

Teaching Young Adult Ministry at the Bible College

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Historically the AG Bible colleges have not taught young adult ministries as thoroughly as other areas of ministry. Within the realm of some AG college courses, one may find brief sections on the educational or psychological needs of this age group but not much more. There are degrees for areas such as children's ministries, youth ministry, and music ministry. But there is not one course specifically designed for ministering to young adults or reaching the secular university on any of our AG colleges.

On any given Sunday, the average church bulletin reveals the absence of young adult ministries in the local church. They have nursery, pre-school, elementary, junior high, high school, and then there is a leap into the normal mainstream of church-family life. Historically young adults married earlier. They then transitioned into the normal family program of the church. Today they are remaining single longer, living at home longer, and are putting off starting families. Many churches seem to overlook this group entirely. It could come across that the message is that the church has invested in you as a child and teen and so now you must be ready for adulthood. If you are not, then the church will be here when you are ready to settle down.

If young adult ministries were being promoted at the AG colleges then pastors would be trained to minister to them just like every life phase group for part of the Bible college curriculum. If Long's (1997, 35) estimates are correct, when he says that a church needs to have at least twenty percent of the population of his church who are young

adults, in order to secure its future, then this is definitely an area where pastors need to be trained and prepared.

As these courses are developed it would be recommended that they also be offered online for pastors who are already serving in the pastorate and who did not have the opportunity to take them in college. These courses could also be used for training lay leaders in the churches. If there were several people in one area who were interested, then group classes could also be set up and perhaps moderated (if video or online), or taught by the pastor who had already completed the course.

REFERENCE LIST

Long, Jimmy. 1997. *Generating Hope: A Strategy for Reaching the Postmodern Generation*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.