

ZION BAPTIST CHURCH STUDENT MINISTRY FOCUS

Many Students in Youth Ministry are suffering from “Happathy.” Happathy is the result of trying to make students like church through games, high energy music, and slick events. It is built around emotionalism: the more hyped the event, the better the experience. The wilder the games, the more memories are made. The more students in attendance, the “better” the ministry is. But, this emotionalistic practice of youth ministry often hides the fact that few students are being disciplined and it leads to short lived happiness and apathy. Why?

Once students have experienced this style of ministry, the bar gets raised even more, and as consumers, they demand even more. Our events and programming have to be “bigger and better.” But, once Students have “done it and heard it all,” they become disinterested. Few can truly learn anything significant and lasting from these hyped-up events. Unfortunately many Youth Ministries have fallen into the Happathy trap. For years the goal of youth ministry has been to entertain students long enough to get them in the church doors. Focusing on bringing students into a program does not equip them to lead. When we cater to students instead of investing in them, we are creating a generation of people who are not motivated to be world changers.

Some symptoms of Hapathy are as follows:

- ❖ Students come only for the fun.
- ❖ Students quickly morph into “what-have-you-done-for-me-lately consumers.”
- ❖ Students haven’t invested into the ministry.
- ❖ Students consume only what they find entertaining.
- ❖ Students learn that if they lament loudly enough and often enough, adults will “come to their rescue” and yield to their pleas. After all, “happy students” will be more interested in Jesus, right?
- ❖ Students abandon the Church upon graduation (*statistics show that only 20% will still be going to church by the age of 29*).

At Zion Baptist Student Ministries, we strive to develop people, not programs. Students want to know Jesus is real and can deal with their problems. Students want true meaning and lasting connections. We focus on building Student Leaders and Disciples who make Disciples, because discipleship and leadership go hand in hand.

As young adults, students are ready and able to learn leadership principles. The next generation of church leaders is sitting in youth ministries right now. In light of this, student leadership development is not only a good idea, it is essential for building God’s Kingdom.

New Focus: Students must see youth ministry as their outreach to the world, not what the church provides FOR them. Students must be challenged, not made comfortable. Students must be equipped, not entertained. Students must be released to lead, under the watchful eye of Adult Shepherds, and ultimately the Student Pastor.

At Zion Baptist Church, we don’t think that Student Ministry is the Church’s ministry to students; We see Student Ministry as their ministry to the(ir) world.

At Zion, your student will learn:

- ❖ Their True Identity in Christ.
- ❖ They CAN be a Leader.
- ❖ Their Leadership Style.
- ❖ Biblical Leader Skills & Character Traits.
- ❖ How God “wired them” and what Spiritual Gifts they possess
- ❖ How to take Calculated Risks
- ❖ That it’s ok to fail
- ❖ How to turn Failure into Success.

Each and every event, gathering, camp, ministry opportunity, topic taught, curriculum chosen, meeting, song sung, game played, and regular programming is a calculated piece of this Discipleship and Leadership focus, all leading to a well-developed follower of Christ.

We emphasize 4 discipleship areas:

1. **DEVELOPING A STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (Spending time with God)
2. **COMMUNITY** (Spending Time with Others)
3. **SERVICE** (Knowing & Using Your Gifts)
4. **MISSIONS EXPERIENCE** (Sharing Your Story & Sharing the Gospel)

We stress 8 Life Topics each year and 4 Life Topics every other year. They are as follows:

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| ❖ Spiritual Habits | - Authority |
| ❖ Friendship | - Doubt |
| ❖ Family | - Hurt |
| ❖ Wisdom | - Loving Others |
| ❖ Evangelism | |
| ❖ Jesus | |
| ❖ Identity | |
| ❖ Apologetics | |

Only 6 Events are planned each year, but they are done exceptionally well. They are as follows:

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| Camp | Missions |
| DNOW Weekend | Fall Retreat |
| Community Building Event | Celebration Event |

Along with an intentional discipleship focus for students, we recognize parents as the primary and key developer of their student(s). Our goal is to equip and resource parents of teens. Throughout the year, we will send various communications, hold parent discussion groups, and host parent events to assist you in discipling your student

If you are looking for a local church and ministry that will love, develop, and disciple you and your student, Zion Baptist wants to partner with you.