

THE ESSENCE OF THE GKS YOUTH FELLOWSHIP ASSEMBLY

The Holy Bible shows that it is through the word of God that youths are trained and equipped with knowledge to practice righteousness and to detest things that are repugnant to or inconsistent with the tenets of Christianity. (1 John 2:14; Psalm 119:9,105; Titus 2:6-8; Proverbs 22:6) Read prayerfully, with diligence and faith, the Scriptures ennoble the mind of the youth, instills in him the sense of obedience to duty, firmness of principles and high regard for order and decency that will enable him to be in favour with God and men of goodwill. It is for the benefit of youths particularly that we have published this leaflet. Those who read it with clear and sober minds will certainly be blessed by God Almighty, by His grace. - 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40; Romans 13:1-5; Ecclesiastes 7:12; etc.

❖ *WHAT IS THE GKS YOUTH FELLOWSHIP ASSEMBLY?*

The GKS Youth Fellowship Assembly, which started in 1975, is an annual gathering of children, young men, women and friends of God's Kingdom Society (GKS), *The Church of the Living God*, for the purpose of exercising themselves in spiritual activities so that they would become godly men and women who would worship God faithfully and be of service to humanity by His grace. Scripture says: "Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people... Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons." - Deuteronomy 4:6-9. See also Psalm 78:3-7.

For the purpose of convenience and to ensure effective participation by as many youths as possible, it is held at Zonal level annually and once every three years, on a national level in Salem City, Warri, Delta State Nigeria. The Assembly holds in August every year, by the grace of God.

❖ *WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE GKS YOUTH FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL ASSEMBLY?*

The purpose is to excite the interest of the youths in the worship of God Almighty; to encourage them to learn His holy commandments and to fear Him and make them realize that they, irrespective of nationality or tribe, are one in Christ Jesus. -Ecclesiastes 12:1; Isaiah 43:21; Galatians 3:26-28; Revelations 14:6, 7; etc.

❖ *WHAT ARE THE THINGS EMPHASIZED BY THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH DURING THE ASSEMBLY?*

Emphasis is placed on spiritual knowledge, fear of God, chastity, faith and holiness which are some of the fundamentals of practical Christianity. The youths are taught to put into practice the principles or rules taught by Christ so as to prove faithful to God. (Luke 8:19-21; Romans 2:13) Obedience to parents in particular and respect for elders generally are also emphasized. – Proverbs 4:7; 16:6; 22:4; Ecclesiastes 7:12; Hebrews 11:6; 12:14; 1 Corinthians 13:1-8,13; Colossians 3:14, 20; Ephesians 6:1-3; etc.

Moreover, the youths are warned strongly against all evils, including immorality, and against the wiles of ungodly men or women who may lure them into sin (Proverbs 1:10). The girls are particularly warned against immoral men who may deceive and defile them.

❖ *WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS IN THE PROGRAMME OF THE ASSEMBLY?*

The highlights of the Youth Assembly programme usually include a message from the Lord's Ministry that is read to the youths; Bible Quiz Competition, Exhortational Talks, Bible Lectures and Symposia. Others are: Workshops and Seminars, Bible Recitations, Drama, Excursions to places of interest, musical presentations, sporting activities, and so on.

❖ *HOW SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH PREPARE FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSEMBLY?*

Since the benefits expected to be derived from the Youth Annual Assembly are spiritual knowledge, edification and upliftment, the Christian youth who is attending the Assembly should prepare his heart to seek the law of the Lord. (Ezra 7:10) He must endeavour to keep his feet when he goes into the house of God "and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools". - Ecclesiastes 5:1.

Participants at the Assembly should be well equipped with their Bibles, Hymn-Books and writing materials so as to look up citations and write down Bible references and other notable events. Our salvation lies in our ability to remember what we hear and to do them by God's grace. – 1 Corinthians 15:1, 2; Hebrews 2:1.

❖ *IS THERE ANYTHING WRONG WITH BOYFRIEND AND GIRL FRIEND RELATIONSHIPS?*

There are several things wrong with boyfriend and girlfriend relationships. It exposes boys and girls to temptations and leads to fornication or unlawful sexual intercourse WHICH IS A SIN. The Bible says fornicators and adulterers will not be saved in God's Kingdom EXCEPT THEY REPENT AND REFRAIN FROM SUCH SINFUL ACTS. (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10). Scripture says faithful worshippers of God should "STAND IN AWE (FEAR), AND SIN NOT." – Psalm 4:4, *parenthesis ours*.

❖ *WHAT SHOULD BE THE ATTITUDE OF CHRISTIAN GIRLS TO BEAUTY CONTESTS?*

The staging of beauty contests is a ploy by the devil to lure young girls into sin. There is nothing edifying about beauty contests. They involve indecent exposure of the body which excites men to sin. Such frivolous and vain past times as beauty contests only serve to gratify the "lusts of the eyes" which shall be destroyed with the world. (1 John 2:15-17) The criteria the Bible uses to judge beauty are not mere physical appearance, but such qualities as the fear of God, faith, humility, patience, **"the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price"**. (1 Peter 3:1-6) Scripture further says: **"Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD she shall be praised."** - Proverbs 31:30.

❖ *HOW IMPORTANT IS DRESSING TO THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER?*

It is human beings that wear clothes and it is for functional reasons, such as warmth or protection from harsh weather conditions; for the purpose of hygiene, sexual differentiation and decency. A number of youths give a negative impression of themselves by the way they dress. There is a saying that we should dress in the way we want to be addressed. A writer has described the dressing of many youths as "comical, garish and disturbing." Some young men look like ruffians in the way they dress. Many girls go practically naked with their transparent wears, skin-tight dresses, mini-skirts and slits. They also put on trousers, shorts, leggings, "sagging" skirts and trousers and blouses that expose their chest and back. These are contrary to the dictates of common sense and good breeding and, above all, the law of God in the Holy Bible.

Girls must avoid clothes that expose their features as it entices men to lust after them, and these are sinful before God while boys must desist from wearing ear rings and clothes that pertain to women. See Matthew 5:27, 28; 1 Timothy 2:9, 10. The Bible says that **"whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"**. - 1 Corinthians 10:31; Deuteronomy 22:5; 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40; 7:31.

❖ *SHOULD A CHRISTIAN YOUTH BELONG TO SECRET CULTS OR SOCIETIES?*

A Christian youth should keep away from secret cults. Those who join secret cults do so for ungodly reasons, such as power, status and influence and to get easy marks in school without studying. Many have been demonized through initiation rituals. Others have died in fights with rival cult groups, while union leaders, students and members of staff of higher institutions have been killed by these secret cult groups. Anything connected with darkness is evil and not of God. Jesus Christ said: **“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”** -John 3: 19-21. See also 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4.

❖ *HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN YOUTH VIEW INTERFAITH?*

A Christian youth should avoid interfaith, that is, committing idolatry or worshipping together with people of different faiths, either by way of physically participating in such mixed worship or by indirectly supporting the activities of false religious groups in order to please friends or relations.

It is unfortunate however that some so-called Christians do not worship God whole-heartedly but keep some charms under their pillows and beds in order to give themselves protection. This means that they have two masters contrary to Matthew 6:24. Such ones lack faith in the Almightyness of God and unless they repent, they will not enter into His Kingdom because they still owe allegiance to the devil while claiming to be walking in newness of life. - 1 Corinthians 10:20-22.

No Christian youth should allow himself or herself to be lured into practicing interfaith through worshipping with those who have not come to the knowledge of the truth. The Bible says: **“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”** - 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18. See also Amos 3:3; John 8:31, 32, 36; 1 Timothy 2:3, 4.

❖ *WHAT DO THE YOUTHS GAIN FROM THE ASSEMBLY?*

The youths gain the knowledge of God which will always guide them in all they do, particularly in the practice of God’s righteousness which will make them to be blessed manifold more in this present life and in the world to come, life everlasting by the grace of God. (2 Timothy 3:14, 15; Proverbs 11:19; 1 Peter

3:10-12; Isaiah 3:10; etc.) The Assembly helps in no small way in reforming and moulding the character of the youths, especially those who have hearing ears. (Matthew 13:16; Mark 4:9). This makes them to be pleasing to God and their parents and guardians and to be good citizens.

It is the prayer of the Lord's Ministry of the GKS that the children of God everywhere should grow in His grace, full of faith and blessed with His wisdom to practise righteousness so that they may be saved in His Kingdom forever. – Hebrews 11:6; Matthew 5:20; 6:33; Acts 10:34, 35; Hebrews 12:14; 2 Peter 3:18.

❖ *HOW ARE YOUTHS EXPECTED TO COMPORT THEMSELVES DURING THE ASSEMBLY?*

For the youths to make the most of this annual occasion, a high standard of discipline is expected from every one of them. The youths should therefore avoid the following:

- **Lateness to assemblies**
- **Taking of photographs when assemblies are in progress**
- **Loitering**
- **Poor inter-personal relationships among participants on any matter**
- **Stealing of belongings of any participant; etc.**
- **Littering the lodging places and the compound with refuse; etc.**
- **Holding discussions during assemblies; etc.**

We pray God Almighty to continue to direct our youths with His holy spirit so that they may become men and women who would always uphold the banner of truth and righteousness by His grace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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