

Why Invest in the Next Generation?

I can say with confidence that I never would have imagined being where I am today. When I first felt like serving in youth ministry was something I wanted to do, I was still very much lost and living for the flesh. I walked away from serving, from the church and eventually tried to step back from the Lord. But He is faithful and He had a plan. There is so many WHY's on why I have dedicated myself to being a Pastor, specifically a youth pastor. Here are a few of my thoughts with scripture that keep me staying steadfast in doing what I feel is my purpose here at Providence.

Psalm 78: 1

O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old--3what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us.4We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.5He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children,6so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.7Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

We as all followers of Jesus are called to this.

The Bible talks about teaching our children, teaching the next generation the commands and the ways of the Lord. I am single and have no children but I have such a passion to teach and reach the young adults in our world. The enemy comes to kill, steal, and destroy. Our teenagers are not exempt just because they are still too young to have a drivers license. I know I have a duty to love and encourage and teach these students. I believe in the next generation and know they need to know the wonders and hardships of life and what we go through and show them Jesus through it all.

One of my favorite books in the Bible is Ecclesiastes. The whole book is about how the writer walks away from the Lord to realize life is completely meaningless without Him. Which there is so many layers to that. Layers that if our teens only knew, maybe we would be able to save them from some heartache. If they truly knew what the world had to offer they would be able to easily resist that temptation and stay in

relationship with God.

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 talks about these moments in life. I feel as though its one of the biggest honors in life to walk with these students through the lows and the highs of life.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet[a] no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Students are not too young to understand and follow Jesus.

From an early age each of us have this God size hole inside of us. We spend endless time trying to fill it. The only thing that will ultimately do that will be the relationship with Jesus. One of my biggest why is how sometimes life can just be so heavy. Matthew 11:28 **“Come to me all who are weary and burden and I will give you rest”**.

I remember as teen not knowing what was wrong with me, but quickly overwhelmed by being alive. I didn't learn till later in life how Jesus truly brings rest. That my little teenage heart didn't have to be as heavy as it was. I was alone, I felt alone and didn't think anyone understood me. I never want a teen to feel that way. It is a honor to lead them, and even carry them to the feet of Jesus when they feel like they cant do it. Doing life with them goes beyond just teaching the words of God. It involves, late night phone calls. Loving them even when they are acting unloveable, and showing them what grace is. Demonstrating what it looks like to serve others. Dying to self and choosing God first. Always being there no matter how many times they have walked away. Never ceasing to pray for them. Ultimately it is picking up my own cross and following Jesus. I have a million Whys.

“It is not Gods will for any of us to go through life being or feeling alone.”

Overall, the biggest why is why not?

Why would I not do everything in my power to show others who Jesus is. Why would I not share this knowledge and hope with the next generation. Everything has just aligned to where the Lord has me here with the teenagers.

