

Ministry of Reconciliation

By Glyn Henman

Read: 2 Cor. 5:17-21, 1 Thes 2:6-12

We are all called to a ministry of reconciliation - a ministry of reconciling those who do not know Jesus into a full relationship with Him. The Bible says that all are called. It means all Christians, not just those who have lots of extra time, are good communicators, are educated in technology, or are outgoing. All. The question isn't just what am I called to do, but how can I best do what God has called me to do?

Young Life is a tool, one of many, and like any tool it can be used correctly or incorrectly. We need to plan together to make a real difference for God's Kingdom.

How do young people come to know Jesus in Young Life? They know you! They have a friendship with you that says 'I love you as Christ loves you - unconditionally.' A friendship that says 'I accept you as Christ accepts you - unconditionally.' I care enough to listen. You are my friend no matter what.

How do young people grow up in Christ? They know you! As you walk with young people who have made commitments, live with them, grow with them, and give yourself to them, they see someone who is their example of who Christ is.

What do young people need today? They need Christian adults of any age to take an interest in them. Young people don't usually have adult "friends" - unless they want something from them. They need adults who are willing to love sacrificially, spend time with them, be vulnerable with them, and stay by their side through whatever life brings. They also need mature adults who are strong and able to be tough with them, when needed. We need to be adults who demonstrate the values of God. Out of this kind of friendship, we proclaim the Gospel.

"Your actions speak so loud I can't hear your words" changes to "Your actions speak so loud I want to stop in this busy world and listen to what you have to say."

We are His Ambassadors. An ambassador is both a messenger and a representative. He doesn't speak in his own name or act on his own authority. What he communicates is not his own opinions or demands, but simply what he has been told to communicate. At the same time, he speaks with authority, in this case with the authority of Christ Himself. It is God's divine love we are commissioned to proclaim.

We share God's love with young people by our words, but even more often by giving them our very lives. It's a sacrifice to love young people on their terms, not ours, but that is what we are called to do.

(Further verses to study: 1 Peter 2:9, Matt 28:19, Matt 9:35-38, Acts 1:8, John 15:7-8, John 15:16-17, John 10:10-11)