

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

I Thessalonians 2:8 – “*So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.*”

INTRODUCTION:

In too many churches in society today, people, especially teenagers, have become mere statistics. Many churches have grown cold and calloused toward the ministry of people. An effective youth ministry and effective youth work must always be person to person. The youth worker is primarily here to personally interact with the teens. Whatever responsibilities are given, whether driving a bus or running an activity, they should always fall second to personal interaction and love for the teens.

As the youth group grows, there is the challenge to love and meet the needs of more kids. For this reason, one or two people cannot accomplish the task. It is imperative that every teenager at every event receives a personal touch. A personal touch can be defined every time a youth worker singles out a young person as an individual, apart from the mass. It is best for the youth ministry that every teenager is given the personal touch at least once every week. Mass mailings, flyers, visitor letters, absentee letters and photo-copied handouts do not communicate a personal touch, and nothing is as important to a teenager as being personally loved and encouraged.

In today's society teenagers are starving for personal attention. Moms and dads have forsaken personal involvement for television, careers, hobbies and toys and many of the teenagers in the group are longing for someone to personally reach out and invest into their lives.

How is a personal touch communicated? Here are some suggestions for how to effectively touch the lives of the teenagers, personally.

1. Greet the teens at every meeting.

It is vital that no teenager feels ignored or rejected. The only way to do this is to work as a team to greet and welcome every teenager. A high five, a handshake, a pat on the back, slap on the shoulder, and a smile can do more than we could ever imagine.

Always look the teenagers in the eyes when you're talking to and communicating with them. This gives a sense of undivided attention and it lets the teenagers know they are really cared about.

2. Send an occasional note.

Every week, look at the list of teens and write five or six notes of encouragement to those the Lord lays on your heart. A note only takes a couple minutes to write but will have a huge impact. Make these notes personal and encouraging and always make them feel loved.

3. Remember birthdays.

As a youth department, let's begin acknowledging birthdays on more occasions than just Sunday mornings. It is important to check the birthday list and send cards and notes. To a teenager, a birthday is the single most important event of the year, and when someone remembers a birthday, it means more than we will ever know.

4. Have a teenager in your home.

It may be a group of teens or a single teen the Lord lays on your heart, but to take a teen out to lunch or have him over for dinner indicates an investment of personal time and shows real love and concern.

5. Make phone calls every week.

Each week, pull anywhere from five to twenty names from your list, take a few minutes, and call the teenagers to tell them they were being thought of and are loved.
