

# Worksheet 4: Rough Draft

*Fill in this worksheet with the information required. DO not worry about connective language. Just get the information down. Make sure you include citation information for all quotes in parenthesis so that the information does not get lost as you are copying and pasting. The final copy will have citations in footnotes per Chicago formatting.*

## Introduction

- What is a pre-teen ministry and why is it vital to the church?
- We are not reaching the pre-teens intentionally.
- The church should take pre-teen ministry seriously and vital.
- Preliminary Information
  - The classified age of pre-teens is 10-12 years old. During early adolescence, the brain is developing more accurately than kids nine years old and younger (Sweet 22). “[Pre-teens] are experiencing exponential changes in the ways they think and process information. They can begin to test hypotheses, think abstractly, and contemplate complex, unanswerable questions like never before” (Sweet 23). Also, their brains are not mature yet of a teenager when processing information at a fast pace for one example.
  - “1 in 6 youth aged 6-17 years old experience a mental health disorder. They also report that 50% of all lifetime mental illness begin showing symptoms in people before the age of fourteen years” (Sweet 49). “The 4/14 Window refers to a demographic age group. There are 2.3 billion kids in the world, and those aged 4 to 14 are the largest unreached people group today. In the United States, nearly 85 percent of people who make decision for Christ do so between the ages of 4 and 14” (MacDonald 17). If the church does not move fast to evangelize to the next generation of pre-teens, the world and the fall of sin will already have its grip in these young lives, and it will be too late.
- Thesis: A vital pre-teen ministry will equip kids to be responsible in their relationship with God, engage kids in God’s Word, and connect them with each other.

## Theological Framework: Evangelism and Discipleship

- “Encouraging church leaders in discipling pre-teens.”
  - The responsibility of the church is bringing all people to Christ, including pre-teens.
- Matthew 18:1-6,19:13-15
  - The Gospel of Matthew, “is very Jewish and [Matthew] reveals his special interest in the fulfillment of prophecy” (Stott 122). The two passages focus on Jesus and the children who are the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. The

people during that time did not understand and that is why Jesus was there to teach and rebuke. He blesses the children because all Christians should have child-like faith. Was that Jewish-like for the people? No child should be rejected.

- Matthew 18:5-6 and 19:14 are key as to why it is necessary to disciple children. The person is then welcoming Christ and the children belong to the Kingdom. If the church does nothing and ignores them, the church is then allowing kids to stumble and fall into the ways of the world. Children are oppressed enough in this world of sin; the church has a command to teach children of Christ and raise them as soldiers for His army. The church must wake up and make a move.

Literature Review: Who emerged as the top voices of this topic?

- “A pre-teen ministry belongs to the pre-teens, not the leaders.”
  - Sean Sweet – Pre-teen Pastor
    - Pastor Sean wants to teach and equip all leaders and teams on how effectively run a pre-teen ministry. Giving space for 4th, 5th, and 6th grades to take ownership of their faith in Jesus Christ.
    - “...create space for preteens to move toward: a faith in God that is THEIRS, a love of God’s Word that is THEIRS, and a walk with Jesus Christ that is THEIRS” (Sweet 13). And “It’s often not important that the choice they’re making is the RIGHT choice; the important thing for them is that it’s THEIR choice” (Sweet 57).
- “Kids can be heroes of their community.”
  - David Livermore – PhD social scientist and President of the Cultural Intelligence Center
    - Livermore writes a chapter on how kids can be the world changers. He writes to teachers in the church and outside the church as well as parents how they can teach and equip children to make a difference in their own home, amongst their friends, and their neighborhood.
    - “One of the most important roles we play as we work with the kids as students in our lives is giving them an imagination to live the best possible life—a life defined by surrender to Jesus, being an image bearer of God, and joining God’s work in the world” (Livermore 115).
- “Do as Jesus commanded and invite kids to be part of God’s Kingdom.”
  - Richard Stearns – was President of World Vision U.S.
    - Stearns talks about the importance of expanding God’s Kingdom and to make a difference as Christian individuals and as a community who loves Jesus and

people. As church leaders, a boldness of faith in Christ is vital and if leaders do not have that, ministries will fail.

o “Living in the Kingdom of God means we must try to live as Jesus lived, love what Jesus loved, and obey what Jesus taught” (Stearns 71).

“A vital pre-teen ministry will equip kids to be responsible in their relationship with God, engage kids in God’s Word, and connect them with each other.”

### 1. Responsible in their relationship with God

a. “The issue is no longer training kids to think—it’s giving them permission to think” (MacDonald 39). “God’s voice is the one [Sean] want these kids to hear, not [his]” (Sweet 36). “An Intentional Preteen Ministry is one in which kids feel safe as we challenge them to spread their wings and try new things” (Sweet 44). “Jesus didn’t answer every question he was asked; instead he asked probing questions and encouraged people to think wisely” (Livermore 117). “Denial of participation in public rituals can have a discouraging effect on the very ones who are striving to commit themselves to their faith, especially for those who are growing up within a supportive Christian environment” (Horton).

### 2. Engage kids in God’s Word

a. “[Barna] stresses the fact that before the age 13, kids are forming what they believe. After age 13, they start defending what they believe” (MacDonald 28). “Education itself is also a redemptive gift” (Livermore 117). “Active learning means that preteens are researching, writing, and delivering a sermon instead of simply hearing one. Then, afterward, they’re thinking about what the experience taught them. Active learning involves creation, experimentation, and risk-taking” (Sweet 69). “Jesus called us to be disciples and make disciples, not just be deciders” (Stearns 58).

### 3. Connect them with each other

a. “It’s often not important that the choice they’re making is the RIGHT choice; the important thing for them is that it’s THEIR choice” (Sweet 57). “The local church creates framework for followers of Jesus to come together around worship, discipleship, and mission” (Stearns 72). “Kids need adults in their lives who are willing to enter into their reality” (MacDonald 88). “...but, the truth is that it is very likely in your church you have kids looking for authenticity, looking for adults they feel safe with so they can share real life with them, and they are not finding it” (MacDonald 95).

## Conclusion

- A vital pre-teen ministry will equip kids to be responsible in their relationship with God, engage kids in God's Word, and connect them with each other.
- Passion – The heart of the church is to rescue lost and wounded souls. 10-, 11-, and 12-year-olds are the most unreached group whose souls hunger for Jesus and community.
- Vision – Every church should have a pre-teen ministry that is intentional while simultaneously winning, building, and equipping the souls of 10-, 11-, and 12-year-olds.
- Call to Action – The church needs to wake up and look at their surroundings. Pre-teens need the church's attention for they are the next generation of the church. Therefore, invest in the ministry and pray for the pre-teens, it is urgent.