

# Why I Believe in **Awana**

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Recently our church had the privilege of hosting an AWANA pastor/commander countdown. Steve Cohoon, our Awana Missionary, had asked me to say a few words of testimony concerning the Awana program in our church. As I thought of the positive impact Awana has had in the past two churches I have pastored, I realized there were some basic reasons for its success. The following outline shows the foundation for that success.

## **#1 Awana is “Bible-centered”!**

If there is one thing that Awana is guilty of it is being Bible centered. Everything that Awana is geared toward has to do with teaching the Bible and scripture memorization. Nothing that I have been associated with in over 26 years of ministering to churches has come close to the Bible teaching potential of Awana!

## **#2 Awana is “Gospel-oriented”!**

Awana’s purpose is to reach boys and girls with the saving gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That has always been and will always be the goal of Awana. Awana never assumes that children are good and going to heaven. In fact, just the opposite is true. Awana assumes that all children are born sinners, are lost and on their way to hell. Awana believes that every child must come to saving faith in the Lord Jesus to be forgiven and go to heaven.



## **#3 Awana is “Doctrinally-sound”!**

One of the things that initially impressed me about the Awana program was its doctrinal statement. In a day when doctrine is looked down on and ignored by many churches and organizations – Awana is standing for truth that does not need to be forgotten. If we do not know what we believe or why we believe it then we cannot have a clear and strong message to share with a lost and dying world. It’s important that we hold to basic, fundamental, sound doctrine if we are to stand against the false prophets and false doctrine of our day.



## **#4 Awana is “Church-accountable”!**

Awana believes in the authority and the responsibility of the local church to carry out the Great Commission. Therefore, Awana exists for the local church to aid her in carrying out the work God has called her to do. Awana recognizes the authority and influence that the Senior Pastor has in leading a church to accomplish its ministry and tasks. Awana has no practical existence apart from the support of the pastor and the local church.

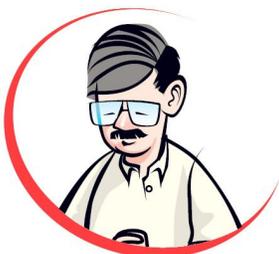


### **#5 Awana is “Family-friendly”!**

In a day when the family is separated and divided so much, it is good to see a program that encourages parent and child interaction. Awana is the kind of program that encourages spiritual growth, not just in the child, but also in the adult who is helping. Often times it is through the child bringing Awana into the home that parents and whole families come to Christ! This is exactly what my prayer is as Awana spreads to countries like India. Children in these countries will be able to get the gospel into places no missionary could ever go.

### **#6 Awana is “Kid-attracting”!**

I have never seen a program that attracts young people like Awana does! Just recently I was out visiting with my son, inviting children to Awana, and immediately at one home the children began to jump up and down asking to go! Awana takes into account the fact that children are energetic and need activities that are directed toward their need for recreation and recognition. Children like being able to do things that are challenging and rewarding. What could be more fulfilling than to meet the Lord Jesus as your personal Savior?



### **#7 Awana is “Leader-fulfilling”!**

One of the highlights of every Awana year is our annual leadership banquet! Every time our banquet is held we are reminded of just how great it has been to serve in Awana. No one remembers all of the hard work and difficulty but only the rewards of having seen children come to faith in Christ and to grow in His Word! If you are looking for a job to serve Christ in, there’s nothing like Awana. You will never have felt so needed and so eternally grateful to have served.

### **#8 Awana is “Missions-minded”!**

Currently Awana is reaching out to 110 countries all over the world. Awana understands the fact that no matter what country a child is from their needs are pretty much the same. The main need all children have is to hear the Savior’s Gospel message. Awana is taking that message around the globe and all of us can help. The Adopt-A-Club program is enabling clubbers across our country to sponsor clubs where the message of Christ’s love would otherwise go unheard. This is why I am excited about Awana’s partnership with mission organizations like Evangelizing India For Christ (EIFC), who together are reaching the world’s least evangelized people.



Maybe you are reading this and are interested in serving in Awana. Or, perhaps you are a pastor or church leader and would like to know about starting an Awana club in your church. I would welcome the opportunity to share my Awana experience with you. Contact information is listed below.



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