

RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION
FOR THE CHURCH LIFE

Message Four

The Emphasis of a Genuine Work with the Young People

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:11-12, 16; 1 Thes. 2:11; Acts 20:31; Phil. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 16:10;
Col. 1:28-29; 2 Tim. 1:5-7

I. Helping the young brothers and sisters depends not on our ability to give them messages but on our regular, frequent contacts with them; the emphasis of a genuine work with young people is individual contact—1 Thes. 2:11; Acts 20:31; 2 John 12; 3 John 14:

- A. The power and effect of doing a personal work with the young people are many times greater than the meetings—Acts 20:31:
 - 1. Big meetings do not have much effect on young people; when you gather them together, usually all you can do is give them a message and at most a little work of revival.
 - 2. It seems the way of personal contact is fragmentary and wastes a lot of time; seemingly, this way is less effective than holding big meetings where you can speak to hundreds of people at once.
 - 3. If all you have is meetings, the young people's work will end up with something that is only on the surface, like loose sand without a foundation; it will not be able to produce any solid ones.
- B. If you pay attention to individual contact, although you may not gain one person in a month, each one who is gained through your personal contact counts.
- C. Moreover, like you, he will contact others, you have gained one, but eventually this one will become two, two will become four, and every one of them will be solid.
- D. In the matter of personal contact, skills are needed; if you practice this matter seriously, gradually you will gain experience and insight:
 - 1. You will know which one among so many young people should be contacted and gained first; after one has been gained, he will go to stir up others in the same way.
 - 2. Even if there are no big meetings, many can still get saved and many can be raised up to love the Lord, and you will be able to gain solid young people.
- E. When you have personal contact with young people, on the one hand, you need to have broad contact with them, treating every one of them equally; on the other hand, you need to have specific contact:
 - 1. We need to exercise our spiritual insight and follow the Spirit's leading to sense which ones, once they are gained, will have impact on others.
 - 2. Then we should spend our effort on them first and help them to love and pursue the Lord; once they are raised up, they will influence the other young brothers and sisters.

II. We must pay attention to a fundamental point in the young people's work, which is that we must bring them into working with us—1 Cor. 16:10; Phil. 2:19-22:

- A. We should not replace others in whatever we do; however, we often do the work by ourselves and thus replace others; this is the natural way to work.
- B. We need to be aggressive and learn how to preach the gospel in a school without ever setting foot in the school; we should not go to the school to preach the gospel—Phil. 2:22.

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- C. We must always apply this principle no matter where we serve; we have failed in the service when we are always asking others to help us; the work must belong to the local saints to the point that they are, at most, asking the co-workers for assistance rather than relying on them to do everything.

III. In order to produce a useful brother, we must spend a few months to labor with him; the practical way is to labor and gain one person, working on him until he is burdened to preach the gospel in his school—cf. 1 Thes. 1:5-8:

- A. We should spend time with him by fellowshiping with him, having meals with him, and leading him to pray until the young brother begins to love the Lord, is revived, and becomes willing to preach the gospel in his school.
- B. If we find a young brother who attends a target school, we must work on the young brother until he is raised up; we should not go to the school; rather, we must work on the young brother until he is more zealous and more serious about the work than we are—Col. 1:28-29.
- C. He can save one classmate, and the two can begin to meet together; we should teach the two of them to coordinate together and to meet; however, we do not need to meet with them at school:
 - 1. When the young saints ask for help, we should be ready to help them; if we cannot help them, they will not ask for help again.
 - 2. If the young saints learn something that they can apply, they will return for more help; then we can give them further direction.
 - 3. At this point, the work will be borne by both the students and the worker because the students carry it out at school, and the worker helps as needed; if we work in this way, it will be easy to gain a school.
- D. We must diligently learn to produce useful saints in the schools; then no matter where we are, we will succeed in every situation, and we will gain double the result with half the effort.

IV. In every school we must produce young saints who are so burdened for the gospel that the work becomes theirs, and we only assist and supply them from a distance—Eph. 4:11-12, 16:

- A. The supply should not be in the way of leading the students in a meeting or replacing them in the meeting:
 - 1. The worker should not decide on what day the students meet, direct them to invite their friends, take the lead in their meeting, or give a message in their meeting; if he functions in this way, he is replacing the students.
 - 2. Even though he will spend much time and energy, none of the young saints will be able to serve; instead, they will support the co-worker with their presence; however, that is not the best foundation for our work.
- B. Our work is to produce a saint who is more burdened than we are; we should work with him until he is on fire for the gospel—2 Tim. 1:5-7:
 - 1. We should let the brother whom we have perfected lead his classmates; when he asks for help, we should be ready to assist him so that he can take a step forward.
 - 2. If we work in this way, the young saints will decide when and where to have a meeting; they will take care of their own meeting and bear the burden for the meeting.
 - 3. Apparently, their meeting is their work; in reality, it is also our work.
- C. If this is the way we serve, every school will be open to us; both university students and junior high school students can be gained in this way; instead of replacing the students, we should serve with them and let them serve.