

Study group: Children, Youth, and Mission

Topic: Youth marginalisation in African local churches. The sacrificing of the future of a continent.

Abstract

Nearly 1 in 3 Africans are between the ages of 10 and 24, and approximately 60% of Africa's total population is below the age of 35. Yet Africa is dominated by a culture that does not value the voice of the youth in society. This culture has an autocratic leadership style, which considers elderly people and those in position of power as the best custodians of wisdom and knowledge. The local churches seem to be the mirror of such a societal dominant leadership style. It is therefore an accomplice in sacrificing the future of the continent by undermining the voice of the majority of the population. It also goes against the biblical truths that liken the kingdom of God to children and that encourages the youth to not be undermined because of their age. This research is a case study of InnerCHANGE, a missional team, which focuses on the development of the youth of townships of South Africa as good news agents that participate in building their community and country. It stresses that the church marginalisation of the youth makes it an active participant of the increasing underdevelopment of Africa.

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