

Building a Balanced Youth Ministry

By Andy Barnard

Session 1. Starting From Scratch

1) **Have a call from God**

- a) Youth Ministry is not something that you can do just because you would like to, or because you have the time, or because the pastor asked you to. This is something that you definitely need to have a call from God.

2) **Know your strengths and giftings.**

- a) Always work in your area of strength. Eg. If you can not sing, don't try to lead Praise and Worship.
A knowledge of your strengths will affect your planning. If you have the ability to teach, your initial programs should involve a lot of Bible studies etc.

3) **Have a purpose**

- a) Don't just run a youth for the sake of running a youth. This will probably end up being nothing more than a social-club. There needs to be more direction than that.
Focus on meeting Physical, Mental, Social and Spiritual needs.

4) **Build a support team**

- a) Build relationships with key people:
 - i) The pastor
 - ii) Church leaders (elders; deacons; home cell leaders)
 - iii) Parents
 - iv) Young adults (this is the group of people that you should be training as leaders)

5) **Build relationships with the young people**

- a) Remember that teens don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.
- b) Find out where they hang out ... and hang out there.
- c) Go to their sports events; school plays etc.
- d) Do everything possible to get into the schools. This is a tremendous place to build relationships. When you get into the schools, remember that your primary objective is to build relationships. You don't have to be "in your face" with the gospel all the time, just be a friend.
- e) Remember birthdays.
- f) Visit as many of the youth as possible.

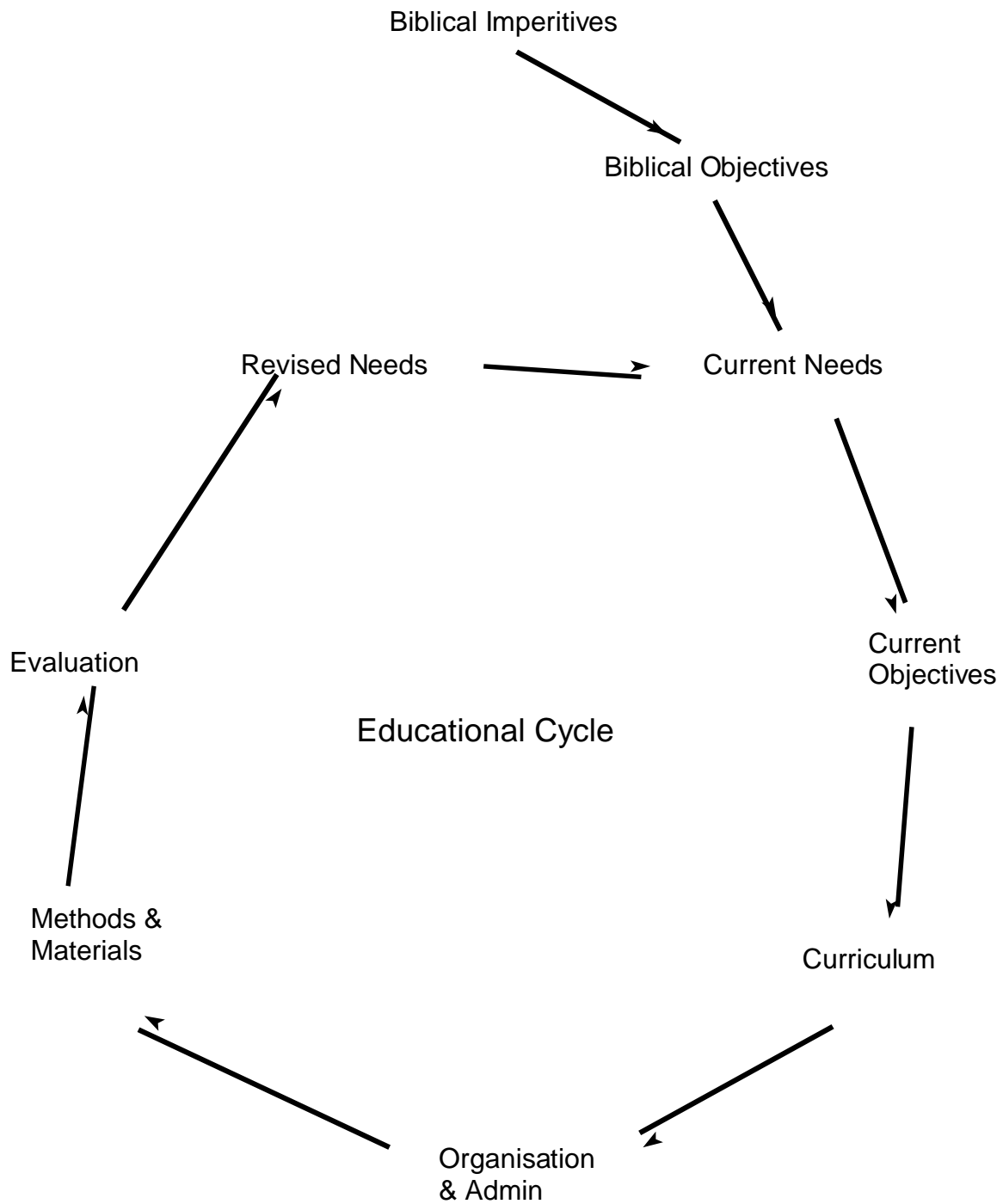
6) **Plan a big event**

- a) Don't do this to start your ministry. "What you attract them with, is what you will have to keep them with"
- b) Pulling a big event, like a concert, will establish your credibility as a leader. The young people will see that you are worthy of being followed..

Create a follow-up system to ensure that people who visit your youth are followed up.

Session 2. Once You're Going ...

Planning



Programming

WHY IS IT THAT LIVES ARE NOT TRANSFORMED BY THE BIBLE? Is it not authoritative?? Doesn't God speak through His word? Isn't it sharper than a two edged sword? Then why aren't lives changed? Because we don't understand how the Bible changes lives and therefore we don't know how to teach it!

AIM to equip you to teach the Bible so that teen's lives are transformed.

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

The Bible is not revelation ... it is reports of revelation.

The authority is in its content - not words; and this content is God himself.

We need therefore to teach the Bible in such a way that the learner meets God, as opposed to learning about God.

How?? Col 1:9 10

BACKGROUND: False teachers claiming that they had found a higher spirituality: material world evil; spirit good. Their path to God was one of two ways:- beat the flesh OR abuse the flesh. Against this Paul prays that the Colossians will grow in their knowledge of God and in his prayer he outlines the way to meet God.

asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will

What is God's will? ... the Bible.

We must teach the Bible. In order to know God we must first know about Him.

through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Difference between knowledge and wisdom. There are different levels of learning.

ROTE

RECOGNITION

RESTATEMENT

RELATION

REALIZATION

In teaching we must strive towards raising their learning level.

in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord

This truth must be applied in daily life.

The best way to teach this is to be an example.

bearing fruit will follow naturally

growing in the knowledge of God This is our aim.

Youth leader's job is therefore to

- i) teach the Bible
- ii) raise their level of learning
- iii) guide young person to self application.

This gives us a practice outline for preparing a program.

- * teach the facts of Bible - BOOK
- * assisting teens to realise how this truth applies to their lives - LOOK
- * helping them to respond - TOOK
- * all start on different level so we need to get their attention and to set a goal for the evening - HOOK

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

In this session we want to introduce you to a tool that can make you more effective in your programming.

- DATE** For your own reference. It's always good to keep good records of your youth activities.
- TITLE** Try to come up with a creative, catchy title which can be used for advertising your programs.
- THEME** It is vitally important that a program have only one theme. By writing this down you are forced to keep your focus for the program.
- OBJECTIVES** If you aim at nothing, you will hit it! We must have very clear objectives of what we are wanting the program to accomplish before we start planning.
- KNOW** Ask yourself "What is it that we want the young people to know by the end of the evening?" Your answer would be the know objective. This is your mental goal - focusing on the facts.
- FEEL** Ask yourself "What do we want the young people to feel?" Here we are focusing on emotions.
- DO** Ask yourself "What do we want the young people to do?" The focus of this objective is application.
- HOOK** Everyone comes to youth with different things on their mind (a fight with parents; just met the most fantastic girl; etc). The hook is used to get and then focus everyone's attention on the topic for the evening.
- BOOK** This is the Bible section of the program.
- LOOK** In this section we show the relevance of the Biblical truths in the lives of the young people.
- TOOK** Here we create opportunities for the young people to respond to what they have just learnt. The learning process is incomplete without an application.
- CONTENT / RESOURCE** This is the main content of the program. This column is quickly filled as you brainstorm ideas for the program.
- FLOW** To put some order into your brainstorming.

- METHOD** What method will you use to convey the content / resource? Use this column to add variety to your program.
- MEDIA** What media (drama; video; music etc) will you use? This column will be used as a checklist of items to bring for the evening.
- TIME** Use this column to ensure that you don't have angry parents waiting outside for the program to finish.
- PERSON** Person responsible to run with this section of the program.

Is this organised or what?! On just one piece of paper you have everything from your objectives to a complete checklist of items needed for the night. Please remember however, that a youth leader's focus should always be people and not programs. This tool alone (even if used correctly) will not make you an effective youth leader. For that you need a few more ingredients ... like prayer and the Holy Spirit.

Session 3. Keeping Going

THE YOUTH LEADER'S TEN COMMANDMENTS

- 1) Thou shalt not allow sin to develop in thy life

- 2) Thou shalt not be driven by selfish motives

- 3) Thou shalt seek to meet the basic needs of young people

- 4) Thou shalt have a vision/goal that thou workest towards

- 5) Thou shalt meet often enough as a leadership team to stay one month ahead in your planning.

- 6) Thou shalt always seek to be creative so as not to bore thy teenagers

- 7) Thou shalt read every book on youth ministry and leadership that thy hands can lay on

8) Thou shalt communicate regularly with the parents of thy young people

9) Thou shalt strive to disciple at least one potential leader.

10) Thou shalt have a sense of humour - don't laugh at young people