

A Few Reflections about the Role of a Youth Leader / Youth Minister

by Jim Klassen, August Y2K

A Youth Leader/Youth Minister is a member of a team
which includes youth leaders, parents, Sunday School teachers, and the pastor/s.

A Youth Leader/Youth Minister does not--can not, should not--stand alone.

I see a Youth Leader / Youth Minister as
a listener, not a know-it-all
a friend, not a parent
an advisor, not a dictator
an encourager, not a stop-sign
a bridge-builder, not a one-way street
a coordinator, not a slave-driver

The youth are a part of the entire life of the congregation, yet their program should be distinctly theirs--
interdependent, not independent.

In their program, some things will be successful, some things may be failures--
but that is a part of learning and maturing.

When youth activities are planned,

I think a Youth Leader/Youth Minister should always ask three questions:

- 1) Is it morally acceptable?
- 2) Is it Biblically acceptable?
- 3) Is it "reasonable"? (with wide latitude on this one)

The goal is to help the youth grow in their walk
with the Lord
with their families
with each other
with the church

and to help them reach out to others.

The goal of a Youth Leader/Youth Minister is not for himself/herself to "feel comfortable,"
but to be willing to "Tear a Hole in the Roof" (Mark 2:1-12) in order to bring people to Jesus.

Let me share one other concern that is on my heart.

Vietnamese young people in the U.S. today have a wide range of viable options for churches
where they could find God, worship God, serve God.

But if the church is predominantly Anglo-Americans,

then the VN will be a minority in the midst of a people who don't know VN culture, food, values, etc.

2nd generation Vietnamese in the US today are not 100% "Vietnamese" nor are they 100% "American"--
they are a unique blend with different realities, different issues, different culture.

I want to do all I can to help make Jesus meaningful to them--
because I, too, am neither 100% American nor 100% Vietnamese!

May God bless us as we seek creative ways to work together for His glory.