

29. Youth Anointed Disciples of Jesus

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston emphasizes the vital role of parents in raising youth as dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ through spiritual guidance and open communication.

Duration: 42:53

Scripture: Acts 2:17

Topics: "Discipleship", "Youth Ministry"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of raising youth as anointed disciples of Jesus Christ, highlighting the need for parents to guide their children to walk with God, keep their conscience clear, establish a devotional life, maintain open communication, provide godly influence, involve them in God's work, and exercise loving authority to disciple them into maturity and service for God.

Transcript

The first session here this evening is entitled, Youth, Anointed Disciples of Jesus Christ. Youth, Anointed Disciples of Jesus Christ. Acts chapter 2, verse 17 and 18 read, And it shall come to pass, in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your young men shall see visions. Your old men shall dream dreams.

And upon my servants and on my handmaids, I will pour out in those days of my spirit, And they shall prophesy. God continues to say a little later in the text, For the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are far off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. These verses are timeless promises given to the saints centuries ago, yet they apply to you and I this evening.

I want you to take a moment and just dream with me. Let your mind go for just a moment and envision your children standing somewhere in the world, serving God with all their hearts. Maybe they're 20 years old, 21, 22.

They are full of the Spirit of God. They are serving God with their whole heart. They open their mouth with boldness and speak out the mind and will of God with unction.

Their life and service is such that they are known among the Gentiles and by all the people. All that see them shall acknowledge them that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed. Their testimony is clear

and everyone can see the blessing of God is upon them.

That, my dear people, is God's will for every one of your children. If I understand the promises of God in the Word of God and understand God at all, I know Him to be a God who is no respecter of persons, but anyone who will take Him at His Word and with all of their heart move forward and meet the conditions of the promises that God made. God will do that with their children.

I believe that. Remember those mature plants and those polished cornerstones that upright young man with a clear countenance because he has a clear conscience that stays clean on his own. Remember him who loves the Lord Jesus and all who know him know that he's committed to the Lord.

Remember him, he's a virgin saving his purity for the life of his youth. He's filled with the Holy Ghost. He's filled with God's words.

He's busy about the Master's business. Amen. Remember that young lady we talked about who is also upright in her heart.

Her face glows because her conscience is clear. Her face glows because her conscience is clear and she's learned to keep it clear. She's one of the king's daughters.

Hallelujah. All glorious within. Praise the Lord.

Waiting to be placed in a building somewhere someday at God's appointment. Grace is upon her. Everyone knows it.

She's a virgin. She's pure. She's saving her heart and body for one.

She loves her parents. She delights in authority and she's ready to guide a home. Yes, he's beautiful.

Yes, she's beautiful. My dear people tonight, this is God's heart and will for your children. Remember, he is a God who calleth those things which be not as though they already are.

Hallelujah. I believe that. He is a God who calls us to see and believe and move toward that which is his heart.

God sees your seed, that is your children, anointed with the Holy Ghost and living as witnesses of his life-changing power. That's how God sees every one of our children. It is in his heart.

It is not in his heart that one here and one there gets all on fire for God. It is in his heart that every last one of them represented in this room would be on fire for God someday and a testimony and a witness opening their mouth to the glory of God of his life-changing power. That is God's will.

Hallelujah. To have youth that are filled with God is a great asset in any home. It's a great asset.

To have youth who are learning to walk with God is a refreshing addition to any home, any family. This is the goal and I assure you it is worth striving for. You as parents, as you disciple your young people into disciples of Jesus Christ, you will only bless your own household while you do it.

I remember the first time it dawned on me that the spiritual level had risen in my house because of our young people. The older children were moving into this dedicated discipleship stage and the atmosphere of the home was coming up because of it. It changed the atmosphere.

All of a sudden we were having church during family devotions. We were having open testimony meetings on Sunday evening while we gathered around the popcorn for our family evening. Things broke out in beautiful discussions and open confessions in those days as our young people began to become on fire for Jesus Christ.

And I'm speaking about Rebecca and Daniel and Elizabeth and maybe Samuel, but he was a little young then. Godly youth will bless and sanctify the atmosphere of your home. I noticed it three weeks ago when Samuel came back from Africa.

I noticed the atmosphere of the home changed when he came back in. This is God's will that our young people are so dedicated to God that the atmosphere of the home is not only affected by mom and dad, but guess what? If you do your homework while they're young, they're gonna come alongside you and help you with the rest of them. Sanctifying the atmosphere of the home.

I would like to consider this evening the maturing process that takes place in our youth from the time that they say, I am the Lord's to the time when they become like these youth that I have just described which, by the way, is the joy and consolation of any parent's heart. Many parents, when they hear their children say, I am the Lord's and they stand there on the edge of the baptismal waters and see their children baptized, many parents let up at that point. Well, that one's done.

On to the next one. Wrong response. Wrong response.

This is a very crucial time. When your child rises up and says, I am the Lord's. I will follow Jesus.

This is a very crucial time. Many parents are short-sighted on this point. Somehow they have this idea that once their child is soundly converted, the job is done.

This is a big mistake. Yes, the job is done, but there's another one just beginning in your life as a father and a mother. You are to take this born-again, bathing Christ Jesus and disciple that babe unto maturity, unto a steady walk with God, into a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

And that is our responsibility as parents. Make a disciple. Make a disciple.

Jesus told His disciples to go and make disciples in the same manner that they were trained. This is what we must do as parents. We are to make a disciple for Jesus Christ.

We must carefully take our newly converted babe in Christ and teach them how to walk with God. This whole process should be a major focus for the next few years of their life until we can clearly see my child is walking in the grace of God. And I know it without a doubt.

Let's look at a few practical ways in which we can guide these young people on toward this goal. Number one, you must be spiritual. Father and mother, you must be spiritual.

You say, brother, you've been saying that all week. Sorry, but you must be spiritual to make a disciple. You must be a disciple in order to make a disciple.

And I am not saying that if you are not a disciple or your own life is a little bit like this, that you should take a back seat and let it up to the pastor. No, I'm saying, bless God, if you have a young person who has been born again, who is just getting their feet on the ground spiritually, and you're not prepared to guide them where they need to go, it is time to get your feet on the ground. It is your responsibility to guide them.

You must be spiritual. As I mentioned earlier, many parents neglect this responsibility. And I'm afraid the reason why it is neglected is because you can't make a disciple if you're not one yourself.

So, that's kind of how it goes. This is a very sobering condition to be in. To have a child who has given their heart to the Lord and yet we are in no shape to help them along their way.

Paul said to Timothy, the husbandman must first be partaker of the fruits. As a pastor and a man, a counselor who works in the prayer rooms many, many times, I've caught many a tear from a young person who was born again back there somewhere and lost their way up until now. Sin is in their life.

They've made mistakes. They wish they never would have made but they've made those mistakes because they have not been guided and disciplined into a solid walk with God. Oh parents, I'm just pleading with us this evening that we be spiritual so that we can put their feet solid on the ground.

The next point I want to look at as we look at discipling young people into disciples of Jesus Christ. They are young adults. Your young people are no longer children.

This is something that we can see with our eyes but we don't always realize it in our relationship with them. That's why I like the term young adults. This helps me to remember that I am moving into a different level of relating with my children.

They are not children anymore. They are blossoming adults. Your child is now your brother or your sister in Christ.

That changes the relationship a bit. Amen? This changes the way you relate to them. You don't speak with frustration in your spirit when you speak to one of the brothers in the church, do you? We parents need to change how we look at our children.

I have shared a little earlier this week about some of our failures in this area with our own young people. As Jackie and I sat down to hear the hearts of our youth these are some of the things that came out. We were offending them by treating them like small children.

We hadn't made the change in our mind. You do what I say. You do it when I say.

No questions asked. That's not how you relate to a young person. It doesn't work.

We slowly learn that we could not just tell them what to do, no questions asked. They must be treated with respect and it's okay if they ask a question as long as they ask it in a right way. We shifted from commanding to leading, from quick words to conversation and explanation.

And there was a learning curve in this and there were a few times when we went back to our youth and said, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Let's move on to the next one.

Help them keep their conscience clear. If they're gonna learn to walk with God they must learn to keep their conscience clear. That is our responsibility.

Now we move into lessons of learning to walk with God. The God who just saved them. And if they're gonna walk with God they must learn to keep their conscience clear.

Otherwise, they will lose their way continually. And praise God if you have your children in a place where they can hear such words and they can hear a good revival message or go to a Bible school and be challenged about walking with God. That's wonderful.

But God wants us as parents to teach them how to walk with God. I remember so clearly with our son Joshua. He was recently born again.

What a beautiful time for the whole family as his heart was cleansed and changed. Oh, it was precious. But not long after this he did something wrong.

Like all Christians do at times. He did something wrong. And I, as a wise papa I saw it on his face immediately.

I saw what he did and I saw on his face immediately his conscience just got cloudy. But what did I do? I just took him aside and we had our first lesson about keeping your conscience clear. And I said, Josh, you're a Christian now.

And you know he had walked for a whole week. He was beautiful. He was full of joy and all of that for a whole week.

But now something went wrong and now his conscience was cloudy. And we just sat down and we had a little talk about it. Josh, you need to keep your conscience clear.

When you do something wrong now you can't just say, oh well maybe papa will take care of it someday. Maybe I'll get a spanking and I can get it clear. No, not anymore.

Now, you get on your knees and you get right with God. And we got down on our knees there that day and he prayed and confessed and repented of the wrong that he did. You should have seen the joy on his face when he got up off his knees.

It was like, wow! New lesson. That was wonderful. Didn't even have to get a spanking to get it either.

Bless God. That was wonderful. You know, from that day Joshua began to relate with me in a different way.

He looked at me yes, as his father but he also looked at me as somebody who was a helper of his faith and a helper of his joy. And he would come to me and say, Papa, this is going on inside my heart. What do you think? And I would give him some counsel.

Papa, I'm thinking about studying these verses in devotions. What do you think? And I would give him some counsel. It was like as if a light went off in his little head back there that day and he realized this man can teach me to walk with God.

I'm gonna find out everything I can from him. And our relationship has been different ever since. We're still buddies but we're much closer.

Oh, the joy of watching him begin to learn to take those steps of keeping his conscience clear before God on his own. That's part of making a disciple of Jesus Christ. The next point.

Establish their devotional life. This is one of those areas that we are quick to cover with a new convert, you know. We need somebody to the Lord in the church.

We're quick to come alongside of them. Look, get your Bible, spend this much time, read here, do this, have some time in prayer. We know that if a new babe in Christ will spend time in the Word and prayer, they will grow.

And we want them to grow. This is of utmost important that we check on a new convert to see how they're getting along. All this kind of care should be transferred over to our children also.

Just like as if we just led somebody to the Lord off the street and here they are in the church and we're rejoicing about all that God has done. We need to work the same way with our own youth. And come alongside and say, OK, let's establish a devotional life now.

Let's begin to get up. Let's set these things in order. They need their parents who will watch over them and help them get on their feet spiritually.

If your child does not have a regular time to seek God every day, then help them get it into concrete while they're young. Get it into concrete. At our house in the morning, I'm always floating around the house, checking on all my little lambs to see how the morning is going with them.

I'll ask them what they're reading. I'll ask them to share what they're getting from God. I'll ask them how their prayer time is going.

All this is very much assumed so nobody feels threatened, but rather loved when I ask. By keeping close contact here, I get a constant glimpse into where they're at with God and their walk with God. Sometimes they will say, oh, I'm having such a precious time in my quiet times with God, but other times they'll say it's not going too well right now, and then I begin to probe and ask a few questions and give them some counsel in light of that.

This is our responsibility as a father and a mother to do that till they get themselves solid on the ground, solid on the rock. Christ Jesus. The next one.

Talk time and accountability that goes along with talk time. Young people need to talk. Amen? Sometimes parents think, oh man, I'm glad my little ones grew up.

Now I've got more free time. No, you don't. Your young people need more time to talk to you than you gave when they were little.

Talk time. Communication is one of your key methods of guiding them and monitoring their process. Sometimes this can be serious conversation and sometimes it can just be nice family talks with humor around the home.

Both of those are very important. The point here is that you as parents keep your hand on the pulse of the heart of your child. The youthful years are formative years.

And the young people are beginning to examine everything. Like it or not, these kind of thoughts go through their mind. I wonder if that is right.

What he says about this or that. I wonder if this conviction is really in the Bible. And these kind of things are going on inside of their hearts.

They're finding their way. Establishing their own convictions before God. It's time to communicate mom and dad.

It's time to communicate. They want to talk these things through. There are questions that go on inside their minds.

They want to talk them through. But we must be close enough to them and we must make available enough opportunities that it just naturally flows out. And soon they begin opening up and sharing things that are inside their heart.

And guess what? You can minister to them and again guide them along the way as they learn to walk with God. These things are very important. This flow of communication naturally opens up to some accountability for them also.

If relationships are right, this accountability is perceived as loving protection. And that is exactly what it is by the way. It is loving protection.

Maybe our young people go out for an evening, maybe to a youth meeting or whatever. You sit down with them and you say, So, how was the youth meeting? Hmm? Who was there? Oh, I see. You have any good conversations? Uh-huh.

What did you talk about? Okay. Who had the message? Hmm? What did you think about the message? And on and on it goes. Accountability.

Accountability. You should have the freedom to ask them how the evening went. You should be one of their friends and able to talk to them about how they're doing morally.

This should be a willing free flow of information so that you can help them through the battles of their coming to maturity. I have seen dozens of young people prosper and gain victory in the area of self-abuse and moral struggle simply by being accountable to mom and dad. You can bring them through to victory.

I've seen other young people struggle for years with issues like that. And guess what? They flip-flop spiritually for all those years and live in condemnation and feel degraded and all of that. Moms and dads need to come near their sons or come near their daughters and keep them accountable concerning things like that.

Keep the communications open and you will do them a great favor. The next point is the blessing of authority. I have been young in the ministry and now I'm getting old in the same.

I have watched many lives of many young people in the last 25 years of my ministry. The ones who really prosper had some of this blessed commodity in their lives as they grew in the Lord. Biblical authority overseeing them.

In the Christian context, there is no greater power available to mold a young person into maturity than to have some authority over their life that you can freely guide them and ask them and direct them and check them and say no sometimes about what they're doing. Nothing is more powerful than this. And blessed are the youth who have parents who will watch over them in these ways.

I've spoken about this authority already in a previous message. However, it was within the context of the small children. Obviously, if you do your homework while the child is young, you will have very little problem moving into this vital aspect of authority with your young people.

It just kind of flows right along. But if you have failed in the other, you will have your hands full when you realize, whoa, they're going away. I don't want them to go.

I think I'll try to stop them. That may not be as easy as just saying one, two, three. So I want to encourage you to do your homework while they're young.

But I also want to encourage you to take authority over your young people. The rules are the same because the principle is the same. Again, the great need is for calm, quiet authority.

This is most important with young people. Most important. They are beginning to question issues in life.

They are beginning to make decisions on their own. It is vital that you as a parent be firmly established in your authority, which means you don't feel threatened when a question comes. Okay? There should be no arguments, no debates, no raising of the voice at all, ever in this area.

This is always counterproductive. Listen, fathers and mothers, there are times when young people need to be told no. There are times like that.

Make sure that you have enough ground in your life and in their life that you can freely do that when it needs to be done. And they will just say okay, sure. It's fine, dad.

No problem. Sometimes young people need to be told no. We need to come alongside of them and help them learn to live.

Amen? Where they're doing well and clearly in control, you can let up. But where they're not doing well, and you can see they're not doing well, they need some oversight. Please, give it to them.

I remember when Daniel came back from Africa after he was there for six months. He came to this place where I was realizing he's gonna be okay. Came back from Africa.

God had done a beautiful work in his heart while he was there. Six months of service on the front lines. God had poured a lot of grace in his life.

Six weeks flat on his back with hepatitis. Hardly able to eat any food. God did a work in his heart while he was there.

And he came back, and as soon as he walked through the door, we knew right away this boy is different. Now, he was a good boy when he left. We wouldn't have sent him to Africa.

But when he came home, we said, whoa. What happened to Daniel? As I began to watch him walk with God after he came home, my heart as a parent began to say oh, this boy doesn't need so much oversight anymore. I think I'll just back out of the way.

He seems to be making all the right decisions on his own. But you know, it's very interesting. As my heart was saying this boy's okay on his own, his heart was saying, crying like never before, oh Papa, I want to know what you think.

I tell you what, what a beautiful combination that is. When those two come together, you look and say everything's okay. They look on and say, please give me some guidance in my life.

Let's go on to the next one. Young people need godly friends. We hear a lot about peer pressure these days, and it's right, and it's a right concern.

However, there is also good peer pressure. Amen? Or may I say it better, the godly influence of close friends who love the Lord Jesus. Amen? Our young people need the godly influence of friends who love the Lord Jesus.

This is an important aspect of making a disciple of Jesus Christ. Very important. I realize that some people may not be in a very good situation, and your heart may be crying even now while you hear it.

Where do I find one? What will I do? Where do we go to church? We've got away from all the churches. I understand all that, but I want to give the principle anyway, and I trust that God will help you to find your way in your situation what you should do with what I'm saying. But young people need godly influence from others who love God with all their heart.

It's such a blessing when a parent comes alongside of a youth who's learning to walk with God and learning to submit their heart to the direction that they're being given to have another godly youth come alongside of them and say Amen. I think what your papa is saying is right. Oh, that's powerful stuff when a young person will do that for their friend.

And by the way, if they do the other, they are not your friend. You ought to get loose of them as fast as you can. And by the way, if I ever hear of anybody saying to mine, why does your dad make you do that? That's the last time I let my children hang around them.

Because that's dangerous words. The next point, we're moving along here. Time, time, time.

Help them get involved in God's work. This is a very important part of making a disciple of Jesus Christ. As your young people begin to experience the fullness of the spirit in their lives, they must have an outlet for this river that is beginning to flow in their heart.

This is a major principle in the New Testament and a vital key to your task of establishing them in the faith. Your youth must be doing something for God. We are saved to serve.

Amen? That's the bottom line. Every one of us. We are saved to serve.

We are not saved to sit. And the young people are no exception to that at all. Many parents are short-sighted on this point.

They think the youth must mature first and then serve. They think that service is for the mature adults in the congregation and the youth must maintain a holding pattern for a while until they grow. I feel this is a wrong approach to take with young people.

Absolutely wrong. If you take that approach, they'll be finding miniature golf to play. They'll be finding all kinds of other nonsense to do.

They'll be finding other things to do with their time. They'll be wasting their time on nonsense things. Young people need to be given something to do for God.

You know, when the grace of God starts flowing through them and they begin to give it out to somebody else, guess what? They'll find out, this is wonderful. God is flowing through me. And guess what? They'll get addicted.

And that's what we want. Amen? I mean, it's the difference between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Amen? The Sea of Galilee has fresh water flowing in and fresh water flowing out.

But the Dead Sea has fresh water flowing in and nothing flowing out. What do you want in your young person? A Sea of Galilee or a Dead Sea? Get them something to do. And I believe that's the parent's responsibility to be thinking and pondering and praying and searching for avenues and opportunities where you can get the children involved in the work of God.

You'll never be sorry if you do it. A life of living for others is what Christianity is all about. I think many youth lose their way because they don't have anything to do.

Living for others or love is half the Christian life. You want them to miss half? That's a lot to miss, amen? That's a whole lot to miss. There are many many different ways in which you can live this out.

Remember William Booth? How he took his children out there on the front lines and they got thoroughly addicted to the work of God? This is what we're talking about. This is a secret, dear fathers and mothers. This is a secret.

This is how this thing keeps on going. God has given you those children that you might train those children and raise them up that they might be servants of the living God, every one of them. And the sooner you can begin to guide them down that path, the easier it will be for them and for you.

As youth get involved in the work of God, they begin to mature. They begin to learn their Bibles in ways they didn't before. They begin to learn to pray as they get a burden to pray for somebody.

They begin to develop their own convictions as people ask them questions about this or that. Why do you do this and why that? What's that thing on your head? What is it for? And why do you do that? All those things are used to develop deep, heartfelt convictions and stability and maturity in the young people. In our house, we send our young people to Africa when they're 16 years old.

That's family tradition in our house. Hannah's 15 and she's counting the days. When it's her turn to go over to Africa, it changes their life.

It changes their perspective on every decision they make from that day forward. We send them to Africa. There are many other things we do.

This whole home series that we've been involved in these last 10 days is just another example of what I'm talking about. The whole family has been in it from day one. I mean two weeks before we ever stood up and shared one word.

The family was in it all the way. Whole home. It's not Papa's task.

It's the whole family that's going to do it. Bless God. And that was by my design.

Lord, here is an opportunity that I can pull all these children right into the middle of the work. Man, they had no idea what they were getting into. They had no idea, but it's been good for them.

We started three weeks ago partial fasting almost every day for the last three weeks. Family meetings to discuss the whole project. All the work on family verses and songs has been going on for two or three weeks.

Prayer meetings at home as a family. Special prayer schedules where you go and be alone during the day and have a season of prayer to pray for the home meetings. I even gathered a selected group of people together to pray with during the meetings so that our children would feel free to open up and pray with a bunch of other people that are on fire and seeking God with all their hearts.

We have been in the mythic of the battle all this week. The children have grown up this week, no question about it, in the area of spiritual warfare. Some of the things that they've seen happen, some of the things that we've gone through have educated them.

I mean they realize without a doubt there is a devil and he doesn't like it when God's people get busy for God. Now I've been telling them that a long time, but they know it in experience now. Very much so.

That's what I'm talking about. How can I get them involved? Let's do this. Let's try this.

Let's go to New York City. Let's go have a rest home ministry. Let's go to do the shut-in thing and take care of them.

Let's go out street preaching on Friday night. Get them involved. It's good for them.

And by the way, lastly, we will all rejoice together when the task is finished. Bless God. We will all rejoice together.

And that's part of doing the work of God. You sit down and it's all over. You say, hey, what did you hear? What happened here? We're doing that every night this week.

I mean when I get home, I'm tired. But we don't just run off and go to bed. We sit down and everybody starts talking.

Did you hear what happened to so-and-so? Really? Praise God. Somebody got converted and we just go on like that for about 20-25 minutes every evening. What am I doing? I'm making soldiers for Jesus.

That's what I'm doing. I want them to be involved in this thing. I want them to get excited about what God is doing.

I want them to know what God is doing. I want them to be in the middle of the whole thing. Why? Because young people need to be involved in God's work.

And when you get them involved in God's work, someday they're going to take off running and they may even pass you up. Bless God. They may even pass you up.

Well, dear parents, these are just a few helpful suggestions. It is by no means a conclusive list of suggestions and helpful meditations for you. You can come up with many more of them on your own.

The goal is a disciple of Jesus Christ. That's what we're after. Who loves God with their whole heart and delights in giving their life away to live for others.

I want to encourage your parents to receive the vision and the calling that God is presenting before you. And guide those children to stand on their own two feet on the Lord Jesus Christ and begin to walk. That is the challenge that I leave you in this message.

Let us pray. Yes, our God and our Father, here I am, Lord. It is I, Lord.

I have heard you calling in the night. Oh, Father, we know that you do call in the night. Oh, God, we pray that you'll give us the wisdom and God to give us the direction and give us the grace that we need to so guide our children that in the youth of their life they will hear you calling in the night.

I've got something for you to do. Lord, this is our prayer. Our desire is for anointed youth who are full of the Holy Ghost, who love you with all their heart, and they're a witness of Jesus Christ.

This we pray for in Jesus' name. Amen.

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