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Teaching Teens

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TEACHING TEENS

By ELMER TOWNS



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This book is dedicated to my teachers who have given me inspiration and encouragement. Especially must I extend appreciation to Mr. Howard Hendricks, Professor of Christian Education at Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas, for his part in making this manuscript possible. He did much to mould my thoughts concerning youth work. I trust the truths of **Teaching Teens** will be used to influence others as they have influenced me.

Elmer L. Towns,

FOREWORD

Hi:

So you are the youth leader and it is your job to guide the youth meeting of your church. I am glad to know you.

Suppose we have a little chat about your youth work. This is the greatest task you have in life. During the teens, a youth finds himself at the crossroads of life. Here the teen-ager needs a friend and helping companion to point him in the way of Jesus Christ. It is during this “stress and strain” period of life that many teens go astray, and their lives are lost to the cause of Christ. My prayer for you is that you will be used of God to point many teens in the way of Christ.

There are two mistakes into which youth leaders fall. These mistakes are as common as the traditional youth meeting in churches across our nation.

The first mistake you will find is that of the domineering youth leader. He does all the planning, all the speaking, and all the song leading; the whole meeting depends on him. Many times the leader gets wonderful blessings from studying the program and having the thrill of presenting God’s Word; other times he becomes discouraged because the work is hard and disappointing. Usually he has many talents, and can do many jobs so much better than the kids, that in actuality each week’s program is his program. The youth meeting grows in relation to the effort the leader puts into the program.

Almost every time, the domineering leader has this problem: “I can’t get the kids to help me; they don’t seem interested in the work of God.” At the same time the kids may have this feeling, although they never express it: “This meeting doesn’t belong to us, it belongs to our leader; so, why should we care?”

Don’t let this problem be characteristic of your ministry with young people. Remember, as a youth leader you exist for the youth. It is their meeting and their program.

The second mistake into which you might fall is that of becoming the descending youth leader. This leader takes almost no part in the planning of the youth programs. He leaves the entire job up to the young people. The only reason he is there is because no one else in the church will take the job of youth director, and some adult must be present with the youth at their gathering.

In this type of program, the song leader arrives late and selects the same old choruses with never a suggestion from the youth leader as to new choruses or to planning of the meeting. The speaker usually reads the message from a program book and this is very acceptable with the leader. After the closing prayer the youth director goes home relieved that his chore is over until next Sunday. There is no planning or organization of the program, only poor presentation.

Don’t let either of these prevalent attitudes ruin your chance of working with youth. You are not to be their dictator nor are you to fade almost out of the picture. A really successful youth leader is something like a good football coach, who seeks to train the team in practical experiences, while giving them the needed background and discipline. But when the big game arrives (which for you is the Sunday evening program), you, like the coach, should stay on the sideline and give only the minimum guidance that is needed for the successful completion of the task. The young people run the plays by leading the singing, presenting the program, and gaining the experience. By using this approach you are accomplishing your goal as the youth leader in presenting every young person mature in Jesus Christ and well equipped for the work of the ministry.

It is a great opportunity you have as youth director, but with opportunity comes responsibility. Your responsibility toward every young person in your group is to work, lead and pray that each may come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, may grow in grace, and may bring praise to your Saviour. With every responsibility God bestows there comes accountability and one day you will give an account to God. Determine now that by God's grace you will do your best. Determine that when the Lord comes He will find you faithful to your important calling, that of a youth director.

The things mentioned in this handbook should help you to be well equipped. By observing the easy steps set down in the following pages you can, by the grace of God, become a successful youth director: This is my prayer for you, for there is definitely great need and great opportunity in this area today.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Elmer L. Towns

CHAPTER 1

BY HAVING A PURPOSE

Reaching, teaching, winning, and developing young people is one of the biggest jobs in the church today. For the most part, the teen-age period is known as the drop out period-the age when many young people are flocking away from religious instruction. The statistics show that three out of four young people do not attend any religious instruction and four out of five of those who attend religious instruction in earlier years are lost in their teen years. Why? Is there something lacking in the “attractiveness” of Jesus Christ that drives young people away from our churches?

ANALYSIS OF THE FAILURE OF YOUTH WORK

It is not the lack of attractiveness in Jesus Christ, but the methods of the young program that have driven many of our young people away from the churches. By analyzing the failure of youth work, a better understanding can be had of what will attract young people to Jesus Christ. The following suggestions give some indication of why our young people’s program has failed to attract the youth.

1. The young people’s program has been geared to adults. Many churches have fallen into the snare of treating teens like they were adults on a lower level. Possibly because the adults pay the bills, make the decisions, and staff the program, the church program is geared to their level. Young people are an age all their own. They have needs, ambitions, and desires that are all their own and they must be reached as young people. They cannot be treated as adults, half matured.

2. The young people’s program has failed to integrate Christianity with life. Many times we tell our young people to become dead - dead to self - dying with Christ. Young people want to live. They have their entire life before them and they should be challenged to live for Christ, and to let the power of the resurrected life be lived out through them in all details of their lives. We have been guilty of preaching compartmentalization. Our guilt is seen by implying that prayer meeting, church attendance, and witnessing are spiritual, while football, pajama parties, and picnics are outside of the consideration of God. Youth must be made to realize that all of life is to be Christ-centered, and Christianity is integral with life.

3. Youth directors have a defeatist attitude concerning teenagers. “You can’t do anything with young people today.” This is the prevalent cry in the churches. The young people are going to the dogs! There is nothing you can do with young people, so why try? You can only accomplish in life what you attempt.

4. Youth directors today have failed by not presenting a challenge to the youth. Many youth programs today insult the nature of young people by showing Christianity as a grandmother’s religion. Youth directors present the challenge in such a way that it seems easier to be a Christian than to join the Elks Club. There seems to be no real challenge to the youth of today. Communism is challenging and conquering the mind of the youth around the world because they offer something worthy for which to live and to die.

5. Youth directors have failed in their lack of vision. The United States is in the midst of a population explosion. By 1964, there will be R 1,100,000 more 17 year old young people than we have today. The young people are here, the lack of vision falls to the leadership. By God’s grace the youth of America can be reached if adequate plans and provision are made soon for this rapidly increasing segment of our population.

HOW CAN WE MEET THIS CHALLENGE?

1. We can meet this challenge by introducing you to one of the least understood, but most determinative areas of life-adolescence. Adolescence is one of the hardest areas of life to understand. What makes young people tick? What makes them do like they do? You may be saying, "I went through adolescence, I was a teen-ager once, I know all about teens." Just because you went through this area doesn't mean you know all about it. Remember back in high school and grade school, how you went through algebra or Latin? Just because you went through these subjects, doesn't mean you knew all about them. So it is possible for you to go through adolescence and not really know this area of life.

2. We can meet this challenge by youth directors becoming perennial, rather than annual educators. The farmer knows that the annual plant blooms but once a year and then dies. But the perennial plant blooms each season bringing forth its fruits. Many times we as educators with young people give them a program, solve the immediate problems, but we do not give them principles on which to live the rest of their lives. The cry of young people today is to give us principles by which we can live, rather than programs to entertain us. Let us be perennial educators giving young people something by which to live for the rest of their lives.

3. We can meet this challenge by using up-to-date procedure. As a youth director you will say it is foolish to try to get young people in the Word without knowing the Word. In just the same way, it is foolish for a director of youth to try to get the Word into the pupil, without knowing procedures and methods. How can this be done? What methods, materials, programs, can be used? The aim of this book is to answer these questions.

4. We can meet this challenge by a marriage between the "Book and life." The Word of God was written to meet the needs of people. Too often the Bible is treated as if it is fantasy rather than facts (as lying rather than living). Young people need to see that the Word of God has application to their everyday life. A teen-age girl recently came up to me at a Bible camp and said, "I understand you're going to speak this evening. Please don't tell us what to do and leave it there, but tell us how to live it practically, as you've experienced it in your own life."

YARDSTICKS FOR MEASURING YOUTH

The average youth director's worst weakness is his self-satisfaction. He does not know that he needs to improve or if he does inwardly admit now and then that he would like to have better results from his youth work, he does nothing about it. But in most cases, youth directors do not know whether or not they are doing a good job. From Sunday to Sunday their tasks are performed and they are ignorant as to whether they are meeting the needs of the youth in their care. The following points can be used as a yardstick for measuring the successfulness of your program in reaching youth.

1. Conversion. Are the young people of your group saved? Have they come into a personal, vital contact with Jesus Christ, wherein they have seen that they are sinners, and as sinners they stand in the way of the wrath of God? Have they seen that Christ has borne their punishment, dying on the cross for them? Have they seen that by receiving Christ they can accept God's gift of free salvation, thereby coming into right relationship with God? Are young people being saved through your ministry? This is the first yardstick whereby you can measure the success of your work with young people.

2. Careers. Youth, the teens, is a transitional period, in which they are finishing high school, getting ready for their life's work. If your guidance as a youth director does not show the young person how to find his place in life according to the will of God, you are failing as a youth worker. Many times we have the false concept and convey this false concept to our young people: "You have God's second best by not being a full-time servant, by not being in the ministry." Some young people have the idea that only those called into the ministry have a

calling from God. We must teach our young people that every Christian young person has a calling and a place in life to fulfill.

The high schools teach that the world is at the feet of every high school graduate. According to the average high school counselor, you can be anything, you can do anything, for which you have the necessary desire, ability, and ambition. This is not according to God's plan for His own. God has a plan and a purpose for each one, and his responsibility is to find this plan and fulfill this purpose. One teen-age boy told me, "When I was small, I told my mother I wanted to be a garbage man. She forgot this. Later on after coming home from a parade, I told her I wanted to be a policeman. She forgot this. One day we saw a gigantic fire, and I told mother I wanted to be a fireman. This she also forgot. One day I made the mistake of telling mother I wanted to be a preacher. She never forgot this and she tells me I'm called to be a preacher. I know now that the ministry is not God's will for my life. God wants me to be a lawyer. How can I help my mother to see what God wants for my life?"

As a youth director it is your job to help young people to find their proper place in life. Sixty per cent of all teen-agers consider dropping out of school at one time or another. It will be your responsibility to help guide them into preparation for a life of useful service and satisfying work in the will of God.

3. Companionship. Today, young people have a greater knowledge of sex than in any other generation. Modern advertising media have corrupted God's pure plan for companionship. A good youth director will guide young people into a satisfying and yet sanctifying companionship of the sexes. If your youth program does not include companionship, then it is lacking in a vital point.

4. Courtship. Companionship naturally leads to courtship. The time to teach the principles of Christian engagement, Christian marriage, and the Christian home is before they begin picking out a wife, not after 15 years of married life. Too often, Christian educators wait until a couple has had many years of what is called a "hell on earth" dissatisfaction, living out of the will of God, before they teach them God's purposes and methods in courtship and marriage. As a youth director, include courtship and marriage as a vital part of your youth training program.

5. Conviction. Young people are in the age of transition, and therefore are forming their ideals of life. Many times they are accepting the standards of Christians when they should be accepting Christian standards. They accept the standards of a Church, or a group, rather than those set forth in the Bible.

A false emphasis is to teach our young people separation to the isolationism. Though Jesus said we are in the world not of the world, our separation should be immunization, not isolation. Otherwise, why am I here and not in heaven? Our calling is to live for Jesus Christ here on earth.

When there is the threatening of an epidemic or illness in town people do not hide, but receive the vaccination or the immunization that will protect them. So Christians are to be immunized against the world. They are in the world, but are not of the world.

Furthermore, convictions are not built and the inner life strengthened by sitting on the lid of their natural desires. Invariably it will happen: the harder you sit on the lid, the greater the inner pressure and the higher the lid finally blows.

Our goal in teaching our young people conviction is to make people independently dependent, as opposed to paternalism. If we make our young people to become dependent upon their leader, their standards are not really their own. But by making them independent of ourselves and dependent upon God, with ideas based upon solid biblical truths, we bring them to

firm convictions by which they can live. This is our goal in youth education. The convictions you impart become another means by which we can apply the yardstick to see if we are doing a good job with our young people.

WHAT IS THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEETING FOR?

Check yourself on **why**. Why do you meet? Why do you have the type of program you do? Why do you speak? Why have socials? Why . . . ?

To keep youth off the street		To promote fellowship and recreation in a Christian environment	
To win teen-agers to Christ		To keep the teens from dropping out of the church	
To prepare the youth for church membership		If we don't they might go to the "other" church	
To teach the Bible		Because everyone else is having one	
To develop strong Christ-centered personalities		To learn to express themselves by speaking and song leading	
To help them find God's will for their life		To build strong morals	
To have a stronger church		Because the church I came from had a youth fellowship	

TOTAL _____

16

Score (3) for Essential, (2) Good, (1) Irrelevant.
Score 14 to 22 — limited vision, 23-28 — balanced vision, 29 and above — visionary.

CHAPTER 2

BY KNOWING THE PUPIL

"Young folks are sure flighty these days . . ." "Why, when I was in high school a young man had a little more sense. . ." "I just don't know what's become of this younger generation!" The many statements like these, voiced almost daily by adult church leaders throughout our nation, are the result of several things.

Part of our fear and concern is based on facts; for there is considerably more instability in evidence today than 20 or 30 years ago. Two world wars, a "police action" or two, and almost daily talk of world destruction contribute to the demoralization of our youth. The unprecedented number of broken homes has also taken its toll. Still another reason for our cries of bewilderment is that we have forgotten the less desirable traits of our own younger years, or laughed them off as "the wild oats of our youth."

Both in church and school we make a great use of the terms “normal” and “average.” We talk about normal youth, normal adults or normal conditions. We talk about normal achievement and we make judgments as to whether the youth’s achievement is “normal,” “above average,” or “below average.”

We may say for example that David is below average for a public speaker, while Ralph is above average. This is a straightforward statement, meaning that David cannot speak in public as well as the average youth, and Ralph can speak better.

But if we are not careful this “average” or “normal” begin to take on a marginal character in our thinking. It doesn’t become a straightforward statistical statement but an implied expectation of the youth. Somehow we feel it is wrong for David not to achieve up to the norm. There is a stigma attached to the term “below average.” Adults often demand that this youth at least hit the average that is, reach the “norm” for their age. Yet this automatically dooms half of the group to disappointment and failure for repeated measurements by adults.

Don’t be too critical of the youth who can’t pray well in public, can’t perform musically or doesn’t have the social graces of your youth group. Every young person in your group needs help. You must give yourself for everyone of them-not just the ones that appeal to you.

You may expect every fifteen year old to display fifteen-year-oldness at the same time, but this is not true. Jane may be fifteen years old chronologically, yet her body is over developed and she looks like a college queen, so she may be nineteen physically. As a result, her social adjustment may be that of a twenty year old. At the same time she has the mental development of a thirteen year old junior high. Now, how old is Jane? 15, 19, 20 or 13? ? ?

Let us look at three youngsters. As you read Bob, Mark and Dorothy, watch for ways in which their physical, spiritual, social and personal development interlock.

Bob is a junior in high school. His academic achievement is low in all subjects. He never attends school parties, sports events, or activities and has no close friends. Bob is an only child and attends Sunday school very regularly. His father is very sports minded, but seldom comes to church. His mother attends church fairly regularly but doesn’t take part. He is a regular in the youth group but is not a leader; he withdraws from social contacts and continues to do so. Now in adolescence he shows no interest in girls, but spends time working on hobbies. He is very obedient to his parents.

Bob is very deliberate to abstain from all worldly amusements and reads his Bible every day. He has never witnessed but knows he should. He intends on going to Bible College after high school.

Mark is an outstanding athlete and a student in the senior class at high school. He was elected co-captain of the football team and president of the youth group. He has a superior academic record in school. His parents are both very active in the church and very proud of Mark. They are well to do and Mark wears the latest of styles among young men’s clothes.

Mark leads singing often in the evening service and sings in a men’s quartette. Also he plays the piano and can bring “a good message” at young people’s. He is not consistent in his devotional life, and relies on the Bible learned as a youngster in the Sunday School. Although he does not participate in worldly amusements, he sees nothing wrong in them for the unsaved. Mark will get a scholarship from an outstanding Christian college upon graduation from high school.

Dorothy is a high school freshman. She has few friends and avoids school activities completely. She has always been slightly overweight. She used to be regarded as “cute” because

of her chubbiness, but lately it is the basis for teasing. She has a severe case of acne, probably as a result of overeating and a poor diet.

Dorothy misses church about every third week for no reason at all. When given a committee position, she either refuses or gets so excited, she controls the group. On some occasions her presentations in the youth group has shown glimpses of intelligence. Other times she does not show up for her responsibility. She has some ability in art, music, and public speaking. Her best friend is the school "sweetheart." Even though her friend is very worldly, Dorothy gives lip service to separation. Her main desire in life is to be a personal secretary.

Young people today need help. Considering this fact there is no doubt. But, young people cannot be helped without first being understood. You and I need to re-study the characteristics and needs of young people-to broaden our scope of experience and understanding beyond one life (our own) before we can be of any assistance whatever to the rollicking, bustling, shouting groups of effervescent teen-age vitality which pose such a challenge to churches and Christian leaders all over our nation.

PHYSICALLY SPEAKING

Youth is growing humanity. Physical changes revolutionize their bodies constantly as children pass into and through adolescence. During the ages of 12 through 14, to which we will hereafter refer as the "early period," youth experience a rapid, uneven growth rate. In development, major muscles are ahead of smaller ones, and they therefore experience low muscle co-ordination with its natural accompaniment: self-consciousness.

The fifteen-eighteen year old evidences a slower, more steady growth rate. In this "middle period," those tardy smaller muscles are developing, bones are increasing in size and strength, and in general the entire body is assuming more adult proportions. The result is obvious: a feeling of greater independence and self-confidence. Girls reach adult strength near 17, whereas men usually increase in strength into their early twenties. One of the natural causes for much of the self-consciousness in fellows is the voice change normal for boys in this grouping.

When our youth reach ages 19 through 24 they are entering what we will call the "late period." Nearing maturity, these wonderful young lives are enjoying their apex of physical co-ordination and mental alertness. New horizons of adult experience loom before them, and we must give them firm foundations on which they may build a Christ-honoring future!

Most childhood habits are breaking down during the early period, leaving wide areas of personality exposed to new impressions. Body changes during the transition from the early to middle period are feared by many young people, and should be satisfactorily explained for proper adjustment. Sound, helpful booklets and books by both Christian and non-Christian authors are available on the subject.

During the middle period, many habits are formed by social pressure through the teenagers' desire to be accepted by their friends.

This tremendous factor can work for either good or evil, depending upon the character of the group to which they conform. Habits have become more or less permanent by the late period and little change can be expected through natural means.

MENTALLY SPEAKING

What makes them tick? Where do they get such wild imagination? How can they be interested in such trivial things? Why do they always laugh at the wrong time?

Someone has said, "You can't put an old head on young shoulders." He was right. And you and I must keep that fact ever before us as we try to help young people. Teen-agers are not adults, no matter how many times they tell you they, are, nor how many times you've wished they were!

Let's take "Johnny Early Age" first of all, and "Susie Early Age," too. Their imaginations are pretty fanciful, conjuring up situations which could be possible, but are highly improbable. Johnny is a jet pilot and Susie an airline stewardess, while Johnny fails his math courses and Susie is only four feet tall. However, even though the realization of their day-dreaming is quite improbable, it still helps them practice thinking, and will enable them in later days to logically weigh the positive and negative aspects of a decision in fruitful thinking.

Interests in this group may change from one week to the next, or even oftener. Tomorrow Johnny may want to be a doctor, and Susie a nurse. Collections are a great joy, with rocks and bottle caps, baseball cards and autographs topping the list of importance. Heroes and heroines are constantly inspiring our early group to be what they daydream, to top the ladder of success and happiness. Would to God our "earlies" could see more of Christ in us as their Ideal! Any kind of adventuresome reading may interest these folk, any kind. I trust that you are not ignorant of the filthy trash available to them on the school grounds, and that you will supplant such trash with an adequate supply of the good Christian literature available for their age level. Memory is keen when the "early" knows why he should memorize. A goal, not a simple prize but a real incentive, will prove of great profit in encouraging memorization of Scripture. Don't try to teach the "early" all you know about the hypostatic union, or hyper-anti-dispensationalism-such teaching will leave them cold, just like it probably does you. Stick to simple truths, concrete facts they can get their feet on, and you'll see the fruit of such teaching as they grow.

Be prepared to be laughed at, for the "earlies" sense of humor includes you. Laugh with them and all will be well. Become angry or insulted and you're through. The impressions you give to them when they first test you will be long-lasting. This group makes snap judgments and many times lack discrimination in judging, though they are capable of real thinking.

Get next to the leader of their gang. He holds the key to the others' affections and respect. Spend a lot of time with him or her. If you don't have much time to spend, take it from something else or get out of youth work; for time spent with a godly youth leader is what your young people need.

You'll find Johnny and Susie inquisitive about religious things, though they won't want you to know they are. Not only will you find them inquisitive, but you'll also find that they expect you to produce a "golden-halo" type of life even though they themselves can't do it. Their doubting hearts will be doubly damaged if they find they must be disappointed in you as well as in themselves. Doubts, questions, obstinacy in the face of truth and an unpredictable personality make the "earlies" a tremendous challenge for any dedicated Christian youth sponsor.

In the middle period of youth, minds are turned toward more creative thinking. Real possibilities come into view, and more and more concrete plans are laid for the future.

Social relations are immensely important. Anything which tells them "how to become a hero" is avidly read, watched, or heard. Diaries may be kept as an evaluation of personal progress. Cliques and co-ed groups are favored, and the leaders of these should be the focal point of your attack for Christ.

Rote memory is less relied upon for facts, whereas rationalization, thinking for themselves, becomes their course to decision.

This age brings the most critical attitude of all ages. These young people have standards which you must meet, or you will fail them. They have a definite concept of how things should be done -order without formality. They are bound to criticize your best efforts, no matter how hard you try to please them. If they do this behind your back, beware! If they do it to your face, they love you!

Their humor always has an object, maybe some other young person in their group, possibly you. They love puns and practical jokes. Be always ready to laugh with them, except when another is really injured, and you will be their friend.

Don't be disturbed by the "middles" faulty reasoning. They are just beginning to figure things out for themselves, and tangents are tempting. Plan your programs with their mental problems in mind so they can solve their problems through their programs. In other words, plan them specifically to meet their needs at every point.

Don't fight their fashions (unless they are morally indecent). Remember, they are young, and you don't know what you would wear if you were their age now. Social pressure demands a certain amount of conformity from each of us. You don't wear button shoes or a stove-pipe hat anymore, do you? Their suggestibility is stimulated not only through group pressure, but through reading as well, so give them all the good Christian fiction and current Christian biographies you can find. Don't be too obvious in this method of teaching, for remember, their attitudes are critical, and they are pretty sure they are already experts on most subjects.

Their instability at points is really remarkable. For, though they'll tell you they know it all, the next moment for them may be a chasm of doubt and contradiction into which you must keep them from falling. Live them something to believe!

Our interesting late period youth have arrived at the point of actual constructive thinking. Real, relative mental productions can be consistently ground out for personality and career advancement.

Their interests have shifted to areas of specialization. Their field has narrowed, but their diligence has increased. Spiritual concepts for reading and study intrigue them. More practical books on "how to achieve" are also sought after. Memory is only valuable for use, so teach them the uses of memorized Scripture. Give them doctrinal studies and biographical studies of men of God who achieved their goals, pointing out how they achieved them.

Cultural tastes have begun to grow. Show them the beauty of high Christian culture, the formation of the personality of Christ within themselves.

They still like to laugh, though their humor has become more subtle, more personal. They like to match wits with one another and with you. They'll even laugh at themselves when the joke is on them. You should not do less.

Note and use their increased ability to think along productive lines, especially, where possible, in planning and producing programs.

You may not get all the praise, but your youth will amount to more for Christ. Use their specialized talents of thought and action; let their hobbies, youthful enthusiasm and vitality liven up the whole program of the church. Who is there among us who could not use a little more vitality?

Since this group is being more respectfully to recognize authority, discipline problems should be lessened. This will of course depend upon your position before them, the position you have merited through godly example. Since you will be able to reason with them along logical lines, prepare your discussions with this in mind. If you can satisfy their intellectual questions

through a Spirit-filled ministry of the Word of God, you will have enlisted soldiers for Jesus Christ. If not, you will discharge hardened skeptics.

EMOTIONALLY SPEAKING

The “earlies” bound from pole to pole, from chasm to peak. Changing, chaotic emotions fill their daily experience because of their physical and mental changes. These emotions are controllable only through appealing to shame, self, or Christ. Understand them. Pray for them. Don’t give up in anger or disgust.

The “middles” are beginning to experiment with their emotions, and experiment requires a certain amount of control. They enjoy their emotions, and will seek activities which stimulate them. These must be guided into godly channels! Self-esteem and the desire to be adult are the greatest factors of control. They need to see in you the exhibition of adult, mature, Christ-like emotions as a pattern to follow.

By the time the late period is reached, rationality has increased to the point of much more controlled emotions. The members of this group can better understand their own emotions and the emotions of others. They can help themselves and one another toward greater stability. Their delight is conformity to an adult emotional experience. May they see this in their leader.

SOCIALLY SPEAKING

The early group enjoys physical activity. If you’re too tired to play with them, let someone else have the job-if you really care for your “earlies.” Spectator sports are not very appealing for these folk; they like to make a name for themselves, not watch someone else get all the glory. For harmonious activity, it is better to have group games for the most part, where no specific one is singled out as the leader.

Proven and established authority obtains the “early’s” respect. If the leadership is not proven, it will be resented, for these youngsters feel that they are personally becoming authorities themselves. Their idealism greatly influences their respect for their leaders, and their desires for themselves. Be the kind of leader Christ can make you, and hold Him up to them for their Standard. Remember their critical attitudes, and rejoice that in their instability they may be just as good tomorrow as they are naughty today.

The middle group enjoys organized sports, using them to gain individual excellence. They are beginning to enjoy spectator sports. These social interests can be used by the wise youth leader for valuable personal contacts and friendships for Christ. Go to their games or their craftsmanship displays. If they have done or do a good job, tell them so. If they have not, encourage them to do better. Be their friend.

Since they often rebel against social authority, they will better follow your leadership if they like and respect you. They are beginning to distrust themselves and others; therefore you must consistently “live them something to believe.” If you fail them at this juncture, the battle to regain them for Christ will have to be fought with much blood and many tears- if it is ever fought at all.

Ideally, these are beginning to see their own shortcomings; that’s why they can be helped. They are most concerned with their social reputation. Make Christ the center of their desire for reputation. He must be made relevant to them.

Use their social desires as opportunities for clean Christian fellowship. If **you** don’t meet their social need, they’ll have it met elsewhere. Satan especially loves to meet this need. Use their self-critical attitudes for comparison of themselves with Christ that they may be “not forgetful hearers, but doers of the Word.”

In the late period, skill games where mental alertness is necessary appeal to the group. There are many good clean and even scriptural games obtainable for use in social functions.

Since they recognize social authority, help group leaders to exercise such authority in Christ. Don't assume a dictatorial attitude, but cultivate a friendship and respect. Then they will often accept and even seek your advice.

Recognize their utilitarian ideals; show them the practical values of Christian living, by showing how Christ can meet and solve their real-life problems.

Their maturing attitudes toward others' social abilities and their desires for self-improvement in the light of valid self-criticism are traits which you must recognize and use. Do all you can to get other adults to encourage their advancement of attitudes for the glory of God as their motivation.

CHAPTER 3

BY FOLLOWING GOOD PRINCIPLES

Just why do you want to work with youth? How did you come to decide on this job? Did other youth workers influence you? Was it being a leader that you liked? Was it interest in young people? Or did the church draft you for the job?

Before you read any further, it will help you to stop and make a list of reasons why you want to lead youth. Be honest with yourself. Try to list the real reason.

	Interest in young people		I have "talents" for working with youth		
	It is an "all right" thing to do		Know it is God's will		
	Want to take advantage of my training in Christian Education		Nobody else will take the job		
	Want to win youth to Christ		Youth like me		
	The church needs a youth group		I'll stay young in this position		
	I like to teach		Other:		

ANALYSIS OF THE FAILURE OF YOUTH WORK

Most people hold that a leader's basic outlook determines his manner of guiding the youth, more than the material covered in a youth program. Look over the reasons given above. Can you see any relationship between why you want to lead youth and the way you might lead youth? Your concept of yourself, your past experience, your relationship to Christ, the people in the church, all play a part in determining your leadership personality. But the major factor in shaping your personality is your desire to be a leader. Do you know what kind of leader you want to be? Would you desire to be like the best youth leader you ever had? Look back into your past and try to remember him. Why was he the best youth leader? Was it his appearance, his kindness, the way he disciplined, the way he was always there? Was it his spiritual life or his smile?

You may not be absolutely certain as yet what kind of youth leader you want to be. But surely you know what kind of leader you do not want to be. Let's look for a moment at several youth leaders. You may have known leaders like them.

Take for example Mr. Andrews, who has been trying to prove himself a "spiritual giant" ever since he was in Bible institute. Mr. Andrews spends the entire hour lecturing. His messages are well outlined and alliterated. They are taken from deeper life books. He never gives his pupils an opportunity for discussion. He has no use for the student whose behavior is out of line, particularly if the student shows a lack of respect for him or the subject. He is particularly impatient with "dead heads." He discourages socials and anything that implies frivolity. He does not visit the pupils and regards his time as his own for study and self improvement.

How does Mr. Andrews see himself as a teacher? What effect does the way he feels about his own abilities and potentialities have upon the way he approaches the youth meetings? Does he have the students' interest at heart?

Do you know Miss Brown? Miss Brown always had a great verbalized desire to date and marry. During her youth, she had few dates, even though she was average in appearance. Now at the age of thirty-nine, she finds herself on the shelf socially.

Miss Brown has a reputation among the youth of playing favorites. She becomes very much attached to the youth who shows her attention and in return makes considerable demands upon them. She likes the quiet retiring boy or girl and in the meeting speaks much about the danger of dating, petting and "marrying out of your religion." They know that a smile from them means an invitation out to a restaurant. Only later do they realize it will mean having to continue to smile and show attention in order to maintain this "special" category. Some youth become weary of being "special" and ignore Miss Brown, who becomes deeply hurt. The youth will either drop out of the church or the family will be brought into a squabble.

Why does Miss Brown need to "buy" the youth's affection? Do her feelings about herself have anything to do with her being a youth leader? Does she really have the students' interest with her "special" favors?

Then there is Mr. Clark. He is a research chemist for a local concern, but his greatest joy is the high school group. He enjoys playing touch football with the fellows or sitting and talking over a "coke" at a social. He considers his greatest investment as a youth leader is helping to guide the committees in planning the youth meeting. His students feel that he cares both about learning the Bible and about them. At the regular youth meeting he lets the youth take charge. He then always offers a word of encouragement for a job well done. Often a youth poses a problem that stumps Mr. Clark. In those cases he works with the student to find the answer in the Bible.

Mr. Clark is interested in the problems of his students and is concerned about their future, although he is careful not to become too involved personally with their lives. He respects the youth's right to make a decision and know God's will. The boys have never seen him lose his temper, and say "Mr. Clark is the best Christian they know."

Does Mr. Clark show an interest in students, motivated by the love of Christ? What does his attitude toward the youth program reveal about his role as youth leader?

Any one of these youth leaders could be you. Some youth leaders can be categorized into broad general types such as these. But remember-no two leaders are alike, just as no two young people are alike. The purpose of this book is not to pour you into a mould and categorize your actions and personality. If you learn a few principles that will help you do the job of leading young people to spiritual maturity, this book will accomplish its purpose.

What are the characteristics of a good youth leader? What good principles do you need to follow in order to be a success in guiding youth down the path of life?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A YOUTH LEADER

1. A leader must counteract the immaturity of youth with the maturity of adulthood. Immaturity produces immaturity. If you as a leader are in spiritual infancy, you cannot expect spiritual adulthood from the youth with which you work. A leader must possess spiritual maturity at all times, and spiritual maturity is reflected by being mature in the emotional, mental, intellectual, and physical realms. I Corinthians 13:11, "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."

2. The leader must understand and become interested in every phase of life as it pertains to the youth. There are two words that are very important to the youth director. They are as follows:

(1) **Understanding.** You must be understanding at all times. With understanding comes acceptance. As a youth leader, you will be more acceptable and more highly esteemed once you are able to accept each young person as an individual; the boy with acne on his face; the girl with gangly, knocking knees; the young person from a poor background, and the teen-ager who lives in a wealthy manner. You understand that each young person is trying to adjust to life by trying to find his own way.

(2) **Love.** Allow an attitude of love to always flow from your innermost being. Just as Christ displayed love to His friends and family, loving them to the end of His earthly ministry, you will have to display love to every one of the young people with whom you come in contact. John 15:12, "This is My commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you."

3. The leader must talk the language of the youth. This is the basic problem of communication. When a young person cannot understand you and you cannot understand him, there is no common Point of connection. The language of the youth director should not be slang but simple, for he must talk the language of the adolescent. **4. A leader must break down any barriers between himself and the youth.** The leader must be careful not to build these barriers between himself and the youth but he must break down any barriers already present. Many churches have barriers between the youth and the adult. These barriers are built by attitudes which adults have toward the youth. For instance, one attitude is that "the youth are going to the dogs." Therefore, youth will not accept the guidance and leadership of adults. If there are barriers in your youth group, break them down. Let the young person know that you, as the youth director, are their friend.

5. The youth leader must recognize individual differences and treat every young person *as* an individual. This principle is important because every young person is different. You have seen this as you have studied chapter two, Know the Pupil. Now put this principle into action. Treat every young person differently as his needs direct, accept him as he is and where he is.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH WORK

There are certain guiding principles that a youth director will follow in planning a program, in personally counseling with young people, in organizing a camp, or in any other section of youth work.

1. Meet young people where they are and lead them to where they should be. This is in keeping with God's plan in dealing with man. God meets man as and where he is, and lifts him to a higher sphere of life. God doesn't wait for the sinner to quit smoking, drinking, gambling,

etc., before He saves him. God meets the sinner where he is and in his sinful condition. Therefore the youth leader should meet the young person where he is. The youth leader shouldn't say, "Well, you quit smoking, drinking, etc., and then I will come and help you." The youth leader should present Christ as the One who can help.

2. Don't consider yourself God's gift to all young people. Some leaders who work with youth think they are the ultimate in personality. This is not the way to be used of the Lord in working with young people. For instance, there are youth leaders who will not take suggestions from any of the young people. Why should they be bothered with the young people's ideas when theirs are much better?

3. Make young people increasingly independent of yourself and increasingly dependent on the Lord. This is your goal of maturity for young people. They must be cut off from leaning on you. Young people like to have someone to lean on but they must learn to lean on the Lord, and become increasingly dependent on Him. Don't let the plague of Paternalism strike you. Proverbs 3:5, b, "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."

4. Seek constructively to build an allegiance to Christ and His church. Don't permit the young people to pledge their main allegiance to you. The more they depend on you for spiritual growth, the more difficult it will be for them to be able to stand on their own two feet when you leave.

This principle can also be applied when they grow up, or when they go off to college. They will falter because they have been depending on you. A good youth program will tie the youth to the local church. Then the youth will have stability as he is tied to the institution established and blessed by Christ.

5. By God's grace be a living and not a talking example. Your life is a pane of glass. Young people can see completely through you. What they need is a good dose of reality in the Christian life. Live before them the life of Jesus Christ.

Youth have passed the stage when they will "do as you say but not as you do." Advocating any Christian principle which is not first present in your own life is certainly a waste of time and probably more a detriment than a help to the group.

6. Keep your mouth shut and your eyes and ears open. Many times youth leaders speak when they should be observing, when they should be seeing and when they should be listening. You should be a man of vision. You should see more, see first, and see farther, than the average run of Christians. Be an observant leader.

7. Do not rely upon methods apart from the working of the Spirit of God. Many youth leaders depend upon motion pictures, panels, debates, slides and such methods to accomplish maturity in young people. These can never accomplish maturity. The only thing that brings about spirituality is the working of the Spirit in the heart. These guiding principles will help you as a young people's leader to guide your young people into spiritual maturity. John 14:26, "But the Comforter, which is 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." As a leader you will take your place under the responsibility of the Lord and fill it as unto the Lord.

A lad was talking about his youth director; he made the following comment: "I recall vividly the youth group to which I went as a boy. Our youth leader set the kind of example which I wanted to be with all my heart when I grew up. He had a radiant personality and a living spirit of Christian joy, faith, and obedience to Jesus Christ. Everyone seemed to feel good in his

presence. I was glad many times that he found me and won me to Christ. On many occasions he found time to spend with me to direct my life. I owe more to my youth director than any other person for my spiritual growth.”

Note the sentence, “Everyone felt good in his presence.” Is this characteristic of you as a youth leader?

God will not forget what we have done for Him in our labor of love. Hebrews 6:10, “For 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.”

As a youth director, you must first have a purpose to be successful. Second, you must know the pupil as an individual. To be a successful youth director, you must also follow good principles. As a leader, your relationship with the young people determines the amount of success.

The leader has often wished he could tell his group about the ways of life and thus spare them the necessity of travelling along the hard road of experience, but such is not the case. There are no short cuts to Christian maturity. Each young person must learn the lessons of life for himself; sorrow - how to endure it, success - how to live with it, failure - how to survive it, challenge - how to meet it. You as a leader can help the young person, but the youth must learn and grow by himself.

CHAPTER 4

BY CAREFUL PLANNING

Another Sunday night and you haven’t got a program prepared? Let’s do it differently this coming Sunday.

Many youth leaders face each program with something of a fear of failure and of relief when the meeting is over. Usually the time of the meeting is upon them before they know it, and the program is thrown together with little or no planning. If you do not take time to plan the coming program and those that follow, disastrous results are sure to be inevitable. Not only the programs but the entire roster of youth endeavor should be planned- and this planning should be done far in advance.

EQUIPMENT FOR PLANNING

1. Pencil
2. Paper
3. Prayer
4. Purpose

Have a pencil and paper handy to write down the impressions and suggestions that come. This is a necessity, whether you plan by yourself or with a planning group. When good ideas come, you will not forget them in you have your thoughts down on paper for reference.

By planning with paper and pencil, you take vague thoughts and put them down in some concrete fashion. Someone has said: “Thoughts disentangle themselves, over lips and finger tips.” You or someone else may have a tremendous idea in planning, and when this thought is put on paper and all the parts are explained, the idea may lose its brilliance.

Planning should be with prayer- a time of direct intercession to God for wisdom and guidance. To do a spiritual work, we must have the guidance of the Spirit. Planning by prayer is more than a time of seeking God's plans. Planning should be accomplished in a continual attitude of prayer. God's will is desired in every venture and this desire is manifested in yieldedness to God and faith that He will satisfy every need.

Planning should be governed by a **purpose**. One who desires to go shopping in town, but has no purpose, will find himself buying nothing, buying everything, or not even arriving in town at all. You as a youth director will have to have definite purposes in mind for the over-all youth endeavor as well as the individual youth meeting. Always have a purpose, in every activity with your youth.

RESULTS OF ACTIVITY WITHOUT PURPOSE

1. The program will cover too much ground. If there is no purpose in a program for youth, the result will be ambiguous because too much ground has been covered, and most times the ground covered is not covered well. By having a purpose, you as a leader have a basis for selectivity. The material, illustrations, Scriptures, or story that is not pertinent to the aim of the program should be ruled out. Some material will have to be postponed until later meetings. To get quality in a youth meeting you will have to eliminate quantity. In planning, have a clear purpose in mind, so too much excess baggage will not be thrown into a meeting.

2. The program will major in the minors - tend to ramble. Usually the programs that tries to cover all will cover essentially nothing. This is known as majoring in the minors. A youth leader will ride a hobby horse and tell the youth not to do this and not to do that. Do not jump to the wrong conclusion. There are things our youth shouldn't do, but the negative is to tell them to leave this or that alone, the positive is to give them basic scriptural laws of separation. A well-planned program will not ramble, but will be well balanced.

3. The program will not be related to life needs. If you do not take time to plan your program, your programs will be just filling time and space. A good program will be related to the needs of the youth's life. Meeting the needs of youth does not come by accident, it comes as a result of planning.

4. The program will have little or no results. When you aim at nothing you usually hit it. Suppose a program is presented as general Christian living and as a result no spiritual giants evolve from the meeting, no all night prayer meeting follows, and no one responds to the invitation. The leader is asked, "What was the purpose of the meeting?" This is a vague purpose and no earth shaking results were forthcoming so as a result the leader is discouraged. His attitude is expressed, "You can't do anything with teen-agers today."

Jimmy, sitting in the third row, got a tremendous blessing out of the meeting. He is going back to the super market where he bags groceries with new determination to keep his temper because Christ lives in his heart. God used this program in the life of Jimmy, although the youth director never realized it. If the leader had specific purposes, he might have seen specific results. He might have seen a change in Jimmy's control of his temper. But by having vague purposes, he got vague results. Hence he became discouraged in his work.

The most supernatural element of most youth meetings is that we get any results at all!

You as a youth director have the youth for a very short period of time. For the most part you have the shortest amount of time to influence the youth of all agencies trying to sway the lives of youth today.

Much of the time which the youth spends at home he spends in sleeping, but still if time means anything, the home and the school will have the greater influence in molding the youth.

What is the answer? Can the church have more of the youth's time? In most cases, no. The answer lies in an increase of quality of the work. This quality can be increased by having definite purpose in our youth program and moving toward that end.

REASONS FOR PURPOSE

1 . A purpose makes possible definite plans for meeting immediate needs. In most cases youth have specific needs, but no specific purposes are forthcoming to help meet these needs. Young people cry out "we want reality," but instead they get superficiality. By having definite purposes, we can make definite plans toward meeting the needs of youth. This is your goal.

2. Purposes make procedures intelligent. If you have a purpose in mind for your young people's program, you should exhibit confidence and show that you know where you are going. Young people will follow the person who knows where he is going.

3. Purposes serve as your compass and direction finder. Guidance is a big word in education today. The guide must be true for right direction. If the guide blazing a trail through the woods becomes lost, he immediately consults the compass which gives direction.

You, as youth director and guide, disappointed, and many times lost in your work. You will not know where to turn in your work or where to go for help. The work of Christ will become bogged down, and you will be tempted to quit. This is the place you turn to the compass - your purposes. The purposes for your youth work will give you direction and point the way out of discouragement to your goal of successful youth work.

4. Purposes enable you to take logical rather than hit or miss steps. Each program, as well as the points of an individual program, should be building toward the purpose in which the youth group is moving. The work of the Lord with youth is "not somehow but triumphant."

5. Purposes eliminate tangents and irrelevancies. In golf, it is easy to get the ball lost in high grass or in the woods, but by going straight off the tee to the green and into the cup, the ball is never lost. So is the case in working with youth.

When youth leaders lose sight of their goal and get lost in the high grass, the work suffers. Some workers go off on the tangent of prophecy, chart making, or having panel discussions. All their time is spent in these areas to the exclusion of others. Working with youth necessitates much time in important areas of Christian living. Prophecy, chart making, and having panel discussions are important, but only when seen in the light of the purpose of the program. Point to your Purpose at all times.

6. Purpose suggests materials and activities. Some youth leaders are forever having a moving picture, which is the easiest program to arrange, but most times is not in keeping with the purpose you want to accomplish. You may say, our youth love films. Perhaps, but the real purpose is not to **Entertain** but to **Educate**. Determine the purpose of your meeting. The Christian maturity of every youth is the main purpose of working with youth.

A good purpose that is well defined will suggest the activities. A well defined purpose might be: "To show the Christian standard of grace as opposed to law." This purpose not only could be presented in many ways but also it will suggest many activities and program methods.

A debate, such as "Resolved that Justification is by Works" taking Romans chapter 3 as opposed to James chapter 2 would be an example in which the purpose has suggested the method.

A court scene before God as Judge could be presented by two men, one claiming to be justified by law and the other by grace. This use of drama is a valid means of teaching God's

truth. The wrong procedure would be to decide on having a drama, and then to choose a subject and purpose. Purpose should dictate the method, never should method determine the purpose.

A panel could be presented, using the subject, "What Justification Means to Me." Different people to whom the youth look up, could be part of the panel. For instance, a banker, a lawyer, or a medical doctor could be used on the panel. The panel can now be said to have grown out of the purpose of the program.

7. Purposes furnish a sound basis for measurement of progress. Some people don't know when they have arrived because they don't know where they are going. Youth leaders spend many hours in hard labor but never have the satisfaction of success. Their lack of success is because they have no purpose, and therefore they don't know their accomplishments.

Test yourself before you go any farther as to your purposes. Only by being truthful with yourself can you help yourself. With your next youth program in mind, as you have presently planned it, check the appropriate section on the following chart.

	None	Vague	Definite
1. Purposes and plans to make friends of lost youth.			
2. Purposes and plans to win lost youth to Christ.			
3. Purposes to increase Bible knowledge of youth.			
4. Purposes to increase youth's desire to live for Christ.			
5. Purposes to direct youth into life's vocation.			
6. Purposes to provide for youth social needs and desires.			
7. Purposes to increase youth's ability to perform church management.			
8. Purposes to prepare youth for Christian engagement and marriage.			
9. Purposes to separate youth from the world.			
10. Purposes for deepening devotional life of youth.			

Score 0 for checks in the NONE column, 1 for check in the VAGUE column and 2 for check in the definite column.

Points: 8 or below Failing as youth director.
 10 Average but inadequate.
 15 or above Congratulations! You're a youth director who knows where he's going!

HOW TO PLAN A PROGRAM

Now that you have in mind the over-all purpose which should be accomplished within your youth group and you've decided upon the aim of the next program, you may find that planning the following steps will help in logical, orderly program planning.

Sunday afternoon is too late to plan for the Sunday evening program. The planning session of the youth council should make out a program calendar, at least three months in advance of the program. This should include the general purpose, the title, subject, the leader, for all programs for the next three months. By planning programs far in advance, a wider and more complete coverage can be given to all areas of youth's needs.

Three weeks before the program is to be presented, the leader should consult those on the program, and schedule a group meeting. When those on the program come together for the initial meeting, there are certain areas to be discussed and decisions to be made.

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1. The theme of the program should be in keeping with the general purpose. Many times the theme and aim are the same, but at other times the theme gives expression to the aim. A program aim could be, "To teach discipline in the devotional life of a Christian." The aim could be spelled out in a football theme. The room could be decorated with football pennants, equipment and the traditional football bench. Slogans could be hung on the walls, similar to those used by football coaches in locker rooms to promote discipline and desire. The whole program could be pitched, "The football player must be trained, disciplined, and in condition to win the game; so also the Christian must be spiritually trained, and disciplined to succeed in life." The aim is discipline, but the theme is football training.

Follow these points on themes:

1. The theme must grow out of the aim.
2. The theme must be simple.
3. The theme must be interesting and appeal to young people.

2. The Scripture of the program should be in keeping with the general aim. If you were preparing a program on **Christian discipline**, you would want to have Scripture in keeping with what you are trying to accomplish. In I Cor. 9:24-27, Paul speaks of training to gain the crown in the athletic races. This Scripture would be good, or it would be in keeping with both the aim of discipline, and the theme of sports, that being football. Since football was not played in Bible times, the races of that day would be a good parallel.

3. The responsibility of each person on the program should be discussed at this initial meeting. A person will do a much better job, if he knows what he is to do.

Many young people refuse to take a part in the program simply because their responsibility is not made clear when they are asked to take part. The leader will have to answer the questions of the young people who are participating. If the leader will answer these simple questions for all taking part when giving out responsibility, he will find better followers and the program will run more smoothly.

1. What am I to do?
2. Where am I to do this?
3. When am I to do this?

4. The specific accomplishment of this program should be discussed. Each person taking part in the program should understand the general aim. As they understand the general

aim, they can help to determine what specific accomplishment is expected in the lives of the youth. Let each young person in the program discuss the aim and arrive at the accomplishment. This will have a training effect, not only with those who attend the program, but also with those who present the program.

The accomplishment might be called the desired outcomes. These accomplishments or outcomes are expressed in these areas of the pupil's life. As a result of their program YOU SHOULD CONSIDER:

1. What do you want the youth to know?
2. What do you want the youth to do?
3. What do you want the youth to feel?

As a result of the program on Christian discipline, these would be certain expected accomplishments. The group after discussing the aims and desired outcomes, might come to the following conclusion.

1. What do you want the youth to know? To let the youth know how to have his devotions.
2. What do you want the youth to do? To cause the youth to follow daily disciplined patterns in his devotions.
3. What do you want the youth to feel? To instill in the youth the opportunities of and the obligations to Christ in having devotions.

In the desired outcomes, the first deals with knowledge. The programs impart knowledge to the youth on how to have an intelligent devotional time. In the second, accomplished ability or action is prominent. The program is designed to cause the youth to act. The third point expresses attitude or feeling. This deals with intangibles of the Christian life. The desired accomplishment of the program was to instill in the youth a wanting and a will to have devotions.

The following layout sheet for planning a program may be helpful to your group. This is to be used by your planning committee. After the layout sheet is completed, a program schedule should be arranged to give the sequence of events in the youth program.

CHAPTER 5

BY ORGANIZING THE PROGRAM

Have you ever attended a football game in which neither team gathered in a huddle? I doubt it, for in a huddle they receive their instructions and each player in turn fulfills his part. Because they have a need, which is victory, they meet the need through teamwork or organization. As we have needs so must we organize. Having the greatest ball players on the team does not assure victory. Each player must work together, each one understanding and fulfilling his obligation. As a youth leader you must make each member of your youth group aware of his or her specific responsibilities. Dismiss the idea that organization is not spiritual. God's Word plainly teaches that "God is not the author of confusion" (1 Cor 14:33), and also, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). Read Acts the sixth chapter and you will find an example in the organization of the post of deacon in the local church. Organization is a must if you are to go forward for Christ.

WHY SHOULD YOU ORGANIZE?

1. To eliminate duplication. Much of the confusion in your youth society can be avoided if you assign a specific project, meeting, etc., to one person rather than several, because “Everybody’s job is nobody’s job.” For example, have only one team head the mission project rather than several young people. Let this one work out an over-all plan to meet with your approval and have him assign responsibilities to the others. You will still have young people working on the project but only one will be the chairman and consequently your goal will be reached more efficiently because you have eliminated confusion due to duplication.

2. To fix responsibility. In eliminating duplication, you should be aware that certain teen-agers have certain responsibilities. Because “specifics” have been stated, the youths understand what is required and as a result you have fixed responsibility. Paul said, “This one thing I do,” not “In these 40 things I dabble.” Think for a moment, how many people do you know that are known for two vocations instead of one? Very, very few, if any. The greatest majority of men are known as a doctor, engineer, or a lawyer, etc. Only those who border on the genius ever dominate two vocational fields. Your young people need to have their responsibilities fixed in a oneness of thought and goal.

3. To put more people to work. Sad, sad, the bitter tale of the average youth work today. Of the multitude of young people that attend youth meetings, only a small percentage ever actively take part. The majority of youth belong to the P.W.A. (Pew Warmers Association) and spend all their time in youth meetings like sponges soaking up everything but never giving out. When you organize, every person should be giving a part in the total plan of your group. It will not be your Young Person’s Meeting but their Young Person’s Meeting.

4. To give efficiency. This is getting the most done in the best way. A prime example of this principle is the assembly line of an automobile factory. Each man, as he fulfills his task, seems to be so small a task, becomes a part of a huge team. As each car rolls off the assembly line, minute by minute, each person is contributing to the whole. With each person of your youth fulfilling their task along with the other, the whole team work will result in efficiency.

5. To give unity. Unless your young people realize that every activity, meeting, etc., is a part of an over-all plan, the picture of unity will not be evident to them. Do they realize why you are having a basketball team? That it’s to bring unsaved kids to your meetings as well as providing wholesome recreation for the Christians? Are they conscious that their support of an orphan is to help them to develop charity and help for the needy as well as using their money wisely? They must have the knowledge that everything is unified, each is working toward a single goal- “Whatsoever you do in word or deed do all” for what? “To glorify the Lord Jesus.”

HOW TO HAVE ORGANIZATION

1. Define the duties in the meeting. If Johnny is going to lead songs, tell him that it will be for a missionary meeting and so he should have songs related to missions. When Tom and Ken are told that they will take the offering, explain at what time to do it and how if necessary. Clearly outline their duties so that all the other kids don’t have to squirm when a blunder is made. Then Tom and Ken won’t become scared and nervous in fulfilling their part of the program. Nothing confuses like confusion.

2. Use all the young people. This is participation not observation. Unless each and every youth is assigned some part in the youth activities, you can expect attendance casualties. If someone can straighten the chairs, assign it to one of your young people. Need some song books repaired? Use a young person. No matter how big or how small the job, use all the kids. The psychological support they will receive will be one more stronghold in keeping them in your group.

3. Vary the program from week to week. It surely would be a boring life if all we had was sunshine, day in and day out. A little rain and a little snow makes that sunny day more appreciated. Love missionary meetings? That's wonderful, but what about a panel on dating problems, a skit on practical witnessing, or a study of false religions. Make your programs well balanced. Give them some meat and not just milk.

4. Organize in advance. Have you ever arrived at a youth meeting to find the song leader thumbing through the book for choruses? What a silly question -of course you have. Now, remember the impression you received? "Boy, what a guy, he doesn't care enough about the songs to have them chosen beforehand." If all these things were taken care of in advance-pleasant attitude and impression would be received. Organize in advance (and that doesn't mean fifteen minutes before the meeting).

5. Find out what resources you have on hand. If you belong to a fairly large church, you'll be fortunate to have a library, projector, and visual aids. A great number of churches, however, are limited as to their facilities and aids. Maybe Johnny can lend his tape recorder for a meeting or Susan can welcome one of the kids to her house to use her encyclopedia for reference work on dope addiction. Pete is known as one of the best trumpet players in town, he'd be glad to play a special some night. Mary's terrific on cartoons and will be willing to make special posters for the party. Gather your sources and use them to widen your scope and give variety to your meetings.

b. Advertise efficiently. "I didn't know, otherwise I would have been there." I've never heard of your group before." These are familiar quotes from the young people. You've got to make known what you are doing and advertise, advertise, advertise (see chapter 10 for fuller details).

These comments and helps will only serve you as a youth leader when you make them applicable to your youth society. By no means has the field of organization been thoroughly covered, but these thoughts are intended to stimulate your mind along these lines and to emphasize the importance as well as the need of organization in Christ's work. Do not underestimate it; enforce it; and watch the results bring glory to God.

CHAPTER 6

BY EMBRACING PROCEDURE

You must remember that administration must be left to the chosen officers. You as a youth leader must be careful not to "run the show" yourself, as it is often easy to do this, but it is not wise. Let the youth themselves get under the responsibility of administering the youth program.

Another important point to be remembered is that the youth director must have a clear definition of the purpose and function of each office, committee, or rule. To see that these functions are carried out is your part as a youth leader.

STAFF

1. Supervisors. In addition to yourself, it is well to have an advisory board. That is, a few within the church who are sympathetic with the youth group and its work. This group of supervisors could be composed of:

a. The Pastor. He should naturally have the youth at heart and be willing to do much for their benefit, and you will have to receive most of your authority through him.

b. The Board. It would be well to have at least two representatives from both the deacons and elders. Since they are the governing body of the church, they should know just what the youth are doing.

c. The Congregation. The layman in youth work can be a real asset to you as you strive to win more youth to your group. You can use some of those people in the church who are interested in the youth as co-sponsors. Even though they might lack formal training, their zeal and love for the youth might more than make up for that lack of training.

d. The Sunday School Superintendent. This person can do more to help your youth group grow in numbers possibly than anyone else in the entire church. He has within his reach all the potential youth, and he can be a vital instrument in winning them for the youth society. This point must be emphasized. There must be a connection between the different groups of the youth. You should see that your group is one throughout the entire church, yet each program, each meeting should be completely individualistic, and geared to meet the needs of the respective ages. By tying the Sunday evening youth group in with the Sunday School you will be contributing to this integrated program.

2. Officers. As I have said before, the youth should get underneath the responsibility of the actual administration of the youth group, and to do this efficiently they must have their own leaders.

a. President. Your president is the principal executive officer. He is the head of the organization. Naturally, he will be an ex-officio member of all group committees, and will be a member of all committees.

The president can either make the youth group succeed or fail according to his ability and interest. If he lacks ability, but abounds in interest, which will be the case more often than not, he will be a real challenge to you to train him; but if he lacks interest and ability, then he will be an even greater challenge to you.

The youth group is a training school. Here is where you should train future leaders for church offices, and since such positions are to be filled by men it is particularly beneficial to have a boy as the president and vice-president. But you must remember that the women also have their place and you must train the girls to fill their future responsibilities.

b. Vice-President. His job is mostly confined to that of filling in when the president is absent. He should, by all means, be ready at any time to assist the president in matters concerning the group. Also, the vice-president could be used as the song-leader if you lack enough fellows in your group; but only if you have no one else to take the job.

c. Secretary. While it might be better to have fellows in the two preceding positions, it would be just as well to have girls fill the next two positions of secretary and treasurer. The job may be combined if your numbers are few, but if your group is of any size the responsibility would be too great for one person.

The duties of the secretary should be to keep accurate records and also to make all announcements and reports. The job of handling correspondence of all types should be taken care of by her. The secretary should endeavor to keep closely in touch with all members and keep the youth group closely in touch with each other. All matters of interest and importance to the group should be accumulated by the secretary and reported to the president.

d. Treasurer. The duties of the treasurer are to take care of the financial matters pertaining to the group. All money received and distributed on behalf of the group should pass through the treasurer's hands. He should keep accurate records of all financial matters and he should be able

at all times to prepare a financial report and he should prepare one and distribute it among the group at least once a year.

3. Committees. The young people's group necessitates having committees appointed to take care of different situations that arise in the group. You will probably want certain standing committees. a. Program Committee. This committee, with the officers, will probably be the determining factor of your programs. They will do the actual planning of your meetings.

b. Missions committee. This committee could have a lot to do in influencing the members of your group in their attitude toward the mission field and missionaries, and rightly so. Because the Lord put such emphasis on the evangelization of the world, this committee should do all it can to arouse interest of the youth.

c. Recreation committee. You don't want to put too much emphasis on this side of the work, but it certainly cannot be neglected. With active, energetic youth to handle, you will have to have some physical outlet for them. By having planned recreation before them you can in some ways control this vitality and direct it into real Christian channels.

There are many more committees that could be listed, but that will be up to your own discretion in light of the needs of your specific group. Keep your committees small for best results, with each member having a definite job to do.

Remember the staff is the actual governing body. Prayer is the lubrication that insures smooth running of all parts of the youth group. It should reach into all the cracks and corners of the youth group making the entire youth machine run efficiently and effectively.

RECORDS

The matter of keeping records is a very important, yet, sometimes greatly neglected phase of the work. You must remember the Lord said let all things be done decently and in order. And without records you can have little order in your affairs. But keep in mind that in record keeping as well as in other things there must be a definite and practical bearing upon the accomplishment of a particular purpose or goal. Your records should be complete and carefully prepared, each committee keeping a record of its activities. This would necessitate each committee having a secretary within the group, who, in a way would be an assistant to the group secretary. The reason careful attention should be given to record keeping both on individual committee basis as well as the whole group is that the officers both present and future may have definite and accurate information to use for guiding them when attacking new phases of work.

Within your group you should be able to find someone who is interested and able in the matter of devising and supervising this whole matter of records and reports.

You will have to standardize your record keeping to meet your own specific needs, but some of the things that should be kept on record are membership, attendance, recreational activities, finances, and the programs throughout the year. You can elaborate on those and add others as you see the need arise.

You will want to obtain the names and addresses of all the new young people who come into your group so that you can do follow-up work with them. Remember these records are to help you, not hinder you. Keep them simple but complete with the information that is necessary to you.

AGE GROUPING

One of the fastest ways you can tear down your youth group in numbers is by having poor division of the age groups.

By separating the respective ages, you can much better reach them on their level and you can also fill their needs more intelligently. Each particular age group has certain problems, and their problems are of no concern to any other age.

Because the youth themselves like to be with their own age, a division of this type is well because it not only makes it easier for you to reach them, but it also promotes greater unity between the youth themselves. They speak, act, and think more on their own level, if they are around others of their level.

If the youth knows the group is geared to meet his own personal needs, he is more likely to come out than if he knew that there would be others there much older or much younger than he. So you see, you will be able to increase your numbers by dividing and subduing the problem of combined ages. Thus, you will reach many more with the Gospel.

FINANCES

You as a youth leader should encourage the youth to give systematically out of a cheerful heart. Present the scriptural viewpoint on this subject to them and then let them take the matter before the Lord.

It would be well for your group to set up a budget for the entire year, thus knowing how much money is to be allowed for each phase of the work. In some churches the church budget has allowances for the youth work, so all the money taken in by the group goes toward the support of missionaries or a particular project. When this is not the case then the group must plan for both the evangelistic and social functions of their group.

After you have set your budget up you must be certain that you fill it and remain consistent with it. If your group supports an organization or a missionary, keep before them that those who they support are counting on the funds which they give. This will encourage them to be faithful in this phase of the Lord's work.

EQUIPMENT

In many cases, the room in which your meeting is to be held will have to be made the most of, for lack of something better. But you should be sure that certain things are **done before** the meeting is ready to begin.

You will want to be certain that there are adequate chairs, that the lighting is sufficient, and that the room is well ventilated.

If you are planning to utilize such instruments as a loud speaker, tape recorder, record player, or movie projector, make sure that they are in working order before your meeting begins. Or if you are going to have a skit or a play, don't wait until five minutes before the program to rush around setting up props and equipment.

If possible, the room should be geared to the age group using it. Don't hold the teen-age meeting in the Junior room. Try to stimulate the youth by the use of atmosphere. Have maps, charts, posters, and other audio-visual aids throughout the room.

Through environmental means you will be able to meet the needs of the youth more effectively, so you must be on the look-out for new and different ways of using the facilities available to you.

The area of administration is a large one, and the way it is carried out determines the way the group will go. If you try out a plan and it doesn't work too well in your case, don't take the attitude that the "die is cast," and you just can't change it, but rather review your needs and fit your resources into those needs.

By all means don't be afraid to change any one point within your youth machine. Remember, even the best of machines must have check-ups and changes, and your youth machine is no different.

CHAPTER 7

BY INTERESTING PRESENTATION HOW TO CHOOSE METHODS FOR A YOUTH GROUP

The aim of this section is to show you what must be taken into consideration when you are choosing a method of procedure for a youth group. This may be a Christian club, Sunday evening Christian Endeavor, or other Christian youth work.

1. Have you noted the age of your group? To you, the age of your group is one most important concern, or at least it should be, as you work with youth. Have you considered the three basic age groups: **12-14** yrs. early, **15-18** yrs., middle, and **19-24** yrs., late. Each group has its own needs. In the early age group, you will find a tendency toward being together and doing things together rather than individual activity. So you must then plan your programs to meet the needs of youth as a group. But this group will have a tendency to do things in two separate groups, boys against girls.

In the middle group (15-18 yrs.) you will find them becoming interested in doing things together as a gang. Here you will find mostly mixed groups, perhaps not as couples but as a mixed gang.

You will find ones in this age group becoming interested in those of the opposite sex but still they will do things as a mixed gang if they are planned in an informal way. You will find this age group most critical and also their thinking is greatly governed by the latest fashions and what they read. Cliques will also become more of a problem, so you must plan a program that works away from these *Cliques will be a Problem* cliques and towards a Christian goal. *You will* find that much prayer will be needed to analyze the age groups and to know how to meet their needs.

Lastly (**19-24**), the late group consisting largely of couples and college students has a need completely different from that of the others. You will now need to plan programs along a more intellectual line with a logical aim behind everything that is said and done.

2. Have you noted the needs of your group? What are the needs of your group? Have you stopped long enough to consider just what would best meet the immediate needs of your group or club? If not, stop now and do so before your organization grows less interesting or you lose another precious young person. Are they being taught how to be future leaders, Sunday School teachers, presidents of groups or church leaders? Perhaps a study in leadership and qualifications of a deacon, elder or Sunday School superintendent would be good material for your groups next study series.

Have you tried sitting down and making a mental or written list of the needs of your group? Keeping these needs in mind would produce a better method of presentation.

You will find that your group's needs will also vary with environment. Economic, social and educational background-each of these things must be taken into consideration before choosing a method of presentation.

3. Have you noted the needs of your individuals? After noting the age of your group and the needs of your group as a whole it is time to consider the needs of the individuals within that group. Each of these individuals differs completely from all the others. They are made up different-physically, mentally, morally, socially, and emotionally.

Have you noted any peculiar characteristic of an individual as they are in a group? Have you visited in the pupils' homes? If you haven't, do so.

When you are planning for a program, remember that you are ministering to needs of individuals within a group. You must consider the individual needs of every pupil. Have you geared your program to meet some need in Jim's life, the blond fellow who is popular in your group? He is having dating problems concerning his choice of a date. Is your program geared to meet his need in Christ and in his dating question as part of his Christian living.

4. Have you checked the enthusiasm to your methods? What about the enthusiasm in your group as you perhaps lecture? Are some of the students asleep or talking so that you do not get their attention?

Maybe you should try some other method of presentation. Have you ever thought of discussing this with your pupils to determine which type of presentation they like best. Unless your method is interesting in working with youth you will soon lose their attention and perhaps the student. Let your pupil and his needs be your guide in the methods you choose. Here again you will find age group needs and individuals entering into the picture as you plan what method to use.

5. Have you noted the facilities at hand for the method chosen? Having the proper equipment, chalk, board, maps, pictures, reading materials, audio-visual equipment is vital. Your Bible is one of the most important pieces of equipment that will fit your need.

a. Time. Do you have adequate time to present the material through the method you have chosen? Something that is never finished during one class or meeting period will not hold interest if it is finished at a later time. You as a leader are responsible for planning or seeing that you have the time to present your method. Remember, to let out late is not the answer to a program that ran overtime. Interest is lost when the class period or regular meeting is over.

b. Place. Do you have sufficient room for your presentation? Is the seating capacity sufficient to allow room for your pupils? If they are crowded together, interest will be harder to hold. Is the room adequately ventilated, lighted and heated? All these things must be taken into consideration if you are to be an effective leader or teacher.

PRINCIPLES OF USING METHODS

1. Is your method aiming toward a purpose? What is the purpose in your young people's meeting for next Sunday evening? Is it just to fill up time, to entertain, to hold interest, or is it geared to meet a need in the life of the members of your class?

Every meeting small or large should have a goal at which to shoot. The purpose you have in mind should always be to meet the need of your group. The method and purpose should fit together perfectly.

2. Is your method aiming toward the age of our group? Many of the methods you use may be applied to a large age group, but the method or methods should be planned to take in the group with which you work. Flannel graph is not effective with those of 15-18 years because they consider it childish. Have you considered your group in the light of their ages? You will find that the Word of God will hold varying degrees of interest to different age groups according to the method you use to present the Word to the pupil.

3. Is your method best suited for your group? If you consider your group a relatively immature one, then you have an idea as to some of the needs of the group. You may now plan a program and use methods of presenting their need for a dedicated life to Christ. Do not try to teach an immature group as you would a mature group because you will not be meeting their immediate needs.

Then again if your group is a spiritually mature group and is living for Christ, you have the opportunity of leading them into a deeper spiritual knowledge of God. You may also use this type of group for planned visitation, projects to help missionaries or a local church group of younger children. Planned responsibility is also a good method which will help the youth to get experience that they may use as they become the future leaders of the church.

Use methods that will apply to your group in the light of whether they are carnal or spiritual Christians. If you have some who are unsaved, then your duty is to present a program geared to show the way of salvation.

BETTER METHODS AT YOUR SERVICE FOR BETTER TEACHING!

	Buzz Sessions	Small groups of 3 to 8 discussing simultaneously various phases of a given problem.
	Brainstorming	A listing of as many ideas as possible on a given subject or problem, without evaluation. The goal is a quantity of suggestions.
	Circle Conversation	An "airing" of individual opinions or answers, beginning with one person and continuing around the group.
	Debate	A consideration of opposing issues of a problem, with a "negative" team and a positive" team. Arguments are given alternately from side to side; then rebuttals are given alternately.
	Discussion	Free participation in which all are working together to clarify issues, consider solutions, solve problems, propose action.
	Demonstration	Portrayal of Bible stories or truths by means of acting with pantomimes, puppets, shadow pictures, plays, skits, role plays, etc.
	Forum	A question and answer period in which the audience asks questions of the experts.
	Lecture	Presentation of material by the leader to impart or interpret information, clarify facts, stimulate thinking.
	Listening Teams	Teams within a larger group looking for or listening for various phases of a subject as given by a speaker, film, etc.
	Panel	A guided discussion among representatives before an audience.
	Question and Answer	Inquiry made by teacher to the pupil to promote thinking test learning, arouse interest.
	Research Assignment	A personal or group study project to search for facts or solutions.
	Story Illustration	Presentation of relevant incidents to illuminate the truth.
	Symposium	An orderly lecture-type presentation of aspects of a single subject by experts. A forum (questions from the audience) usually follows.
	visual aids	Physical objects or materials to be seen and/or heard in order to impress the mind, stimulate interest, explain facts.

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PRINCIPLES OF USING MATERIAL

You will find that the method you choose will usually limit you to material which you can use. The quarterly may not always supply the material you need, so do not hesitate to lay it aside and find material to meet the method and do not hesitate to lay it aside and find the material to meet the method and need present.

1. Material should match age level. Your material whether taken from a quarterly or some other source should be matched to the age group you are teaching. If you are teaching teens, be sure the material is at their age level. Be sure that it is not on the "childish" side. Teen-agers will notice this much quicker, and resent it more than when you have material above their age level.

If you are teaching a lesson to the 15 to 18 year age group, plan to make the material have illustrations and applications to their problems.

2. Material should meet needs. Teaching is meeting needs. This is what should be before you as leader and teacher at all times. Inquire of yourself, “is my teaching meeting the needs of my students and their everyday problems?” You will find that if you are not meeting their needs, interest will be low and you will have a hard time keeping the attention of your pupils. If you are teaching from the Bible, make applications which will meet a specific problem before one or more of your students at that moment. You will find youth eager to listen and learn if you give them something that is “practical” to the everyday Christian life.

3. Material is to be accompanied with preparation regardless of method used. Preparation is essential to meeting needs. Preparation is essential to all age groups. Preparation is essential to the teacher as well as to the student. If you are to be a successful leader or teacher, you must spend much time in study and prayer concerning the material which you are going to present. You will find that it does not take young people long to discover whether you are prepared or unprepared. If you are going to hold the attention of your group, you must be well prepared. No matter what method you use, it is your responsibility as leader to answer any questions or direct any discussions into proper channels. As an automobile salesman must know his product in order to effectively sell, you must know your material in order to effectively sell your student on the teaching of the Bible.

You must have interesting opening remarks that will catch attention and yet apply to the lesson at hand. You then must know the material well enough to reach a conclusion or purpose as you go along.

Again, you will need to spend much time in prayer, that the Holy Spirit will lead you as you teach. Only then will all the methods and materials, which you may choose to use, become completely effective for God will direct you to the right method and purpose.

Along with prayer goes the importance of Bible reading and study. The Bible should be the center of all of your activity. You will find that the Word will become more effective in accomplishing its purpose as you plan and study in new ways to apply it to your youths needs.

CHAPTER 8

BY ENCOURAGING PUPIL PARTICIPATION

Bill was a carnal Christian. He attended services irregularly until he was given the responsibility of helping present the lesson one week. In preparing for the lesson, Bill realized his own lack of appreciation for the things of God. The result of preparing the lesson and participating in the program has caused Bill to seek to live for the Lord and to serve Him by leading the young people's group.

You should use the young people as much as possible because this is the only way they can be trained to take an active part. By giving a pupil something to do, you encourage him to work and that gives him the feeling that this is not just another group, but his group. It makes a person feel wanted and useful. Put some of your pupils in charge of the lesson and make it their responsibility to give the lesson. This will help him to grow spiritually. He will have to study for the lesson and that will mean getting into the Word for himself. Then when the day comes to present the material, he should be spiritually ready. And though that young person may be

nervous, after several times he will begin to be more confident within himself. The old saying that unless you use them, you lose them has been proven true, so it behooves you to use all the pupils as much as possible.

HOW TO GET KIDS TO PARTICIPATE

1. Have a “gab-fest” with the youth group to talk out the purpose of youth programming.
2. Encourage the young people who may not have done their best. Let them know the program was not a complete flop.
3. Use an interest-finder to determine the interest and needs of the youth.
4. Put the top leaders on the planning groups.
5. Help the youth criticize and evaluate their own programs.
6. Be sure the planning groups have plenty of time to prepare (at least three weeks in advance).
7. Do not force the young person to take on a major responsibility. Realize that learning to bear responsibility takes time.
8. Ask the program participants to give an outline of what they are planning to say in their reports, talks, etc.
9. Use the youth in outside meetings or services (for example, old folks’ homes).
10. Advertise the meetings in clever, up-to-date ways.
11. Tell the participants that “the group is on your side, rooting for you..”
12. Let the kids be creative and change the program to fit themselves.
13. Be enthusiastic and spiritually concerned.
14. Set the pace. Be an example.
15. Be sure the program presents something they are interested in.
16. Make discussion questions neither too simple nor too hard.
17. Help the youth see accomplishments in the meetings.
18. Use the church choir director to help the youth song leader.
19. Let the song leader choose the songs himself.
20. Show your teens appreciation for what they do.
21. Don’t let them be satisfied. Inspire them on.

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METHODS OF GAINING PUPIL PARTICIPATION

When your pupils are told something or shown something they are learning by impression but when they themselves do something they learn by expression. Both these methods are needed. No one ever learned to drive a car or bake a pie by just being told how or reading a book about it. He only learns by doing. The more one does something the better he gets at it. The old saying, “practice makes perfect,” is applicable here and should be put into effect.

These methods were used and demonstrated by Jesus. Jesus demonstrated that expression is an essential factor in learning; He used the method of “Hear, then do.” We can see His method when calling a disciple. He first had them arise and come, then follow and go and make disciples.

Other words that Christ used were tell, watch, and work. The same principle holds that you cannot make good Christians out of your young people unless you get them to become active.

You should teach your pupils to participate in the class and to practice in daily life the principles learned in the Bible class. It is a well known fact that a student who never participates never learns. However, the pupil should know that this participation is for a purpose. The activity may be largely mental such as thinking through the situation or problem presented by the teacher. You must teach the one who gives the lesson that he or she has the responsibility of making the others to think.

As the leader of the young people's group you should sit down and figure out a job for every one of the students. Don't just give them a job without first telling each one the purpose of his job. Think up jobs that will teach leadership, help to build up confidence and make everyone feel useful.

You can check on the following chart and see if you are using any or all of these suggested ways of using your students.

SUGGESTED LIST OF ACTIVITIES

I Use I Use These I Should Inappropriate
 Often Occasionally Use More For My Use

	Passing out bulletins					
	Taking offerings					
	Special Music					
	Play piano					
	Teach lesson					
	Debate					
	Discussion					
	Drama					
	Drill					
	Panel discussion					
	Question					
	Make Posters					
	Pass out hand bills					
	House to house visitation					
	Visit sick					
	Pass out tracts					
	Street meetings					
	Lead in prayer					
	Sing in choir					
	Committees					
	Leaders					
	Mailing letters					
	Janitor					
	Welcoming committee					
	Usher					
	Book reports					
	Game committee					
	Actors in plays					
	Fill out reports					
	Pick up pupils					
	Eats committee					
	Scripture memory					
	Fill out workbooks					
	Handwork					

CHAPTER 9

BY GUIDING THROUGH PROBLEMS

Formal guidance is the method used when a young person comes to your office with his problem. For the most part, you will not do a lot of this type of counseling in your ministry.

Informal guidance has sometimes been called “Coca-Cola counseling.” This method is used when a young person brings up a problem as you are sitting across the table at the snack shop or as you are talking with him in an informal manner. In fact, this method is used any time a

problem is brought up, perhaps on a ball field or in a car. The average young people's director will probably use this method most.

PRINCIPLES OF COUNSELING

1 . Realization is the first principle. You must realize that young people do have problems and they need counseling. So when a young person comes and tells you that he does not get anything out of reading the Bible, you must realize there is a real problem in his life and that he needs help. The problem may be in his method of reading or it may be in his relationship to the Author. Whatever the problem is, he needs counsel.

Proverbs 11:14, "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety."

We must also realize that in God's sight the counselor is of infinite value; therefore, you must be at your best spiritually, mentally, physically and socially.

The greatest spiritual quality of a counselor is his love to God and his love for the counselee. Jesus is our greatest example. No love for God could be greater than the love for the individuals shown in the story of the woman taken in adultery, John 8:1-11. Jesus did not condemn her but He forgave her.

Mentally, you must know life and be adjusted to it in order to help others adjust to it. You must know that teen-agers like to be in a gang rather than alone because of their sociological make-up. Such knowledge is required to be an effective counselor.

Your physical appearance determines whether or not the counselee will accept you. Emerson once said, "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."

Socially, you must be a good mixer and have friends. To have friends you must show yourself friendly according to Proverbs 18:24: "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

You must realize that God is very interested in people's problems. He was so concerned with our problem of sin that He gave His only Son Jesus to meet our need of salvation. You must realize that each young person in your group is the one for whom Christ died and that as he matures in the Christian life, he will be valuable in the Lord's service. Having these two facts in mind, you should be more interested in guiding them through their problems.

Christ realized the need of man and placed a high value upon him. Therefore, you must also realize and place a high value upon all of your young people.

2. Relaxation is the next principle in counseling with young people. This means that you must get the counselee to tell you his whole problem. Your problem is that a boy comes to you and he is either all keyed up and cannot say a word, or else he talks about everything under the sun except his dilemma. Therefore, you must get him to feel at home in your presence. If he feels you are interested in him and will keep his confidence, he will be relaxed and tell you his whole story. You can get him to relax by following several principles.

You must win his confidence, and then keep it. Get him to confide in you and then do not tell anyone about it except to God in prayer.

Relaxation often comes when you assure The counselee that God understands all problems. You may even give an example of how Jesus understood problems such as the woman taken in adultery. John 8:1-11.

You can help them get started by asking questions, such as, “What’s on your mind?” or “What would you like to talk about today?” What you say is not so important as the way you say it. Be sincere and understanding.

Remember that you are trying to get the counselee to tell his whole problem; therefore let him talk all he will and do not interrupt. When he is talking, never show shock or disapproval of what he is telling you.

Never tell a counselee, “O, you will forget all about it in a couple of days.” To him it is an important problem. Remember how you felt when you were turned down for a date.

As your interview goes on, the counselee will feel you understand and that he can talk about anything as frankly as he wishes. That is what you are seeking for, his telling what is really upon his heart. This confession of the problem is necessarily the first step in solving it.

3. Rapport is a relation that must be in existence for you to help your youth. Rapport means “a relation characterized by harmony, conformity, accord or affinity” (Webster). It is “an intimate harmonious relation as applied to people having close understanding.” Rapport is gained in much the same way as you use to get the youth to relax as stated in our previous point. However, there is a difference between rapport and relaxation in that through relaxation lie merely relaxes and tells his story but in rapport you must think along with the youth as he is telling his problem. You must forget what is on your own mind and enter into his experience. To do this, you must listen well and give your full attention to what he is saying. You must have warmth in understanding but control in your emotions. Be patient with the youth and help him talk, and be careful not to embarrass him if he cries or just cannot seem to say what he wants to. When a student comes to you with a problem about dates, and realizes that you are not a judge but you understand, this is rapport.

If you come to an immediate solution or call this “puppy love” or unimportant, you have lost contact and destroyed rapport. You are gaining rapport as you get the youth to relax.

4. Reservation of enough time is a very important aspect of counseling. To help the counselee see and find a solution to his problem, the counselor must get the whole picture. This takes time. Often the counselee does not start with his real problem but as he gains confidence in you he will bring it out, perhaps at the very end of the allotted time. In such a case, you should arrange to see the youth at another time. This may also be the case when you are doing informal counseling. Of course it is better to be able to deal with the problem immediately when it is brought up even if it inconveniences you, but there are certain cases where it is impossible.

5. Reveal the problem. This means to take all the information obtained and analyze it to come up with the problem which is really bothering the youth. This is necessary because the youth perhaps does not tell you his real problem because of fear or something else; therefore you have to take what you heard and determine what is the real problem.

Most counselors say that you should take notes so you can analyze the problem better. However, with young people, note taking seems to distract them. Therefore do not take notes during an interview with a young person but do keep a file on each one. This file should contain the following information.

- a. Talents-His ability to do specific things.
- b. Past responsibility-What meetings he has led, parties for which he has planned, etc.
- c. Achievements-What success he has had, and what awards he has received in school (athletic and academic).
- d. Information about his parents.

e. All facts concerning his problems when counseling with you.

f. How he has solved other problems he has brought to you. This file will help you to understand the youth's real problem. Prayer is potent. Do not fail to get guidance from Him who understands all problems perfectly.

Never be afraid to refer your counselee to a specialist in the case of difficult problems, because you may confuse the youth further. In the case of a difficult spiritual problem refer him to your pastor, or if he has a physical problem send him to the doctor or if it is a serious psychological or mental problem refer him to a Christian psychiatrist.

6. Results. The first result is in his unburdening himself by the confession of his problem. This helps him to understand his own problem. For instance, a young person leaves you and tells his friend, "our sponsor really helped me," when really all you did was listen to his problem. The use of parallel passages in the Bible as illustrations are very useful in helping the counselee decide upon a solution to the problem. You may also be able to point out to him that we can have peace amid our circumstances and that God's plan is best. Results come when the youth sees his own problem and solution. Yours is not the task of passing out information, but guiding the youth to see his own solution.

You must get them to see the solution because they are the ones who follow the steps to that solution. This gives them confidence in themselves and they will be able to solve their own problem next time. In leading them into this, you must be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," Matthew **10:16**. For his own future strength of character, it is important for the youth to feel that he has solved his own problem. Thus he is becoming independently dependent upon the Lord.

7. Responsibility is laid on the youth to deal with his own problem. Give information and direction to parallel Scripture passages. Pray with the individual. You can map out daily Bible readings and suggest books to read. You can even help him select activities which will help him solve his problem. But in the last analysis, the responsibility for change is upon the youth entirely. The youth must be aware of this fact. He must not have the idea that just because he has told his problem to you, it is automatically solve.

As a counselor you cannot perform a change in a person's life, but the Holy Spirit can do so. After the interview, you should pray much for the youth. We must pray much before, during, and after the interview.

After the interview, you are also responsible to encourage the young person as he goes forth trying to live up to the standards aimed toward a solution to his problem. Even if he has failed in some point, give him a word of encouragement and a challenge to go on. Young people like challenges.

CHAPTER 10

BY ADEQUATE PROMOTION

Adequate promotion is the path that leads to personal contact. This is the reason you should promote and the reason why promotion should be done adequately. Promotion should follow much prayer and spiritual discernment.

Advertising should be done only when you have something worthwhile to advertise. Needless to say, you have the best product in the world. You should be so sold on Jesus Christ and what He can do for others, that you want all to share in your experience.

Use the available talent for the jobs they are best suited. Make sure the individuals who are affiliated with the advertising are sold on what they are promoting. Push your promoting after you see the Lord's will outlined and use the individuals God would desire in this position. There are some individuals who do better at ushering than at advertising; if so, use them in this manner. Adequate promotion requires adequate individuals!

PERSONAL CRITERIA FOR ADVERTISING

Advertising for Christ calls forth several basic and vital criteria in reaching youth, that you must strive to attain.

1. Led of the Spirit. In Christian advertising, those involved must seek to be led by the Holy Spirit and rely upon Him for direction. The Spirit guides men in various ways. Prayer is a powerful and effective way of knowing God's will and of being led of the Spirit. A good way to begin an advertising campaign is with a prayer meeting in which all in attendance display one desire; to let the Holy Spirit do the leading.

2. Scriptural. Study of the Word of God can also be a means of showing the way in which God desires that you go. All advertising should be kept in limits of the Word of God.

3. Surrounding Circumstances. This plays a large part in determining the leading of the Spirit. If the group in charge is sure that a certain method is the Lord's will, and yet all doors seem to be closed, they might humbly concede that it was their wish and not His will. God often uses circumstances and more often than not when things don't work out it is because God has said "no" in an indirect way.

4. Consult those who are experienced in the field of Christian advertising. Those who have been through it before can give wise counsel on the do's and don'ts of this type of advertising. Although everything will not apply in one case as in another, basically the experiences of older Christians or veterans in the field are useful and helpful to the one just beginning.

METHODS OF PROMOTION

In the secular world it is quite well known that some advertising is untruthful and dishonest. It is often exaggerated to the extent of being entirely false in its relaying to the public its worth. Advertising in the Lord's work for youth must produce good after-effects. Young people do not like to be fooled, so when advertising, you should keep in mind that when the program's over and each element has been tested and tried, it will verify what was said previously.

1. Make the Advertising Scriptural. Show the youth that there is no disappointment in what Christ had to offer through your program. Scripture can be utilized wisely.

2. Make Advertising appeal to youth. This should be kept in mind in every detail. Take into consideration their interests, their desire to have things a little contrary to the general common every-day elements and the fast pace at which they live and move.

3. Be brief. Don't try to put the 6th chapter of Matthew on a post card and expect kids to take it all in. They are usually in too much of a hurry to take that much time. Select a striking Scripture motto or theme and put it down in as few words as possible.

4. Be different! If there is anything that appeals to youth it is something out of the ordinary. Make the letters sideways, upside down, slanting or crooked; anything to make it eye-catching, yet readable. But be sure it's different and youth will love it and read it too!

5. Be personal. In the Lord's work many methods can be utilized successfully if used prayerfully and thoughtfully, but one of the most important aspects of advertising something is to make it personal. The youth must feel personally wanted at the youth meeting.

6. Advertise in Advance. No matter how well one advertises, if it is not in sufficient amount of time, your advertising will be of no avail. Advertising should be done under the precept that it will be early enough for all to build their schedule around it. In this busy age many very interesting activities occupy a young person's mind and interest. Youth will display a very positive response when your program meets their needs.

7. Be neat and attractive. In advertising for your youth programs, you will not be able to display professional work but you can and should display neat and attractive work. Many times a neat and well organized poster is indicative of a neat and well rounded program.

8. Be informative. The information on the poster should contain all the information but should be done in as little space as possible. You should always make your program posters informative but brief.

9. Be colorful and attractive. Use much color as this will catch the youth's eye and he or she will want to look at it twice. Use illustrations wherever possible.

GENERAL SUGGESTED METHODS

Of the general methods used in advertising, one of the best is by far the personal testimony. One young person telling another of the great experience he or she had at the last meeting does much to encourage attendance.

Neat, attractive posters can be placed in store windows, busses, on church bulletin boards, in the youth room, and in school when, where, and if permitted.

Handbills can reach everyone in school. These can be done very quickly and cheaply. They can be given to youth in school, stuck on car windows, etc.

The local newspaper is always in need of some news, so utilize this service as it is reasonable in cost and very effective. Use pictures and articles of activities and of members at recent activities. Any special news bit, such as awards, should be emphasized. You should use the newspaper as much as possible; then you are placed before the public and this will give the community a chance to voice confidence in what you are doing.

Telephoning is a very personal way to make contact and can be correlated with postcards and posters. Ask them to call you for further details. You will get a call!

A personally typed letter is sure to be read. Amazing responses have been recorded from neat informative hand written letters. Try it! You should also use the two closest methods to you: your organizational calendar and your own church bulletin. Distribute a wallet size calendar with all events on it to keep the youth informed. Make sure your calendar is made up-to-date.

For special events that need prayer support or interests of parents, have the pastor prepare a space in your church bulletin announcements section. Give all details and again be informative and brief.

In advertising as in all phases of the Lord's work, we should seek daily His guidance in that which we do; and remember that whatever happens, to God be the Glory!

CHAPTER 11

BY PROOF OF THE PUDDING

This chapter deals with evaluation and judging the accomplishments of youth work. Here you will be given a few basic standards which you can use to evaluate yourself. These will help to determine the effectiveness of your youth work, as well as point out the weaknesses which need improvement.

In this chapter, evaluation is dealt with as not necessarily pointing out all that is wrong with the subject being evaluated, but rather is constructive in that it should tend to help improve the subject. As correction means “setting something right” (not to show all that is wrong), so is evaluation in that it should restore, and not always tear down. But sometimes it is necessary to “tear down” and if this is done in the proper manner it can be of much use. For example, a doctor sometimes needs to operate, in order to help the patient. But he must also know how to restore the body to its normal use. Thus it is the main purpose of this chapter in showing that evaluation is like being a “physician,” not a “diagnostician.”

YOUR STANDARD OF EVALUATION

You as a youth leader will have to have certain standards which you must meet. These will be your guide to see if you are fulfilling that which you have set out to accomplish. Perhaps this is the most important thing for you to ask yourself, “Am I fulfilling the purpose or aim that I have set as my goal?”

1. The standard is to see if guidance of the youth is accomplished. Evaluation is guidance, to foster growth. As mentioned above, evaluation should be constructive in order that it be of any value. Therefore, you as a youth leader must see that guidance is given in all phases of youth work. This includes guidance in the program, in the administration, and in the supervision of personnel.

Your guidance in the program is of utmost importance for it is through the program that you make your initial contact with youth. Now to hold the interest of these young people, the program needs to be geared to their needs, and these needs are the basis for your aims of the program. You should always ask yourself, “Will the purpose of this program be suited to meet their needs?” If you can answer “yes” to this question, you have begun on the right foot and are on your way to a successful program. Next you must see that this purpose is carried out.

This thought leads to the actual administration, or working out of the program. Not only is it important that you have a purpose for each program, but you must see that the program is planned to keep

this purpose in mind, and that as the program is given, the needs of the young people will be met through this purpose. Now this purpose or aim should be the focal point of every part of the program. These parts include the singing, testimonies, quizzes, special music, the message, and even audience participation. From the beginning of the program to the end, the purpose should always direct the procedure. But you must remember that your job is to guide, for that is your part of the program.

Those young people who will be helping you will often need your help and guidance in knowing exactly what they are to do and how they are to go about doing their work. This is a responsibility of yours which must never be overlooked. Always be ready to “feed young Christians,” in order that they may grow spiritually. Thus by their actual participation in the program they do grow spiritually. Many of the responsibilities of the programming can be theirs, for actually the program is theirs. Have them to do the participating. Have them to develop and

plan the programs. But you must only guide. Thus you can evaluate the effectiveness of the programs by seeing if the personnel, or those who actively take part, with your guidance and advice, are doing their jobs and thereby are growing spiritually.

2. The standard is to follow scriptural pattern. In all of your youth work the Word of God is to be the final authority. The Bible is not only to be used as a guide in order to “keep on the right track,” but is also to be taught to the young people with the aim of getting them to memorize and study it for themselves. It might even be a good idea for you to use the Bible as the subject of one of your first programs, because all of the following programs will have a scriptural basis. You should stress the accuracy and truthfulness of the Word of God, and show proof that the man of today can rely on God’s Word because it is inspired by God. By firmly planting the young people in the sound foundation of the Scriptures, you can more readily proceed to accomplish your aims.

As to the many questions which come up in a young person’s life, the Bible will again provide the answers. Here too, you can evaluate the effectiveness of your work by seeing the results of how the young people are using the Word of God as their final answer. Are they still in doubt about some problem for which the Bible has a definite answer? If so, perhaps you will need to again guide them in the Word of God.

Another positive way to instruct young people is through the example of Christ. By presenting the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament, you can clearly show them the things they ought to do, for Christ is the Perfect Example. This will be the purpose, rather than to present a list of “don’ts,” which young people will immediately cast aside. In conclusion then, you should instruct youth in their knowledge and usability of the Scriptures in order that the purpose of guidance be accomplished.

In reviewing the standards of evaluation, the most important standard could be said to be that of fulfillment of purpose. This is the key to all youth work. The purpose is based on the needs of youth, and if those needs aren’t being met, the purpose, whether in the planning or in the working out of the program, needs to be improved. Then too, the Scriptures plan an important part in evaluation, for it is the Word of God which is the final authority on what is right and what is wrong.

YOUR APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

You as a youth leader will have to know how to apply these standards. Although a little of this has been touched upon in the above paragraphs, a few more helps will now be given. Of course, there are many various standards which would be included under the one standard of purpose, and it is some of these specific standards which will be seen. The actual usage of those standards rather than the standard itself will be dealt with here.

1. Viewing existing program in the realm of aim. Have you ever seen a youth program that had a procedure but was without an aim? What was the result? Eventual failure. A church’s young people’s group started to have youth meetings every Sunday night. They were supposed to begin at 7:30, although they rarely did. But after everyone finally arrived, they began by singing for fifteen minutes. Then the announcements were given, and after this another song. Then the message. (And you could be sure it wouldn’t be anything but a message. Never a discussion, quiz, play, musical, or panel). When the speaker was through, refreshments were served and everyone went home. Needless to say, this group gradually decreased and finally ended at six months.

But yet many young people’s meetings are like that today. Week after week the same routine is carried on. As mentioned before, the aim or purpose of the youth program is very

important. "But how should I go about finding a purpose?" you ask. The answer is simply by knowing what are the needs of youth. Perhaps your young people's group consists of five Christian teenagers. Would your aim be to preach the Gospel to them? Of course it wouldn't. But maybe they are interested in winning their unsaved high school friends to the Lord, but they don't know how to go about using the Scriptures to lead a soul to Christ. Their need is obvious. You would, therefore, proceed to teach them how to win a soul to Christ and have them learn the appropriate Scriptures.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING

EVALUATION SHEET

Subject of the program Date

	Yes	No
★ Did the planning group begin preparing well in advance?	()	()
★ Was the program well publicized?	()	()
★ Did the program begin on time?	()	()
★ Was the room conducive to learning and training, i.e., neat, attractive, chairs in order, etc?	()	()
★ Were the young people actively participating?	()	()
★ Was the program more youth-centered than sponsor-centered?	()	()
★ Did the program appear to be interesting and appealing to the young people?	()	()
★ Was the program well presented?	()	()
★ Was the goal or aim of this program clear to you?	()	()
★ Was the goal or aim of the meeting accomplished?	()	()
★ Did the program contain variety?	()	()
★ Were needs met, lives changed, spiritual growth evident?	()	()
★ Did the program help train youth for intelligent Christian living and leadership?	()	()

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For the point rated "No" what would you suggest the group do to those areas of weakness?

What other reactions and evaluations do you have?

List the various teaching and training methods used in this program.

Name

(Written by Dr. Roy B. Zuck, Editor, Training Hour Publications,
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This is putting into action the standard which you have already set up. Of course, there are many more possible aims of a youth program which cannot be listed here. But remember, even though youth's actions change from generation to generation, their needs stay the same. Therefore, the principle of meeting these needs may vary.

2. Viewing existing program in the realm of content. After you have found the purpose of your youth program, you will next want to go about planning and arranging it, always keeping in mind the purpose. After the program is completed you should ask yourself, "Will I be presenting the facts?" A good purpose with a false presentation will never do. The materials with which you present the program should always be constructive and true. The idea of a well-balanced diet" also fits in here. The program shouldn't be all singing, all reading, all message, etc., but rather a variety presenting the purpose. (The exception to this, though, is a program designated to be a singspiration, or talent program.) Young people like action and variety, but you mustn't let this detract from the purpose or present any false ideas. You can evaluate the program by seeing if the materials fit the purpose, or if the purpose fits the materials in which case the weak purpose of "Getting a large group out" was the primary motive.

3. Encouraging by showing results that are being accomplished. Nothing succeeds like success. It is your responsibility to help the young people to grow spiritually. A little encouragement will do wonders. One of the best ways to help them is to acknowledge their efforts in their youth work. For example, if your pianist is shy, and afraid to play before a group, tell her how much she is needed and that her playing is good. You can also encourage your group by showing them some promises from the Scriptures. Many times a young person thinks his abilities are useless, but if you show him that the Lord can do great things with the insignificant things, he finds out that even his talents can be used by the Lord.

It will also be profitable to point out what other youth groups have been accomplishing and that this same victory can be theirs. Perhaps a program aimed to encourage could be planned. For this a film could be used. If you could make your youth group realize their potential and get them to use it, you have accomplished much. You could evaluate your youth work by asking yourself,

"Have I encouraged my group to use their abilities?"

4. Informing of new methods and materials. Due to the constantly changing young person from generation to generation, there is a necessity to use any new means or methods which are available. Of course, these should be in accord with the purpose of youth work. Now you as a youth leader will have to find out what these latest materials are and then be able to use them properly. "But what kind of methods and materials do you mean?" you ask. Well, as for materials, the list could include such items as books, commentaries, charts, films and filmstrips, tape recorders, songs, and even a handbook on youth programs. Within the last few years there has been a growing interest in youth work, and some manuals for instructing youth which have been printed would be profitable.

As for the new means or methods to present a program, you should first know something about the youth's attitude toward the different materials. For example, a high school student wouldn't be as attracted by a flannelgraph story, while a five-year-old would be attracted. So why should you even begin to use flannelgraph? But they do have an interest in constructive creation in humor, in problem solving, and in sports. These are a few of the means of presentation. But how do you apply them? Take humor, for example. A part of the program could be to present a play or skit. (But remember to make it fit the purpose.) Of course, interwoven throughout this skit will be a few jokes. You know that young people like humor, so they will listen attentively to the skit. It will hold their attention, but more important it will present a few thoughts along the line of the purpose. In your evaluation of the use of new methods and materials you might ask yourself these questions: "Am I using the latest materials?", and "Am I presenting these materials by a method that will be suitable for young people?"

YOUR IMPROVEMENT OF APPLICATION

You will not be able to see some of the needs of young people until after you have worked with them. Perhaps some of the programs aren't exactly fulfilling the aim which you have set up. You probably need to improve upon the actual program.

But on what basis should this improvement be made? And how can this improvement be made?

1. Realize errors. The evaluation of your work can partly be based upon your acknowledgment of errors. If you can notice the mistakes that you made, you have half-way solved the problem of improvement. No matter how good a program may seem to be, there is always room for improvement. To guide you as to where improvements could be made, ask yourself these questions: "Were the main points of the program clearly understood?" "Were the young people interested?" "Were unnecessary points included?" "Were any important points left out?" These questions are general, but more specifically you might ask, "Was the message appropriate?" "Was the advertising of the program done well in advance?" "Did all of the young people have some part in the program?" An example here might be of some help. At a youth meeting one time, everything was done as planned. The program had a purpose and was presented in a way that would appeal to the young people. But the song leader wasn't as good as he could have been, and thus the group singing was poor. The group leader noticed this and immediately instructed the song leader in how to lead singing. There was noted improvement in the next program. If you will do the same and improve upon what you have, rather than to allow the same mistake to happen again, you will have a better youth program as a result.

2. Accept worthy criticism. You will be surprised to find that there are others who are also interested in youth work, although they don't take an active part in it. These aren't the young people, but the people who are older usually the parents of the members of your youth group. You will be wise to listen to their suggestions and criticisms because they do want the best for their youth. Perhaps in their experience they had to face a similar problem that is now in front of you, and their solution could very well be the answer for which you are looking. And also, there are times when another person sees an error in the program that you have overlooked.

Much of the criticism will come from the youth groups, and this is proper. In fact, it should be encouraged. For if you can get your group to evaluate themselves you have accomplished much. If they can realize their own errors and want to improve upon their own programs, they will grow. And at the same time, you will be taking your proper place; in the back seat. Then too, they realize what they like and dislike about the program, and surely they as teenagers know what they want. The next time one of your young people comes to you and says, "I sure would have liked to have known earlier the date of the musical program," take the hint. Next time, provide a more thorough means of advertising.

Now, will you accept criticism in a Christian-like manner, or will you tell the person to mind his own business? Will you understandingly listen to others as they give their ideas about programming? Will you try to improve the programs by using any new worthy ideas? Will you teach your group to accept other's criticism? By accepting worthy criticism, you have a basis for improving your program in many ways.

3. Conditioning yourself. You may spend hours evaluating your young people until you know exactly what each has done and can do. You may add more hours of evaluating the program presentation, until you know exactly what the needs are and how to set forth the purpose. But what about yourself? Are you measuring up to Christian standards in your own life? Have you evaluated yourself?

Your character is important to your work as a youth leader. If you are to develop Christian character in your young people, you must possess in your own life those characteristics

which you desire to develop in others. Here are some questions, designed to help you judge your character. Can you find your strong qualities? What are your weaknesses?

Are You	Or Are You . . .
1. Open minded, inquiring?	Narrow, dogmatic?
2. Accurate, discerning?	Indefinite, superficial?
3. Judicious, balanced?	Prejudiced, biased?
4. Decisive, possessing	Wavering' undecided? convictions?
5. Friendly, agreeable?	Unsociable, disagreeable?
6. Generous, courteous?	Selfish, rude?
7. Honest, truthful?	Dishonest, hypocritical?
8. Patient, calm?	Irritable, excitable?
9. Punctual, on time?	Tardy, late?
10. Logical, consistent?	Haphazard, inconsistent?
11. Constant and earnest in	Cold, negligent in prayer? graver?
12. Desiring to win others?	Little concern for the lost?
13. Interested and confident	Little concerned and doubtful
In the Bible?	of the Bible?

Another good way to evaluate yourself is to read good books and magazine articles on youth directing, and make a comparison with the standards set forth there. A visit to another youth program to observe an experienced youth leader offers an excellent basis for evaluation. Or you could invite another youth leader to sit in on your program from time to time and honestly appraise the presentation. But remember, if you are sincerely desirous of improving your ability as a youth worker, these and other methods of evaluation will be a continuous part of your program. In the final analysis, however, the product, which is the young person, is the determining factor. Can you see in his life the outgrowth of your work? Is he a maturing youth, who reveals Jesus Christ in his life? If so, you are doing a good job of training teens.