YOUTH WITH CHRIST IN ACTION

October 2019

Youth Sunday

Old Testament	**Daniel 1: 1- 17**
Psalm	**98**
Epistle	**Acts 6: 1- 7**
Gospel	**John 1: 35- 42**

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Investing quality time and adequate resources in today's youth is necessary in growing the body of Christ. Teaching young people in church namely: **1.** to grow in their relationship with the Lord and **2.** to encourage them to take up responsibilities prepares them to actively serve Christ in all they do. Ministering to young people can not only prepare them to become strong witnesses and responsible leaders but also allow them to contribute to the church. As a result, this nurtures the congregation and allows the **church** to flourish.

Scripture reminds us that a man's youth is of utmost significance. Ecclesiastes reminds us to remember the creator in your youth (Ecc. 11: 9; 12: 1). Paul advises to lead a pure life in one's youthful days. Do not use your youthful strength for evil (Proverbs 5: 9). Youthfulness should not be disdained. It becomes meaningful when a God-centered and Christ-centered life is led.



In today's reading, we have a very courageous youth – **Daniel** (Daniel 1:7-8). His LIFE and faith inspired his three friends. He is a perfect phenomenal to see how our faith will influence our friends. Daniel refused to eat meat offered to idols, his friends too chose not to compromise. Daniel was the first opinion not to defile himself with the royal food and wine. And Daniel's three friends followed his lead. He inspired his friends so strongly that he made way for them to grow in their faith. Two chapters later in this book we see these three young men standing all by themselves in front of a fiery furnace facing death. Daniel is nowhere to be seen

but they had grown strong by then to stand firm without compromise before a powerful king in a test bigger than the first. So while we should grieve at the cruelty that Daniel and his friends suffered at the hands of the Babylonians, we should also celebrate their potentials and their faith in God. The elders have the most responsible task of being the good lead for the youth in our Church. The faith, unity and strength that they exhibit will have a major impact on how the youth actively carry about their responsibilities in Church.



The Gospel reading introduces to us Andrew, a not so familiar or favourite person when called by Jesus. He is usually noted as Peter's 'brother'. What is see about him is:

* He is only mentioned by name in twelve verses and nearly always mentioned the second. In eight of those verses, he is referred to as Simon Peter's brother.

* He was one of the first two men to follow Jesus yet in lists of the apostles, he is in the middle. But there is no evidence that Andrew ever got resentful; he just kept following Jesus.

He did his ministry without seeking fame. He is known to have brought people to Jesus.

1. The first thing we read of Andrew doing after he was introduced to the Savior, was to go get his brother, Peter. v.40

2. When the young boy with 5 loaves and 2 small fishes came to him, he brought the boy to Jesus. Cf Jn. 6:5-9

3. When there were some Greeks who were looking for Jesus, it seems Philip didn't know what to do, but Andrew took them to Jesus. Cf Jn. 12:21-22

Most of us are not bold leaders, but we all can be like Andrew. Today's youth should concentrate on actively working for the growth of God's kingdom. When anything is dominated by a desire for self and fame then the work of the Church loses its focus. The Church should remember that the youth is the future of any church. They are the ones who decide whether to continue preaching what their predecessors have preached or to introduce something new and fresh. If the youth is not interested in going to church, then the whole institute of religion might fall apart. Therefore, it is important to encourage the youth to get involved with the church.



On the one hand, the Church is ever-growing in number AND SO ARE THE YOUTH. It is always a good reason to have the growth but nevertheless, it is a matter that brings with it certain challenges. No longer can the church do things the way it always had. The young growing body of believers in a Church needs not only the Word of God but also some level of organization skills. Lots of teenagers are great at organising and holding various celebrations and events, as they usually have lots of amazing ideas. Apart from being in control of things like planning, youths should also act as resources. This could mean many things: young people can take on the duties and responsibilities; they can help the Pastor, elders, oldest members of the church; they can also help each other in their search for God and spirituality.

On the other hand, the Church is sensing the absence of youth in large numbers. Finding their availability to involve them in church activities is a big challenge. The church has to continually look inwardly to examine itself in the light of God's word to see whether it is becoming what God desires. The possibility of disagreements and misunderstandings between the growing youth and experienced members of Church is more, many of which may, in fact, be unintentional.

Young people often are more experimenting than children and also have more energy than adults. These qualities make them courageous to speak their mind and root them firm in their belief. The young generation face a lot of challenges in the contemporary era. Many temptations raise challenges to their spirituality. We live in a time wherein the nuclear family system, social media, advances in telecommunication technology and the idea of 'global village' have made the world quite small. The youth are made to engage in jobs that constrain their thoughts about church, God and godly matters. The growth of science and technology have frequently questioned their Christian faith. At this point, serious thought must be put into how contemporary youth can remain proactive in Christ.

HAVE A
ACTIVE YOUTHFUL SUNDAY !!