



1. CONVERTED— The foundation for developing a mature Christian youth is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The student recognizes that Christ died for his sins according to scripture, was buried, and rose again on the third day so he could experience eternal life. The experience begins when a commitment is made to Jesus Christ by asking Him into their heart as Lord of their lives. (Luke 13:3, Romans 10:9-10)

2. CHURCHED—After a young person accepts Christ, he must meet and spend time with other members of his spiritual family. This is accomplished by leading the convert in becoming a part of a Bible-believing, local church. While in this church, he/she is instructed in the importance of “never forsaking the assembling” of believers. It will be necessary for him/her to be at church services and youth ministry functions. A loyalty to the body of believers and participation in the ordinances of the church, communion and baptism by immersion, are established. (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:41-42)

3. CRAVING THE WORD— David said, “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word...I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” (Psalms 119:9-11). It is our desire that young people crave the Word of God and they starve for its message. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” (Matthew 5:6). Young people satisfy this craving by daily reading, studying, memorizing, and applying God’s Word. (1 Peter 2:1, 2; 2 Timothy 2:15)

4. COMPASSION FOR THE LOST— As Christ looked over Jerusalem, he wept with compassion. Compassion is an attitude, followed by an action toward one’s inner need. One who is a mature Christian is one who is able to see a world in need of a Savior and respond sacrificially. Those who have compassion for the lost pray, weep and tell others about Jesus Christ. It is an active recognition that their schools and neighborhoods are mission fields. They can reach that world. (Matthew 9: 36-38; Matthew 28: 19-20)

5. CONSECRATION— When a young person accepts Christ as Savior, then studies and lives the Word of God and has a desire to tell others about Christ, he is able to set himself apart for his Lord’s service. This simple means that the maturing Christian is desirous of God to work any grace in his life necessary to God’s good pleasure. This involves a commitment to Jesus Christ in church and Christian services, character development and personal habits. Oftentimes our young people are the only Bible some teenagers will ever read. Jesus Christ, the living Word of life, needs to shine through them. Consecration is not allowing anything or anyone to take their focus off or Christ and His lordship in their lives. (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Timothy 4:12; Colossians 3:1-10)

This Biblical philosophy is initiated with the premise found in Ephesians 4:11-13, to produce mature young people who are able to do the work of the ministry. How does one incorporate this philosophy and these goals into the local church youth ministry? How does one formulate programs and activities to conform to the philosophy, while being culturally appropriate yet not violating Biblical mandates?