

Scriptural Youth Directors

Dub McClish

What about the practice of churches that have a “youth director”? Is the practice authorized by Scripture? I suppose the answer would be affected by what his duties and responsibilities are. If he spends all his time in teaching, training, and otherwise assisting young people in their spiritual development, perhaps spiritual justification can be built for him. However, I would be hard pressed to name one in my personal acquaintance who does not spend far more time planning and supervising recreational and “fun” activities (ski trips, Six Flags excursions, ball games, picnics, bowling, and skating jaunts, etc.) than he does on spiritual activities. In my experience, even when he may try diligently to get young people to come to a special class or to take part in distributing brochures or visiting the elderly, etc., he will have the same handful each time. However, when he plans one of the above-name recreational activities, he can’t get them all on the church bus there are so many. I do not think that all the “youth directors” want it that way, but that is apparently what most parents and young people expect of him. Thus, even those who truly want to do their work entirely for the spiritual maturing of the young people, find themselves trapped in a system that will not allow them to.

There is a general attitude observable in the brotherhood that equates having a “youth director” with a successful and wide-awake church (to put it mildly). Some members who move in from other places don’t bother to get beyond the question, “Do you have a ‘youth director’?” A large congregation in Texas found itself without a “youth director” a while back. The preacher reassured the church in a statement in the church bulletin that a diligent search was being made for another one because their “...elders care about our young people.” I strongly reject the implications of such a statement, namely, that the elders who **do not** see fit to hire a “youth director” **don’t** care about young people. In fact, some wise elders **do not** hire a “youth director” because they do care about the young people, their parents, and the Scriptures!

I know for sure that there are such things as Scriptural “youth directors.” Another name for them is *parents*. Until the early to mid 1960s, one would find “youth directors” only among the denominations. Christian parents rightly assumed and discharged the Scriptural command toward their children to “...nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). Thank God for elders and parents who still believe in the wisdom of God’s plan.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for, and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, January 24, 1988, of which I was editor.]

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