

Sunday 14 April 2024

## Life Group Leaders' Notes

Series: Now Is The Time

Title: Time To Bring the Youth Back To Life

Key Text: Acts 20:7-11

God has great plans for young people. Christianity has certainly accelerated when the Holy Spirit was poured out on many young people.

Peter said in Acts 2:17, "God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams."

All through history young people have been key to spiritual revolutions in their generation (e.g. the story of Billy Graham; the 'Jesus Revolution' film).

In China, they are experiencing perhaps the greatest growth in the Christian faith. According to a recent estimate, more than half of China's one billion population are under 20. China is a nation of young people, so it is not surprising that the house churches have a preponderance of people in their 20's and 30's. Some sources estimate over 72,000 people a day are being converted in China.

Across the world there are indications of a significant move of the Holy Spirit in our generation. In the UK the time is ripe for many young people to discover the new life and hope that Jesus promised. A BBC news report suggested nearly three-quarters of young Brits identify as having no religion.

So how can today's generation of young people both inside and outside of the church receive a spiritual awakening? We can find some answers by considering a dramatic story recorded in Acts 20.

After leaving the great city of Ephesus where the gospel made a big impact, the apostle Paul and his companions had travelled in Greece and modern-day Turkey, encouraging many people. Then they came to a place called Troas, a Greek port city, where one young man called

Eutychus, probably aged between 8 and 14, was saved from what could have been a tragic and early end to his life (Acts 20:7-11).

The great apostle Paul was preaching on a short visit where crowds came in to hear him. He had so much to share and, as Luke writes, he talked on and on! The young Eutychus became very sleepy and fell out of an upstairs window to his death. Panic arose, but the Apostle Paul did not worry, he knew that this was not the end for this young man. And the difficult situations that many young people find themselves in today are not terminal either. God has a great love and purpose for each young person and is ready to bring a great spiritual awakening to this generation of young people. Let's look at some lessons here:

1. Young people are often in great danger (Acts 20:8-9; 1 Peter 5:8 MSG; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:6)
2. Young people need to be brought back to life (Acts 20:9-10)
3. Young people need to be looked after by the family of God (Acts 20:11-12)

## Apply

**1. Young people are often in great danger.** Your surroundings can make you spiritually sleepy (Acts 20:8-9). Most likely the combination of heat from the candles and the people crowded into an upstairs room, created an atmosphere to make you feel drowsy. Today the constant bombardment of sexual images, bad language, rebelliousness, peer pressure, anti-Christian media bias can slowly cause you to go to sleep. You may be in a more dangerous position than you imagine (Acts 20:9) Eutychus was in the room with everyone else hearing great teaching. Eutychus was in the right place, right? He was present in this church meeting, but he wasn't completely in the room, he was sat on the edge of a window. The edge is a dangerous place to be, in this instance practically and physically. But when we read the Word, we see that God doesn't want us to be half in and half out. Unhealthy influences and relationships, a love for self, materialism, stubbornness: These are just a few areas where we can find ourselves not sitting where God wants us to be. We have to be aware there is a great spiritual battle for every life (1 Peter 5:8 MSG; 1 Corinthians 16:13). Are you spiritually on guard? Are you aware of where you are positioned right now? If you want to experience the move into the purpose

of God, you must come off the ledge. You may have been troubled, you may feel like you have fallen away. But today is the day where you can come alive again in the spirit and receive great things from God (1 Thessalonians 5:6). If you are spiritually asleep you can fall. It's time to wake up.

**2. Young people need to be brought back to life** (Acts 20:9-10). Eutychus fell and he fell a long way, all looked lost. As they went down to find him, they picked him up dead - he was lifeless. But when the people of faith are in the building what seems lost - dead and gone - can be brought back to life. Paul came down from ministering to the crowd of people upstairs and threw himself on this young man here before him, and he embraced him. This was similar to the story of Elisha bringing a boy back to life in the Old Testament. He didn't care that his message was interrupted and wasn't intimidated by the circumstance, he had great faith and did not accept that this young man was dead. Where others saw death, Paul saw life. He spoke faith over him. Don't just see people as they are, but what they can be. We as a church need to see what the youth can be. Don't just leave it to others. Declare life over the youth. If you have fallen asleep, if you feel spiritually dead, God wants to bring you back to life. God is not finished with you. Just like He had compassion and grace for Eutychus, He sees where you are and has the same for you too. He wants to embrace you and bring you back to life.

**3. Young people need to be looked after by the family of God.** They must be brought into fellowship with people who are focused on Jesus (Acts 20:11). They must also be brought home (Acts 20:12). For those of you that are standing for your friends, your children, your family; after all of this had happened, Eutychus' family were blown away at how Eutychus had been brought back to life. Have faith for your children and be confident that God has a plan for them. Don't stop interceding for them, don't give up encouraging and supporting them. Eutychus was revived because he had the right people around him. We need to bring the young people back into the house of God. Now is the time, now is your time.