

The Importance Of Young People In The Church

Growing up in Alabama from ages 4-13, I attended a congregation that had little to no young people. The age group seemed to jump from people in their later years to small children which were very few, so I never learned at a young age the importance of having young people in the congregation. However, I was fortunate in 2009 to move to Texas and attend a congregation that had numerous young people, many of them baptized, that wanted to be proactive in our worship services. Not only that, but I was fortunate to see that most of the older brethren in the congregation would be very encouraging to the young people and help them to be proactive in worship. I would often be told as well as hear the older adults tell the other young people, "You young people are the future of this congregation," and "It's so nice to see young people who want to serve God and take part by fulfilling roles in the congregation." However, there are also people that are very apprehensive to letting the young people take some sense of responsibility in worship. This could be due to the belief in the world today that all young people are irresponsible and rude, and therefore should not be trusted with worship service. For some young people that is true, but the young people are the future of a congregation and that makes them very important in the present.

There is a strong need for young people in the church, but more than that, there is a need for young people who are willing to volunteer themselves to take part in worshipping our great and powerful God in Heaven, whether it's helping in whatever capacity they can for worship or spreading the Gospel. Paul had told Timothy, a young preacher, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). Young people play a very important part of the Lord's church. Young people need to strive to set an example to the older members of the congregation they attend, but not just to the older people. They also need to be an example to the kids of the congregation, because the little ones are always watching the young people. They watch every decision and will want to do and act just like them when they get older. Paul throughout his letters discussed areas in our lives where the young people need to focus on in order to be a good example for others. First, we need to be an example in what we say. We should always strive to be honest and loving in what we say, as it says in Ephesians 4:15: "Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, Christ." Next is our conduct — our lives — and what we do should be controlled by the word of God. We have to be careful not to be like the hypocrites that Paul warned Titus of in Titus 1:16: "They profess to know God; but they deny Him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work." Most importantly, young people need to set an example to always be in the word of God, as Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15-16: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

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