

WHY I PREACH TO THE YOUTH

We are very thankful for the opportunity this past week to be one of the speakers at the youth camp our church youth attended. As I write these words, I am preparing for my wife to drop me off at the Little Rock, AR airport to fly to Chicago then on to Boston to preach Friday night and Saturday morning for a New England Youth Rally. I give the Lord thanks for the privilege to speak to youth across the country. You may ask, what is my motivation? Allow me to address that question.

1. I PREACH TO THE YOUTH BECAUSE I AM INVITED.

I honestly thought when I got through my 20s that the meetings for specifically young people would slow down, but instead the invitations increased and stayed constant through my forties, fifties, sixties and now just days from seventy, I am already booked for youth meetings well into my seventies.

I Corinthians 16:9a: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me...."
Revelation 3:8: "...behold, I have set before thee an open door...."

2. I PREACH TO THE YOUTH BECAUSE IT IS PART OF MY CALLING.

Romans 11:29: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." I did not realize everything God had packaged in His will for my life, but I am living with the confidence that I have followed the path that God Himself has chosen for me.

3. I PREACH TO THE YOUTH BECAUSE I DESIRE THEM TO BE SAVED FROM A LIFE OF SIN.

I have said many times, it is better to be saved from a life of sin than to be saved out of a life of sin. Timothy was one of those young people that was claimed for Christ before the world got ahold of him. II Timothy 1:5: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." When God saves a young person and that young person surrenders to God's call for his or her life, God gets the whole life. I always encourage the young people to give the best years of their life to Jesus.

4. I PREACH TO THE YOUTH BECAUSE THIS IS THE TIME OF LIFE'S GREATEST DECISIONS.

Life's greatest decisions must be made before we are old enough and wise enough to make them. This is why I preach "give your all to Christ", so that He may impart to the young man and lady the wisdom that they need to make those most important decisions in life such as what college they shall attend, what their vocation shall be, whom they shall marry and where they shall live and serve the Lord. God has a plan for each young person's life. I am driven that they might find it.

Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

5. I PREACH TO THE YOUTH BECAUSE I SEE THE RACE THAT WE ARE ENGAGED IN AS A RELAY.

II Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." I Corinthians 9:26a: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly...." In my youthful days in ministry I saw the race I was running as a lone runner, but as I have grown older I see myself as one carrying the proverbial baton for the next generation.

6. I PREACH TO THE YOUTH BECAUSE THEY ARE THE CHURCH OF TOMORROW.

The Bible says in Acts 13:36a: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God...." We all have our place in the grand scheme of history. We have our chance to serve God in our generation and then it's on to the next generation. Mordecai said to Esther, "...and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14b).

7. I PREACH TO THE YOUTH BECAUSE OF A VESTED INTEREST.

I am burdened that young people serve God because of the blessing dedicated Christians are to their churches, their communities, and their country. I have children and especially grandchildren who will live beyond my lifetime. I am ever aware that many of the youth that I preach and reach for God today may be my grandchildren's pastor or laymen who makes a strong spiritual impact on my progeny.

God is looking for that one to step up. Ezekiel 22:30: "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land."

-Pastor Pope-