

The Church of Tomorrow?

By David Wright

Sometimes young people hear that they are “the church of tomorrow.” Only in a limited sense is this true. Today’s boys will one day serve in the Lord’s body as elders, deacons, and preachers. Today’s girls will soon be the older women responsible for teaching and guiding the young ladies of a generation yet unborn.

However, it may be a mistake to encourage young people to think of themselves as tomorrow’s church. This perspective seems to minimize the vital role played by young Christians now. If they are merely “the church of tomorrow,” then they are free to be foolish and careless for the time being. They can always mature and become responsible when the church truly needs them.

Actually, though, the majority of Christian converts obey the Gospel before turning 20. And who brings these teens and preteens to Jesus? Their families and friends! This means that our young people are the ones in the congregation with the best opportunities to win converts.

Paul certainly never minimizes the importance of young Christians. He doesn’t even hint that Timothy must wait his turn to be a leader in the church. On the contrary, the apostle challenges his young friend to “let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12).

Young people, you are much more than tomorrow’s leaders. You are the church of today. We love, need, and appreciate you.

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