

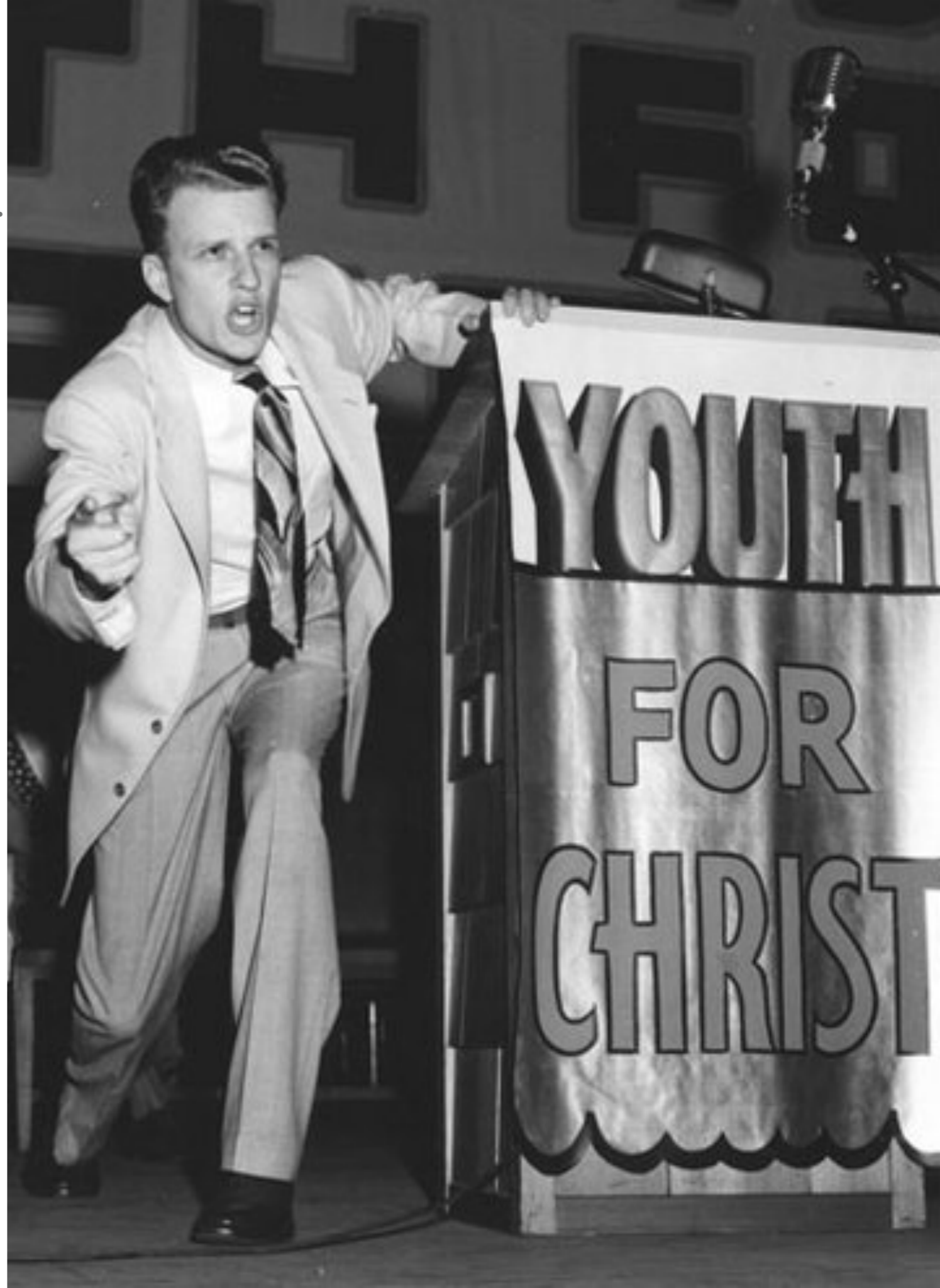


CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN YOUTH MINISTRY

David Sessions

BRIEF HISTORY OF YOUTH MINISTRY IN AMERICA

- Post WWII - emergence of new demographic.
- Emergence of parachurch youth focused ministries
- Late 60's/Early 70's - Churches begin hiring youth ministers
- 1988 - "One-eared-Micky-Mouse" - Stuart Cummings-Bond.
- 2000's - Churches begin identifying ministry to parents as a necessary aspect to youth ministry
- 2003 - "Youth ministry as an experiment has failed. If we want to see the church survive, we need to rethink youth ministry." Mike Yaconelli





WHAT ARE THE UNSTATED GOALS OF YOUTH MINISTRY?

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- In my experience...
 - Parents often expect...
 - behavior modification.
 - Leaders sometimes just want...
 - numbers.
 - Volunteers and leaders can feel the need to be...
 - “Answering Machines.”



THE RICH YOUNG RULER

A case study in youth ministry expectations



CONCLUSIONS

- What does Jesus think Youth Ministry is?
 - Not behavior modification - Parents' anxiety
 - Not worship (kids in seats) - Leaders' anxiety
 - Not simply answers - Leaders' and volunteers' anxiety
- Jesus wants young people to follow him as he does what only he is capable of doing, guiding us towards death, rebirth, union with God and life in The Spirit

A CHURCH DOES YOUTH MINISTRY WELL WHEN . . .

They invite young people to begin their life's journey with Jesus, train them to do it well, and extend grace and encouragement when it becomes difficult.



THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS



THE FLOW OF MINISTRY

PREPARING
PEOPLE
TO MEET GOD



DISCIPLING
AFTERWARDS

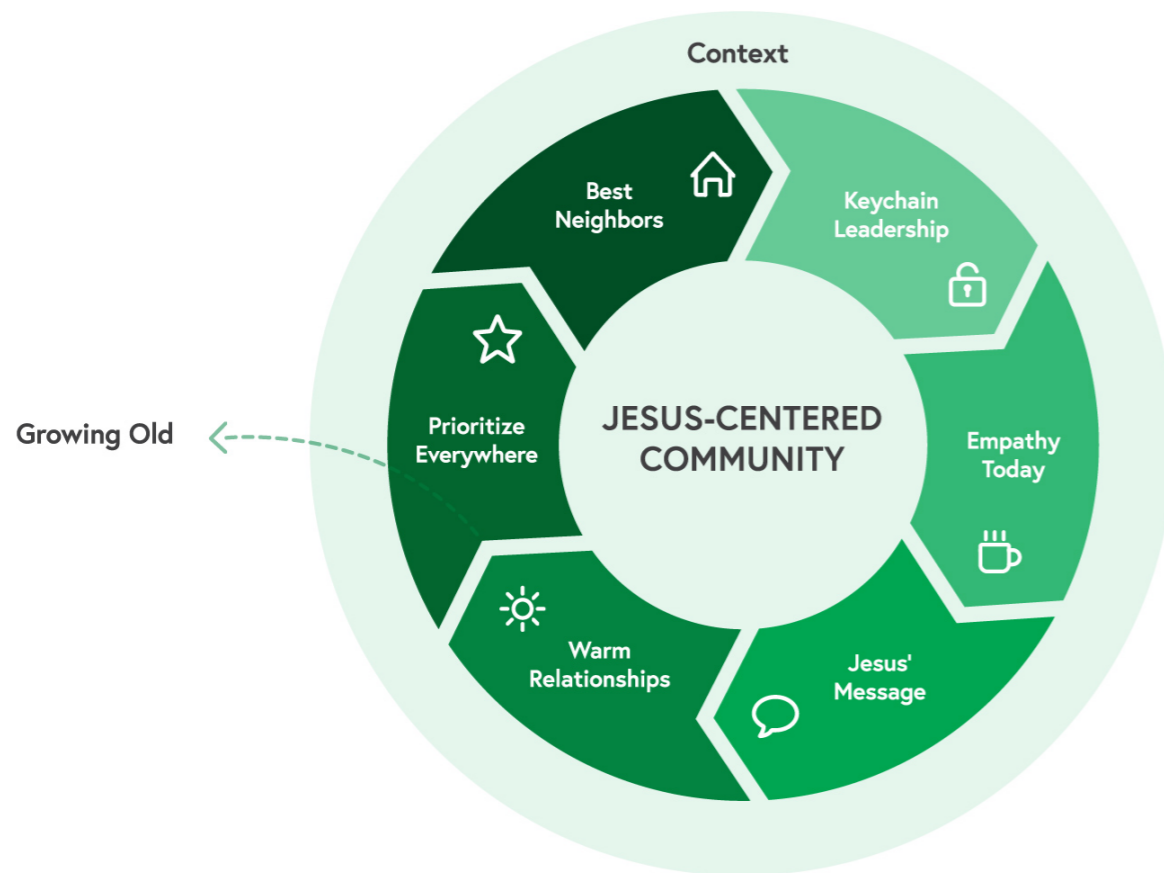


PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- Take the message of Jesus seriously.
 - Teach towards Jesus.
 - Which means having really hard conversations.
- Make sure they're actually a part of your church. Kill the one-eared-Mickey-Mouse
 - Find out what they're good at and what they love, then put them in charge of doing that thing at your church.
 - Intergenerational discipleship
 - ≠ co-generational fellowship or service.
 - 5:1

6 BIG QUESTIONS

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- How will we train them to be a part of God’s vision for our church?
- How well do we know what it feels like to be them?
- How well do we teach about Jesus in word and deed?
- How many people (outside their age) really know them?
- How often do we ask, “How will this effect young people?”
- How well does our message line up with our neighboring?

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 - A book for the whole church if that church is concerned about the largest, and largest growing, demographic of unchurched in America; youth.
- Kara Powell and Chap Clark. *Sticky Faith: Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids*. Grand Rapids; Zondervan, 2011.
 - A really good book for youth ministers, parents, and mentors on how to talk to teenagers about faith.
- Joiner, Reggie. *Think Orange: Imagine the Impact When Church and Family Collide...* Colorado Springs; David C. Cook, 2009.
 - Orange is what you get when you combine the church, light of the world (yellow), with the place most first experience love, the family (red). When family and church come together you get orange theory. Orange places an emphasis on intergenerational discipleship not fellowship.
- Root, Andrew. *Faith Formation in a Secular Age : Volume 1 (Ministry in a Secular Age): Responding to the Church's Obsession with Youthfulness*. Grand rapids; Baker Publishing Group. 2017
- Yaconelli, Mark. *Contemplative Youth Ministry: Practicing the Presence of Jesus*. Grand Rapids; Zondervan, 2006.
 - I read this once a year because it's so important to me to remind myself A) I am a spiritual being dealign with spiritual beings and the ministry of presence is always the best at communicating the gospel and B) it has many practical ways of implementing contemplative practices into actual ministry.