**BMi SALTS COURSE**

**Youth Ministry**

God is seeking alive, enthusiastic leaders to touch the disillusioned young people of our day.

We often hear the statement that young people are the church of tomorrow, but I believe that young people are the church of today, expect them to believe that and behave like that and they will!

2.6 million Australians are between 15-24 years of age. This is 17% of the population. 12% out of the 17% say they have no religion. That is 1.75 million.

Many have moved out of Youth Ministry just at that point where they were starting to get somewhere because it is a hard ministry (all ministry is hard) - and as a result many potentially powerful Youth Groups have been left floundering.

If you want to succeed as a Youth Leader AND if you want to see your Youth Group grow, you must make Youth Ministry your LIFE.

**What Makes a Successful Youth Group?**

You must have an effective and successful Youth Leader.

A Youth Group will only be as good as the leader. This is especially true of youth because young people will follow role models, they need heroes, more than other age groups.

Young people are so confused today they can’t think for themselves anymore and that’s why they look for images to follow.

God is looking for Youth Leaders who with confidence will be able to say as Paul in 1 Corinthians 11: 1-2. *Imitate me just as I also imitate Christ.*

**1. Availability**

There are many talented people who are not available—not willing to pay the price of leadership.

We must be available:

a) to God. We must first commit ourselves to knowing God—a love for people will not carry you through, but love for God will.

WE ARE NOT WORKING FOR GOD WE ARE WORKING WITH HIM.

A good working relationship with someone requires that you know them.

b) to the task set before us. We become love slaves to God. Too many people serve God out of either obligation or peer pressure.

**2. Dependence on the Holy Spirit**

Zech 4:6. *It’s not by might, it’s not by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord.*

*Jesus was anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor. To heal the broken hearted and to preach deliverance to the captive. To give sight to the blind and set at liberty those who are oppressed.*

Looking and behaving like the world won’t bring people to Christ.

The Anointing of the Spirit Brings Results

In Judges 6:34 (Amplified) it says, *The Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon with Himself and took possession of Him.* David was anointed—didn’t need man-made weapons. Paul was anointed - 1 Corinthians 2:4 - *I come to you in the power of the Spirit*. In 2 Corinthians 22:28 Paul went through hardships but still rejoiced, ­because he was anointed for the task.

**Practical Qualities of a Youth Leader**

1. Be young at heart and enjoy doing things young people enjoy. e.g. swimming at the parks, etc., if you will play with them, they will pray with you.

2. Be trendy and up-to-date without going to extremes. Young people like to be proud of their Youth Leader. Be a leader young people will love to follow - not just in dress but also conduct, speech, faith, spirit and life.

3. Be a friend not just a leader.

a) Be loving and affectionate.

b) Be hospitable.

c) Be interested in the things they are interested in (hobbies, job, etc).

4. Recognize talent and ability and use it. If there are young people in your Youth Group that can do things better than you let them!

5. Be a submissive and teachable person. Don’t be a know all - we can learn from everyone.

6. Develop a healthy relationship with your pastor. Get to know his vision and support it. Bring the youth in line with that vision. The youth group is not a separate church within the church.

7. Be a person of DIRECTION AND VISION. Share your heart with committee and group. Set goals to make sure that vision is accomplished. Make sure your goals are realistic. Good goals are just beyond your reach.

8. Be a good listener

9. Don’t show partiality

10. Be an encourager

11. Don’t procrastinate

12. Don’t make promises you can’t keep

13. Be organized. Plan ahead, write things down and keep a diary.

14. Don’t be afraid to discipline but do it in love.

15. Demonstrate a servant’s heart.

16. Don’t manipulate people into doing things that will help you, but think of their well-being.

17. Spend time with positive people that can have a positive influence on your life.

18. Strengthen your own personal weak points. Set goals to see it happen. e.g. song leading, preaching, smiling, dress, etc.

19. Don’t be afraid to make mistakes - try new things.

20. Don’t let criticism get the better of you.

**Programs for Youth**

To be able to construct an effective youth programme we need to ask:

**1. Why I am involved in youth ministry?**

We must have a desire to see young people growing in God and putting their faith into action.

**2. What has God called me to do in this ministry?**

Lead young people in their relationship with God, involving them in the life of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**3. What is my philosophy of youth ministry?**

The young people need to be pastored—cared for and nurtured.

The youth meetings need to be alive with the presence of God, the Holy Spirit. It is His power that brings joy, overcoming of sin, commitment, the drive to evangelise, and to separate from the things of the world. Youth meetings should concentrate on the spiritual.

Involve the young people in the work of ministry—ensure everyone has a job to do—this can change people’s lives.

**Weekly Program**

Plan the program well ahead of time. We have a 2 monthly program using, movies, music, preaching, teaching, worship, have a go, special, skit nights, and through all these mediums we share a theme for 2 months.

The youth leader’s responsibility is to hear from God. Wait on God; He will speak to you, e.g. Acts 3:19. Share it with committee.

Films or videos - preview, they are a great evangelistic tool if good.

Preaching- inspirational, YP want to hear from God, use illustrations, skits, creative thoughts.

Teaching — Advertise a special subject.

Encourage YP to take notes and use the material as witnessing tool.

Teach on body ministry and then give them opportunity to get involved.

There is plenty of material for us to use—but you need to search it out—don’t be lazy.

Greatest fear of youth is not drugs but fear of the future—positively address this issue.

Teach about CHARACTER, how to deal with anger, how to behave at work and home.

Worship nights. Leaders come prayed up with a couple of scriptures and long list of choruses; an unstructured program—just flow with what is happening.

Have-a-go nights

New preachers’ opportunities, talent and skit times.

**Advertising**

Monthly newsletter posted

We don’t use posters but SMALL CARDS.

**Finances**

YP tithe to the church and bring offerings to youth

**Prayer** - plan well. Half nights and pre-service and special thrusts.

Old Folks Homes—entertain and minister.

**Summary**

1. DON’T BE AFRAID TO MAKE MISTAKES

2. NO MATTER how well you do - you’ll be criticised.

They called John the Baptist a demoniac and Jesus a glutton.

The Editor of a book once wrote, “If you find any mistakes please consider that they appear for the benefit of those readers who always look for them”.

3. DON’T REPRODUCE OTHER PEOPLE’S PROGRAMS. Find out what God wants you to do.

4. LOVE GOD MORE THAN PEOPLE

5. REST IN YOUR CALL.

The task that is before us is great but the hand that is behind us is far greater.