

HOW CAN YOUTHS COPE WITH TODAY'S CRISIS?

Note to the speaker:

Acknowledging the challenges that youths face, appeal to parents in the audience to fulfill their responsibility to educate their children in a godly way. Show the youths present how to cope with life in this system of things, and stress the benefits of living according to God's standards

TODAY'S YOUTHS FACE A TIME OF CRISIS—FUTURE IN JEOPARDY (4 min.)

We live in a crucial time, comparable to turning point for better or worse of very sick patient (2Ki 20:1, 2)

Crisis reflected by youths' use of drugs, suicides, sexual immorality, sexually transmitted diseases, violence (Cite current statistics or brief examples; see *Index* under "Youths")

What will you do—make a turn for the better or the worse?

Even if not young, how do you think youths can ensure happy future?

WHY THIS CRISIS EXISTS TODAY (10 min.)

Breakdown of family life a major factor in the crisis

Many parents fail to spend much time with children (g93 5/22 16-17)

"A recent study by the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research found that working mothers spend an average of 11 minutes daily of quality time (defined as exclusive playing or teaching) with their kids during weekdays and about 30 minutes per day on the weekends. Fathers spend about 8 minutes of quality time with their kids on weekdays and 14 minutes on weekends. Nonworking mothers spend 13 minutes per day of quality time with their children" (*U.S. News & World Report*, October 27, 1986)

Parents may lack strong moral convictions, provide little discipline or sound direction (1Co 14:8)

Normal childhood has often been lost because of parents' spoiling children (g85 7/22 28)

Pampering youths leads to bad consequences (Pr 29:21; g87 2/8 20)

Much of today's education and environment lacks morality, ethics

Many equate success with material possessions or social position

Sexual immorality, homosexuality, and so forth, presented as acceptable

Prominent worldly figures flaunt or promote immorality, show disrespect for authority and traditional standards of living

Influence of television and music on youth a big factor in today's crisis

Much of it glamorizes violence, sex, indifference to suffering

In many lands, by time a youth reaches age of 18, he or she has watched thousands of murders, rapes, other crimes

This tends to desensitize and to brutalize today's youth

Poverty, hopelessness, desperation are also contributing factors

The fundamental reasons for the crisis are given in the Bible

A major reason is that we are in the last days, time of end (Mt 24:3-8)

Paul foretold how last days would affect people, including youth (2Ti 3:1-5)

Mentions key reason for crisis: adults, youths proving false to power of godly devotion because of a lack of fear of Jehovah

True godly devotion results in obedience to God; proving false to its power results in disobedience (Tit 1:16)

Young or old, do you agree these factors produce today's crisis?

Granting that the crisis exists, what can you do about it?

PARENTAL EXAMPLE AND TRAINING WILL HELP YOUTHS COPE (12 min.)

To be effective, parental example must be consistent with Christian teachings

Parents should demonstrate to children that love for God is foremost in lives (De 6:5, 6; Mt 22:37, 38)

To do this, parents should be willing to submit to God's authority and Bible standards

As example, seek God's Kingdom and righteousness first (Mt 6:33)

Parents need to let children see the qualities in them that Timothy saw in his mother and grandmother (2Ti 1:5; 3:14)

It takes effort for parents to buy out time to spend with children

More is required than simply being around them; must communicate or effectively interact with them

Regular listening, talking, playing time vital, providing opportunities for communication (De 6:7)

Strive to develop an interesting, enjoyable study program (w92 10/15 16-18)

Vital that time be spent in wholesome recreation that children enjoy

The goal should be mental-regulating of children, putting mind of Jehovah in them (Eph 6:4)

Means more than just imparting information; need to train child's will and disposition in right ways (*w93* 5/15 18-19)

Truly loving parents will be more concerned about inculcating godly devotion than about children's secular education and material prosperity (Joh 17:3)

YOUTHS, COPE WITH CRISIS BY PRACTICING GODLY DEVOTION (15 min.)

To cope successfully, vital to recognize your enemy and resist his efforts

Satan is chief enemy, whole world in his power (1Jo 5:19)

Devil's purpose is to turn you away from Jehovah or to get you to do things that will bring His disapproval

Do not blame your parents for wicked world into which you both were born

Majority of mankind is in disapproved state (Mt 7:13, 14)

Grim harvest is now being reaped (Ga 6:7; refer to statistics given earlier)

You need to resist Satan by practicing godly devotion

Have moral fiber to flee from sexual immorality (1Co 6:18)

Say NO to improper use of drugs as Jesus did (Mr 15:23; *g85* 3/8 16-18)

Reap different harvest—rich rewards—by taking the initiative in doing God's will (1Jo 2:17)

Jehovah offers freedom and purposeful, happy life now for those who serve him unselfishly (Joh 8:32)

Freedom from religious bondage, worldly philosophies, and slavery to one's own fleshly desires (Ro 6:16; 8:5, 6)

Enjoy life of purpose in Jehovah's service (Ro 12:1, 2)

Others serve him faithfully; so can you (1Pe 5:9, 10; cite local examples or use experiences from *w91* 7/15 23-6)

Jehovah's worldwide congregation is composed of hundreds of thousands of zealous youths, like "dewdrops" (Ps 110:3)

WONDERFUL FUTURE AWAITS YOUTHS WHO DISPLAY GODLY DEVOTION (4 min.)

Have faith in Jehovah; trust his devoted people

God has promised everlasting life; he cannot lie (Tit 1:1, 2)

Have confidence in and work along with his visible organization

Support meetings, seek counsel of elders (2Ti 2:22)

Preach Kingdom message, which makes God's heart glad (Pr 27:11)

Wonderful, peaceful future awaits upright youths (Ps 37:37)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)