth groups in God's house but teens should not be allowed to sit together. The young people should be with their family when they come together to worship.

According to "Time Magazine", December 16, 2002, "Youth ministers are the fastest-growing staff position in American churches. In 1980, 35 children's pastors attended the Inaugural Conference of the International Network of Children's Ministry. This year (2002) attendance was more than 2500. More seminaries are training pastors to specialize in children's needs." This same article titled, "New Funday School," mentioned how one church in Springdale, AR. paid \$297,000 to Bruce Barry's Wacky World Studio's set design company in Tampa, FL, to make over a Sunday school room with cartoon characters and where confetti would rain down from the ceiling. This was all done to increase attendance. The question we must ask, "Are we feeding sheep or entertaining goats in our modern churches?" The modern philosophy is to appeal to the flesh and then sneak up on the youth with the gospel.

There are more programs, seminars, books, and videos now than ever before; and yet, we are losing the youth. It is estimated that less than one-third of today's youth attend church, that is sixty-seven percent. According to one report I have recently seen, **it is estimated that seventy percent of teens who are involved in a church youth group will stop attending church within two years after their high school graduation.** This report went on to say that if this is true, that sixty-seven percent do not go to church and then we lose seventy percent of those who do, that means that within two years of finishing high school only ten percent of America's youth will attend church. These are staggering facts and the answer is not found in another youth program to be incorporated into the church. I also read another report that said, one out of two students from christian families in America is denying the faith by the time they graduate from college.

The solution to this breakdown in the church is to be found in the first divine ordained institution, the family. Fathers must become the leader to their youth and churches must not usurp this authority. It is the father's responsibility to train his children and not a peer. Every dad is a youth leader and the youth in his department (his family) should be near him in every worship service that he attends. This is God's way and no one can ever improve upon this.

In most youth groups there is a mixed multitude (**Exodus 12:37-38**) that is, saved and lost together. The world always has the most influence over the believer; if you do not believe this, just look at the way our youth dress and the music to which they listen. Studies have shown that when young people (peer grouping) spend a lot of their time with their peers, they are prone to become peer dependent rather than adult dependent. This is why there is such a large gap between parents and their youth today. This is why many parents cannot relate to their children. The counsel of their peers outweighs the counsel of their parents, which creates havoc in the family (**I Kings 12:1-14**). Our churches have helped to create another culture group that actually divides parents from their youth instead of uniting them. The church of Jesus Christ is to complement the family, not tear it apart. We must wake up and quit following the story of the "Emperor's New Clothes". Someone must cry out the truth.