

# Student Ministries Goal: Deep and Wide Spiritual Growth

## The issue:

2 out of 3 Christian teens will participate in a “graduation evacuation” from the body of Christ once they graduate high school. (George Barna research)

## Also:

Adolescent crime rate is dangerously high

Student suicide rate is dangerously high

Teen pregnancy rate is dangerously high

## Adult and government response:

Educational programs

School dress codes

Stricter law enforcement

Longer prison sentences

While this response may slow the growth of these statistics, it does not get to the heart of the problem. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ holds the keys of hope for today’s teenagers.

## The Church’s contribution to this issue:

The church has failed to capture the hearts, minds, and imaginations of this generation of students. A typical youth group focuses on entertainment more than evangelism, programs to please parents rather than a passion to serve God, and baby food curriculum rather than the meaty truth of God’s Word. The result, many Christian students have no lifestyle difference compared to unsaved students.

## The good news!

Today’s teenagers are very optimistic. They have a growing sense of duty, responsibility, and even heroism. They are expected to be world changers. Can you imagine what would happen if these world changers were first transformed by the Gospel and then embraced the Great Commission? We have a golden opportunity to capture the hearts of our youth and harness their energy and focus their collective power – releasing them with a message that is powerful, practical, and true!

## So what do we do?

Raise the bar! Pushing our students to grow deeper spiritually and to go wider evangelistically. Our goal is to move all youth past apathy or mere casual interest into deep spiritual passion for the things of God before they graduate from High School. We will do this by challenging our students to wrestle with

their beliefs so they can defend what they believe in a postmodern world. We also want to equip our youth to be able to share the Gospel with anyone they come across regardless of that person's faith.

### How will we do this?

We will be implementing this process of challenging our youth to go deeper and wider on Sunday mornings and nights at our youth gatherings. The Sunday evening format will be somewhat different. We will still have fun but the students will be expected to DIG into the things of God. **To begin with, each student will be required to bring their Bible - preferably the NIV.** There are certain theological topics we want each student to embrace and be able to defend so when they graduate, they won't exit the body of Christ. All of our events will be evaluated by asking the question, will this help our youth grow deeper and wider?

### Want more information?

See Pastor Kimberly for the 32 page Deep and Wide Philosophy statement that outlines this philosophy in detail.