Youth Ministries ‘Get Real’

- You’ve read the reports about teenagers leaving the faith in droves.

Despite the blood, sweat and tears of many youth pastors, a study from Britt Beemer, a former senior research analyst for the Heritage Foundation, reveals a disturbing trend: as many as two-thirds of young people in evangelical churches will leave when they enter their 20s.

These and other studies sounded an alarm in the Body of Christ—and a new breed of youth ministries is rising to the occasion to stop the enemy from stealing, killing and destroying not only church kids but also unchurched kids in need of a Savior.

Are U.S. Christian Leaders Too Quiet About China’s Persecuted?

- Human Rights attorney and Christian Gao Zhisheng received media attention for his torture and re-disappearance last year. His whereabouts are still unknown.

Dr. Fan Yafeng was violently arrested for speaking with National Public Radio (NPR) On November 24, 2010. He endured nine days of torture. He is presently under house arrest and prevented from communicating with the outside world.

Christian groups don’t feel that these and other issues are spurring the Church to take enough action to stop the abuse.

International Christian Concern (ICC) recently met with three leading Chinese Christian human rights activists who reported that the persecuted Church there is facing increased persecution. The church there is desperate for vocal support from U.S.-based churches and denominations.

Egypt's Military Has Anti-Christian History

The pictures and reports appear to be positive in Egypt. There's relative calm, but the organization in power doesn't have a good track record when it comes to Christians.

With the military in control and the constitution set aside, many are wondering what will happen in the next six months. The constitution is expected to be revised, followed by national elections.

Todd Nettleton with Voice of the Martyrs says while the military has done well so far, they don't have a very good track record. He says an Egyptian Christian did not fare well under their watch. "When his unit members and his commander found out that he was a Christian, they made his life miserable and ultimately beat him to the point that he died."

Botched Abortion in St. Louis

Shines Light on Planned Parenthood

After several undercover videos were released showing Planned Parenthood working with pimps to provide under-aged girls with services, Christian groups started calling for defunding.

Now, new evidence has emerged that gives these groups more ammunition.

It seems emergency responders removed a patient from a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic in St. Louis on Saturday morning and rushed her to the emergency room at Barnes-Jewish-Christian Hospital.

A witness, pro-life sidewalk counselor Marty Bennet, took more than a dozen photos of the dramatic incident as the woman was wheeled out the clinic and into an awaiting ambulance. Photos showed that the woman's head was covered and that there was no IV bag or any other sign of ongoing emergency care. There was no evidence that any Planned Parenthood staff member accompanied her to the hospital.

Preserving Virginity Major Priority Among Youth

A majority of young people in the U.S.—61 percent—would like to be virgins when they get married. Another 63 percent said they would regain their virginity if possible.

So says a new survey from OneHope, a Christian organization

committed to understanding the harsh realities youth face and sharing God's love with them through meaningful media experiences.

These surprising "virginity" results arrive just in time for Valentine's Day amid a climate of high teen exposure to sexually explicit media content, surfaced by the current controversy over the MTV program "Skins." According to a report by the Parents Television Council, 64 percent of all TV shows contain "sexual content"—anything from flirting to intercourse. Conducted with youth aged 13-18 in late 2010, OneHope's U.S. research revealed additional data about teens' beliefs, values and spirituality. Some of them are disturbing, others encouraging. For example, 52 percent believe spiritual development is not necessary for a satisfying life.

Egypt Jubilant Over President Ouster

Egypt is basking in the glow of making history. On Friday, President Hosni Mubarak stepped down, clearing the way for the armed forces to restore order until the September elections.

Over concerns that the military may not be so keen to step aside in the fall, Terry Ascott, SAT-7 CEO, responds, "We've seen enough poor judgment in the last few hours and days, where President Mubarak thought he could stay despite the anger on the street. I don't think the military or anyone in the military will make this mistake in this day and age, after what has happened over the last 18 days."

Justin Bieber’s Mom Issues Prayer Request

- Pattie Mallette is a praying mom—and she’s praying for her son, the 16-year-old Canadian pop superstar Justin Bieber.

The 3D film “Justin Bieber: Never Say Never” is now playing in movie theaters. The motion picture chronicles the North American leg of Bieber’s first world tour.

Mallette is convinced that she and her son are following God’s purpose for their lives. Still, the single mom, who has seen Bieber go from drumming his highchair tray to street busking to international pop stardom, is also doing all she can to maintain some semblance of normalcy in her son’s life by steeping him in her Christian faith and surrounding him with positive moral influences.

“I’m aware of the dangers,” Mallette says. “He’s my son and I’m accountable by God and by the law to protect him, which includes covering him spiritually. Justin’s faith is strong but he’s young and hasn’t come completely into himself yet. So what I can do is pray, teach and continue surrounding him with strong Christian influences.”

After Attacks, Christian

Leaders in Indonesia Decry Lax Security

Christian leaders faulted Indonesian authorities for security breaches that allowed Islamic extremist mobs this week to attack a defendant convicted of defaming Islam, the judge that sentenced him, two churches and a Christian school.

The judge in Temanggung, Central Java on Tuesday (Feb. 8) sentenced Antonius Richmond Bawengan to five years in prison – the maximum allowed under Indonesia's "blasphemy" law – for distributing pamphlets that allegedly disparaged the Kaaba, the black cube-shaped building in Mecca, Saudi Arabia that Muslims face when praying, source said.

Not satisfied with the five-year sentence, Islamist mobs rushed toward the defendant and judge, who were whisked out of the courtroom. Crowds outside began to break windows and burn vehicles around the courthouse, also damaging the lobby, and before nightfall more than 1,000 Muslim extremists had damaged Sts. Peter and Paul Church and the Indonesia Pentecostal Church, as well as Shekinah Christian School. The school belongs to the Indonesia Bethel Church of Temanggung.

Future of Egyptian Christians Unclear After Mubarak Resignation

With the resignation of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak today, pro-democracy protestors are celebrating in the

streets of Cairo and other cities around the country. According to the Associated Press, power was handed over to the Egyptian military.

An Open Doors source in the area said while international television is showing people celebrating, he has received mixed reaction from Christians to the resignation. How the change will affect the 10 million minority Christians in Egypt is unclear. However, there is a risk of a new government under a conservative Muslim mindset.

“Given recent polling data, if an election were to be held tomorrow, it’s quite likely that Islamic extremists would have a significant—if not dominant—role to play in the new government,” Dr. Carl Moeller, President/CEO of Open Doors USA, told Mission Network News. That, Moeller says, would likely lead to greater hardship for Christians.

Ted Haggard Talks Temptation and Contempt for American Church

Disgraced mega-church pastor Ted Haggard is offering another angle on the temptations that led to his downfall in a new video interview for Lifetree Café, a network of discussion forums.

In the interview, Haggard tells about events in his past, including being sexually abused as a child, which contributed to his temptation. He also describes characteristics of temptation he believes make every person vulnerable, and tells what has helped him since the scandal.

The interview will be used to facilitate candid discussions during the week of February 20, when people are expected to gather at Lifetree Café venues in numerous cities to explore personal and societal issues of temptation, forgiveness and the role of the church.