

Getting the Most from your Vacation Bible School

I) Intro.

A) Goal: big picture - discuss more the why's than the how's

B) What is traditional view/ goal/mission of VBS?

C) Xenos history

II) Developing VBS Philosophy

A) Questioned what and why

B) Questions to help clarify

1) What's the purpose of the church? Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8

2) What's our scriptural responsibility to our children?

(a) Model, instruct - Deut. 6:5

(b) Teach/train Prov. 22:6

3) What are God's goals for kids, i.e., can children REALLY be used by God?

(a) Matt. 22:37-39; 28-18-20, i.e., the REAL work only for adults?

(b) Use it, pass it on...

(c) Consider following quotes:

(a) Regarding the Holy Spirit? "For some reason, we adults do not expect much from our children when it comes to prayer. But when children accept Jesus Christ into their lives, they do not

receive a 'junior version' of the Holy Spirit to dwell within them. It is the same Holy Spirit that dwells within us, helping and guiding us in every way—including when we pray.”¹

(b) “During their formative years, children develop their decision-making perspectives and patterns. Helping them in that process is one of the most important responsibilities we have as humans; engaging them at a young age is a critical strategic choice.”²

(d) We don't have to dichotomize, we can multi-task

III) Stumbling Blocks

A) Tradition

B) Fear - afraid God won't come through & child's faith weakened

1) Tend toward assurance that the next generation will have a better life than we've had...

2) What's the source of the fear?

C) Adults' personal struggle

D) Under-value children

E) Wrong thinking

¹ *Growing Up Prayerful, A Pray! Magazine Book*, Navpress, p. 5

² *Transforming Children Into Spiritual Champions*, George Barna, Regal Press, p. 32

- F) American Lifestyle, i.e., Lazy, apathetic, complacent, comfortable
 - 1) "It's easy to pick and choose what we want from the Sometimes we think we know what is best without even seeking God's wisdom. Not that we purposely overlook it, but we're busy and we often think we know what works best for our family. In a nutshell, here's what this book is all about—creative ideas to help you keep the essentials of Scripture foremost in your family's life."³

IV) Rewards

A) Develop lifelong habits

B) Fulfilled life

C) Health of the church

V) Helping children develop purpose through the experience of VBS

A) Develop Lifestyle/Vision for a significant, supernatural life w/God

B) Passion

C) Experience

1) power and provision from the Lord

2) pleasure and joy doing God's work

D) Equipping "... Kids are more comfortable sharing their faith than are adults. Our responsibility is to prepare and encourage them and then see how the Holy Spirit uses them in the process."⁴

³ *Becoming a World Changing Family*, Donna Thomas, Baker Books, ISBN 0801065127, p. 16

⁴ Barna, p. 72

VI) Transition/Paradigm shift

A) Standard

B) Simplified

C) Structure

- 1) Ages 3-entering 4th grade
- 2) 3 teachers/class – using teens who have been trained in Oasis classrooms
- 3) Entire drama team is middle & high school students
- 4) Limited attendance
- 5) AM & PM sessions

D) Outreach to parents

VII) Conclusion

A) VBS is an extension of what we do all year

B) Mission statement “Vacation Bible School is a summer outreach program where families can invite children to learn about Jesus through Bible stories, music, crafts, games and drama; and where families can experience the love of our local Christian body through biblical lessons and fun activities.”

- 1) 2-fold
 - (a) to give children an opportunity...

(b) Adults reached

C) Fruit