

SUMMERDALE YOUTH NEWS

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Ray Reynolds

Minister to Youth & Young Families

summerdaleyq@gmail.com



"LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO JESUS"

You have arrived for Bible study on Sunday morning. You are late, but you take your child to class, then rush to the auditorium and sit down in a pew. At first, you sigh deeply, then you open your Bible to take in the topic of the class. As the class continues you can listen through the walls and can hear the children singing. You can hear what sounds like teenagers talking loudly. Before you know it, the bell rings and it's time to pick up your child for the worship hour.

The announcements begin, followed by the singing. You are having trouble thinking about the next few moments of our time together as a church family or about worshipping the Creator because you are nervous about how you are perceived by those sitting around you. Your child is restless, maybe even a little rowdy. The eyes of others seem to turn toward you. You try to silence your child, but nothing works. You attempt to pacify them with children's bulletins, then Cheerios, followed by coloring books and toys. You even hand them your smart phone and start scrolling through the apps and games. Nothing is working.

The sermon begins. You want to listen. Your neighbors want to listen. So what do you do? You do the last thing you wanted to do! You pick them up... and as it seems the audience watches you... you march out of the auditorium dragging your toddler behind you. You overhear someone say, "Finally!" Another person smiles and laughs. You are frustrated and embarrassed.

When you reach the foyer you consider your options. You can't take the child to the nursery because they are past the "nursing" stage. What will you do? Option #1 Go outside and beat the thunder out of the kid (where no one inside can watch you), Option #2 Take the child to the bathroom (where you can spank them silently), Option #3 Stay in the foyer and just give the child a stern speech about proper behavior in worship (though you know this may not be effective because past experience says you might end up here again in 5 minutes).

Sound familiar? You may be wondering, "Why even come to services? I get nothing out of worship!" Pay close attention to these words... YOU ARE AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE CHURCH FAMILY! That's right. I want you to know that you are an encouragement to me, to the families who understand where you are, and to future parents. Don't become frustrated. Don't worry about what other people think. If they are critical, they can take it up with Jesus! He said, "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to people who are like these children. I tell you the truth, you must accept the kingdom of God as if you were a little child, or you will never enter it." (Mark 10:14-15)

I wonder if you have considered the whole picture. As you take your child out there are elderly members beaming with joy as you wrestle your little one. What you don't see is a happy elderly sister who is glad you brought that child to worship! You don't see the middle aged couple going through an empty nest reflecting on memories of their own past experiences with their children. You might not realize that an elderly brother is reflecting on how great it is you discipline your children, and that you can convince your child to sit so long during services, because his children do not attend worship anymore.

Keep coming to worship. Keep bringing your children to services. I heard a preacher once say: "If you don't hear crying, the church is dying." I know you are tired. I know you are probably overwhelmed. BUT KEEP THE FAITH! We are proud of you and we love you!
Let the little children come to Jesus!

*You are loved,
Ray*



After carefully weighing the COVID-19 safety concerns, we must announce that we have decided not to send our children or any staff to GCBC this year on the church van. However, we will not discourage parents from sending their own kids to GCBC or other summer camps. We believe that each family should weigh the risks and make that decision. Thank you so much.

YOUTH NEWS

**JUNIOR WEEK
JULY 5-8**

**MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL WEEK
JULY 26-31**



www.gulfcoastbiblecamp.com



The "Sunshine Studies" online series has moved to 9 AM on Sunday mornings. These studies revolve around the Sermon on the Mount and are directed towards our pre-K to 5th grade. However, it is fun for the whole family! We will continue this series of Bible lessons until Sunday morning Bible classes resume at the building at 9 AM in the near future. Please watch the bulletin and our social media pages for that update.

We've got questions. You've got the answers. Don't throw us shade. It's time to spill the tea. Each week one of our teens will be asked a series of random questions. We call it "7 Groovy Questions." You can find it on Facebook, Instagram or YouTube. So far we have interviewed Brady Long, Sebastian Hall, Carter Long, and Zane Rider. Who will be next? Caryn Coxwell! Follow us and watch on YouTube.



We have postponed the Awards Presentation due to COVID-19 and summer vacation. In the coming weeks we will announce a date to honor our L2L kids. Also, Junior Leaders has been put on temporary hold. We are tentatively planning to attend an L2L convention in New Orleans on August 8. Thank you to all who help L2L!

TITUS Camp will be held July 12-15 in an online virtual format. There will be more than 60 teachers helping students develop leadership and communication skills. It will be absolutely FREE! Everyone is welcome! Parents, teachers, students, elders, etc. are encouraged to watch LIVE! Go to www.hcu.edu or follow @TITUSCamp on social media.



We are excited to announce that we will be having a Youth & Young Family Retreat in Gatlinburg, TN for our church family. The plans are to leave the church building on Friday, July 24 around 6 PM. We will drive to Gadsden, AL and stay the first night in a hotel. Saturday through Wednesday morning we will stay at a cabin. Our activities will include devotionals, Bible studies, singing, a video scavenger hunt, lots of games, a trip to Dollywood, hiking, and shopping in Pigeon Forge. We will leave the Smoky Mountains on Wednesday morning to head home. This will be a great experience for the whole family! Space will be limited to around 32 people. Please see me if you have any questions.

TENTATIVE YOUTH CALENDAR:

July 12-15 - TITUS Camp (online)
July 24-29 - Family Retreat in Gatlinburg, TN
August 8 - L2L Convention in New Orleans, LA



Ray Reynolds -- (251) 923-8951 -- summerdaleyq@gmail.com