

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TROY

## PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH MINISTRY

- ❶ Youth ministry must seek to develop teens in four main areas, based on the development of Christ (Luke 2:52): mentally, socially, physically, and spiritually.
- ❷ Youth work should have the proper balance (Prov 11:1) to produce well-rounded teens. The program must be geared around the Word of God, and be centered on the person of Christ. It must not center on the program or a personality.
- ❸ The goal is to glorify God through producing mature Christian youth by emphasizing five areas of spiritual training:
  - 1) SALVATION (Rom 3:23)
  - 2) SEPARATION from the world and unto God (2 Cor 6:17)
  - 3) CONSECRATION (Phil 3:10)
  - 4) HUNGER FOR GOD'S WORD (2 Pet 3:18)
  - 5) BURDEN FOR THE LOST (Mat 9:37-38)

Everything we do should help in the advancement of this goal.

- ❹ The plan to achieve this goal is three-fold:
  - 1) EVANGELISM (Dan 12:3)
  - 2) CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT (1 Tim 4:7)
  - 3) BIBLE KNOWLEDGE (2 Tim 3:16-17)

It is important to remember that you will keep teens with the same things you use to get them. Since spiritual activities are the only way to build teens spiritually, the emphasis of the program should be to make Bible studies, soulwinning, and Sunday School an exciting part of the young person's life. A teen should not miss these essential elements and only come to activities. The group should not have a "let's have fun" mentality. They should be taught the real joy of service. Activities and recreation play a part in the teens development, but only as they fit into the plan and ultimately help fulfill the goal. (1 Thes 5:22; Ecc 9:10).

- ❺ Parents play a vital role in youth work. The youth pastor is a "parent-helper." Youth ministry is not a childcare program. Nor does the responsibility for "training up a child in the way he should go" fall upon the youth program. That responsibility is the parent's. Regular communication with the parents is a vital part of success in youth ministry. This communication is helpful for the youth pastor, but essential for the parents. Effective youth work must have parental support (Deut 5 & 6).
- ❻ Loyalty to the local church (Matt 16:18) and to the pastor (Heb 13:17) must be held by the youth pastor, youth workers, parents, and teens. Ultimately, the philosophy of youth ministry must be the philosophy of the pastor. The goal of youth ministry is never to teach loyalty to a program or a person, but to teach loyalty to Christ and to His local church. There is a philosophy problem if a teen has loyalty to the youth pastor and not to the pastor, as the youth pastor serves as the hand of the pastor in the youth ministry. The youth pastor's authority is only that which has been delegated to him by the pastor.
- ❼ Unity in the group is a must and is the secret to success and strength (Rom 12:5). Strife and rebellion cannot be tolerated (1 Sam 15:23). Ministry standards are set based upon either Biblical mandate, Biblical principle, or implication from a principle. No apology is made for those ministry standards as it is always right to have in place hindrances to sin. Some standards are set for utilitarian purpose, but are necessary for smooth operation and to insure that we approve things that are excellent. Repeated breaking of these standards is rebellion, and will be treated as such. Good teaching is vital to reaching teens with God's life-changing principles and truths (Eph 4:11). The teens should be taught excellence in every phase of their lives, including what they wear, what they listen to, and who their friends are. Our desire is not conformation to the rules, but transformation of the mind (Rom 12:1-2).
- ❽ Quality is always a priority over quantity. Every legitimate effort should be made to reach teens, but never at the expense of sacrificing the discipleship of maturing youth. Personal work and a strong follow-up program (Rom 15:14) are necessary to see lasting results. We do not expect the lost to look and act like the saved, but we will not allow the saved to come to outreach activities and look and act like the lost. The goal of youth evangelism is not to see men saved, it is to glorify God through the salvation of the lost. Anything that is done to reach the lost that does not glorify God is wrong. Our purpose is to make disciples. In light of that purpose, the youth pastor should be available to his teens 24 hours a day if needed (1 Pet 3:15). His office should be open for help and counseling when needed (Prov 24:6,15:22).
- ❾ Youth ministry should complement the other ministries of the church (1 Cor 3:9). At times there may conflicts in schedule, but there must never be conflicts in philosophy. Agreement of purpose is of the utmost importance as we raise up a generation to the "praise of His glory" (1 Cor 12:25).