calling all young adults

& those who minister with them

ignition
young adult summit
april 7-11, 2010
greater columbus convention center
columbus, ohio

fueled by worship
ignited to disciple
sparking a revolution

issues
postmodern worship
mentoring
campus ministry
film & the arts
discipleship

experience
best practices
equipping seminars
dynamic worship
prayer rooms
encounter cafe

connect
tim elmore
nota
ann roda
eddie hypolite
nick zork
a allan martin
sonscreen

REGISTER AT: http://jci2.adventistyouthministries.org/register.htm or 800.732.7587

Wednesday - April 7

9:00 am – 11:30 pm	Registration (Prefunction C)
9:00 am – 12:00 am	Bible Reading Marathon (D140)
1:00 pm – 5:15 pm	YPAC/JCI Workshops (see seminar schedule for locations)
1:00 pm – 5:15 pm	IGNITION: Workshops

    1:00 pm – 2:15 pm
- "Fostering Young Adults on the Sacred Journey" - Ann Roda [Hyatt Union E]
- "Thriving in Babylon: Growing Your Spiritual Life On Campus" - Ron Pickell [Hyatt Grant]

    2:30 pm – 3:45 pm
- "The Arts & Film: A Ministry Passage to the Young Adult Soul"
  - Stacia D. Wright [Hyatt Grant]
- "Collegiate Public Campus Ministry in Your Church" - Jeff Wines [C226]

    4:00 pm – 5:15 pm
- IGNITION: All Skate Mixer [C213-215]

1:00 pm – 7:30 pm	Exhibits are open (Hall C)
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Community Projects (Sites around Columbus)
	Activity Options (Throughout Convention Center)
	Prayer Initiatives (Throughout Convention Center)
5:30 pm	Dinner for delegates with tickets (Ballrooms 1,2,3 in Convention Center)
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm	Opening Session – Keynote (Hall D)
9:30 pm–10:30 pm	Prayer & Praise Concert (Hall D)
9:30 pm - 11:30 pm	Exhibits are open (Hall C)
	Activity Options (see program for details)
	Teen Afterglow (D130)
	Recreation (Hall C)
	Bible Reading Marathon (D140)
9:30 pm – 12:00am	IGNITION: encounters café [C213-215]

Thursday - April 8

6:30 am	Breakfast for delegates with tickets (Battelle South)
6:00 am – 12:00 am	Bible Reading Marathon (D140)
8:15 am – 9:15 am	General Session – JCI/YPAC (Hall D)
9:00 am – 7:00 pm	Exhibits are open (Hall C)
9:30 am – 12:15 pm	YPAC/JCI Workshops (see seminar schedule for locations)
9:30 am – 12:15 pm	IGNITION Workshops

    9:30 am – 10:45 am
- "Launching the Local Church into the Postmodern Matrix" - Bill Bossert [C226]
- "Fostering Authentic Community: Advent Hope Café" - Todd Stout [C224]

    11:00 am – 12:15 pm
- "Fostering Young Adults on the Sacred Journey" - Ann Roda [C224]
- "Thriving in Babylon: Growing Your Spiritual Life On Campus" - Ron Pickell [C226]

9:00 am – 12:15 pm	Kids Kongress (D144-145)
12:30 pm	Lunch for delegates with tickets (Battelle South)
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm	Community Projects – JCI (Downtown Columbus)
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Creative Ministries/ Street ministries (Throughout the city)

Thursday - April 8 *(continued)*

2:00 pm - 6:00 pm   Activity Options (Throughout Convention Center)

                        Prayer Initiatives (Throughout Convention Center)

                        Bible Reading Marathon (D140)

                        YPAC/JCI Workshops (see seminar schedule for locations)

                        Recreation (Hall C)

2:00 pm – 5:15 pm   IGNITION: Workshops

      2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

- "The Arts & Film: A Ministry Passage to the Young Adult Soul"
  - Stacia D. Wright [C224]
- "Young Adult Worship Ministry in a Postmodern Matrix" - Nick Zork [C226]

      3:45 pm – 5:15 pm

- "Younger Generation Church: Pursuing Intimacy with God in Worship"
  – Jameson Francis, Ryan Gil, A Danillo Riojas [C226]
- "Launching the Local Church into the Postmodern Matrix" – Bill Bossert [C224]

5:30 pm – 7: 00 pm   Street Evangelism (Downtown Columbus)

                        Dinner (On your own)

7:30 pm - 9:00 pm   General Session (Hall D)

9:30 pm - 10:30 pm   Prayer & Praise Concert (Hall D)

9:30 pm - 11:30 pm   Exhibits are open (Hall C)

                        Activity Options (see program for details)

                        Teen Afterglow (D130)

                        Recreation (Hall C)

                        Bible Reading Marathon (D140)

9:30 pm – 12:00am   IGNITION: encounters café [C213-215]

Friday - April 9

6:30 am   Breakfast for delegates with tickets (Battelle South)

6:00 am – 12:00 am   Bible Reading Marathon (D140)

8:15 am – 9:15 am   General Session – JCI/YPAC (Hall D)

9:00 am – 7:00 pm   Exhibits are open (Hall C)

9:30 am – 12:15 pm   YPAC/JCI Workshops (see seminar schedule for locations)

9:30 am – 12:15 pm   IGNITION Workshops – YPAC (see seminar schedule for locations)

      9:30 am – 10:45 am

- IGNITION: All Skate Worship [C213-215]

      11:00 am – 12:15 pm

- "Fostering Authentic Community: Advent Hope Café" - Todd Stout [C226]
- "Younger Generation Church: Pursuing Intimacy with God in Worship"
  – Jameson Francis, Ryan Gil, A Danillo Riojas [C224]

9:00 am – 12:15 pm   Kids Kongress (D144-145)

12:30 pm   Lunch for delegates with tickets (Battelle South)

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm   Community Projects – JCI (Downtown Columbus)

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm   Creative Ministries/ Street ministries (Throughout the city)

Friday - April 9 *(continued)*

2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Activity Options (Throughout Convention Center)
	Prayer Initiatives (Throughout Convention Center)
	Bible Reading Marathon (D140)
	YPAC/JCI Workshops (see seminar schedule for locations)
	Recreation (Hall C)
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	IGNITION: Growing Leaders Intensive (Part 1) – Tim Elmore [C213-215]
5:30 pm – 7:00 pm	Street Evangelism (Downtown Columbus)
	Dinner (On your own)
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm	General Session (Hall D)
9:30 pm - 10: 30 pm	Prayer & Praise Concert (Hall D)
	Activity Options (see program for details)
	Teen Afterglow (D130)
	Bible Reading Marathon (D140)
	Prayer Initiatives (Throughout Convention Center)
9:30 pm – 12:00am	IGNITION: encounters café [C213-215]

Saturday - April 10

6:30 am	Breakfast for delegates with tickets (Battelle North)
6:00 am – 5:00 pm	Bible Reading Marathon (D140)
8:15 am – 9:15 am	General Session – Morning Devotion (Hall D)
9:15 am – 10:15 am	Sabbath School- Special Features (Hall D)
9:30 am – 12:30 pm	Children's Worship Festival (E160, E161 & E162)
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	General Session - Morning Worship (Hall D)
12:30 pm	Lunch for delegates with tickets (Battelle North)
1:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Exhibits Open (Hall C)
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	IGNITION: Growing Leaders Intensive (Part 2) – Tim Elmore [C213-215]
3:00 pm – 5: 00 pm	Youth Rally (Goodale Park, 120 W Goodale St, Columbus)
	Critical Issues (D130)
	Ohio Conference Worship Festival (Hall D)
5:00 pm – 6:30 pm	Dinner (On your own)
6:00 pm – 6:30 pm	PK's Track (D235)
6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Drama Finale, Closing Challenge (Hall D)
8:00 pm – 11:00 pm	Exhibits open (Hall C)
8:00 pm – 11:00 pm	Prayer & Praise Concert (Hall D)
	Activity Options (Throughout Convention Center)
	Recreation (hall C)
	Teen Afterglow (D130)
8:00 pm – 11:00pm	IGNITION: encounters café [C213-215]

Sunday - April 11

8:00 am – 12:00 pm	NAD Young Adult Ministry Advisory [Hyatt Madison, 2nd floor]

ignition

April 2010

We've been praying for you. Not just your arrival to this gathering of GODfollowers passionate about minister to young adults. Not just for the equipping and experiences in the moments ahead. Not just those things.

We've been praying for who you are becoming as GOD continues to shape you, as He ignites the Holy Spirit within.

In Jeremiah 24:7 God declares,
"I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart."

This is our prayer over you. In these days of IGNITION, we are praying desperately for our return to the heart of GOD. We asking GOD to give us a heart to know him and to find confidence in being His people, coming boldly into His presence.

Some may come to a summit of this sort, anticipating, "What will I get out of this?" Often these gatherings can be about what will be taught, what resources will be shared/bought, who to network with, how to get ahead at ministry.

However, that is NOT what IGNITION is about.

What is IGNITION about? Our team, Dee and I have been praying that GOD will imprint on your heart, *"What will I give? What does GOD request of me? What will I offer to GOD here at IGNTION?"*

It is this context that we are the fuel for the flame of worship. We submit to being discipled, then are commissioned to disciple. It is in deciding to give that we spark a revolution.

We've been praying for you. May you find in these days GODencounters in every moment, embracing the heart He is placing in you as you give in to His desires. Let the revolution of our hearts begin here at IGNITION. We are honored and delighted you are here.

A Allan Martin, PhD, CFLE
Young Adult Ministry Coordinator
Youth/Young Adult Ministries
North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists

fueled by worship, ignited to disciple, sparking a revolution
apr 7-11, 2010 • greater columbus convention center • columbus, ohio

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seminars

[67% | 77% | 90% | 46%]

A

B

relationships.

The ABCs &Ds of Young Adult

C

D

[81% | 51% | 89% | 61%]

The ABCs & Ds

YouTube link to intro video shown in workshop: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=puqMafEr4N0

> 67% believe church is full of hypocrites, 77% Christianity is more about organized religion than loving God and people, 90% believe they can have a good relationship with God without attending Church, 46% feel that Christians get on their nerves. It's not all bad news, however. 81% believe that God exists, 51% believe in a Biblical God, 89% willing to listen if someone wanted to engage them in conversation about Christianity, 61% willing to study the Bible if a friend asked them (Stetzer, Stanley, & Hayes, 2009).

With all these statistics in mind, what can ministry leaders do to "walk across the room" and engage today's generation along with the rest of the church's worshiping community?

This presentation will seek to present four of the core values that undergird what young adults are looking for from the church at worship today.

> *"The reasons most frequently cited by persons who leave local church fellowship are found in the realm of relationships, the absence of a sense of belonging, and the lack of meaningful engagement in the local congregation and its mission." (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee, 2007, para. 5).*

It's probably something you have noticed, and our denomination has taken notice as well. Quality relationships are the common denominator in young adult core values.

Quote: (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee, 2007, para. 5)

- If someone wanted to tell me what she or he believed about Christianity, I would be willing to listen

  - 20-29 = 89% vs. 30+ = 75%

Quote: (Stetzer, Stanley, & Hayes, 2009, p. 55)

Researchers have taken notice as well. Today's generation represents a shift in the way Christian leaders should approach evangelism.

- I would be willing to study the Bible if a friend asked me to.
  - 20-29 = 61% vs. 30+ = 42%

Quote: (Stetzer, Stanley, & Hayes, 2009, p. 55)

□   □

Story of young SDA woman who found it difficult to stay in her SDA church because of the loving relationships experienced at the local Lutheran church during her time of need.

Story of young adult woman who left a large non-denominational church for a smaller church of another denomination because of the family atmosphere and warm relationships.

When it comes down to it, young adults are more likely to forgive doctrinal differences for the sake of relationships. How can our church be more intentional as a worshiping community in order to bring meaningful relationships back into focus?

It's as *easy* as ABC & D

the art of being real.

Authenticity

As you saw in the short video clip, young adults are looking for real, honest, and transparent people.

Authenticity

- Real & Honest
- Transparent
- Genuine & Sincere
- Humble
- Human

Authenticity is: We eat, sweat, live, and breathe just like everyone else. We're not perfect Christians who somehow have a life different than every one else's. It's okay to admit that we struggle with real tangible issues. And it's okay to not have the answers.

"An honest interest in a young adult, fueled by virtuous intention, builds relational bridges to new generations that have seen so little attention from parental and adult figures."
-Allan Martin

Quote: (Martin, 2010)

Young adults want older adults involved in their lives – only if it is genuine (with no ulterior motives, or trumped up interest).

For many of us, this means an added awareness of the way young adults perceive *us*.

Jesus lived walked ate – genuinely experienced life with us.

feeling accepted and involved.

Belonging

Young adults want to feel like they are a valued, integral, and trusted part of something larger than themselves.

Belonging

- Included
- Involved
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Trust & Risk
- Responsibility
- Purpose

The key is ownership. Ownership doesn't mean the extreme of completely handing over the reigns of control. Ownership is entering into dialogue and asking, valuing, and utilizing the input of young adults.

With allowing ownership comes risk. With every new generation comes a new skill set from which to draw. New ideas and methods and ways of accomplishing the central vision come with the possibility of failure.

With allowing ownership also comes connection.

Example of Guy Kawasaki relating the community business techniques of Apple and other growing companies in Stetzer Stanley, & Haynes (2009):

> "Create something worth building a community around [the product should sell itself] …
> Identify and recruit your thunderlizards – immediately! …
> Assign one person the task of building a community …
> Create an open system …
> Welcome criticism …
> Foster discourse …" (149-150)

Being included, being trusted, being considered responsible, for elders to be prepared to take some risk with inexperience, are sentiments and attitudes which senior leadership must be willing to show, or we [young adults] are gone!
-Jan Paulsen

General Conference President (Paulsen, 2006)

do something now.

Compassion

John the Baptist's charge to Christians in Luke 3:7-11

Social action, compassion, and caring used to be distinctive markers of those a part of the Christian church.

66% of outsider young adults believe that
Christians actually care about them

-Kinnaman & Lyons "unChristian"

Quote: (Kinnaman & Lyons, 2006 p. 68)

13

Compassion

- Service
- Social Activism
- Justice
- Advocacy
- Abroad & Local

I also believe there is a direct relationship between worship and compassion. As pointed out by Robert Webber in his book, *Worship is a Verb* (2004)

In worship our whole lives are to celebrate Christ. Part of Jesus' ministry was bringing about the Kingdom of Heaven here, now.

Worship calls us to a place of active compassion as well (211).

on the journey together.

Discipleship

This last core value, I believe is the most important within the church context. It is the one out of the four that can be most uniquely met by Christianity as Jesus commissioned us to do.

Discipleship

- Relational
- "Guide on the Side"
- Mentoring
- Longitudinal
- Inside Out

As is most young adult's experience, my life is marked by the pronounced and ambiguous transition into adulthood. This is a common trend among most currently emerging generations (Smith & Snell, 2009).

We don't know what we're doing, we know we have to do something, but we don't know how.

Contrary to previous generations marked by a more individualistic approach to life, young adults crave relationship and would want to be mentored through their life transitions.

Not Puppeteer or a 'Sage on the stage' – but a 'Guide on the side.'

"Young adults are eager to be mentored by spiritually wise adults willing to pour their life experiences into new generations. Don't dictate direction, rather explore possibilities and lend guidance."   *-Allan Martin*

Quote: (Martin, 2009)

Huge opportunity for Christians to fulfill the Great Commission.

Being Authentic...
Fostering Belonging...
Expressing Compassion...
Purposefully Discipling...

Being authentic. . . fostering belonging. . . expressing compassion. . . purposefully discipling
    These are the ABC's & D's
    Not just some catch all Simplistic Phrase: This is the result of your life of worship in relationship with God
    along with your relationship with your surrounding world.

group.

Interact

1. What are some of your observations on *your* young adult communities' needs?

2. With the ABCD principles in mind, what can your worshipping community begin to implement and start looking like as you look to lead them to lives of worship of Christ?

A Allan Martin, PhD, CFLE

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Recommended Books:

✓ Stetzer, Ed. *Lost and Found*. B&H Publishing Group. 2009.

✓ Kinnaman, D., and G. Lyons. *Unchristian*. Baker Books. 2007.

✓ Smith, C., and P. Snell. *Souls in Transition*. Oxford Univ. Press. 2009.

✓ Paulien, Jon. *Everlasting Gospel Ever-Changing World*. Pacific Press. 2008

References

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee. (April 10, 2007). *Conserving membership gains – An appeal.* Retrieved December 19, 2007 from: http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/other_documents/conserving-gains.html

Martin, A. A. (2010, February 2, 4-5). *The ABCs & Ds of young adult relationships: A conceptual model for discipling new generations.* Presented for the 2010 Seminary Scholarship Symposium, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

Martin, A. A. (2009, Spring). The ABCs and Ds of young adult relationships. *Passport: Your gateway to the world of Adventist ministry, 14*(2), 1.

Martin, A. A. (1995, Winter-Spring). The ABCs of ministry to generations X, Y, and Z. *Journal of Adventist Youth Ministry, 5*(1&2), 37-46.

Paulsen, J. (2006). Special Report: Annual Council 2006. *Paulsen sermon: Service--an attitude.* Retrieved December 20, 2007 from: http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=774

Smith, C. & Snell, P. (2009). *Souls in transition: The religious & spiritual lives of emerging adults.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Stetzer, E., Stanley, R., & Hayes, J. (2009). *Lost and found: The younger unchurched and the churches that reach them.* Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group.

ignition

intensive

Growing Leaders:
Becoming Life-giving Mentors
Dr. Tim Elmore

Dr. Tim Elmore – Profile

Dr. Tim Elmore is the founder and president of Growing Leaders www.GrowingLeaders.com, an Atlanta-based non-profit organization created to develop emerging leaders. Through Growing Leaders, he and his team provide public schools, state universities, civic organizations and corporations with the tools they need to help develop young leaders who can impact and transform society.

Elmore trains middle school, high school and college students with the skills they need to become authentic leaders with huge potential to transform society. Since founding Growing Leaders, Elmore has spoken to more than 250,000 students, faculty and staff on hundreds of campuses across the country, including Stanford University, Duke University, Rutgers University, the University of South Carolina, the University of North Carolina, Florida State University and Baylor University. Elmore has also provided leadership training and resources nationally for the Future Farmers of America and multiple athletic programs including, the University of Texas football team, the Jacksonville State University football team and the Kansas City Royals. In addition, a number of government offices in Washington, D.C. have gone through the *Habitudes™* curriculum.

From the classroom to the boardroom, Elmore is a dynamic communicator who uses principles, images and stories to strengthen leaders. He teaches leadership to Chick-fil-A Inc., The Home Depot, HomeBanc, Gold Kist Inc., Home & Garden Party, Oti Consulting, Network TwentyOne International, and Purofirst, among others. He has also taught courses on leadership and mentoring at nine universities and graduate schools across the U.S. Committed to developing young leaders on every continent of the world, Elmore also has shared his insights in more than 30 countries -- including India, Russia, China and Australia, among others

Elmore has written more than 20 books, including the best-selling *Habitudes™: Images that Form Leadership Habits and Attitudes, Life Giving Mentors,* and *Nurturing the Leader Within Your Child.* In addition, he has appeared on the ABC Family Channel.

Elmore has worked alongside internationally recognized leadership expert Dr. John Maxwell for the past 25 years. According to Maxwell, "No one teaches leadership better than Tim Elmore."

Elmore lives in Atlanta with his wife, Pam, and his two children, Bethany and Jonathan.

A New Wave
Understanding and Connecting with the Millennial Generation
Dr. Tim Elmore / www.GrowingLeaders.com / www.Habitudes.org

Every generation shares common characteristics. <u>In fact, each generation is defined by those shared experiences in their developmental years</u>. The Millennial generation comes to us with a different view of life, faith, and leadership. Further, they are growing up in a world that is changing, and is increasingly post-modern. In this session, we will examine these evolutions and the amazing opportunity we have to develop students as leaders and world changers.

How the Generations Have Evolved
Ready or not, the newest Millennial generation students are here. Just when you thought you had them figured out, Generation Y turned into Generation iY. According to sociologists, these Millennials will be around for the next two decades. In case you haven't noticed, they are different than the last two generations who graced the campus.

FIVE GENERATIONS

LEADERSHIP ISSUE	SENIORS	BUILDERS	BOOMERS	BUSTERS	MILLENNIALS
1. Era they were born	1900-1928	1929-1945	1946-1964	1965-1983	1984-2002
2. Life paradigm	*Manifest destiny*	*Be grateful you have a job*	*You owe me*	*Relate to me*	*Life is a cafeteria*
3. Attitude to authority	Respect them	Endure them	Replace them	Ignore them	Choose them
4. Role of relationships	Long term	Significant	Limited: useful	Central; caring	Global
5. Value Systems	Traditional	Conservative	Self-based	Media	Shop around
6. Role of Career	Loyalty	Means for living	Central focus	Irritant	Place to serve
7. Schedules	Responsible	Mellow	Frantic	Aimless	Volatile
8. Technology	What's that?	Hope to outlive it	Master it	Enjoy it	Employ it
9. Market	Commodities	Goods	Services	Experiences	Transformations
10. View of future	Uncertain	Seek to stabilize	Create it!	Hopeless	Optimistic

An EPIC Generation
Perhaps Dr. Leonard Sweet has summarized this generation best, with his acronym: EPIC. If you plan to connect with students today and teach them, I suggest you do it in an EPIC manner:

EXPERIENTIAL
Don't simply lecture, but provide something experiential, from video, to virtual reality theatre.

PARTICIPATORY
Don't plan to be the only one in motion; allow them to participate in where the discussion goes.

IMAGE-RICH
Images are the language of the 21st century, not words. Base your truth on a metaphor.

CONNECTED
They want high tech and high touch. Use technology and relationships to help them discover truth.

A Summary of the Millennial Generation

1. They feel special.
Movies, government focus, and parents have all made this generation believe they are vital to our future. Most of them feel very good about themselves. Some are self-absorbed.

2. They love family.
They rely on family as a sanctuary from the troubles of their world. They've been sheltered by many kid-safety rules and devices. Many are the focus of what I call "parental paranoia."

3. They are confident.
Millennials believe they can make a difference. Many already boast about their power and potential, even as kids. They will be more self reliant and ambitious than Generation X.

4. They are mediavores.
These individuals are addicted to media. It's not uncommon for them to do homework, listen to a CD, watch TV, and interact on-line simultaneously. They give new meaning to multi-tasking.

5. They are team oriented.
Think about it. They grew up with Barney, played soccer, learned in groups at school and often wore uniforms. Community is as important as individual accomplishments. Many date in groups.

6. They are global.
This generation promises to build relationships all over the world. They will be the most mobile group ever. They have itchy feet and want to travel, just like they have on the internet.

7. They are pressured.
They've been pushed to study/work hard, avoid personal risks, and capitalize on opportunities their family has afforded them. Schedules are tight for them and their parents; they live with stress.

8. They are harmonious.
For the first time in decades, this generation is cooperative and conventional. They take pride in improving their behavior and often are more comfortable with traditional values than parents.

9. They are generous.
They not only enjoy accomplishment, they enjoy giving away their resources. They want to serve their communities. 50% of teenagers are active in community service; they feel it's their duty.

10. They are optimistic achievers.
They may be the best-educated, best-behaved adults in the nation's history. They are full of hope. They aren't as cynical as Generation X. They want to make a difference; optimism drives them.

Reflect and Respond…

1. Have you noticed any of these emerging trends in the individuals you work with? The "tweeners" will share some of these characteristics that have shown up in high school surveys.

2. What sort of opportunities do you think lay in front of us, if these statistics are true?

The New Kids: Generation iY

For ten years now, sociologists have been surveying students from the Millennial Generation. They are the kids born between 1984 and 2002. Authors *Howe* and *Strauss* drew some early conclusions about them. Some of them remain the same; others have changed as we move further into the twenty-first century. The first batch, called Generation Y, has become Generation iY. (the kids born after 1990). Let's take a look at the pros and the cons of this new demographic. Each of the positive qualities has a negative consequence, and vice-versa. Our job is to minimize their "cons" and capitalize on their positive qualities and help students leverage them.

PROS	CONS
1. They feel special and needed.	1. They can act spoiled and conceited.
2. They own the world of technology.	2. They expect quick and easy results.
3. They love community.	3. They often won't act outside of their clique.
4. They are the focus of their parents.	4. They may be unable to cope with reality.
5. They are high on tolerance.	5. They often lack absolute values.
6. They've had a fairly easy life.	6. The lack stamina to finish high school.
7. They catch on to new ideas quickly.	7. They struggle with long-term commitment.
8. They can multi-task.	8. They often cannot focus on one central goal.
9. They have a bias for action and interaction.	9. They're too impatient to sit and listen long.
10. They want to be the best.	10. They can get depressed when they aren't.
11. They plan to live a life of purpose.	11. They often neglect tasks that seem trivial.
12. They are confident and assertive.	12. They can come across careless and rude.
13. They hunger to change the world.	13. They anticipate doing it quickly and easily.

A Summary of the Recent Shifts in Millennial Minds (From 2000 to Today)

1. They have become more cautious and a bit more anxious about the state of the U.S.
2. They want to be change agents, but realize the pace of change will be slower than desired.
3. They are unhappy and even pessimistic about the present direction of politics and the economy.
4. They are questioning their former obsession with good grades and college acceptance.
5. They have begun to see they have little understanding of stewardship of time or money.
6. They want to explore the future, but many are paralyzed when faced with so many options.
7. They despise society's moral decay, but most now admit to cheating at school and on resumes.
8. They are often at odds with their own beliefs and values, and feel they must grow up too fast.
9. They are dissatisfied with American leadership (corporate & government) unlike five years ago.
10. They feel less prepared for life after school, and often return home after college graduation.

Discussion…
1. Which "cons" have you observed? Which "pros" have you seen?
2. How can we capitalize on the positive qualities and diminish the consequences of the negatives?

Preferred Methods of Communication and Information

So, if we're going to connect with this new generation, how will we do it? How do they want us to communicate information to them? Regarding Millennials' preferences for mode of communication and information, the following lists are the results of focus groups done by Growing Leaders. Note that email is last on the list. One student described email as "a way to communicate with older people." Each of these methods was deemed the top six favorites by students, between the ages of 16 and 24:

1. Text messaging
2. IPods & Podcasts
3. Instant messaging
4. Internet (i.e. MySpace.com or FaceBook.com)
5. DVD / CD
6. Books
7. Email

If You Want Your Message to Stick, Remember…

1. Students learn on a "need to know" basis.
Don't just jump into your topic; take time to explain the relevance of it. Why should they listen? We must create incentive for them to believe they need to know what we are communicating.

2. Remember that schemas frame their world—so use them.
When students encounter new information, they attempt to relate it to something they already know. They process new data via their present experiences and understanding. Get familiar with their schemas.

3. The less predictable your words, the more memorable they will be.
Once you summarize your point, ask if it is a cliché? Find a fresh way to say it, with a new twist. Spend as much time on the "how" of your delivery as you do the "what" of our content.

4. The first four minutes must grab their head or their heart, if you want sustain their interest.
Be quick to get to some content, or reveal your own heart. Provide a reason for them to listen. Share your story. Be transparent. Take them on a journey—enlist them quickly to join you on this journey of learning.

5. The best learning occurs in a social context.
Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky held the theory of social constructivism. He confirmed that people learn best in community and relationship with the mentor or fellow students. Worldview emerges from interaction.

6. The more "in your face" your words are, the more trust you will earn.
They love to "speak their mind" and tend to believe communicators who are blunt in the same way. Don't be afraid to be forthright and truthful. This earns trust.

7. If you challenge the status quo, they will hunger to take a journey with you.
They have high expectations of themselves and of anyone "up front." Challenge the norm. This doesn't mean you're a rebel or renegade—but simply that you're re-thinking assumptions from the past.

8. They grew up loving images, so give them a metaphor.
They're world is MTV, video games, photos, DVDs, and the internet—you must have a picture, too. Dr. Len Sweet suggests that images are the language of the 21st century, not words.

9. Utilize <u>proximal</u> development by pairing them with coaches.
Students accelerate their learning by associating with a more capable partner, peer or mentor. By learning together, they experience growth first-hand but can also learn through observing an advanced partner.

10. Once you prepare your message, you must find a way to twist it to <u>exceed</u> their expectations.
Think about movies that stick, or popular novels; they excel by adding another layer of story. The story becomes great because it includes an unexpected layer to exceed our expectations.

11. For your message to be remembered, keep the pace of <u>change</u> high, and call them to change.
Change is key. Their world is changing fast. Students don't sit still for very long and they long to change and improve their world. Your communication must reflect this. Your talk must be full of changes.

12. Teach <u>less</u> for <u>more</u>.
Although this sounds contradictory, it isn't. To be remembered, plunge into one central theme. Don't attempt to deliver a large variety of topics. Students have a filter and will screen out most of it.

13. Remember, students today are both <u>high-performance</u> and <u>high maintenance</u>.
Walk the delicate balance between nurture & challenge. Help them "own" your message via relationship. If you can earn their trust through feedback and support, they will perform in extraordinary ways.

14. Students hunger to participate in projects that are very <u>important</u> and almost <u>impossible.</u>
Their greatest incentive for learning may be the challenge of a project that is very important and almost impossible to accomplish. They love growing toward a goal when it is significant.

The Role of Parents
No doubt, parents have played a huge role in shaping the minds of their Millennial kids. However, some well-intentioned parents have stunted their child's growth without knowing it. This unwitting damage is a result of parents needing to mature beyond their own baggage. Parents today are made up of people from both the Baby Boomer and the Baby Buster generations. Both have experienced their own issues and often are children raising children. It has been said: Children have a much better chance of growing up if their parents have done so first. The following are four damaging parenting styles that are common today.

1. [Helicopter Parents](#)
These parents hover over their kids, making sure they get every imaginable advantage. Sadly, they don't allow their kids the privilege of learning to fail and persevere.

2. [Karaoke Parents](#)
These parents hunger to be a "buddy" to their kids and emulate the younger generation. Sadly, they don't offer their kids the boundaries and authority they desperately need.

3. [Dry Cleaner Parents](#)
These parents don't feel equipped to raise their kids so they drop them off for experts to fix them. Sadly, they don't furnish their kids the mentoring and authentic face to face time they require.

4. [Monster Parents](#)
These parents do the work of their kids attempting to live out their unlived life through their child. Sadly, they don't provide the model or the healthy environment young people long for.

Three Kinds of Students…

1. DRIVERS
These students appear to be natural leaders and love to take charge. They will influence through ideas and a strong will. Yet, they must learn patience and people skills along the way. You must speak clearly and directly to them, as their minds are full of their own ideas.

2. DIPLOMATS
These students are people persons—and sometimes people pleasers. They will influence through warm relationships and congeniality. Yet, they must identify their gifts and dreams not just go along with others. You must invite them to cooperate with you; communicate that you need their help.

3. DREAMERS
These students are creative and sharp and "out of the box." They will influence through creativity and vision. Yet, they must harness all their ideas and focus their attention on a few things at one time. You must help them prioritize their agendas and give them options so they can decide from options.

Two Kinds of Leaders…

1. **HABITUAL LEADERS**

2. **SITUATIONAL LEADER**

The Time is Now
As we examine the make-up of this next generation, it appears the time is ripe to develop them as leaders. They are predisposed to want to make a difference, and long to live a life of purpose. It seems they are primed to leverage their influence in the world, if we will just mentor them.

Over the last six years, "Growing Leaders" has surveyed thousands of students, all Millennials. Based on our findings, as well as those of the Kellogg Foundation and Coca Cola, we offer the following conclusions we've drawn regarding students and leadership development:

1. Leaders are made, not born.
2. Students require a catalyst to begin the leader development journey.
3. Becoming a leader is a process not an event.
4. Students learn leadership best in communities.
5. Students need a guide to help them process their experience.
6. In today's world, every student will need leadership skills

Steps You Can Take…
1. Listen to them and affirm their dreams and goals.

2. Give them a sense of purpose as they perform (sometimes) menial tasks.

3. Give them short commitments they can keep, and put wins under their belts.

4. Offer them realistic ideas and boundaries to their often over-optimistic goals.

5. Help them to focus on one, meaningful objective and pull it off.

6. Encourage them to enjoy their life, and remove some self-imposed pressure.

7. Discuss personal values with them and help them to become value-driven.

Generation Y Has Become Generation Why Not?
Equipping and Unleashing Generation Y
Dr. Tim Elmore
www.GrowingLeaders.com

For a little more than five years, social scientists were elated with their findings on this new generation of kids—Generation Y, the Millennial Generation, or the Digital Generation. The stats on these kids were very positive:

- Teen pregnancy was down
- Drug abuse was lower than their parents
- Violent crime was at its lowest in twenty years
- Education and civic involvement was at a record high
- The students were optimistic about their prospects of changing the world.

Now, however, we have seen the dark side of this generation. After the first half of this generation grew into adulthood, we began discovering the down-side of their characteristics. They began to be "echo boomers" sharing some of the same traits as kids in the 1960s. In short, over-indulgence plus over-protection equals a sense of entitlement. Let's first take a look at the qualities of these young people when compared and contrasted with Generation X.

COMPARISON BETWEEN GENERATION X AND GENERATION Y

1. Both love community
2. Both appreciate authenticity
3. Both recognize the world is messed up
4. Both hunger for better, more healthy families
5. Both are at home in the world of digital technology
6. Both learn best through images, relationships and experiences.

CONTRAST BETWEEN GENERATON X AND GENERATION Y

Generation X (1965-1983)	Generation Y (1984-2002)
1. Anti-establishment	1. Work within establishment
2. Angered by their broken world	2. Challenged by their broken world
3. Cynical and jaded	3. Optimistic
4. Struggles with authority	4. Struggles with reality
5. Wants to escape their problems	5. Wants to fix their problems
6. Movie: Reality Bites	6. Movie: Pay It Forward
7. Ignores leadership and authority	7. Chooses leadership and authority
8. My job is an irritant	8. My career is a place to serve
9. Who cares about transcript/resume?	9. Load up the transcript and resume
10. I'm not interested in leadership	10. I plan to change my world

Meet the "Twixters"

Today, however, these early Millennials have graduated and tasted the "real world" after school.
There is a new demographic group that has expanded worldwide. It is an age-group known as the "Twixters."
The years between 18-25 have become a distinct life-stage—a strange, transitional "Never Land" between adolescence and adulthood—where young people stall for a few extra years, putting off adult responsibility. Six reasons for this phenomenon in the U.S. are:

1. Years of <u>affluence</u> and social liberation in America throughout the last fifteen years.
More than 60% of college graduates return home with the luxury of searching their souls, savoring the pleasures of childhood and living rent-free while they experiment with jobs and relationships.

2. Damaging <u>parenting</u> styles that prevent them from preparing for the real world.
The "helicopter", "monster" or "karaoke" parents protect their kids from responsibility. At times, the parent is attempting to live out their unlived life through their child—growing up is avoided.

3. The <u>media</u> has furnished an unrealistic picture of adult life and consequences.
TV dilemmas are solved in 30 minutes; the internet can be manipulated at will; students can log off Facebook. If they're bored, they turn it off. The pursuit is for entertainment rather than preparation.

4. Formal <u>education</u> has prepared them for more school not for the marketplace.
Most colleges are out of step with the world their graduates will enter. Vocational schools (such as Devry and Strayer) have experienced a boom in enrollment, growing 48% from 1996 to 2000.

5. <u>Post-modern</u> thought fosters cynicism and hesitation as they age.
We live in a day of relativism, pluralism and cynicism. Values are not black and white, but gray. As Generation Y graduates, they slowly get beat up by a world jaded with a post-modern worldview.

6. Convenience is <u>valued</u> more highly than commitment.
Just observe our Western culture for a day. You will find tangible examples of how we value speed and convenience—at the expense of long-term commitment. We can't seem to delay gratification.

A Generation of Paradox

PARADOX ONE: They are sheltered…yet pressured.

Our Response? Help them to simplify their lives as much as possible. Help them to slow down and make sense of what goals they really want to pursue.

PARADOX TWO: They are self-absorbed…yet generous.

Our Response? Provide options to participate in a cause that it bigger than they are. Expose them to needs in their community or around the world in developing nations and challenge to expand their horizons.

PARADOX THREE: They are social…yet isolated by technology.

Our response? Create face to face relationships with them, as well as peer communities where they meet in person. Yes, it's a hassle, but we must teach them to communicate and handle relational difficulties.

PARADOX FOUR: Adventuresome…yet protected.

Our response? Enable them to take control of their lives. Allow them to set their priorities and warn them that they'll live with the consequences of their decisions. Help them become drivers not passengers in life.

PARADOX FIVE: They are team oriented…yet diverse.

Our response? Work with them to appreciate strengths in others. Highlight the differences in inward strengths and how each person adds value to a team, not based on ethnic background, but gifts and skills.

PARADOX SIX: They are visionary…yet vacillating.

Our Response? We must help them remain focused on one major priority at a time, and keep commitments for a set length of time. I remind them of the Habitude: we must become rivers not floods. Rivers are helpful. Floods are damaging.

PARADOX SEVEN: Their orientation is high achievement…yet high maintenance.

Our Response? As much as possible, we must provide consistent feedback, at least in the beginning. We must stay in communication with them and celebrate even small wins when they achieve them.

THE BIG "IDEA" FOR TRAINING
To insure our teaching is transformational, I recommend this big IDEA for training:

I – INSTRUCTION   (We must verbally teach our students through images and metaphors.)

D – DEMONSTRATION   (We can't just instruct, we must model the principles we teach.)

E – EXPERIENCE   (We must also give them real life experience so they can apply it.)

A – ASSESSMENT   (Finally, we must debrief and evaluate what they have learned.)

EVENTS AND PROCESS
We've noticed that growth happens through both "events" and "process" in students' lives:

EVENTS	PROCESS
1. Encourage decisions	1. Encourages development
2. Motivate people	2. Matures people
3. Are a calendar issue	3. Is a consistency issue
4. Usually about a big group	4. Usually about a small group
5. Challenge students	5. Changes students
6. Becomes a catalyst	6. Becomes a culture
7. Easy	7. Difficult

Question: How have you seen the truth about "events and process" in your school?

HABITUDES™: IMAGES THAT FORM LEADERSHIP HABITS AND ATTITUDES

The Habitudes™ series is a simple, profound way to connect with students and teach them character and leadership. Within the series, the images cover self-leadership, connecting with others in community, leading others and changing organizational culture.

We have found that by enabling students to see themselves as people of influence (leaders) it positively impacts their self-esteem, their vision for the future and their relationships which, in turn, impacts their grades, attendance, character and graduation rates.

They are being embraced by a number of corporations across the U.S. and internationally, but their greatest potential for impact lies in next-generation leaders. Here is why…

1. Habitudes™ enables you to teach leadership in a simple and brief period of time.

2. Habitudes™ can spark discussion that goes as deep as the maturity of your students.

3. Habitudes™ provides an image, interactive discussion and an exercise to participate in together.

4. Habitudes™ offers you a set of transferable concepts that students can teach as well.

5. Habitudes™ is a series of four discussion guides based on a 360-degree leadership proposition.

6. Habitudes™ furnishes you with a shared language for your leadership culture.

HOW DO WE NURTURE A LEADERSHIP CULTURE?

We define a leadership culture as an environment of shared values and behaviors that contagiously affect students to think and act like authentic-leaders.

The following is a template for fostering a leadership culture on your campus. This leadership development cycle includes the important ingredients we believe foster a leadership culture. We try to tailor-make packages in order to achieve this leadership culture in schools. The packages include resources to be used in the following manner, for maximum benefit:

Leadership Development Cycle

mentor training

catalytic event

the leadership quest

follow-up resources

assessment/preparation

opportunities & apprenticeship

mentoring communities

training experiences
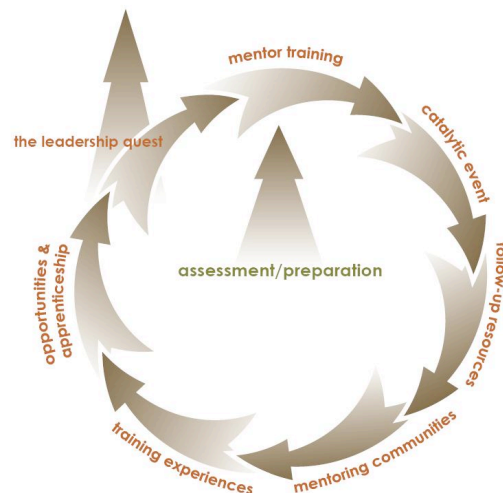
Check out www.Habitudes.org for more resources to that reach Generation Y.

Becoming a Life Giving Mentor

It seems everyone is talking about mentoring these days. It appears to be the cry of a new generation. We're all looking for a mentor. As I help churches, companies and universities to establish healthy mentoring communities—I am discovering something odd. Mentors and mentees begin well, but along the way, the relationship runs out of gas and evaporates. After researching this phenomenon, I think I know why. The mentors are offering information not life. They are not "life giving mentors."

One of my favorite portraits of a life-giving mentor went on display before the entire world at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain. Derrick Redmond, a British athlete, had qualified to compete in the 400 meter event despite the fact that he'd had 22 surgeries on his Achilles heel. It was a miracle he was able to qualify for the Olympics.

It was at the event, however, that tragedy struck. Midway through the race Derrick pulled up short and fell to the ground. He had pulled a hamstring and faced still another injury. At least one of the cameras stayed glued to this athlete as he got up and limped forward, wincing in pain. His hopes of winning were dashed, but he wanted desperately to finish the race. Watching him, however, even this looked impossible. Derrick wept as hobbled forward, realizing it was all over for him.

Enter his mentor. Sitting in the stands, second row from the top, was Jim Redmond, Derrick's father and mentor. He could not imagine watching passively. He pushed his way past the huge crowd separating him from the track. He persistently moved toward the gate and sifted through the security guards. They would not keep this man from his mentee. Jim had been Derrick's biggest fan through the years, and this move was the only logical one for him. The cameras quickly focused on this intruder running toward the pitiful athlete from the UK. Jim put his arm around his son. It must have been a familiar touch because Derrick took a few more steps and stopped. In tears, Derrick fell into his father's arms, and wept. The two exchanged words for a moment. I am sure Jim asked Derrick if he was sure he wanted to finish the race. When Derrick replied that he did, Jim said what I consider to be classic mentor words: "Derrick, we started this thing together. We are going to finish this thing together." Then Jim did what all great mentors do for their mentees. Jim lifted Derrick up, put his son's arm over his own shoulder, and the two finished the 400 meter race together.

I remember watching this scene with tears in my eyes. I didn't expect to see such an act of love that day—to receive such a clear snapshot of someone investing in the life of another. I can remember the crowd applauding for the two of them as loudly as they did the winner of the race that day. Whether he knew it or not, Jim Redmond gave the world a picture of a life-giving mentor: one who walks beside another and says, "I'm going to help you finish your race well."

The more I travel and speak on this subject, the more I'm discovering how new it is to most people. It's not so much that the idea is new—but the practice life-giving relationships is rare, indeed. Most mentoring relationships are reduced to either fellowship or facts. The first fosters no growth. Thesecond fosters no life. We're better at dispensing information than providing life. Mentees feel something is missing. Consequently, the idea of mentoring is vogue, but it's also still vague.

Most adults I meet (even pastors) don't get this. I believe the future of the church depends on this. Leaders cannot be mass-produced, but are developed through life-on-life mentoring. There's no life-change without life-exchange. I fear if we don't grasp what life-giving relationships look like, we will reproduce another empty, disconnected, wounded, and disappointed generation of people graduating from our schools and leading our churches and nation. Generation Y isn't looking for a "sage on the stage" but a guide on the side. They're in need of life-giving mentors. We must nurture environments that are safe places to experience life-giving relationships.

How Do I Do This?

Do you ever wonder how to ask someone to enter a mentoring relationship with you? For many, it is best to throw away the term "mentor." It's just too intimidating. Why not make it natural. I'm frequently struck by the simplicity of how Jesus selected his twelve disciples (or mentees) in the scripture. He provides an amazing case study for us to learn from today. It appears that He simply prayed all night, and then chose a handful of men—from scratch! What's more, it seems as though they just up and left their work and followed Him, without any prior knowledge of what they were in for. Oh, if it were only that easy today, we sigh. If only we could find a mentor with that much authority and credibility; or, if only we could get people to follow our mentoring that quickly.

Upon closer study we discover that it really wasn't that easy, even for someone like Jesus. Let's learn from this model, and use it as a case study. No doubt, there was a time when he did issue a challenge to Peter, and the other "disciples" to follow him, and they did, indeed, leave their nets to follow. I don't believe, however, that this was their first exposure to Jesus. I believe there was a PROCESS involved that required several stages of relationship. My good friend Steve Moore and I have assigned titles to these stages of relationships to help you see the process necessary for people to make the kind of commitment that mentoring requires. I share this with you to liberate you from unrealistic expectations and to give you a path to take as you enter the process yourself. Let me outline these stages as a case study for you to examine.

Come And See...

This is stage one. In the Gospel of John, we read of Jesus' first encounter with his potential disciples or mentees. In John 1:35-51, a conversation begins when Jesus discovers that two men are following Him. He asks them what they are seeking. They inquire where He is staying. They are obviously at a curiosity level. They just want to know a little bit more about Him and what it means to be associated with Him. After all, he was intriguing. His response is simply: "Come and see." For us, this may mean offering an opportunity to a potential mentee to join us in some community service, or observe some task in action, or to have coffee with us—just to get acquainted. If you are going to win their trust, you need to give them time. By offering these opportunities, you are demonstrating first your commitment and intentions to them. The curiosity level is low, and the challenge is simple and easy. Your relationship may even be in its early stages. Your appropriate call on their life is simply: come and see.

Come And Follow...

This is stage two. At this stage, Jesus believes His disciples are ready to actually make a commitment, and follow after Him as a mentor. This is precisely what many of the twelve were after. Some of them, at this point, are not ready to call Him "Lord." He is "teacher" to them. In Luke 5: 1-11, Simon Peter doesn't even feel comfortable being close to Jesus, and tells Him to depart from the area. Peter realized what an unworthy man he was, and that this man, Jesus, was standing in front of him. Jesus knew he was ready for stage two, however, and simply said to this fisherman: "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." These kinds of words are to be spoken to those ready for the commitment level, who are ready to sacrifice in order to go forward and grow further. The word ""follow" means "repeated, deliberate steps." Everyone is not ready for this level of commitment to a mentoring process. At this stage, mentees prove themselves to be faithful to the little tasks and assignments given by the mentor. They are willing to "follow the ruts of routine until they have become grooves of grace," as Dr. Vernon Grounds has put it. These routines might be faithfulness in meeting together, reading books that you'll later discuss together, performing a task, keeping a journal, etc. At this stage, the mentee is clearly prepared to deliberately follow the mentor.

Come And Surrender...

This is stage three. Somewhere in the midst of Jesus' three-and-a-half-year period with the twelve, He issued a deeper challenge to them as mentees. You might say He asked them to "surrender"; to make the ultimate commitment. In Mark 8:34-35, He said: "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it." Of course, none of us literally ask for this kind of commitment, but it illustrates a new level. This level of challenge is appropriate for those at the conviction level. If a person is ready to take this deep and heavy step, it will become clear by their reaction. It will also be clear if they are not. Jesus asked a wealthy, young synagogue ruler to sell everything he had (something He did not ask of everyone He met) and to come follow Him. The young man, who assumed he was further along in his spiritual journey than he was, just dropped his head and walked away. The step was too big for him to take.

At this stage, the mentee has so bought into the mentor that they not only love the mentor, but their cause as well. They are prepared to give their life to the mission. Profound steps of action can be expected from the mentee because the maturity level is deep. It is very appropriate, then, to issue a challenge: come and surrender.

Come And Multiply...

This is the fourth stage. During the latter part of Jesus' mentoring relationship with the twelve, He began to send them out to mentor others themselves. In fact, the final words He spoke to them are called "the Great Commission." In Matthew 28:19-20, we read: "Go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey all that I've commanded you..." They were to duplicate what He had just done with them as mentees. This

is the commissioned level. We're to go full circle. At this point, the mentee is ready to become a mentor. If they are to continue stretching and growing, they must be "pushed out of the nest" and made to fly. They must pass on what they've received; they must imitate the process and duplicate the lifestyle. They must reproduce themselves. Unfortunately, very few ever reach this level. Many stop and are satisfied at merely being mentored. Perhaps this is why Jesus reminded them: "Freely you have received, freely give."

What Is Supposed To Happen In A Mentoring Relationship?

So—what is it we are called to do if we're to be life-giving mentors? Good question. Over the last several years I have made it my aim to distill the ingredients that make a good mentoring

experience. The following word-pictures represent what I believe are the most helpful goals you can shoot for as you attempt to invest in someone.

1. PAINT PICTURES

Pictures stick, longer than mere words. Your mentee likely grew up in the digital generation—with MTV, photographs, videos, DVDs and movies. There are screens everywhere and images abound. I believe the surest way to deliver a memorable message is to paint a picture in their mind. Use metaphors, images, word pictures and stories to drive home the principle you want them to catch. I try to live by the axiom: give them a point for their head and a picture for their heart.

2. GIVE "HANDLES"

Everyone possesses some knowledge of truth. Most people, however, are hard pressed to own it in such a way they can use it in everyday life. Simply put, "handles" are things we can grab onto. Every door has a handle; every drawer has a handle. We give people "handles" when we summarize truths or insights in a user-friendly fashion so they can wrap their arms around it. Truth becomes a principle they can live by. When someone has a "handle" on something, it means they "own it" and can practice it as well as communicate it to others. A good mentor can distill or crystallize truth so that the complex becomes simple. For instance mentors may provide a "handle" for their mentees by summarizing the truth they are discussing into a brief phrase, slogan, metaphor or jingle. They may choose to add a memorable experience together. An example for service may be working in a soup kitchen or serving in a retirement home.

3. OFFER "ROADMAPS"

Roadmaps give us direction in our journey and a view of the "big picture." When we give someone a "roadmap," we are passing on a life compass to them. In the same way that maps help us travel on roads we've never been on, these life roadmaps show us where we are; they help people not only to see the right road, but to see that road in relation to all the other roads. They also help a person stay off the wrong roads. They provide perspective on the whole picture. This generally happens only when we communicate intentionally, not accidentally. While there is a place for spontaneous interaction, planned opportunities to speak into a mentee's life are necessary. Friendship may happen by chance, mentoring happens on purpose. Roadmaps help mentees navigate their way through life.

4. PROVIDE "LABORATORIES"

When we provide "laboratories" for our mentees, we are giving them a place to practice the principles we've discussed with them. Do you remember science class in college? Science always included a lecture and a "lab." By definition, laboratories are safe places in which to experiment. We all need a "lab" to accompany all the "lectures" we get in life. In these "labs," we learn the right questions to ask, the appropriate exercises to practice, an understanding of the issues, and experiential knowledge of what our agenda should be in life. Good laboratories are measurable; they can be evaluated together; and they provide ideas for life-application. In these labs, mentors can supervise their mentees like a coach. They can oversee their experimentation like a professor. They can interpret life like a parent. Every time I meet with my mentees, I have a "laboratory" idea to accompany the principle I want them to learn. This forces me to be creative, but I believe in the axiom: information without application leads to spiritual constipation!

5. FURNISH "ROOTS"

One of the most crucial goals mentors ought to have for their mentees is to give them "roots and wings." This popular phrase describes everyone's need for foundations to be laid and for the freedom to soar and broaden their horizons. The foundation we must help to lay in our mentees involves the construction of a "character-based life" versus an "emotion-based life." This means we help them develop core values to live by. They should leave us possessing strong convictions by which they can live their lives and the self-esteem to stand behind those convictions. The deeper the roots, the taller a tree can grow, and the more durable that tree is during a storm.

6. SUPPLY "WINGS"

The final word picture that describes what a mentor must give a mentee is "wings." We give someone wings when we enable them to think big and expect big things from God, from life and from themselves. When someone possesses wings, they are free to explore and to plumb the depths of their own potential. When mentors give wings, they help mentees soar to new heights in their future. Consequently, it's as important to teach them how to ask questions as how to obtain answers. Mentors should empower mentees to take the limits off what they might accomplish with their lives—and cheer when their mentees surpass their own level of personal achievement.

This is the kind of mindset that fosters healthy and hungry mentees. When we provide handles, pictures, roadmaps, laboratories, roots and wings, we spawn strong, growing leaders who are healthy and effective. The ingredients of "grace and truth" take on new meaning. This is what empowers mentees---grace and truth. Grace is the relational love that knows no conditions; it is the warm, personal side of mentoring. Truth is the firm, steady, objective guide that provides a stable foundation for life. In short, mentors have a compass in their heads and a magnet in their hearts.

Deanna was a high school student who always made good grades—until she took chemistry. Somehow she just didn't get it, no matter how hard she tried. As a matter of fact, she ended up failing the course. Fortunately, her teacher was also a life-giving mentor. He knew how devastating it would be to Deanna and her family to see an "F" on her report card. Still, he had to give her the grade. He vacillated over how to deal with the situation. Finally, he found the answer by offering both grace and truth. On her report card, he simply put an "F" next to the subject of Chemistry. However, on the same line he wrote these words: "We cannot all be chemists...but oh, how we would all love to be Deanna's."

Think about it. As you look over the list of gifts again, none of them have to do with possessing an extremely high IQ, lots of talent, good looks or fame. They are gifts that anyone can give away. I cannot think of a wiser investment of our time and energy than in the people who are right under our noses. They are immortal souls with potential and gifts within them. I believe we were designed for that kind of satisfying life-giving investment.

Almost a hundred years ago, a young boy was scarred for life by his parents as he grew up during World War I in Germany. His family, the Schicklewubers, had developed distorted priorities that left the boy emotionally alone and confused. He overheard his father talk about moving away one evening, and assumed that he would be abandoned. His dad had scorned his ideas for a career as an artist and priest. The boy decided then to toughen up and find refuge in things outside of love and family. He would never let someone inside his heart again. The world has suffered much from that decision; for you and I know this young boy as Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler. I have to wonder how history might have been altered if young Adolf had had a life-giving mentor available to him. It's up to us to make sure this never happens again.

--Tim Elmore

TRANSCENDING TALK WITH TITHE

by A. Allan Martin, PhD, CFLE

A. Allan Martin, PhD, CFLE
Associate Professor of
Discipleship and Family Ministry
Seventh-day Adventist
Theological Seminary
Andrews University

Dear Fellow Leader,

Again I have been impressed by the strong and succinct conviction of Elder Jan Paulsen (2009) as he articulated in the October 2009 edition of *Adventist World*, "We must give young adults meaningful roles within the church (p.10)."

And notably, Elder Paulsen has re-initiated the *Let's Talk* series that he has been conducting around the world for over half a decade (Lechleitner, 2009). Even though I support these fine and admirable verbal gestures, I feel we fail new generations if we only offer another round of conversations and compelling articles.

So I share this open letter with you leader—whether you offer volunteer leadership in your local church or campus or serve as a ministry professional, educator or administrator. Leader, I implore you to move beyond conversations about youth and young adults to conspicuous and calculated action.

Although I admire the outspoken positions our leaders have taken on this issue (Martin, 2009), I want to invite you and every leader in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to transcend talk with tangible action. Specifically I'm asking you to tithe. Tithe one or more of the following beginning today: (a) Travel, (b) Time, (c) Timothys, (d) Telecasts, (e) Talents.

Tithe Your Travel

Divert one of your travel appointments, and instead sponsor a young adult to go to IGNITION, April 2010 in Columbus, Ohio, or IGNITION Atlanta, June 2010. Instead of taking on that tenth speaking appointment or attending another committee meeting, invest that trip's budget into the leadership development of a young adult. IGNITION is especially formulated to deepen the discipleship and leadership development of young adults. Go to http://ignitionblog.wordpress.com/ for the latest details on these young adult training opportunities.

Tithe Your Time

Offer a tenth of your time each week to mentoring a young adult. If you average a 40-hour workweek, then set aside four hours this week and each week to nurture, apprentice, and encourage a young adult. Begin to pour yourself into the next generation. If you are working a 60-hour workweek and are saying to yourself, "*There is no way I can offer six hours each week to mentor a young adult,*" it may be that you need to change your work habits/schedule.

Tithe Your Timothys

Empower a tenth of your young leadership to develop new generations. You may be in the situation where you have a large team of young ministry leaders [i.e., a campus ministry or student association for an Adventist college or university]. Ask your team to train, mentor, and nurture the young people that follow them in age. Set aside a tenth of the resources and efforts you give to minister to your campus/church and invest it in the next generation of leaders.

Tithe Your Telecasts

Dedicate a tenth of your broadcast time to intentionally disciple young adults. Knowing the integral role media plays in young lives, invest in nurturing their spiritual growth through music, television, film, drama, comedy, photography, literature, art, production, etc. Overtly involve young adults in the production, creative, and technical aspects of the tithed endeavor.

For some of you, the pulpit is where you broadcast the Gospel. Afford at least a tenth of the worships in your church to involve young people. If you don't have any youth in your church, more radical tithing may be in order.

Tithe Your Talents

Begin today to let a young person take your place. The classic parable admonishes us to multiply our talents, not bury them in the sand. Although often referring to talents as money, I would offer here a hybrid application, noting that your skills, abilities, giftedness, and wisdom need to be invested in the next generation. Allow "up and coming" young adults to take roles you might have easily and competently taken. Give them the opportunity to take your place—at least begin with a tenth of your place.

Do one or more or all of the above. Dear colleague, I am personally appealing to you to instigate this "tithing" conspiracy today. If you or someone else calls you a "Seventh-day Adventist leader," this talk-transcending-tithing request is for you. Whether travel, time, Timothys, telecasts, or talents, I ask that you put your tithing into motion today.

Thank you for your kind consideration, and in advance I share my gratefulness for your immediate action. I believe that leaders best represent the Christ who relentlessly pursues new generations by transcending talk with tangible transformational relationships. May the GOD young adults seek be found living among those who love Him with all their heart (Martin, Bailey, & LaMountain, 2009). May Jesus be found in and through…you.

Lead, Love, Live,

A. Allan Martin, PhD, CFLE

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ignition

young adult ministry descriptive briefs

IMPACT Atlanta 2010 [iATL] is a young adult leadership & discipleship experience concurrent with the 2010 General Conference Session. Adventist delegates from around the world will actively engage the great commission and great commandment in training, ministering, and worship.

June 23 – July 3, 2010
Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland Street NE,
Atlanta, GA 30303 USA

What is IMPACT Atlanta 2010?
IMPACT Atlanta 2010 [iATL] is a young adult leadership & discipleship experience concurrent with the 2010 General Conference Session [www.GCsession.org]. Adventist delegates from around the world will actively engage the great commission and great commandment in training, ministering, and worship.

Learning from the unique cosmopolitan milieu of metro Atlanta, iATL delegates will discover opportunities for servant leadership and experience discipleship equipping— empowering them to expand God's Kingdom in this city and beyond.

Rationale
Leadership Development
- It is our passion to foster service at the heart of new generations. We need leaders who excel in serving.
- We feel GOD re-enacting Judges 7, personally selecting a group of young adults to further expand His kingdom.
- General Conference Youth Director, Elder Baraka Muganda reflects on the relationship between the General Conference Session theme, *Proclaiming God's Grace*, and the department's focus on leadership for this year, *"[They] underscore the need to remind our youth at every level of our church of the importance of getting involved in evangelism and leadership now."*
- General Conference Associate Youth Director, Elder Jonatan Tejel shares the 2010 goal of the General Conference Youth Department, *"Our goal is to open the eyes of our youth to discover the leadership roles that are waiting for them in God's church and prepare them to accept the responsibilities of those positions by strengthening their relationship with Christ."*

Mentoring Disciples
- We are compelling new generations to fulfill the Great Commission in their lives and in their communities.
- Growing disciples is a point of emphasis for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- General Conference Associate Youth Director, Elder Jonatan Tejel speaks on the relationship of discipleship and leadership, *"Spiritual leaders are disciples who make disciples…Ultimately, our focus in the church should be to make disciples. And if we fail at this, we have failed the mission Jesus gave us. . . Be a leader. Follow Jesus. Make disciples."*

Biblical Focus
Ephesians chapter 2, with special emphasis on Ephesians 2:8-10

Where can I get information about iATL
www.impactatlanta.info

Who is iATL for?
Collegiate age Adventist young adults through young professionals age 35

What are the dates for iATL?
June 23 – July 3, 2010
iATL prep, June 20-23, 2010; iATL post, July 4-5, 2010

Where will iATL be held?
Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30303
& throughout the Greater Atlanta metroplex

How much is the delegate registration fee?
The earlybird registration fee is $135.00 USD. After May 10, 2010, the fee will be 185.00 USD. Regular registration concludes June 1, 2010.

What is included in the delegate registration fee?
The registration fee covers access to all iATL programs/events, leadership training, discipleship intensives, service transportation, iATL materials and iATLwear

What are the accommodations for iATL?
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA USA
Accommodations are in either 2 or 4 bedroom apartments, there are **no** singles. An individual will share a bathroom with only one other person. Rooms are assigned at the discretion of Conference Services Staff. Apartments are equipped with a full-size refrigerator, stove, microwave, dishwasher, and are fully furnished. Coin operated laundry facilities are on site on the main floor of each building. Here is the link to take a Virtual Tour of the facilities: http://www.gsu.edu/housing/VirtualTours.html

The linen service options and rates for summer housing are as follows:
*   *Bedroom with No Linen Service* at the rate of $35.00 per person per night. No Service: Linens, towels, and toiletries are not provided.
*   *Bedroom with Standard Linen Service* at the rate of $43.00 per person per night. Standard Service: Each bedroom is supplied with sheets, pillow, pillowcase, blanket, two towels, and one washcloth. Beds are not made; sheets and pillowcase are exchanged weekly. Towel exchange is available daily at a centralized location.

Meal Plan:
Including Breakfast & Lunch, $17.30 per day

No accommodations, lodging nor meals, are included in the basic iATL registration fee.

Are there housing packages available for iATL?
Yes. Housing packages featuring accommodations at Georgia State University are also available as follows:
- *No linen, no meals* -- $570.00 USD. Save $50.00 by registering before earlybird deadline.
- *Meals, no linen* -- $743.00 USD, Breakfast & Lunch. Save $50.00 by registering before earlybird deadline.
- *Meals and linen* -- $831.00 USD, Breakfast & Lunch. Save $50.00 by registering before earlybird deadline.

How should expenses outside of those covered in the fee be paid?
All expenses not included with the registration fee or as part of a paid housing package will be the sole responsibility of each delegate.

Do I need to send my application fee with my application?
Yes. Your application is incomplete without your application fee.

Am I able to have someone stay in my room, who is not a delegate?
No. Only delegates for iATL are allowed to stay at GSU. Anyone who attempts to utilize the accommodations and they are not registered will be asked to leave. Delegates that do not adhere to these rules risk canceling their participation without receiving a refund.

Am I required to attend all the activities that are scheduled?
All delegates are strongly encouraged to attend all activities that have been planned during iATL, especially the scheduled training and ministry participation.

Where can I get information about iATL
www.impactatlanta.info

Application/registration for iATL is slated to open, April 9. Keep coming to impactatlanta.info for information links and resources.

Additional Resources

Air Transporation
http://www.atlanta-airport.com/
Via MTS Travel: https://www.logiforms.com/formdata/user_forms/6791_3553951/79892/

Ground Transportation
http://www.atlanta-airport.com/GroundTransportation/

Advent House

By Lisa Hope

It's 7 p.m. on Wednesday. The sound of voices in the living room mix with the smells of sautéing onions and tomato sauce from the kitchen. Some students gather to fix garlic bread, several pitchers of lemonade, and plenty of spaghetti and sauce. The conversation grows lively as "too many cooks" try not to spoil the meal. Other students congregate in the living room, catching up on the details of life, doing homework, playing the guitar, or continuing a chess match.

Welcome to Spaghetti Dinner, a free, weekly, home-cooked meal enjoyed by the members and friends of Adventist Christian Fellowship at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Advent House has been home to ACF at UTK since 1980, and has been hosting Wednesday night meals for almost as long. In addition to Wednesday evening activities, students come by Advent House to study between classes, catch a short nap, or just to relax and play games. Each Friday evening, vespers provides a time to connect with each other and God through worship, fellowship, and just slowing down after a busy week.

Claire, 19-year-old architecture major, enjoys a change of pace on Wednesdays. "It's not just free food," she says. "It's awesome free food, awesome people, and everything's done out of love."

Advent House exists to create a space where students can belong, explore beliefs, and become part of a community of young adults who come together for inreach and outreach. Having a house on a public university campus is a huge key to opening the door to deeper relationships and more intimate fellowship that ultimately is about sharing God's love – and experiencing God's love – through our relationships with each other.

"[Advent House] has helped me get together with people who believe the same as I do where it might otherwise be hard to meet them here on a really big university campus."
   –Nathan, 22, electrical engineer

"Advent House has been a great place to meet people with similar values."
   –Chris, 21, nutrition major

"It's also good for growth and for that connection to the Adventist world with people our own age."
   –Elisabeth, 19, choosing a major

the

Autocatalytic Reaction

I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. Proverbs 8-17

Who we are

Catalyst is an experience designed to encourage all to feel free to worship and discover God, welcoming people from all walks of life and all backgrounds, regardless of where they are in their spiritual journey.

It is our desire that those who attend will experience the joy of a God that is chasing after them because He loves them - and in turn gain a passion for worship, and a connection with others.

So it begins…

We're launching this newsletter to give you the latest on what Catalyst has been up too, our events for the future, and anything we think you'll find interesting and exciting. We would love to hear from you - send your feedback and suggestions!

Save the Date!

Reverse Sabbath
March 13th, 2010

This event will take place at the WF SDA Church at 12:30pm. Starting with potluck, worship service with speaker C.A. Murray and Sabbath school.

Book Club
April 11th, 2010

This event will kick off our discussion of the book Fearless by Max Lucado. We will meet at the Manna restaurant in Thompsonville at 6pm.

Current News

So what have we been up to in the past several months? Catalyst has been very blessed to have many events including a vespers service, musical program, food drive and most recently movie night. This has given us the chance to grow in Christ together.

We have sponsored a child from Haiti through Danita's Children. Due to the magnitude of destruction in Haiti no child has been assigned to us but we are helping with the cost of much-needed supplies.

We have designed a t-shirt and all money collected will go towards Danita's Children. If you would like to buy a T-shirt please email us at thecatalystexperience@gmail.com with size and number of shirts you would like. The cost is 15 dollars per shirt.

Last Time @ Catalyst

We had the opportunity to watch the inspirational story of William W. in the movie Amazing Grace. What an audacious and faithful man, who gave his entire heart to the Lord in order to change the world and bring an end to slavery. Who said that one person can't make a difference?

Truly, alone we may seem like germs through a microscope, but in God's hands we have the power to revolutionize. Always remember that you too have been called to bring an end to slavery... slavery of poverty, pain, and hopelessness! Yes, if you deposit your life in God's hands, you too can change the world.

Today, I want to encourage you to remember the following quote by my favorite writer, Ellen G White, who says the following:
The greatest want of the world is the want of men, --men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. --Education, p. 57.

I call you to take a stand and join us on our next Catalyst event, where it's not only a program to entertain, but it will help you make a difference in the world.
Written by Carolina Bonilla.

Prayer Requests

- To form strong bonds and build friendships with those around us.
- The people of Haiti
- Carolyn asked for prayer for God's plan for her life.
- Moses asked for prayer for him and his family.
- Sandi asked for prayer for her daughter's salvation, and for her little grandson.
- The upcoming events (see page 1)

Thanks for your continued prayer!
If you have any thing you would like the catalyst team to pray over please email us @ thecatalystexperience@gmail.com or visit the discussion board at thecatalystexperience.org

Catalyst is looking for volunteers!
Each event takes many hands to put things together. If you would like to volunteer please email us!

WE WANT TO THANK ALL THOSE WHO VOLUNTEER TO HELP OR HAVE PRAYED FOR US!

CATALYST INVITES
YOU TO
MANNA
RESTAURANT IN
THOMPSONVILLE
APRIL 11ᵀᴴ @ 6PM
TO KICK OFF THE
DISCUSSION OF

MAX LUCADO

FEARLESS

IMAGINE YOUR LIFE WITHOUT FEAR

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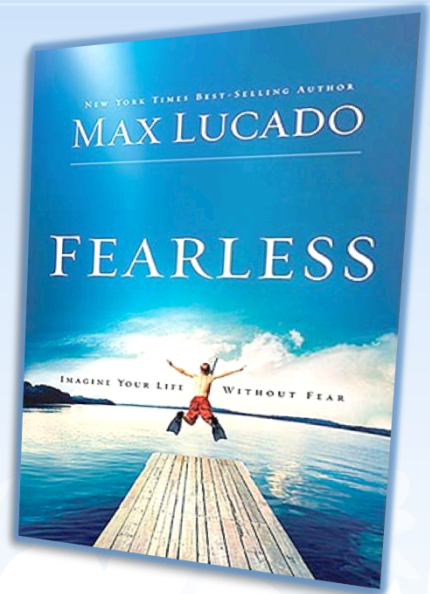
About Fearless:

Each sunrise seems to bring fresh reasons for fear.

They're talking layoffs at work, slowdowns in the economy, flare-ups in the Middle East, turnovers at headquarters, downturns in the housing market, upswings in global warming. The plague of our day, terrorism, begins with the word terror. Fear, it seems, has taken up a hundred-year lease on the building next door and set up shop. Oversized and rude, fear herds us into a prison and slams the doors. Wouldn't it be great to walk out

Imagine your life, wholly untouched by angst. What if faith, not fear, was your default reaction to threats? If you could hover a fear magnet over your heart and extract every last shaving of dread, insecurity, and doubt, what would remain? Envision a day, just one day, when you could trust more and fear less.

Can you imagine your life without fear?

CONNECT

what
CONNECT is the annual ACF leadership conference in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference open to ACF chapters anywhere. Connect is designed to be a connection point for students to meet other Adventists attending public colleges and universities, a time for (re)connection with God, and a place to look at the intricate connections that exist within the body of Christ where we all lead in some capacity, and to recognize one's unique leadership role in representing God on campus. CONNECT 2011 is scheduled for February 25-27.

who
About 90 young adults attended CONNECT 2010. Students represented over 10 colleges and universities throughout the Southern Union. Many of those students attended in the two previous years; may were new this year.

contact
Michaela Lawrence / mlawrence@gccsda.org
1918 Terrace Ave, Knoxville TN, 37916 / 865.522.3193
www.connectacf.org / facebook: CONNECT: Adventist Christian Fellowship

you
The essence of CONNECT can be adopted by every local church. The following steps are suggestions not rules.

- o **Find** your students
  In your pews **/** At your local public college and/or university **/** Search the school's website or call the Student Life department to see if there is a registered Adventist student group

- o **Connect** with your students
  Personally invite students to church and home gatherings **/** Participate in their campus activities (go to *their* world) **/** Connect with *who* they are regardless of *where* they're from / Help them meet each other

- o **Engage** your students
  Find creative ways to continually ask them what they want and need from you and then deliver where appropriate **/** Personally invite them to lead out in your worship services (prayer, scripture reading, music, call to worship…) after intentionally discovering their gifts

- o **Grow** your students
  Allow students to take on leadership roles in your church even if they are not members **/** Encourage members to "adopt" students to mentor and nurture

Collegiate Quarterly

CQ Bible Study Guide is based on the conviction that God's Word offers transforming power and that group study is one important way to harness that power. *CQ*'s purpose is to provide Seventh-day Adventist young adults with a resource for devotional study on mutual topics, which can then be discussed each week in the Sabbath School. About four hundred Adventist young adults contribute to *CQ* each year.

In addition to the Study Guide, *CQ*'s ministry also features Teacher's Guides and a Web site. The Teacher's Guides feature a choice of several activities to choose from, many of them interactive. They also include thought-provoking questions. The Web site consists of blogs by young adults, interviews, daily audio podcasts of *CQ* lessons, and Sabbath School University, a weekly half-hour video podcast bringing the week's Sabbath School lesson to today's audience. You also can download printed editions of both the Study Guide and the Teacher's Guides.

Circulation of printed material is about 72,000. The Web site receives approximately 50,000 page views per month.

To subscribe to *CQ* printed material, contact Pacific Press (P. O. Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353, U.S.A.), or have the Sabbath School Secretary of your local church place an order. For Web site features, visit http://cqbiblestudy.org/.

1. **Name/Title of Ministry-** The Final Movement

2. **Brief description of the ministry, including coming events/initiatives-**

"The Final Movement exists to produce and distribute relevant and challenging media that ignites a revival amongst Christ's Church. By equipping and empowering the youth of the Church, The Final Movement aims to serve as a catalyst for the followers of Christ in acting upon their God-given commission." (Mission statement)

The Final Movement is working towards being the major website/media organization serving the young people of the church. We produce short films, documentaries, sermons, interviews, testimonies, written articles and teaching videos. The plan is to introduce a radio show, weekly podcasts and an expansive collection of theologically solid teaching resources. We have plans to complete a number of teaching videos with Matthew Gamble and other presenters, testimony videos of young people, a discipleship series, a prophecy series and documentaries on 'uncommon' ministries. The future is bright, and we have acquired the help of many talented people including film students, professional photographers, graphic designers, businessmen, speakers and actors.

The Final Movement also aims to set up bases within other countries such as the United States of America. If you would like to get involved, whether that be acting, screenwriting, film making, speaking, presenting, writing articles, graphic design, web design or anything else, we can use you, and God is calling you to use the skills He has given you to glorify Him and spread His message. Please contact us.

3. **How many young adults have been impacted by the ministry.** The website has been viewed in over 100 counties, from every major continent and has had thousands of views. In the physical sense, we have had many young people show a keen interest in being involved, whether that is in front of or behind the camera. Many of these young people have been waiting for chances in the church to be involved, and we have been able to provide them with this opportunity.

4. **Name of leader(s) and their respective email addresses.** Kyle Vincent (managing director/president) kyle@thefinalmovement.com Jared Vincent (secretary/director) jared@thefinalmovement.com

5. **Contact information for ministry:**
   a. Mailing address- 1 Boscawen Street, Wallsend, NSW, 2287, Australia
   b. Phone- (+61) 0450 11 34 92
   c. Website- www.thefinalmovement.com

6. **A step-by-step direction/guide of how to implement your ministry in the local church setting**

- Check out the website

- Use the material to aid your spiritual growth

- Share these videos and other content on facebook, myspace, email etc with as many as possible

- Contact us if you want to make a video for us, have an audio sermon, article, idea etc for us.

- Pray lots, study the bible with intensity, allows God to lead in your life and take seriously your role in this final movement of God's people spreading His message in the end days.

Lighting a Fusion

by Gillian Vargas Sanner

"I am from a non-Christian family," Risa Maeda says. "Sometimes I feel alone going to church and reading my Bible." Maeda, an elementary education major from Japan, attends every FUSION. There she no longer feels alone. "It's so cool to see people praising. FUSION is one of the best places to see our faith," she says. "I realize I'm not the only one – there are many praising the same God. That's encouraging."

About a year ago Etienne Similien's twenty-year-old brother passed away. "We come from the hood," Etienne, an architecture major from Lake Worth, Florida, says, where in just one month he also lost three of his friends. After his brother's death, Etienne realized that it could have been he who died along with any one of his friends. And he wondered, "Why am I still here?"

In April, Etienne, as usual, attended the Friday night FUSION worship at Andrews University. The speaker told the story of Samson and Delilah, of how Samson was arrogant and didn't listen to anybody. Of how, for Samson, it was his way or no way.

Etienne could relate. When the pastor made a call to all the Samsons and Delilahs in the building, Etienne walked onto the stage.

He realized that God had something for him – could use him – and, he says, "I felt it was the time for change."

FUSION is a worship service that takes place on the second Friday evening of each month at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. "It is about oneness," explains David Franklin, Seminary student and FUSION director for the 2007–2008 school year. "In John 17, Jesus prays for believers to be 'brought to complete unity.' FUSION is what God would have us do as Christians – come together."
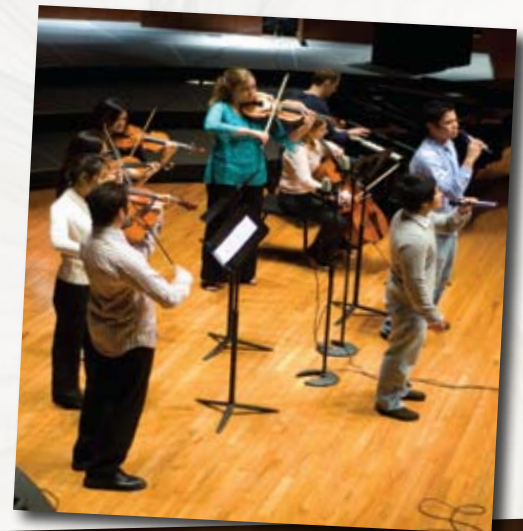
Each Friday night, vespers groups divide, basically, by ethnicities. But a few years ago some worship leaders on campus merged their programs. United Vespers, Mosaic, and Impact combined, once a month, to form FUSION. Now all vespers programs across the Andrews University campus shut down and come together for FUSION.

Attendees are not only students but administrators, faculty, staff, and community members as well. Allan Martin, associate professor of discipleship and family ministry, says, "It has been awesome to find a space here on campus where there is freedom to have a God encounter so fresh and unscripted. I sense spiritual community happening in those few short hours each month and hope that God continues to foster the growth of FUSION for the sake of the Kingdom."

These programs include many styles of music: Christian contemporary, gospel, folk, hymns, bluegrass, and classical. Speakers of all ages and experiences present the messages – some speakers are still in the Seminary, some have completed their doctorates. It is a very diverse program for very diverse people – but it's about more than that. Enoc Lopez, a Spanish/religion/business major who has ministered through music at FUSION for several years and served as as its director for the 2006-2007 year, explains, "Lots of people ask me what FUSION is. We describe it by all the cultures. And that's nice. But it makes the entire thing about how we are different. The only reason this comes close to working is because we are really

Arthur Celestin, now in medical school, served as FUSION pianist for a number of years. "Several times I've had conversations with friends who express how FUSION keeps them going through the week," he says. "They look forward to it every time because they feel so revived and renewed after every program. Being able to impact others spiritually through worship has been a blessing. I can see how others are touched and I'm brought closer to God."

The leaders of FUSION have also grown in their spiritual walks because of the program. Enoc Lopez remembers, "We came up with a team that ended up teaching me and leading me. I learned so much about myself. God revealed to me my strengths and weaknesses. I have a better sense of who I am and who I'm supposed to be."

Already FUSION is broadcast live on the Andrews University television station and on the Internet. With a new year in front of them, the FUSION team has extended the reach of their program. They categorize their work under FUSION worship, FUSION inreach, and FUSION outreach.

Shaunielle Abreu says, "FUSION worship is our Friday night worship experience. Inreach involves getting involved with campus clubs and chapels. We have several big ideas for outreach, such as partnering with a Christian school in the area for a night of worship and partnering with another Adventist college or university for a night of worship." The FUSION team is also planning an international mission trip, a FUSION CD, and a FUSION tour to other Adventist colleges and universities to share this ministry.

Through all of this, the objective of FUSION remains the same. Shaunielle Abreu explains, "There is this FUSION mentality – when people walk into FUSION, they are very open-minded." David Franklin says, "We want to see the oneness at FUSION lived out in people's lives."

the same in a lot of ways. I can praise God completely differently from the guy next to me. But if we're both citizens of heaven, both Christians, that binds us closer than our differences separate us."

A large number of people – including band members, singers, sound and video technicians, photographers, ushers, and stage hands – volunteer their talents for FUSION. The event has been a huge blessing not only to its attendees but also to those who participate in the programs.

Risa, who wants to be a missionary someday, was especially touched by the March 2007 FUSION that focused on world awareness and profiled two Andrews University students, one from Sudan, one from China.

After hearing the stories of people in need world wide, Risa picked up an ADRA catalog. "I have saved my money to send in. I still keep the catalog," she says.

"Where I grew up there was a lot of racism. When I first came to Andrews, I couldn't vibe with white people," Etienne says. He told God, "You've gotta do something for me here."

At the monthly FUSION worship services, Etienne saw people of every race worshipping together – all appreciating different styles of music and different cultures. He recognized the commonality: "We're all praising the same God!"

That insight changed the way Etienne relates to people. "Now," he says, "I want to know about everybody. I'm like, 'Tell me about your culture – your background.' FUSION put me in a different circle. Once you're in a different circle you don't want to live the same way anymore."

Reprinted by permission from FOCUS: The Andrews University Magazine, Spring 2007. To attend FUSION long-distance, visit www.andrews.edu/cm/fusion

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY FUSION MINISTRY

1. 1. **Name/Title of Ministry**
    a. Fusion Ministry
2. **Brief description of the ministry, including coming events/initiatives**
    a. Discription:
        i. Fusion
    b. The purpose:
        i. Fusion is to "Fuse" the Andrews University Campus and is inclusive of all worship styles reflected on the AU Campus (ethnically, racially, and worship style preferences)
    c. Target Group:
        i. Our primary target group is the AU Undergraduate community (ages 17-22)
        ii. Our secondary target group is the graduate community and online viewers, usually consisting of AU Alumni.
    d. Coming Events
        i. April 9 – Fusion Worship
        ii. April 10 – Fusion Friends and Family worship service
    e. Initiatives
        i.
3. **How many young adults have been impacted by the ministry**
    a. During a Fusion Friday the average attendance is 800 and our online viewers are about 75.
    b.
4. . **Name of leader(s) and their respective email addresses**
    a. Josie Asencio – out going director
        i. josieasen@gmail.com
    b. Tacyana – incoming director
        i. Tacyana@andrews.edu
    c. Chaplin T. Nixon – Ministry Mentor
        i. tnixon@andrews.edu
5. **Contact information for ministry:**
    a. mailing address
        i. Fusion@andrews.edu
    b. Phone
        i. 269 471-6241
    c. Website
        i. http://www.andrews.edu/life/spiritual/inreach/worship/sub-worship/friday-vespers/fusion/index.html
6. **A step-by-step direction/guide of how to implement your ministry in the local church setting.**
    a. Spend at 3 months connecting with local churches in your area that serves different demographics in the general area and discuss the following:
        i. What is our target group?
        ii. What will our budget be?

1. Pay your speakers
2. Will you pay your praise band?
   a. You may need to do this for quality
iii. Will we have programs once a month or once a quarter?
iv. Make a leadership group with a mixture of the target group age and mentors, no more than 12 years older than the youngest target age. (no larger than 10 people)
v. Leadership team's diversity must be a reflection of the target group (ie: worship styles and race)
   1.
   2. Program Director
      a. The Big Ideas person – the Vision setter
   3. Program Managers
      a. The Organizers – make the idea happen in a step by step process
   4. Stage manager
      a. The Transition person – makes sure that there are no dead spots in the program
      b. Arranges all sound checks for special music and praise and worship team/band
   5. Ushers Director
      a. Needs to be an Organized person – works with a team of people who are good a customer service
   6. Visual media Director
      a. Your pro-presenter/power point person
      b. Find and shows all videos
      c. Communicates with the sound person
   7. Band Director
      a. Organizes band practices and directs music according to the Praise and worship team leader's direction
   8. Praise and Worship Team Leader
      a. Organizes praise team practices, picks songs according to theme
vi. VERY IMPORTANT:
   1. The leadership team must make all the decisions…not the pastor or elders of the church.
b. Planning process
   i. Deciding on a theme
      1. Brainstorming: (**your first meeting**)
         a. All suggestions give should be written on a whiteboard or large sheet of paper
         b. The purpose of this is not to analyze suggestion given, but to get as many suggestions as possible
         c. Eliminate suggestions given that will not works
         d. Have team members each pick their top three favorite themes

i. The themes with the least votes are eliminated
                       ii. Re-vote until you have one theme
            2. For the Director:
                  a. Ask:
                        i. What are the needs of this group?
                       ii. How can address these needs?
            3. Be Scripturally based:
                  a. All themes should come from a passage of scripture
    ii. Planning the program(**your second meeting**)
            1. A program example is included…
            2. Have you team help you in the following
                  a. Include the arts
                        i. Include music, drama, ect…
                              1. Make sure the arts are a reflection of the
                                 different demographics represented in the
                                 churches
                  b. Include Media
                        i. Have a video
                              1. Where do we get videos??
                                    a. Make your own
                                    b. www.youtube.com
                                    c. www.Sermonspice.com (these are
                                       about $15 each)
                                    d. Nooma videos by Rob Bell (buy
                                       these at a Christian book store)
                  c. Invest in your speakers
                        i. Do not allow just anyone to speak. Get the best
                           your budget will allow.
                  d. Make sure you incorporate prayer in the program
    iii. Building your Runsheet (**third meeting**)
            1. In this step you plan the order of service
                  a. Change up the order of service…let the theme drive the
                     order of service. Don't just plug in names…it make things
                     monotonous.
                  b. Transitions are KEY in this phase
                        i. You need to have time to take mics off the stage
                           and place props/instruments/your pulpit on stage in
                  c. Is there a logical flow?
                        i. Are you answering questions before they are asked?
                       ii. Should offering be before or after the sermon?
                              1. If you are giving to a specific cause that can
                                 be tied into the sermon…do it after.
                      iii. What type of mood do you want to set?
                              1. What is the best way to do that?
                                    a. Start with a song? Poem? Video?
    iv. Preparing for the program (**the week of…**)

1. Schedule sound checks and make sure that your stage manager is at all sound checks (they need to know where people want their mics, if they need a stool, piano, guitar plug, ect…)
   a. Praise team
   b. Special music's
   c. Drama
   d. Videos being shown
   e. Any other audio (bible experience, the sound of wind ect…)
2. Have a meeting with your ushers (**Ushers have the greatest turn over…especially if your service is good and they want to worship**)
   a. Go over the runsheet with them
   b. Let them know what their responsibilities
   c. Explain when they are to take up offering
   d. Delegate who will count offering
      i. Change these people every worship service
      ii. Your usher's director should be the only consistent one counting.
         1. This helps keep everyone honest.
   e. Have worship with them
3. Plan a pre-worship
   a. This includes everyone who is on the leadership team and who is participating in the worship service.
      i. Sing
      ii. Have a short devotion (15 min)
      iii. Pray…pray…pray
      iv. Lay your hands on the speaker (everyone)

Time	Entry/Exit	Notes & House Lights	Stage	For the Screen
8:15-8:45	Pre-Worship: Everyone	Band Room		
8:45	Doors Open	Lights Out	Praise Musicians = Stands/Music Sheets/Water	
9:00 -9:05	LIGHTS OUT/COUNTDOWN (5 minutes)			
9:05-9:06	VIDEO: HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD			
9:06-9:16	Praise Team	Praise Set	8 Mics	Words to Songs
9:16-9:18	Jaime Pombo LEFT, exit RIGHT	Welcome	1 mic	Show Me Your Glory
9:18-9:20	The "Bigness" of God	Lights Out	Thunder Sound Effects	I AM WHO I AM... Exodus 3:14,15
9:20-9:25	Allie Brooks LEFT, exit RIGHT	Special Music	1 mic	Show Me Your Glory
9:25-9:30	Derrick LEFT, exit RIGHT	Prayer	1 mic **Incense on Stage**	Show Me Your Glory
9:30-9:35	Silent Praise LEFT, exit RIGHT	Signing with Soundtrack	15 members will be on stage	Show Me Your Glory
9:35-9:36	The "Closeness" of God	Lights Out	Wind Sound Effects	Psalm 113:5
9:36-10:00	Pastor Carlton Byrd LEFT, exit RIGHT	Sermon and Call	1 lapel mic	
10:00-10:20	Praise Team	Praise Set	8 mics	Words to songs

FUSION Task and Description Check List

Fusion Director

- ➢ Chair Fusion Meetings
- ➢ Keep in contact with and mentor members on the team (weekly)
- ➢ Buy plane tickets for speakers
- ➢ Set speaking calendar
- ➢ Keep University Chaplin for in-reach informed
- ➢ Reserve rooms in campus center for speakers
- ➢ Car rental reservations
- ➢ Attend the spiritual life committee
- ➢ Attend in-reach meetings
- ➢ Attend Worship committee meetings
- ➢ Set meeting dates
- ➢ Keep the Howard Performing Arts Center informed about upcoming Fusion
- ➢ Posters

Program Managers

- ➢ Chair Fusion Meetings in the absence of the director
- ➢ Put together flow sheet for upcoming Fusion
- ➢ Get walkie talkies from CYE
- ➢ Pick up Fusion tickets posters from Litho-tech
- ➢ Get posters approved from student life
- ➢ Put up posters in Girl's dorm and Men's dorm
- ➢ Get song lists from P&W leader
- ➢ Get instrument list from band director
- ➢ Audio Visual for Video
- ➢ E-mail flow sheet to Audio Visual (E-mail by Thursday)
- ➢ E-mail flow sheet to Audio Visual director for Howard Performing Arts Center (E-mail by Thursday)
- ➢ Schedule special music
- ➢ Give runsheet info to the Pro-presenter manager

Stage Manager

➢ Keep stage hands informed about plans for upcoming Fusion

➢ Direct stage hands during program

➢ Attend weekly meetings

Secretary

➢ Keep minutes

➢ Send e-mail minutes after planning meetings

➢ Send all announcements

➢ Make and e-mail task list

➢ Prepare on Fusion Friday

Praise and Worship (P&W) Leader

➢ Do one social activity per month with praise team

➢ Practice once per week with Praise Team

➢ Personally contact each Praise team member monthly to foster spiritual growth

➢ Create a song set

➢ Provide lyrics for new songs to be given to Power Point person

➢ Contacts praise team about practice times and dates

➢ Confirms praise team for Fusion Fridays

➢ Attend weekly meetings

Band Director

➢ Do one social activity per month with praise team

➢ Personally contact each band member monthly to foster spiritual growth

➢ Schedule band practice before praise team practice

➢ Band Director and band attend all praise team practices

➢ Receive song set from P&W leader

➢ Attend weekly meetings

Pro-presenter Manager

➢ Responsible for obtaining songs and lyrics from P&W Leader

➢ Make power points for each song set

➢ Find thematic background & countdown

➤ Attend praise team practice

Lobby and Stage Design Director

➤ Obtain all props for lobby and stage pertaining to the theme
➤ Develop a design concept for stage and lobby
➤ Communicate with design team about building
➤ Set a time for team to set up props on site
➤ Attend weekly meetings

Ushers Director

➤ Do one social activity per month with ushers
➤ Send weekly reminders keeping ushers informed of basic theme for upcoming fusion
➤ Personally contact each Usher monthly to foster spiritual growth
➤ On Fusion Friday:
➤ Have early devotional
➤ Review plan for ticketing, seating, offering, power of one
➤ Instruct ushers to remind attendees that vacant seats between individuals are prohibited
➤ Put up seats for worship participants
➤ Reserve second row on left
➤ Assign two ushers to help treasurer count money
➤ Assign ushers at each door before start time
➤ Open doors at 8:15 pm

Treasurer

➤ Collect receipts for reimbursements
➤ Count offering with two ushers
➤ Make notation of individual currency
➤ Updates personal record of budget
➤ Track spending at Lithotec, video, countdown
➤ Approves all spending

So, do you know what Televisiphonernetting is?

Definition: A verb used to describe what a person is doing when he/she is watching television, using the phone, and surfing the internet all at the same time.

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LEAD
Your Influence
- A Life's Worth
- First Quarter Growth

FIRST QUARTER 2008

Time for Change
*"Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare;
Before they spring forth I tell you of them"* (Isa. 42:9).

Some of the Changes
- **The Name:** LEAD stands for leadership, education, advent, and discipleship—fundamentals for completing Revelation 14's mission.
- **The Issues:** LEAD will be published quarterly rather than monthly to follow the same schedule as the quarterly *Adult Bible Study Guide.*
- **The Size:** 100 pages of dynamic content.
- **The Coverage:** Wider content with which to accomplish the four goals of Sabbath School—
    1. **Faith**—Bible study; growing in personal Christian experience
    2. **Fellowship**—Christian hospitality
    3. **Community**—Working for the human needs of the community
    4. **World Mission**—Financially supporting missionaries
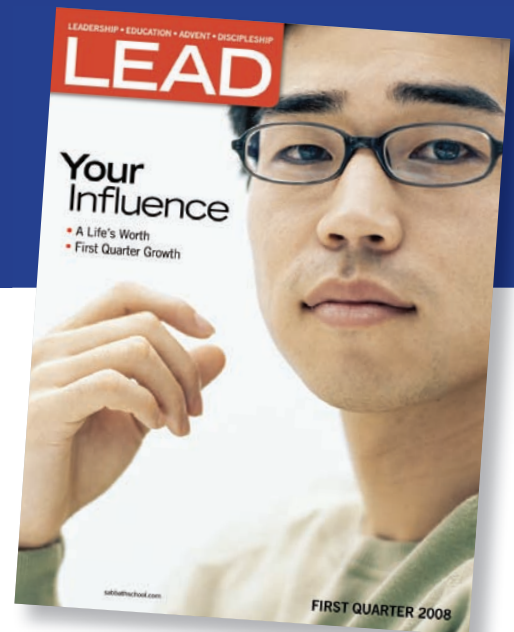
Why Now?
Sabbath School Leadership accomplished its mission for more than a decade. In the past few years we have seen a dynamic shift in the way Sabbath School classes are being facilitated and how the programs function from one church to the next. So we continue to take into account what our readers are saying is necessary and desirable.

What's New?
Here's some of the new content that you will find in LEAD:
- **PERSPECTIVES**—Editorial insights are given by Faith Crumbly, editor, and an author of one of the series in each issue.
- **A.M. BUZZ**—LEAD bridges the gap between modern and postmodern approaches to evaluating social, scientific, and political trends; credible sharing, and lifestyle evangelism.
- **CONVERSATIONS**—Bible study is directed to 18- to 35-year-olds and everyone having the postmodern mindset.
- **THE BRIDGE**—LEAD will include leadership, tips, and training by North American Division leaders in local church outreach—disabilities ministries, Community Services, children's ministries, and personal ministries.
- **FRONT LINES**—Conference directors share training programs provided for their corners of the field.

Back by Popular Demand
Even though we are adding more content, we are keeping our most popular sections for facilitators-teachers, coordinators-superintendents, song leaders, pastors, elders, everyone wanting to improve their leadership skills, and anyone willing to support the local church Sabbath School's evangelism and disciple-making initiatives:
- **CLAIM** Bible Study helps with daily outreach using daily lesson principles.
- **PROFILES** (Profiles of Success) reports on successful strategies, programs, training, and events in local churches.
- **TOOL KIT** (Leadership Tools)
- **QUARTERLY THEME SONG** keeps members singing principles of the lessons for the quarter.
- **EXEGESIS AND HERMENEUTICS** helps members correctly understand and credibly share Bible truth, avoiding popular myths and misconceptions.
- **PROGRAMS** (Program Helps) keep members interacting and reacting appropriately to a world in turmoil, sharpening their interpersonal and conversational skills.

Overall
LEAD will contain 100 pages of thought-provoking and inspirational material to help you LEAD out in your Sabbath ministry as well as provide more ideas on evangelism, outreach, and discipleship—all the while preparing hearts and minds for the Second Advent.

So go ahead! Take the LEAD. Tell your Sabbath School secretary to add it to your churches standing order, or call your Adventist Book Center at 1-800-765-6955.

MOSAIC ADVENTIST
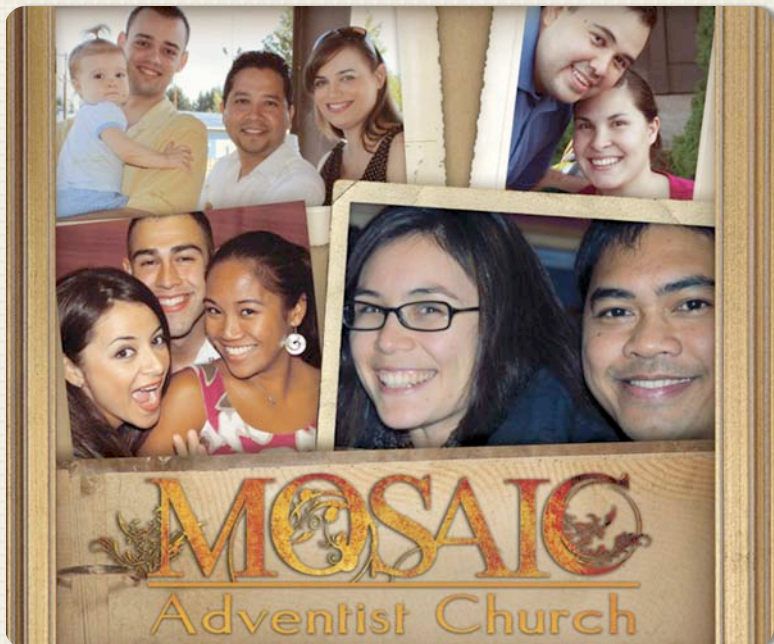
EVERY MEMBER A RADICAL DISCIPLE OF JESUS!

What we are about- A Brief History

Mosaic is a dream come true. Mosaic was the original vision of a spanish speaking congregation that saw the need to reach their kids. Second generation Latinos are one of the least reached people's group in the U.S. Mosaic, then, T"he Rock," began as a youth ministry with a specific group in mind. However, as time went on, we realized that labels and exclusivity is not Biblical nor is something that our postmodern minded members embraced. As God continued to grow the core of young adults, it slowly became apparent that we had become a multi-cultural ministry.

We finally reached the critical moment where we decided to re-invent ourselves and re-new our calling. Our ministry transitioned into a church. Mosaic was born.

Mosaic

Our community is made up of people from a diversity of backgrounds under the same God and passionate about the same cause. It is a picture of unity in diversity and healing in a broken world.

Metaphors and images reflect values and culture. Our metaphor is that of a Mosaic. It is a picture of broken pieces coming together to become a beautiful work of art. We acknowledge that we are broken but in the potter's hands, we become masterpieces. Together we are in a journey to become whole again.

We are about welcoming people from all walks of life, regardless of where they are in their spiritual journey.

What should people expect when they come to Mosaic?

A welcoming and accepting culture, a casual environment , (jeans or casual wear is the norm), young adults and young families, contemporary in our praise and worship but above all we seek to be radical disciples of Jesus Christ!

LIFE TOGETHER!

Our purpose is simple!
We see God's dream for our church family and we are relentlessly pursuing it!

We desire to become the kind of church described in the Bible, a community of believers that are committed to:

LOVE PASSIONATELY- Love God and others

LIVE PURPOSELY- Live Life TOGETHER in Growth Groups to grow in Christ.

LEAD BOLDLY: Lead others to Jesus by sharing the gospel and serving them through our unique S.H.A.PE.

FAMILY

WE REALLY WANT TO LEAD CHANGE. YOUNG ADULTS ARE STARVING FOR SOMETHING THAT IS REAL AND THEY ARE CRAVING FOR GENUINE COMMUNITY. CHURCH IS MEANT TO BE A SAFE PLACE TO BE CONNECTED WITH JESUS!

TOGETHER

THE VISION IS TO GO BACK TO THAT UPPER ROOM EXPERIENCE AND THAT EARLY CHURCH PASSION FOR JESUS. TOGETHER WAS THE PRAYER OF JESUS. TOGETHER IS A WORD REPEATED IN ACTS. THE CHURCH IS MEANT TO BE A PLACE TO LIFE LIFE TOGETHER.

How are we going to get there?

LOVE PASSIONATELY

Answers the question: How can I connect with God and others in this church?

It is also a value in our community. Everything that we do has to be done out of love and in love. This value responds to the search of the transcendent and the need for community in our postmodern world.

LOVE also stand for our purpose driven approach to ministry. It stands for our God given desire for Worship and Fellowship.

Roadmap

Connect with our Creator and our community by coming to our Sabbath Worship Service, participating of GodEncounters or Soul Awakening.

Set a Bible study appointment to learn about God's love and what we stand for as a movement.

Embrace our church family by coming consistently

Learn what our local church is about by participating in MOSAIC 1

Commitment to membership by baptizing into our body and by agreeing with "Our Covenant".

LIVE PURPOSELY

Answers the question: How can I grow in this church?

It is also a value in our community. We understand that we are not called to be a microwave of nominal Christians but rather a movement of radical, passionate disciples of Jesus that are willing to sacrifice. This will only happen as we grow together in Christ's love.

LIVE also stands for our purpose driven approach to ministry. It stands for our God given need to grow or what we call discipleship.

Roadmap

Join a Growth group and live the "Growth Covenant"

Participate in REACH Saturdays 10:00 am

Learn how to grow spiritually by participating of MOSAIC 2

Evaluate your growth holistically by completing a spiritual growth yearly evaluation

LEAD BOLDLY

Answers the question: How can I lead in this church?

It is also a value in our community. It is clear that the church is called to impact the world. We want to leave a legacy behind. We are intentional in serving others through our unique God given gifts and talents. We are still in the incubating phase but we are intentionally guiding the church there!

LEAD also stands for our purpose driven approach to ministry. It stands for the God given mission to the church in the world: ministry and evangelism.

Roadmap

Learn about how to find your God given SHAPE and God's plan to use you to lead by participating of MOSAIC 3

Complete your SHAPE discovery tool

Set a discovery interview with the pastor

Obtain ministry job description

Try to serve in different existing ministries related to your gifts and talents to find God's calling for you.

Start a specific ministry that God is calling you to lead.

CHURCH PLANT STAGE

This year will be focused on LOVE. The goal is to grow the core throughout the year 2010. The goal is to reach at least 80 members.

Next year we will move to LIVE phase. We will focus on spiritual grow and increase attendance to our Growth Groups.

In 2012, we will focus on LEAD. We will focus on finding and implementing ministries that will impact our community.

What worked for us

Focused intensity over time multiplied by God = Unstoppable Momentum

- God given **vision**

- Biblical-clear-simple **structure** and **plan- LOVE.-LIVE.-LEAD**

- **Discipleship** plan: Mosaic 1, Mosaic 2, Mosaic 3

- Passionate **Leadership**

- **Qualities**: Perseverance, Creative, beautiful, excellence, passion, accepting, genuine, participative, challenging, Christ centered, and Bible rooted.

- **Mission** driven

General info

We are a church plant. We have been on our own about 3 months. God has blessed. We are about 60 members and average attendance between 75 to 80 people.

Our membership and target is mainly young adults and young families.

Our services are simple. Fellowship, Art- Praise, Word, Response, Meal

Our vision includes art- We are working on this very important ingredient in worship.

Atmosphere values: Celebration, simplicity, Transcendent, Spirituality, Mystery, Excellence, genuineness, Acceptance, Fellowship and love

LIFE TOGETHER

Pr. Harold Altamirano

ph1006@gmail.com

Website: www.mosaicadventist.com

Address:

5170 Northwest 5 Oaks Drive

Hillsboro, OR 97124

Meeting times:

Growth Groups - Fridays 7:30 pm- different homes

Saturday:

REACH 10:00 AM

Worship 11:00

Soul Awakening: Last weekend of the month

Coming Events

GodEncounters: June 25-26, 2010

FAMILY
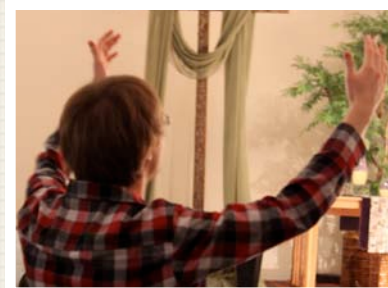
GENUINE PRAISE

WORSHIP

CREATIVITY

THE CROSS

Welcome!
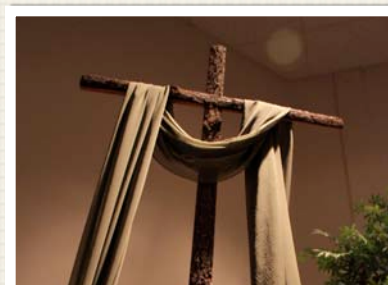
rewind

rewindokc.com

A METRO MINISTRY

A ministry designed for the purpose of reaching out to individuals who have walked away, are walking away or feel a need for something more in their spiritual walk.

Rewind becomes a refuge for those who might want to worship and fellowship with other Christians and Adventists but are working their way back to feeling comfortable in the usual church environment.

Rewind endeavors to be the family that safely brings believers into the fold and not just send out new church attendees. We want people motivated for ministry and working for Jesus Christ.

Rewind had its first official meeting Feb 11th 2009. Since that moment we've had many young adults come and go from Rewind. Many would not have made contact with any church (let alone an Adventist church) if not for stepping into Rewind, just to see what it's all about. Through its ministry, individuals who were habit driven pew sitters have become powerful lay ministers on a road to ministry in a way only God could bring about.

VISION AND START

Rewind began as a need. It was evident that there were several of us who had a vision for some sort of young adult ministry. Many had been attempted, and although well thought out and loved, could not be sustained.

A proposal for a brand new effort was brought together through brainstorming and creative thinking. In the beginning it was "Rehab", a support group for those addicted to sin, basically a hospital for chronic sinners. Although an intriguing idea, there seemed too many negative connotations. As the idea was shaped and chiseled, the name "Rewind" became a relief to the overbearing "Rehab".

The idea started to look in the direction of all the youth and young adults, who had left the church, were leaving the church, or those who had never approached the church. We planned to be the vacuum to pull in those individuals and then eventually funnel them back into the local church families.

a graphic used in our original proposal

Rewinds leaders began to plan practice runs and slowly but surely between September of 2008 and February of 2009, we became ready to launch. On February 11th, 2009 we had our first ever Rewind and haven't missed a Wednesday since.

STEPS TO TAKE

1. Look for others with a feel or need for something new and different
2. Brainstorm and develop an idea that will work for your area and town
3. Look for examples of other ministries who can give advice to your ideas
4. Develop a strong professional proposal that will explain your ideas in a way that others can also get excited about
5. Test your draft proposal on many people so that when you finally give your proposal, you feel it's a "no brainer"
6. Make sure your proposal includes a specific estimate of cost.
7. Find someone with "executive" abilities to be an advocate for you. Preferably someone in the conference. For us it was the Evangelism Director. If you need to look within the local church, find an elder who can be an advocate for you on the church board.
8. Propose your ministry to this person and or others in order to find a source for start-up money or "capital".
9. Find other forms of funding (including your own pocket) until your ministry can begin standing on its own feet.
10. Begin looking for more potential leadership. Start with a number of leadership that will be easy to sustain over a year.
11. Pull together musicians and other talents that will be able to form a cohesive praise team and will have the ability to practice on a regular basis and be dependable on a weekly basis.
12. Develop of theme that your ministry can follow through its first couple of months.
13. Plan Practice runs for your leadership to get everyone used to the regular format.
14. Plan your program to be turn-key meaning almost anyone can step in and take over. Consistency in your program enables the leadership to do their best without making a burden that may be too heavy to carry on a weekly basis. Consistency also enables attendees to tell their friends and acquaintances about your program and invite them without a big surprise change in the format when the person finally comes.
15. Launch your program without tons of fanfare. You are going to grow and develop and get better over the weeks. Sometimes your first few weeks or even months are going to be rough.
16. Don't push attendance as a success or failure. You'll have low attendance days and high attendance days. God will send you who needs to hear the message that week. Your job is to be consistent in your approach, message and support.
17. PRAY, PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!!!!!!!

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

So many ministries these days are built on the backs of one specific individual or on the enthusiasm or fanaticism of one person. Rewind's leadership structure allows for diversity and allows and encourages many to have a hand in leadership.

To begin with we looked for individuals who had what seemed like the mental stamina to be put into a leadership role. Many would begin looking for those who had a passion for Jesus Christ. Although that is important, Rewind is as much a ministry to its own leaders as it is to those who attend and take part. If a person had the mental stamina, a strong opinion (negative or positive) about the church and religion and was currently attending on a semi-regular basis, they were considered for leadership. The opinion was taken that we don't make the Disciple, Jesus Christ is the only one who makes disciples. So we looked for talent and the ability to lead and less for the "spiritual greatness".

The parameters of the ministry were laid out. Rewind would meet EVERY Wednesday night 7PM. We were taking on the attitude that a consistent, weekly form of evangelism would be where our effort would go, rather than a two week push like traditional evangelism usually plans to do.

Each leadership would be given the responsibility for leading one week at a time, and thus rotating through the leadership. On that week, the leader would be charged with making sure everything ran smoothly. They would make sure there was food and refreshments at 7PM. They would make sure the Praise Band had everything together. They would plan for childcare and who would cover it. And finally, the Leader would then be responsible for making sure the program was together and that there was a speaker for the week.

We began with 7 leaders. Theoretically that meant that each individual would only need to cover 7 weeks during the year and would have 6 weeks of preparation for their respective week. We now have 10 leaders which brings that number to 5 maybe 6 weeks that need to be covered by that one individual.

Over time many of the aspects a leader was fully in charge of began to take care of themselves. We developed a calendar of volunteers who would provide the food and drinks. A wonderful attendee of Rewind asked to become the Childcare director and took on scheduling individuals to provide the childcare. The Praise Band became its own entity and had a director appointed to lead the band. Over the span of the year, now a Leader's true responsibility is only to check with the area leaders, make sure things are covered and either speak themselves or find a speaker for the week.

The burden to lead the ministry is carried on many shoulders instead of just one. There have been Directors appointed, but as directors the added responsibility is to be the representative to other organizations and basically to be where the buck stops if or when they are needed.

Recruiting individuals to become leaders was a method of showing them how they could successfully work Rewind into their lives without disrupting they're lives entirely and ultimately sharing with them a vision of what they could be a leading part of.

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EVEN YOUTHS
GROW TIRED AND WEARY,
AND
YOUNG ADULTS STUMBLE AND FALL;
BUT THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD
WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH.
THEY WILL
SOAR ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES;
ISAIAH 40:30.31

some of the original leadership

Hi, my name is:

Wednesdays @ 7pm @ Parkview Academy, 1/2 a mile south of the OKC Zoo on MLK Drive.

Rewind has evolved in so many ways. We've begun to see that although our appeal is very much in the Young adult 17-35 area, we also appeal in a great way to the 17-85 demographic. From the beginning we've had "older" individuals attending and joining us. We have also seen that our format allows for many non-Adventists to attend and worship without prejudice. We've even had a group of Mormons on their summer ministry join us on a weekly basis.

Rewind has been an energizer in many ways to the local church. With a very steady growth in attendance and an ever more present population of young adults, the church is looking for new ways to engage this population. The board has voted to give one of our leadership an Elder position at the age of 24. Young Adults are beginning to have more of a say in the planning and future of the local churches because they have the energy and fervor to move.

Rewind now has a project to convert what was a large metal storage building next to the Adventist School and convert it into the school chapel and a permanent venue for Rewind. We're branching out and planning to do our own evangelistic series, in our own words. There are also plans to begin a "youth" ministry called "Fast Forward" in the near future.

rewind
a christian ministry

EVERY WEDNESDAY @7

praise
worship
family

parkview adventist academy
4201 N Martin Luther King Ave
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

childcare provided

rewindokc.com

The amazing miracle that exists here in Oklahoma City is not that a group of passionate spiritually driven young adults came together to follow God's leading and build a ministry...The more amazing miracle is that a group of average, habit driven pew sitters with an itch decided to follow a vision and actually "DO IT". With God's grace and leadership so many of those individuals are now "becoming" passionate, spiritually driven young adults with the will to do so many greater things.

Students Lead a Revolution of Giving

By Jackson Boren

After months of preparation and promotion, the Pacific Union College campus mall was alive and packed with people on the night of May 18 as the twilight hours welcomed the first REVO PUC. The event was the brainchild of graphic design major Rachel Thompson and inspired by a campus visit from activist David Batstone, encouraging awareness about human trafficking. The awareness of this cause encouraged Thompson to take it up as her own and encourage her peers to do the same.

With hundreds of students in attendance, REVO (short for "revolution") provided a variety of entertainment and features to draw attention to its cause. There was a spoken word poetry slam, a fashion show, several student organization booths, and a concert by Hawaii-based indie band, Goodbye Elliott. Corn dogs and lemonade were for sale and the Amnesty International booth was right at home in the awareness-raising event.

The marquee feature of the event was the student-run benefit sale. Hundreds of items that were donated by students, faculty, and community members were resold and auctioned off. All proceeds went to a project of Batstone's "Not For Sale" campaign, building a shelter and vocational center for trafficked and abused children in Lima, Peru.

Student Nathan Miller, who helped man the silent auction table, noted, "People will say, 'This is for the kids? Well then, yeah, I'll bid!' It's not about how much you want to pay for something but how much it can benefit the kids."

The REVO movement was started over a year ago in Hilo, Hawaii, by a close friend of Thompson's, and has since spread to Orlando, Philadelphia, Baton Rouge, New York, and Las Vegas. Each REVO event has taken its own unique approach to raising awareness and funds for different causes.

With nearly $10,464 raised at REVO PUC, it is safe to say the event was a success. But for the REVO crew (consisting of nearly a dozen students), it is still a work in process. The plan is to bring the event back next year, supporting another social justice cause.

Organizing REVO PUC was an intensive project, but Thompson was motivated by the conviction that one's faith and active participation in social justice causes are interconnected. "If we call ourselves followers of Christ," Thompson says, "then this is something we must be a part of. He calls us to do this work."

Virtuous Women: Slippers, Praise, and Service

By Elizabeth Rivera

In Pacific Union College's Dauphinee Chapel, you stumble upon several dozen girls in PJs and slippers, singing at the top of their lungs. Slumber party? Nope, you've walked into Virtuous Women, PUC's only ministry just for girls – or rather, women. Virtuous Women is a vibrant group of young women who are seeking the Lord and together figuring out exactly what it means to be virtuous.

Virtuous Women meets once a month with powerful speakers, fun giveaways like fuzzy slippers and jelly beans, and two all-girl praise bands to help the girls get their jam on and sing the stress away. It's a place for girls to come as they are (PJs and slippers encouraged) to support each other in Christ as they navigate the fun, work and stresses of college life. It is a place of fellowship where girls can meet together to grow in God and with each other.

But what happens in Virtuous Women doesn't stay in Virtuous Women; there is also an outreach ministry that goes out and helps the community. Their last project included organizing a team of girls to help an elderly woman in Napa clean her neglected home.

Virtuous Women also has projects and programs throughout the month such as cooking classes, clothes swaps, and compliment boxes. For those in need of a weekly pick-me-up, there is also a small group subset of Virtuous Women which meets every week and is lead by Jessica Shine, PUC's worship and outreach pastor.

Other options slated for the "VW" calendar include a self-defense class, stress management event, and financial readiness event. But whatever the schedule holds, Virtuous Women will always have plenty of fun, fellowship, and worship.

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Younger Generation Church

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Jameson Francis - Music Director

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Ryan Gil - Producer

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A Ministry of the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church

Younger Generation Church

About YG Church

The Younger Generation Church is a contemporary worship service held at and supported by the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church, and is designed to provide a modern service of worship and fellowship for a Younger Generation, that encourages communion with Christ and each other. Every part of the ministry is formed with the young-adult age group in mind.

We strive to reach those who were previously unreached by traditional forms of church evangelism-- through a high energy, modern worship service with upbeat music, timely and creative messages, and high impact multimedia elements. YG Church is not just a worship service, however. It is a community of Christian fellowship, with many activities and gatherings outside of the Saturday morning service.

As a young adult movement, Younger Generation Church pursues intimacy with God, creates community with each other, and shares the grace of Jesus Christ through creative fellowship and powerful worship.

YG History

In the summer of 2004, The Arlington Texas Seventh Day Adventist Church recognized that young adults were being underserved in their congregation. Mike Tucker, senior Pastor of Arlington at the time, envisioned a ministry that would be completely run and supported by young adults. He decided that the only

way to achieve this bold idea was to enlist the help of some like-minded college students. With a vision cast from the senior pastor, and a handful of 20 year olds, Younger Generation Church held it's inaugural service In August of 2004. However, since Pastor Mike allowed those college students to "run their own show" YG Church wasn't your typical congregational service. With modern media elements, a contemporary worship environment and a full worship band, YG Church took Arlington to a new high in the church worship experience. In late 2009, YG Church celebrated its 5-year anniversary marking a significant milestone in the life of the ministry. Arlington's Younger Generation Church now boosts a weekly attendance level of 400+ and a virtual attendance of 200+. But it doesn't stop there. YG Church has focused its attention on helping to build solid relationships within its congregation. Small groups, social activities, and community service projects have created various outlets to disciple its members. YG Church became what it is today because of a vision, some people willing to go out on a limb, and simply because GOD was the project foreman for the construction of this unique ministry.

YG Crew
(Leadership Team)

Karla DeChavez - Social Director

Jameson Francis - Music Director

Ryan Gil - Producer

Shaun Hayes - Financial Director

Adrian Riojas - Leadership Director

Dave Morris - Grips

Aaron Weber - Creative Director

Worship

Worship
(The Way We Impact)

- **What is the Purpose of Worship?**

The goal of worship isn't to follow every style or trend that emerges within our society, but to find the expression that best captures the musical or sung prayer of the community. Worship is not about self expression. It's about seeking the very presence of God and responding appropriately. God reveals himself and we respond.

- **The Job & Role of the Worship Leader/Music Minister**

Leading worship is not a musical function, but a leadership function. Your theology of worship influences your philosophy of ministry as it relates to the function of worship leading. If you view worship as a leadership function, then you're concerned about responding to the presence of GOD and obedience is the key value. Worship leading is first a spiritual act.

- **The Worship Team**

(Talent vs. Anointing)

The worship team i.e. band & vocalists must have a heart for God and a passion for worship. They must be willing to be discipled and to grow in the knowledge of God. When choosing the worship team, God's anointing must always be the primary focus. Talent and skill is secondary. If a person has a lot of skill but is not right with God, the worship experience will be greatly hindered.

Choosing Music

1. Knowing your congregation.
2. Songs that have purpose and meaning. Being biblically sound.
3. Congregational Preference vs. Personal Preference
4. When & How to Teach Songs
5. Prayer & Meditation

Song Formula

1. Beginnings & Endings
2. Transitions
3. Set Lists (Following a Theme)

Worship Environments

1. Create the best environment for your target audience

2. Create ways of gauging the sucess of that environment

3. **Become and Stay Relevant** *"What worked 5 years ago, won't necessarily work today. What works today won't 5 years from now."*

4. Context determines initial appeal

5. An uncomforatble context can distract

6. Culture and stage of life determines what is visually and audible appealing.

Creating Worship Online

In no other time in earth's history has communication traveled faster. We have an opportunity to reach people anywhere in the world.

1 Corinthians 12:5 "*there are varieties of ministries, but the same Lord.*" We have applied this to our online audience. We continue to reach others through nontraditional forms of evangelism.

Worship Service Resources:

Organizational: Planning Center

Production Equipment: SolarisNetwork. com

Media: WorshipHouseMedia.com, DigitalJuice.com

Editing: Adobe After Effect, Premiere, Photoshop, Final Cut Pro, Cinema 4D

Tutorials: videocopilot.net, lynda.com, creativecow.net

Presentation Software: ProPresenter for Mac

Streaming: 316 Networks

Education: Collide Magazine, Church Production Magazine, Worship Leader Magazine

ignition

young adult ministry
praxis papers

The Making of a
Young Adult Ministry:
From Concept to Action

Featuring the model of
Encounter Young Adult Ministry
at Andrews University

By Diane Helbley
In fulfillment of CHMN660: Field Practicum
Submitted to Dr. Allan Walshe
August 3, 2009
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, MI 49104

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Introduction and Rationale

> A new study by The Barna Group (Ventura, California) shows that despite strong levels of spiritual activity during the teen years, most twentysomethings disengage from active participation in the Christian faith during their young adult years - and often beyond that. In total, six out of ten twentysomethings were involved in a church during their teen years, but have failed to translate that into active spirituality during their early adulthood…. Twentysomethings continue to be the most spiritually independent and resistant age group in America. Most of them pull away from participation and engagement in Christian churches, particularly during the "college years." (The Barna Group, 2006, para. 2, 5)

Such is the state of the young adult Christian life. There are many reasons young adults decide to drop out of active involvement in the Christian faith, such as a perceived exclusivity in the Church or a lack of authenticity (Cunningham, 2006, p. 25). In her book *Dear Church: Letters from a Disillusioned Generation*, Sarah Cunningham describes some of the aspects that young adults are seeking in their spiritual lives. She reports that twentysomethings: value community; feel connected to their surroundings; want to help; are idealistic to a fault; are transparent; appreciate intergenerational relationships; and need a sense of real responsibility and the authority needed to accomplish a task (Cunningham, pp. 26, 35-49). In essence, Cunningham is describing postmodern people. Young adults are not ones who are content to sit back and watch as someone else does all the work, and they are people who thrive in community and in being authentic. Additionally, postmodern people are not afraid of spirituality and of putting their beliefs into practice.

Furthermore, the Bible is clear about these same ideas. The Acts 2 church exemplifies what it means to live as a community of believers:

> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer…. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their numbers daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:42, 44-47).

The believers studied together, they ate together, and they prayed together. They were unselfish and giving of themselves, sharing what they had and taking care of each other's needs. It was a time of

joy and praise. You can sense the contentment and peace that surrounded the community. Plus, this community was so vibrant that new members were added to it daily. The newcomers couldn't resist the believers' message and their way of life.

Likewise, Hebrews 10:25 states, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Living in community was important back in biblical times and has been important all through history. But as the end times approach, things are going to get harder and harder. Discouragement will abound as worldly troubles increase and as Jesus seemingly tarries. We need to have a strong support system that will encourage us to pray and study and share our stories as well as our needs. There is strength in numbers:

> Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

The following step by step guide to building a young adult ministry takes into account the inner workings and desires of today's young adult, as well as the biblical principles noted above. Encounter Young Adult Ministry on the campus of Andrews University is used as a model of a successful ministry of this nature. Encounter was created by Dr. Jane Thayer, professor emerita of religious education, and has been a tremendous blessing to the young adults who have given their time, talents and heart to its cause, and in return found a family of believers to lean on, share with and grow with.
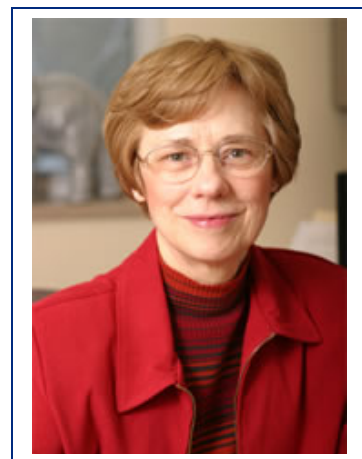
Jane Thayer, PhD

The Process

First Things First

As with any ministry, a successful young adult ministry needs to have some key components in place before it can, or should, launch.

➤ The first thing to do is to seek God's will in the matter. Is this something that God has placed on your heart and in your mind? Have you prayed earnestly about it? Have you sought others' prayers also? You may have the best idea in the world, but if you are running contrary to God's will and purpose for your life, or it's the right idea but the wrong timing, you may find yourself just spinning your wheels and not getting where you had hoped. Rather than being a joyous time of creation and working hand in hand with God, it can be a time of frustration and discouragement.

➤ Along the same lines, if you feel the leading of the Holy Spirit to make this ministry happen, make sure you are staying connected to God personally all throughout the process. As a wise professor once stated in class, you can only minister out of the overflow of what you receive from God. So if you are only getting your cup filled halfway with God's strength, wisdom, energy, and inspiration, you are not receiving all you need to function properly yourself. How can you then give to those with whom you minister or to the ministry itself? You just won't have enough to go around.

Also, it may be tempting to let yourself slack off of pursuing God's wisdom once the ministry is up and running. But don't do it! You never know what else God may have in store for you or the ministry, so stay attuned to how He is leading and guiding.

➤ Once you have yourself grounded in God, take a look around and see what else is out there. Are there other young adult ministries already in action? If so, are there ways you can

collaborate with them? Would another young adult ministry be too much? Would you be serving a different segment of young adults? Would it be wise to meet with the leaders of those ministries to seek advice and/or assistance? If there are no other young adult ministries happening in the area, what is the reason for it? Are there not enough young adults to necessitate such a ministry? Or is there no one to head up the ministry? If you find the answer to be that there are indeed young adults who would benefit from a ministry, then proceed with preparations.

➢ It is always important to gain support from necessary entities. For example, if you are starting your ministry in a church, you should discuss it with the pastor and present a proposal to the board. Be as detailed, yet succinct, as you can, so the board can see your vision but not get weighed down by impertinent details. You should include a proposed budget with specific costs and rationale. Ministries often need money to support it, even if it's just a small budget to buy simple supplies, such as plates, cups, napkins and utensils.

If you are starting your ministry on a Christian campus, you should discuss it with the campus ministries office and present a proposal to the spiritual life committee. If you are starting your ministry on a public campus, touch base with Adventist Christian Fellowship (www.acflink.net) and approach the school's student life office.

Once you have the go-ahead from the right entities, you will need to build a team.

➢ Mark Yaconelli discusses "gathering a covenant community" (Yaconelli, 2006, p. 147) in his book *Contemplative Youth Ministry*. This phrase describes the process of building a team of fellow ministers. Too often we go it alone, and before we know it, we have burned ourselves out or have struggled alone when we could have had a support system in place to help us cope and work. Even Jesus had His disciples. And we need to trust that God will guide the right people to help us in the ministry. If He is guiding us to start a ministry in the first place, we need to trust that He will

provide the people to assist also. The following process for gathering a team is adapted from Mark Yaconelli's book (Yaconelli, p. 147-155).

Whether in a church setting or a college setting (or some other setting), Yaconelli suggests that two facilitators should work together to discover who the right people to serve this ministry might be. The facilitators could be you and another trusted individual. You should pray first and not feel rushed to just find warm bodies to fill the positions. This is something important to note: the process of building a ministry team can take time. Don't get discouraged if things don't fall right into place within a week.

After praying and asking God to lead them, the facilitators should begin to talk and listen to the people either in their church or around campus. Ask the following question: Who in this congregation (or on this campus) enjoys young adults and would make a good volunteer in a young adult ministry? Consider everyone who is mentioned, regardless of age or rank. You never know how God might work through somebody. Just keep a running list of suggestions.

Once this list is complete, pray over the names. Ask God to speak to the individuals that He would like to be a part of the team and to help them discern His will for their lives. You should then contact the potential volunteers, starting with anyone who was named more than once. Meet with each prospect individually in an environment that is conducive to conversation. Pray with your co-facilitator before the meeting. Be relaxed and informal in the meeting and explain to the prospective volunteer that his or her name was mentioned as someone who is seen as having gifts and interest in the area of young adult ministry. Describe your vision for the ministry and what you would expect from a volunteer. Be careful to not use guilt or manipulation when approaching him or her. Assure the candidates that they can say no, and that you are just asking them to listen to see if God might be leading them in this direction. Give them at least a week to pray about it and to discuss it with family or friends. Once the allotted time has passed, call or visit the candidate to hear

his or her response. If they respond favorably but aren't able to give much time to the ministry, still consider them as part of the team. There will be small parts, as well as big parts, to play in this ministry. Plus, you never know how things may change over time.

➢ When a core team has been identified, plan a leadership retreat to do some community-building and vision-casting. Help people to get on the same page, and allow them to ask questions and participate freely.

It is possible that the people who have joined together to lead this ministry are not familiar with each other. So some icebreakers and community-building activities would be beneficial and would allow people to loosen up and get to know each other in an informal capacity. For icebreaker and community-building ideas, visit http://wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html and http://www.icebreakers.ws/.

At this retreat, you will want to solidify some overarching components of your ministry. One of the most important is to identify and put into writing a mission statement. According to Wikipedia, a mission statement is "a brief written statement of the purpose of a company or organization. Ideally, a mission statement guides the actions of the organization, spells out its overall goal, provides a sense of direction, and guides decision making for all levels of management" (wikipedia.com/Mission_statement). Encounter's leadership decided that they would keep the mission statement short and to the point: To disciple young adults. Of course, that is a huge mission, but the statement describes exactly what is intended by this ministry.

The Encounter leadership decided it wanted to break the mission down a bit further and developed two core values. Wikipedia elaborates on values: "Groups, societies, or cultures have values that are largely shared by their members. The values identify those objects, conditions or characteristics that members of the society consider important; that is, valuable"

(wikipedia.com/Values). So in Encounter's case, the ideas that the members considered valuable are: to create a community of belonging; and to make our relationship with Christ meaningful.

The leadership fleshed these two statements out by stating that, "Encounter should be a place where everyone is welcome and appreciated. Jesus describes us as all belonging to the body of Christ where each one is a vital part of the community. Encounter leadership strives to create a family of believers and an environment that is a safe place to grow into the men and women that God desires us to be. Encounter is meant to be a place where people become involved and are affected, challenged, and changed for life. From the new believer to the fourth generation Adventist, each would be drawn into a deeper relationship with God"

(http://www.encounterministries.info/About/index.html).

➢ If you still have time at the retreat, discuss some of the details that will be necessary to get your ministry up and running. (If you run out of time at the retreat, discuss these details at a separate meeting.) For example, Encounter's primary ministry is Sabbath School. If you want to include a Sabbath School in your ministry, you would need to locate and secure a venue and decide upon a meeting time. Some options to consider are whether you want your Sabbath School to be before church or after church, or have something like a Sabbath School on a different day altogether. Weigh the various options by considering how early the young adults like to get out of the house, church start time, and leadership availability. Encounter determined that it would be best to start at 9:45 on Sabbath mornings. This is right between the early and late worship services at the campus church, so attendees can go to either service and still take part in Sabbath School.

Next you should brainstorm and research possible venues. Do you want to meet in the church or outside of the church? What do you anticipate the needs of the Sabbath School being? How many people? How much flexibility and maneuverability will you require? Do you want a cozy feel with couches and lounge chairs or a more functional place with tables and chairs? How

accessible does it need to be – especially for students on a campus who may not have a car? Consider the future as well by thinking about how a room will work if your numbers grow. Have a plan in place for alternate venues if you outgrow your chosen room.

Your ministry community should meet at least once a week in order to best build the community of belonging that young adults crave. So if you do not intend to include a Sabbath School in your ministry, then consider a weekly Bible study night or a Friday night vespers program or a Wednesday meal and prayer time. Whatever it is, make sure you contemplate the best time and venue for it.

Teams and Support

➤ As was mentioned above, a ministry team is vital to the successful operation of a ministry. Encounter's <u>Leadership Team</u> is composed of the director (probably you), the advisor, the secretary, the treasurer and the leaders of its various ministry teams. As with any ministry team leader, the secretary and the treasurer are voted into their positions. Encounter does this by praying for guidance and discussing options from among the membership. Once a name or two has been decided upon, a vote is taken and someone is assigned to speak to the candidate(s). If they accept, they are given a short job description and are welcomed into the leadership team. If they decline, new names are discussed at the next leadership meeting.

The leadership team meets every other week to discuss the business of the ministry. Minutes are taken at each meeting by the secretary and approved at the following meeting. The treasurer presents a hard copy of the budget usage, and any questions or comments are discussed. Each team leader can give a short report of the work his or her team has been accomplishing or the needs they are encountering. It would be wise to set a formal agenda and have hard copies available at each meeting. This way you are more likely to stay on topic and respect each member's time. Ask for agenda items prior to the meeting.

The following sections describe ministry support and each team in further detail.

➢ Encounter has a <u>Faculty Advisor</u> and a number of <u>Sponsors</u>. These are older adults who have a passion for young adult ministry and are willing to give of themselves in order to help the ministry prosper. You will want some of these advocates in your ministry. It is likely that some of these would already be part of the "covenant community" that you had built. These individuals may be a pastor, an elder or the youth director if you are in a church setting. If you are on a campus, you would want some faculty, administrators or perhaps a chaplain. These are people who know the system in which you will be ministering. They will be able to navigate the rules and regulations. They will be able to support the ministry through their wisdom and knowledge, as well as their emotional availability and even perhaps through financial means.

Encounter's advisor attends leadership meeting every other week and as many activities as possible. Sponsors attend Sabbath School and activities, host events, and bring breakfast to Sabbath School. Members of Encounter also do these things, but the sponsors are there if something more is needed. Plus the intergenerational aspect is quite valuable.

➢ In order to get a big picture view of Encounter's Sabbath School, it is necessary to give an overview of the different aspects that happen each Sabbath. Starting at 9:45am, a greeter welcomes all attendees and gives them a song sheet. There is fifteen minutes of praise music, followed by an icebreaker, an introduction to the lesson study, and small group Bible study. A light breakfast follows, which allows for fellowshipping and gives members time to connect with newcomers. This breakfast is served each Sabbath, and members and sponsors take turns providing the fare. Generally, the costs are absorbed by the individuals who provide the food, but a budget line can be put in place to either reimburse the

people or to be used to purchase the food and supplies. Never forget that young adults really enjoy some good food with their ministry!

➢ The first team, whose leader is a member of the leadership team, is the <u>Teaching Team</u>. Since Sabbath School is the primary ministry of Encounter, the teaching team is very important. The leader coordinates the teachers. Since Encounter values active participation, there are approximately a dozen teachers from among the membership. The leader should watch for people who lead the small Bible study groups well or articulate themselves well. S/he should bring the names of prospective teachers to the leadership meeting for discussion or voting.

The teaching team leader also ensures that there is a teacher scheduled for each week. An email can be sent out to all teachers giving them the topics for the quarter's study and asking them to sign up for the topic that interests them most. Encounter utilizes a Google calendar to track teachers (as well as activities). Encounter loosely uses the adult Sabbath School quarterly provided by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (http://www.ssnet.org/qrtrly/), which allows each teacher to use or adapt as much of the lesson as s/he wishes.
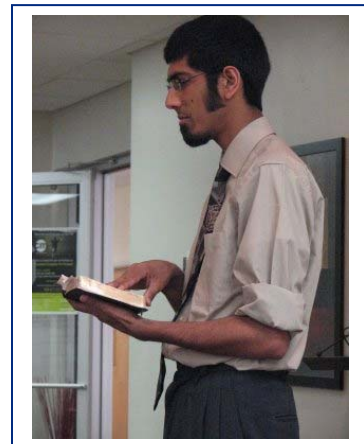
Generally, the lessons begin with an icebreaker. Often these consist of going around the room, having each person state his or her name and answer a non-threatening question. You want to make sure that your question somehow relates to your lesson topic and is not so personal that someone could be nervous or opposed to answering it. The teacher could even tell the group that they can be as deep or as shallow as they wish. For example, the teacher could ask that the members give their name and answer the following question: What are you and how do you know you are that thing? The teacher might get things started by saying that he is a guitarist, and he knows this because he has calluses on his fingertips. Another person might say that she is a writer because she

has a book published. Using an icebreaker in this way assists in building community as people open up and share a tidbit of themselves with each other. Other sorts of icebreakers can be used also. Just be creative!

After the icebreaker, the teacher usually introduces the topic for the week and gives an overview of what is going to be studied. Throughout the week(s) before the teacher's assigned lesson, he or she should be preparing the lesson – reading the quarterly, looking up the Bible verses, praying for wisdom and inspiration, and looking for any other support materials that would be helpful (such as Ellen White quotes or visual aids).

Encounter splits into smaller groups in order to study the lesson. This allows for more participation and interaction. It also allows those who are shy the opportunity to speak in a more intimate setting. Small groups are much more non-threatening and are also valuable for engaging more people at a time. Teachers can divide people into groups in various ways. They can count off by the number of desired groups. They can choose a number or a picture out of a basket, and all the

 like numbers or pictures would meet together. They can just ask the members to split themselves up in roughly equal groups. This can be tricky though because often people will stay with their friends. So in order to get more varied groups, teachers should plan to divide the groups in a formal way.

The lesson should be prepared in such a way that the groups can study the lesson for themselves. A leader is usually chosen within the smaller group to lead out. The teacher can have each group study the same lesson, or each group could study a different aspect of the lesson. An opportunity should be given at the end of the study time to bring everyone back into one group and have each smaller group report on what they have learned. In this way, more perspectives are

shared, and essentially the group members are teaching each other. The lessons can simply consist of Bible verses and leading questions, and/or they can consist of other teaching strategies, such as experiential activities (like writing a letter to or from God), or watching a scene from a video or listening to a song from a CD. The teacher could also read from Ellen White or a relevant story, or use photos or pictures. Don't forget that postmodern young adults are very much interested in stories and experiencing things rather than just reading about them. See Appendix A for sample lesson plans. For additional ideas on teaching strategies, as well as teaching theory, Jane Thayer's book *Teaching for Discipleship* is invaluable. Also see http://glossary.plasmalink.com/glossary.html#V for a glossary of instructional strategies.

➢ The second team, whose leader is a member of the leadership team, is the Social/Connections Team. As was stated above, a primary goal of Encounter is building a true sense of community and an atmosphere of love and acceptance. It is the social/connections team's duty to have greeters inside the door of the Sabbath School room each Sabbath. They greet each person with a smile, sometimes a handshake, and sometimes a hug. They also give the attendees a song sheet for song service and collect the sheets after song service. This person is usually a member of the social/connections team, but others often assist in this capacity.

Another responsibility of this team is to make a concerted effort to make personal contact with any newcomers – to introduce themselves, find out a little about the newcomer, connect them to others who have similar interests or backgrounds, and ask if they would like to be added to the email listserv. Small forms are always on hand to gather their contact information (see Appendix B). These forms are then given to the leader of the communications team (which will be discussed later in this manual).

The vast majority of the social/connections team time is taken up by planning and implementing social activities and other events. The team, comprised of between three and six members, meets at least once a month to make plans. One person takes notes and sends them to all the members via email. At each meeting, the following items are discussed: greeter schedule; the following month's social activity; the following month's potluck; and any other upcoming special events. Sabbath School greeters are usually scheduled one quarter in advance and are made up of team members and others who are friendly and outgoing. Each month contains one social activity and a potluck. It was discovered that members wanted to have at least one weekend free of Encounter activities per month, so the social/connections team, in conjunction with the service team, makes plans accordingly. Oftentimes the potluck and the activity fall on the same day, or one is scheduled for the third weekend of the month and the other is scheduled for the fourth weekend.

For potlucks, the social/connections team brainstorms venues (a member or sponsor's home, the park, the beach, etc.), and one member is assigned to make the arrangements. Supplies, such as paper plates, napkins, cups, and utensils, are purchased with the Encounter budget and stored at one of the member's home. This way, the host of the potluck will not need to worry about providing these items.

For social activities, the team also brainstorms ideas. Possible activities include bowling, ice skating, a corn maze, a beach party, boating, game night, movie night, sledding, hiking, miniature golfing, and picnics in the park. Again, one member is assigned to make the arrangements for whatever is decided upon at the meeting. Keep in mind when considering activities the cost involved, whether any members have children they will need to bring, and what was successful and not so successful in the past. Young adults are a

diverse group, comprised of poor and/or perhaps car-less college students, young or single parents, newlyweds, young professionals, etc. Try to schedule activities that can be attended by most of your members most of the time. Remember the idea is to create community, and if someone keeps feeling slighted by the activities offered, they are not going to stick around.

Occasionally the social/connections team plans other events too. Encounter likes to commemorate its beginnings by having an anniversary party each January, complete with food, singing, a slide show of photos from throughout the years, a worship thought, and an interactive activity like Bible charades. And there is always a cake that wishes Encounter a Happy Anniversary.

As Encounter is held on a college campus, the team also celebrates graduations at that month's potluck by getting cards for each person and having as many members sign it as possible. A cake is also purchased for these events too. The member who buys the cake is able to get reimbursed from the ministry's budget. Other special events, such as weddings and births, are celebrated with cards also. Even if your ministry is not held on a campus, it is important to celebrate these milestones with your members. It makes them feel special and helps to build that close-knit community you are striving for.

Another sort of event that Encounter has realized is an important part of being a discipleship body is the spiritual event. It was decided that having just Sabbath School was not enough in the way of spiritual activity. One such event is an agape feast. Encounter planned the feast with the assistance of the teaching team leader. As members entered the room, an index card was given to each person and they were told to write down what was on their hearts that night and then to leave that card at the foot of a tabletop cross. This symbolically relieved the members of their burdens so they could focus on the evening ahead. Simple foods such as crackers, bread,

cheese, fruit, and grape juice were set out on tables in the shape of a cross. A blessing was given for the food, and at the end of the "feast," the teaching team leader shared a worship thought for the members to also feast on.

The social/connections team found itself needing and wanting to assist the membership in another very important way also. At times, members have had hardships, whether it was an unexpected death in the family with related expenses, or a car that had broken down, or other difficult times. The team quietly took up offerings to assist those who were having the trouble and quietly presented them with the offering and a card if it was appropriate. Again, this just shows the members that they are valued and cared about and that they have a support system in place with the group.

➤ The third team, whose leader is on the leadership team, is the <u>Praise Team</u>. Essentially, the praise team provides music for most of the Encounter activities, including Sabbath School song service and special events. Occasionally there is even an impromptu praise music time at potlucks and gatherings.

For Sabbath School, the praise team, as much as possible, chooses songs that enhance the lesson and provides song sheets for the members to follow along with. The songs are a mixture of contemporary praise songs and hymns, which allows all members the opportunity to enjoy at least some of the music.

It is not unreasonable to have more than one praise team, and may in fact be beneficial so as to help people not burn out from having to provide music so often. The praise team leader should coordinate who will perform when and enter the dates on the Google calendar.

➤ The fourth team, whose leader is on the leadership team, is the <u>Service Team</u>. Encounter firmly believes that an important part of discipling is loving and serving our neighbors. Working

alongside one another also creates a bond that ties the members together in community even more than just worshiping together.

Encounter has at least three standing service engagements. The first is singing at a nursing home in a neighboring town every third Sabbath of the month. Song books filled with hymns are given out to the residents so they can sing along and make requests from among the songs in the book. The residents love to see the Encounter group each month, know the members' names, and even ask about the members when they are not there. This fondness is a result of a concerted effort on the part of the members to interact with the residents individually, not just sing and leave and remain at a distance.

The second standing service engagement is Barnie's Café. This "café" is named in honor of Barnabas, the disciple of encouragement. Every other month, Encounter members gather to make cards and write encouraging notes in them for local service people, such as teachers and janitors, and military personnel. Various art supplies like construction paper, blank cards, scissors, markers, ribbon, stickers, and crayons are purchased using the Encounter budget. The service team leader receives a list of names and addresses for the card recipients from the area schools and the local USO and delivers the cards to the school(s) and to the post office as needed.

The third standing service engagement is Christmas caroling at one of the local festival of lights. Again, song books filled with sacred Christmas songs are given out to the audience so they can sing along and make requests. (The books for the nursing home and caroling are supplied by the praise team.) This particular venue allows the Encounter members to both sing in a nature center filled with people warming up with hot cocoa and cookies and sing a capella along the lit trails outside.

Other service activities are scheduled as opportunities arise. In the past, Encounter members have cleaned up a local park, weeded at an elementary school, assisted with Habitat for Humanity, and cleaned at a community safe house. The service team leader connects with the local volunteer coordinator of the United Way to keep abreast of any opportunities that would fit into Encounter's schedule. Also, the team should keep their eyes open for any way the group can be of service.

➢ The fifth team, whose leader is on the leadership team, is the Communications Team. This team serves the membership by providing the vehicles necessary to interact and stay in touch, specifically an email listserv, a website, and a blog. Encounter has two email address groups, one that goes just to the leadership team, and one that goes to the entire membership. This is a very convenient way of keeping in touch with each other – just type a group name rather than having to enter all the individual emails. The website was created with the assistance of a graphic designer who is a member of Encounter. She did not charge for her services. Encounter did, however, purchase web hosting services from hostmonster.com for approximately $6.00 per month. There are several web hosting sites with reasonable prices, so you should be able to find something affordable, if not free (for example, add pages to your church's website). Encounter also has a blog where members can share with each other about Sabbath School lessons or other discussions. A free blog can be set up using wordpress.com or another similar site.

The communications team is also responsible for promoting Encounter and marketing it to the university campus and surrounding area. Try to find people who are skilled in graphic design for this team so you can create your pieces yourself and not pay someone to do them. Encounter hangs posters or flyers around campus and in community hot spots such as the grocery stores, the laundromat, the library, and any restaurants and stores that will allow things to be hung. Encounter

also takes advantage of its university setting and has flyers inserted into orientation folders for students or stuffs student mailboxes. Additionally, the communications team creates a display for the university ministry fair each fall and has representatives in attendance to discuss the mission and values of Encounter and answer any questions students may have. See Appendix C for samples of promotional items.

➤ Another team that should really exist in a young adult ministry is the <u>Prayer Tteam</u>, or spiritual life, team. Prayer is fundamental to the success of any ministry, and a team of dedicated prayer warriors should be created to lift up the ministry, its members, its activities, and to seek out wisdom for future advancement and endeavors. Encounter currently has a weekly prayer group meeting led by the director and is considering other ways to incorporate prayer in the ministry.

Another aspect of this team could be to visit the members in their homes and ask how they are doing, and how the ministry might assist them, and pray with them. Any discipleship ministry should devote a significant amount of time to prayer and the spiritual well-being of its members.

➤ Other teams may be included according to your ministry's needs. Try to stay attuned to how God is leading and what opportunities or needs present themselves.

Member Development

➤ Like any entity that cares about its members, a young adult ministry should give its members opportunities for growth. Encounter has both leadership retreats and membership retreats, and encourages new leaders by getting members involved with leadership and allowing them to shadow outgoing leaders. There are also mentoring and networking possibilities.

Once a year, the leadership will have a retreat to not only build camaraderie amongst them but to also touch base on the important issues of how well the Encounter mission has been fulfilled

and how best to move forward. Do changes need to be made? Are members' needs being met? Are there ways to grow?

It has been the case with Encounter that the leadership retreat has taken place in a member's home for a Sabbath afternoon and evening, with a potluck at the beginning. Taking the retreat to another venue, such as a camp or retreat center, or expanding it over a weekend are other possibilities. Just take into account the leadership's responsibilities at home, the size of the agenda, the budget, and anything else that may hinder your plans. Be sure to accommodate as many people as you possibly can so no one feels left out and everyone's ideas and opinions will be able to be shared.

Also once a year, usually at the beginning of the school year before everyone gets too busy, there is a membership retreat. This retreat is to welcome new members, allow them time to get to know the other members, cast the vision of Encounter, present ways to get involved, and generally just to have fun and build community. Icebreakers should be played that allow people to mix with as many others as possible. A time of eating and a time of singing should also be included. Again, depending on budget and other considerations, you can either have this retreat at someone's home or at a retreat center, over one day or over multiple days. There is something to be said for the community that is built when you are staying overnight at a center or a camp and seeing people in different ways than you would normally see them. Strong bonds of fellowship can come from this extended time together.

➢ Another way Encounter tries to develop its members is to have up and coming leaders shadow the current leaders so that when the current leader is ready to move on, another is ready to take on the role. There is a helpful formula that you can use to assist in this process. It goes like this: I do, you watch; I do, you help; you do, I help; you do, I watch. In this way, there is a slow progression of the changeover in leadership and the new leader isn't thrown into the role with no

training. This formula allows the time for questions and builds the confidence of the new leader. This can be difficult, though, if you find yourself in a position where no one is interested in taking on the new role. Be patient. If God wants this to happen, He will provide what and who is needed.

➢ With an intergenerational membership, or at least a membership that has people in various stages of their lives, mentorship is an excellent way to disciple. This doesn't have to be some elaborate mentorship program, but rather befriending someone who has similar interests or someone who is shy and perhaps lacking confidence in his/her own abilities. The friendships that are built can bring encouragement and self-assurance as the friends share together.

➢ A young adult ministry and its members don't need to find themselves in a vacuum. There are many resources and networking opportunities available. The North American Division (NAD) has a young adult ministry department that includes a network of young adults from all over the division called Young Adult Ministry Advisory (YAMA). This group gets together at the NAD youth and young adult ministries summit every other year also and stays connected through a listserv and Facebook group. There are also various GODencounters retreats all over the country specifically designed to help young adults experience God 24/7. For further ideas, see the resources section of this manual.

Ministry Fluidity

Change is in the Air

➢ As your ministry develops and grows, you may start to see the needs of the group change or that your vision needs to expand. People bring with them unique skills, gifts, interests, and talents, and as they come and go, the look and feel of your ministry may morph. And that's okay. Use what each person has to give – for their own benefit and yours. Allow the members ownership

of the ministry. As a leader, try not to stifle your members' ambitions and dreams, but rather explore them together. Listen to their ideas and incorporate as much as you can as long as there is enough support in place and it fits with the mission and values of the ministry. This creates a value-added ministry that postmodern young adults will be devoted to. They will feel appreciated and needed.

For example, Encounter agreed to support one member's vision of an arts ministry entitled Artists in Christian Expression (ACE). The mission of the arts ministry was to provide a forum for Christian artists to use their gifts, especially if their art form was not welcome or wasn't practical in the local church setting (e.g. drama, painting and other visual arts, percussion, etc.). This ministry was meant to reach out to those who perhaps have felt slighted by the church, to build community for them, to give them a place to share their gifts, to allow them to network and mentor each other, and to encourage them to use their talents in the community. The mission of ACE matched the mission and values of Encounter very well, so they moved forward with it.

Tips to Minister By

➢ Even the most successful ministries can have their moments of dysfunction. If you find that after a trial run, or even after years of existence, an aspect of your ministry is just not working, get rid of it. There is a time and place for everything; here and now may not be the right place and time. Pray about it, discuss it at leadership meeting, tweak it, and if it's still not working, it's best to move on to something else. Or perhaps nothing else – just leave the rest of the ministry as is.

➢ On occasion, a leader will leave and you will not be able to find someone to fill his/her position. You may panic and attempt to fill it with any warm body, but consider the thought that it

may be best to leave it unfilled. Allow God in His time to work to build someone else up or bring in someone new. Or let it go for now.

➤ Remember that young adults are at various stages of life. Some may be fresh out of high school and away from home for the first time. Some may have just landed their first career job. Some may be newlyweds. Others may have just become parents. A thoughtful young adult ministry will minister to the varying needs of its members as best as it can. Plan activities that children can attend and enjoy, or provide childcare for an event in which children wouldn't be interested. Schedule activities during the times that people specify are best for them. You can even hand out a survey (or create one on surveymonkey.com) to ask your members what activities they would appreciate and what times they are available (see Appendix D). Encourage members to invite college students over for Sabbath lunch or dinner during the week. Throw bridal or baby showers. Whatever you do, the members will appreciate the care and thoughtfulness that went into your ministry's actions.

➤ Plan for the future now. Don't wait until a change is absolutely needed to start making plans. Your ministry will hopefully grow in numbers. If the room in which you are meeting only comfortably holds 20 people, what will happen when you have 25-30 people attending regularly? Will you locate a larger venue? Will you split into two groups (or "multiply" as holistic small group experts say)? Or what happens when your director (you) unexpectedly needs to move to another part of the country? Is someone in the process of being trained to take your position? Are all the ministry details and files organized and in place so the ministry can continue to exist without you?

Encounter recently underwent a process to determine whether or not it should divide into two smaller groups, one for undergraduate students and one for graduate students and career young adults. After much discussion and weighing of options, it was determined that a split will happen only when the following criteria are met: a venue is located for a second group; regular attendance

at Sabbath School reaches at least 30; enough discipled leaders are in place for each Sabbath School; and sufficient support of the ministry teams is in place. Now Encounter can move forward as usual but is ready to proceed when the aforementioned criteria are met.

Conclusion

Young adults have too long been overlooked in our churches. So much so that churches are finding themselves without members in the young adult age range. Ministries, such as Encounter, can bridge the gap between the church and the young adults. Young adults need to be engaged and given an opportunity to learn, grow, serve, and just "be" in a safe, non-judgmental, authentic environment – an environment that is tailored to their specific needs and interests. They need to take ownership of this ministry and shape it within the mission and values it espouses. They need to grow in a community of belonging and find meaning in their relationship with God. And if all these pieces are in place, they will thrive.

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Internet Resources:

24-Seven Ministry Center, a Young Adult Church: http://www.24-seven.org/index.php/ministry/path/

Adventist Christian Fellowship: www.acflink.org

Encounter Young Adult Ministry: www.encounterministries.info

Generation of Youth for Christ: http://www.gycweb.org/

GODencounters: http://godencounters.org/GE/

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Acknowledgments

Appendix A: Sample Lesson Plans

Sabbath School Lesson: The Wonder of His Works
Teacher's Notes
May 3, 2008

1.) **Icebreaker**: Name somebody who has lived during your lifetime who you admire for the things they do/did.

2.) Split into groups for lesson study.

3.) Reconvene.
   a. Job 37:14 – Listen to this Job (Diane, etc.), stop and consider God's wonder.
   b. Psalm 119:27 – Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then I will meditate on your wonders.
   c. Psalm 9:1 – I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders.

There must be something to dwelling on God's wonders – and not just dwelling, but telling of them too. One of my favorite songs is In Wonder by the Newsboys. The lyrics go like this:

So much wonder carved in you coral seas
So much wonder shaded by ancient trees
I consider all that your hands have made
Every newborn's eyes, every new sunrise
No power can tame your presence
No light can match your radiance
Let all creation sing in wonder
Every creature, every sea, every star
You opened up my eyes to wonder
What a vision, what a wonder you are
Such a wonder ordering time and tide
Such a wonder bridging the great divide
I consider all you had, all you gave
All that you endured from this rebel world
What a wondrous cross you chose to bear
What a wonder you would even care
Let every rock cry out
Let every knee bow down
You opened up my heart to wonder
What love, what a wonder you are

Take a piece of paper and a marker, and write words or a poem or draw a picture of God's wonders that you have seen or experienced. Share with your neighbor.

Sabbath School Lesson: The Wonder of His Works
Group Lesson
May 3, 2008

Ask for prayer requests and pray.

1.) Name some people, living or dead, who are known for their positive accomplishments. What kinds of things did they do? How much was done for no other reason than to be of help to others – not to get publicity, not to feel good about themselves, etc.)?

2.) Now ponder the following verses (read one after another with a pause between each). Put yourself in the place of the people who are the object of Jesus' interaction (how do you feel before the interaction? During? And after?): Matt. 9:27-34; Matt. 12:22, 23; Matt. 14:25-36; Matt. 15:29-31; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 6:17-19.

What was Jesus' motivation? (See also Matt. 9:35; Matt. 15:32, Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 1:40-41.)

What are the bystanders' various reactions? What do these reactions say about the people?

3.) Read John 14:12-14.

We just read about so many of the wonderful works that Jesus did. We marvel at what He did, yet we are told that if we have faith in Him, we will do even GREATER things than He did! Do you see evidence of this at all today?

What do you need to do in order to be so connected to God that you will be prepared to do greater works than Jesus?

Sabbath School Lesson 11/8/08
Atonement in Symbols
Teacher's Notes

Introduction
- A. Icebreaker
    - a. Name and something that could symbolize you.
        - i. E.g. flute for me
        - ii. Prince, pope, Tiger (show symbols)
    - b. As they say name and symbol, have each person take one of the pictures of a sheep, a goat, or a ram from the basket

- B. Looking at atonement in symbols today
    - a. My fascination with how God uses symbolism
        - i. The beauty, complexity, logic of the symbols chosen
    - b. The Bible is full of symbolism for various reasons
        - i. To make things like lessons easier to remember or to illustrate something – as in parables
        - ii. To keep things a mystery until the proper time – as in prophecy
        - iii. To make things more understandable or to stress the importance of – as in the sacrificial system
- C. Pray

Group Time: Have them split into groups according to which animal picture they have

Conclusion
- A. I struggle with keeping Christ's sacrifice real. I know intellectually that it happened. I know intellectually that I receive the benefits of that sacrifice daily. I know intellectually that I have a hope and an assurance that the debt has been paid on my behalf. But I can easily lose sight of how much it cost to have that assurance of atonement.

    - a. Imagining having to kill one of those innocent animals moves my heart. We are very fortunate that we don't have to take it upon ourselves to make atonement by killing another creature. But at the same time, keeping it ever before us in such a real and graphic way would certainly bring home the seriousness and costliness of sin. Although even that we could become complacent about….

    - b. One thing that helped it sink in to me was the movie The Chronicles of Narnia. I had never read the books, but I knew the story was based on Christian themes. So when I witnessed the majestic, innocent lion, Aslan, come out of the tent where he made the deal with the evil queen to give his life in place of the boy who betrayed him, I was touched and brought to tears. To imagine an innocent animal dying on my behalf made it easier for me to understand the sacrifice the innocent Lamb of God made for me.

- B. EGW, DA, portions of 55 and 682-687

- C. Pray

Sabbath School Lesson 11/8/08
Atonement in Symbols
Group Lesson

A. Purpose of sacrificial system
   a. 1 John 3:4 - _____
   b. Romans 4:15 - _____
   c. Psalm 19:7-11 - _____
   d. Psalm 51:3-5 - _____
   e. Romans 3:23 - _____
   f. Romans 6:23a - _____
   g. Leviticus 4:27 - _____

B. The sacrificial system in symbols
   a. Repentant sinners, who recognized that they had transgressed the perfect and holy law of God, would bring their sacrifices to the tabernacle. Follow the symbolism:

      i. Leviticus 4:3; 4:23; 4:28; 4:32

         1. What is the common denominator?

         2. Why was the animal to be unblemished and without defect?

         3. See John 1:29

      ii. Leviticus 4:4b; 4:15; 4:24; 4:29

         1. The common denominator?

         2. What is the significance of laying one's hand on the sacrificial animal's head?

         3. See Leviticus 1:4; Leviticus 16: 21 (even though this speaks of the Day of Atonement scapegoat…)

      iii. Leviticus 4:5-7; 4:30

         1. The common denominator?

         2. What is so special about the blood?

         3. Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:16-22

         4. What is the role and symbolism of the priest?

   b. Read 1 Peter 1:18-19; Hebrews 9:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:21

   i. Discuss the awesome fulfillment of sacrificial symbolism.

C. Personal Application
  a. Look at the picture you received during the icebreaker time. Imagine having to choose this particular animal from among the others – for the very reason that it is so perfect and unblemished and perhaps even cherished as a favorite – and then putting your hand on its head, leaning on it, and taking its life with your own hand.
      i. How does it make you feel to imagine having to kill something so innocent and perfect – to make amends for your sinful behavior?

  b. How much harder is it to think about your sins being put on Jesus, and the weight of your sins and the separation from the Father killing Jesus – God Himself – the One who brought you into being?

  c. Discuss practical ways of how you can keep the costliness of sin and the sacrifice of Christ ever before you without becoming completely discouraged by your sinfulness.
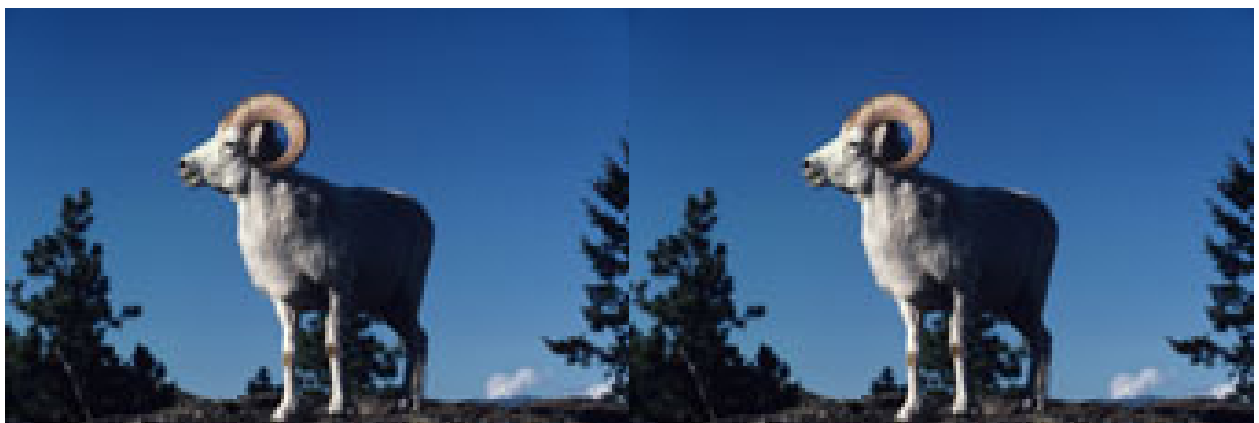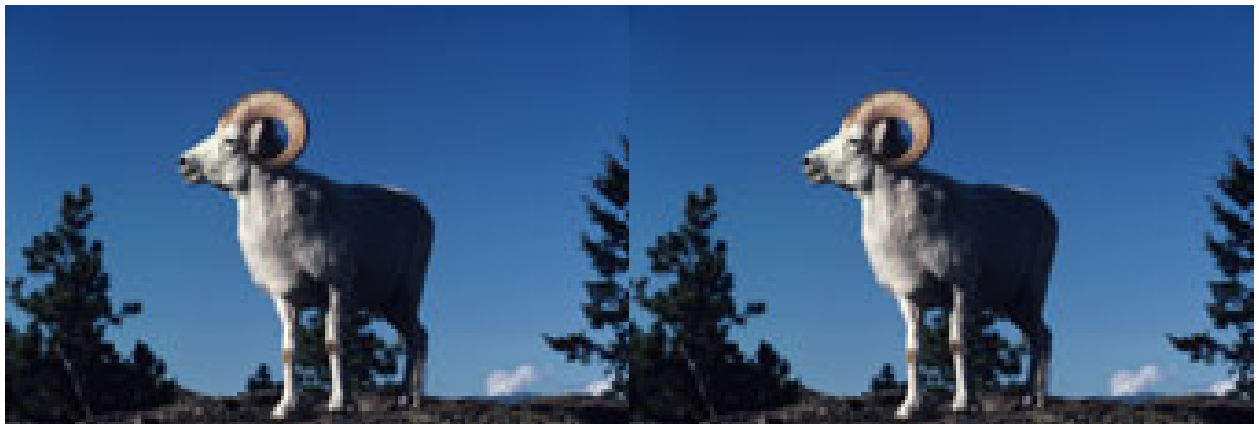
Sabbath School Lesson
Discipleship
June 6, 2009

1. Welcome and intro
   a. Icebreaker
      i. Pass around bowl with pieces of paper with the letters C/U, E, and M on them. Have each person take a paper, say their name, and answer yes or no to the following statement: I feel I have been well discipled by the church.

   b. What is a disciple?
      i. One who follows or is an adherent of another or another's beliefs.
   c. Then what is a disciple of Christ?
      i. A Christian; one who follows Christ and His teachings
   d. Why?
      i. Because He first loved us; we recognize His love/sacrifice/mercy/grace
   e. What happens as a result?
      i. We choose to follow Him; we emulate Him; we become more Christ-like as we look to Him; we become transformed through the strength and power that He provides; we reach out to others and share what has been given to us
   f. What is discipleship?
      i. The act of following Jesus
   g. What else could it be?
      i. Continual nurturing of ourselves and each other
   h. What usually happens after one is baptized? Is there a discipleship plan that is followed that continually helps to nurture and grow the new, as well as the old, members?
      i. No

   i. Something has to change. The SDA church is very big on evangelism – getting the message out and bringing people in. But once we have the people, what do we do with them? We're all sort of left to figure things out on our own. Too many of our young people and our newly converted are leaving the church because it's not meeting their needs and/or expectations.
      i. But our church has finally recognized that we can't just baptize them and hope that they'll grow and stay.
      ii. Religious education and education colleagues here at Andrews are partnering with the General Conference in order to develop a discipleship model. Our very own Jane Thayer (professor emerita of religious education), Allan Martin (associate professor of discipleship and family life), and Kathy Beagles (assistant professor of religious education) have been working on this with various members of the GC and others (including a man from Austria named Gerhard Erbes, who's ideas I've gleaned from).
      iii. So today we'll be looking at discipleship within the framework of what is being developed by the church. It is called Growing Disciples.
      iv. VIDEO: Growing Disciples from Pastor's DVD 15
         1. Any initial thoughts on this?
         2. This model is broken up into four parts: connecting, understanding, equipping, and ministering. We're going to break up into groups, and each group is going to look at a part.
         3. Pray
         4. Break into groups based on the letter you received during icebreaker

2. Lesson
3. Follow up
   a. Have groups return to one group and have each report on what they discovered.
   b. Connecting/Understanding
      i. This can be looked at as a seed buried in the ground, representing a person before they have accepted Jesus as their personal Savior, and once they have accepted Him they start to grow roots and sprout.
   c. Equipping
      i. This can be seen as the plant gaining strength and starting to bloom.
   d. Ministering
      i. This is where the plant bears fruit and multiplies.
   e. It is the equipping phase that the Growing Disciples model recognizes as the most crucial for us.
      i. It's the time after baptism when we have joined a church and need to learn from those who have gone before us, to know how to study the Bible and pray and to engage in spiritual disciplines that will strengthen us to do God's will and protect us from the devil and his ploys.
      ii. Often people flounder at this point, or stagnate, or leave the church because they've been disappointed, disheartened, or disengaged. They didn't have the support or learn the skills necessary to actually be a disciple of Christ.
      iii. We need to change this phenomenon and actively and intentionally engage our members – both new and longstanding. Without continual learning and growing, we will stagnate – how will Jesus ever be able to come back and get us if we aren't doing the work that is needed?
   f. Encounter strives to assist in this discipleship process. We'd certainly like to know if there is something more we could do for you – just let me or Steven or Nate know.
   g. One ministry that is discipling young adults all over the U.S. is GodEncounters….
   h. Pray!

GrowingDisciples

is designed as a whole-church endeavor, based on the biblical view that the person who accepts Christ as Savior is called to a Christ-like life of spiritual, mental, physical, and relational growth. *Growing Disciples* will help church ministry leaders at every level of church organization to better undertake the complex, multi-faceted process of discipling— that of enabling people to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ within the fellowship of the church, His body.

Connecting/Understanding

Take a look at each verse below (and any others that come to mind) and right down the main points of each. Be prepared to share your findings with the whole group at the end. You will have approximately 30 minutes to complete this.

Proverbs 1:7a –

Genesis 1:1, 26-27 –

1 John 3:1-6 –

1 John 2:1-2 –

1 John 4:7-21 –

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 –

2 Timothy 3:16 –

John 15:1, 5 –

John 15:20 –

Romans 8:17-28, 37-39 –

Romans 12:1-8 –

Mark 8:34-38 –

The connecting portion of the model focuses on growing in relationship with God, others, and oneself. The understanding portion focuses on growing in knowledge of Jesus and His teachings/studying and obeying God's word.

From what you studied, how can you sum up this connecting/understanding portion of the discipleship model?

GrowingDisciples

is designed as a whole-church endeavor, based on the biblical view that the person who accepts Christ as Savior is called to a Christ-like life of spiritual, mental, physical, and relational growth. *Growing Disciples* will help church ministry leaders at every level of church organization to better undertake the complex, multi-faceted process of discipling— that of enabling people to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ within the fellowship of the church, His body.

Equipping

Take a look at each verse below (and any others that come to mind) and right down the main points of each. Be prepared to share your findings with the whole group at the end. You will have approximately 30 minutes to complete this.

Hebrews 13:20-21 –

Acts 2:42-47 –

2 Timothy 3:10-17 –

2 Peter 3:18 –

Romans 12:3-21 –

Acts 15:30-36 –

1 Thessalonians 3:6-10 –

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 –

1 Thessalonians 5;11, 14-24 –

Titus 2:1, 7-8 –

Hebrews 3:12-14 –

Hebrews 10:23-25 –

Philippians 1:3-11 –

Philippians 4:4-9, 11b, 13-15 –

Colossians 3:1-2, 12-17 –

Galatians 6:1-2 –

Colossians 2:1-4

The equipping portion of the model focuses on growing by discipling one another.

From what you studied, how can you sum up this equipping portion of the discipleship model?

GrowingDisciples

is designed as a whole-church endeavor, based on the biblical view that the person who accepts Christ as Savior is called to a Christ-like life of spiritual, mental, physical, and relational growth. *Growing Disciples* will help church ministry leaders at every level of church organization to better undertake the complex, multi-faceted process of discipling— that of enabling people to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ within the fellowship of the church, His body.

Ministering

Take a look at each verse below (and any others that come to mind) and right down the main points of each. Be prepared to share your findings with the whole group at the end. You will have approximately 30 minutes to complete this.

Colossians 3:17 –

1 John 3:16-24 –

2 Timothy 4:2 –

Romans 12:6-21 –

Philippians 2:14-16 –

2 Corinthians 5:18-6:2 –

Galatians 6:9-11 –

Matthew 28:18-20 –

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 –

Matthew 5:11-16 –

Matthew 5:41-44 –

Matthew 6:1-4 –

The ministering portion of this model focuses on growing in participation in God's mission of revelation and reconciliation.

From what you studied, how can you sum up this ministering portion of the discipleship model?

C/U	E	M
C/U	E	M
C/U	E	M
C/U	E	M
C/U	E	M
C/U	E	M
C/U	E	M

Appendix B: New Member Information Forms

Encounter Contact List

Please check the box beside which information you would like to have shared with the rest of the Sabbath school members.

      Name: _____

❑   Address: _____

                    _____

❑   Phone: _____

❑   Email: _____

Would you like to be added to our Encounter listserv?

    ❑ Yes   ❑ No

Encounter Contact List

Please check the box beside which information you would like to have shared with the rest of the Sabbath school members.

      Name: _____

❑   Address: _____

                    _____

❑   Phone: _____

❑   Email: _____

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    ❑ Yes   ❑ No

Encounter Contact List

Please check the box beside which information you would like to have shared with the rest of the Sabbath school members.

      Name: _____

❑   Address: _____

                    _____

❑   Phone: _____

❑   Email: _____

Would you like to be added to our Encounter listserv?

    ❑ Yes   ❑ No

Appendix C: Sample Promotional Items

12x18 poster and half-page handout

Slide for chapel

encounter
Young Adult Ministry

Mission:
- To disciple young adults

Core Values:
- To create a community of belonging

- To make our relationship with God meaningful

Graduate Sabbath School meets every Sabbath at 9:45 am in the Campus Ministries Office.

Undergraduate Sabbath School will begin spring semester.

Encounter is a Christian community of students and career young adults seeking to grow, develop, and encounter God in a meaningful way.

Sabbath School is Encounter's primary ministry which includes worship, fellowship, music, refreshments, and small group Bible study every Sabbath.

Encounter also coordinates a variety of service and social activities which are essential to its mission.

We are looking for dedicated individuals to be leaders of the undergraduate Sabbath School! Be a director or team leader!

cm
campus ministries

For further information:
encounter@andrews.edu

en counter

Young Adult Ministry

Encounter is a Christian community of graduate students and career young adults seeking to grow, develop, and encounter God in a meaningful way.

Mission:
- To disciple young adults

Core Values:
- To create a community of belonging

- To make our relationship with God meaningful

Sabbath School is Encounter's primary ministry which includes worship, fellowship, and small group Bible study every Sabbath.

Encounter also coordinates a variety of service and social activities which are essential to its mission. We are currently developing resources to help plant similar young adult ministries outside of Andrews University as well as planting a new undergraduate Sabbath School this fall.

Qualifies as an MDiv Church Involvement Credit
Gain valuable experience and join a team making a difference in the lives of young adults both on and off campus during a critical period of their lives. Depending on your passion and interest, we have several ministry teams you can serve on or lead.

Current Needs:
Evangelism/Service Team
Spiritual Life/Teaching Team
Social/Connections Team
Praise and Worship Team
Weekly Small Group Leaders

ENCOUNTER YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Sabbath School meets every Sabbath at 9:45 am in the Campus Ministries Office.

For further information:
encounter@andrews.edu
or see Diane Helbley in the Christian Ministry Suite

Appendix D: Member Survey

Name:

Click on the text field to type. The field will expand to fit what you want to type.

We would like to start celebrating birthdays with a card for the members of the Sabbath School class. If you wish to participate in this, please write down your birthday:

Students: Please write down when you are planning on graduating.

Please check all of the following activities that you would be interested in attending.

- [ ] ACE (Artists in Christian Expression)
- [ ] Beach
- [ ] Boating/Water Skiing
- [ ] Canoeing
- [ ] Cook off
- [ ] Fireworks
- [ ] Kite Flying
- [ ] Movie Nights
- [ ] Picnics
- [ ] Rollerskating
- [ ] Sledding
- [ ] Windsurfing

- [ ] Agape Feast
- [ ] Bible Studies
- [ ] Bowling
- [ ] Cedar Point
- [ ] Corn Maze
- [ ] Game Nights
- [ ] Midweek worship
- [ ] Museums
- [ ] Potluck
- [ ] Rugby
- [ ] Ultimate Frisbee

- [ ] Back packing
- [ ] Biking
- [ ] Camping
- [ ] Chicago
- [ ] Cross Country Skiing
- [ ] Ice Skating
- [ ] Mini Golf
- [ ] Nature Walks
- [ ] Racquetball
- [ ] Singing Together
- [ ] Volleyball at Gym

Please write in the space below any other activities that you would be interested in attending that we may not have listed above.

Which days are best for social activities? (Please note that we are talking about evenings for Monday-Friday.)

- [ ] Sabbath Afternoon
- [ ] Saturday Night
- [ ] Sunday Morning
- [ ] Sunday Afternoon
- [ ] Sunday evening
- [ ] Monday
- [ ] Tuesday
- [ ] Wednesday
- [ ] Thursday
- [ ] Friday

Would you be interested in <u>participating</u> in one of the following?
- [ ] Small Group Bible Study
- [ ] Book Discussion Group
- [ ] Prayer Group
- [ ] Spiritual Formation Group
- [ ] Other:

Would you be interested in <u>leading</u> one of the following?
- [ ] Small Group Bible Study
- [ ] Book Discussion Group
- [ ] Prayer Group
- [ ] Spiritual Formation Group
- [ ] Other:

If you are interested in being involved with one of the above groups, which days are you available to meet? (Please note that we are talking about evenings for Monday-Friday.)

- [ ] Sabbath Afternoon
- [ ] Saturday Night
- [ ] Sunday Morning
- [ ] Sunday Afternoon
- [ ] Sunday evening
- [ ] Monday
- [ ] Tuesday
- [ ] Wednesday
- [ ] Thursday
- [ ] Friday

 Print

Keeping PKs in the church

Martin Weber

What shall it profit pastors to baptize the whole city but lose their own children? To dedicate one's entire lifework to the salvation of other people's children while losing one's own is not only a tragedy but a travesty.

The following facts of spiritual life in the parsonage emerged among 40 attrition factors in my doctoral data,[1] from responses to my research question: *What influences from Seventh-day Adventist clergy parents may affect whether their children experience attrition from that denomination upon becoming adults*?

The greatest predictor of future faithfulness is whether the pastor's kid (PK) during their childhood takes initiative to approach a clergy parent to discuss spiritual matters. Among the most significant predictors of future attrition (or loss) is having parents enter the pastorate during their 30s. Whereas pastors who enter ministry in their 40s are the least likely to lose their adult children.

I emailed a 111-point questionnaire to each of 222 active and retired clergy in the Mid-America Union[2] who have adult children. Data collected from 113 questionnaires reveal the following summary of conclusions:

• Having a clergy grandparent is a significant stabilizing factor in the spiritual life of a PK.

• Parental conservatism regarding lifestyle standards is not statistically significant in attrition.

• Legalism regarding gospel doctrine is a moderately significant cause of attrition.

• Legalism regarding practicing the principles of the gospel is a major cause of attrition.

• For clergy parents to hold their own children to a higher behavioral standard is one of the highest causes of attrition. In other words, whether mother and father tend to be conservative or liberal makes no measurable difference in the attrition of their children-as long as they are nice about it.

• Lack of relationality in the pastoral family is the most serious cause of PK attrition. Pastors with the highest retention rate of adult children are those who managed to provide the most positive and joy-filled family experience in the parsonage and were close enough to talk about anything in an atmosphere of freedom that allowed children and teens latitude in developing their own faith experience.

• Closely associated with family relationality is the freedom and trust expressed in discussing controversial issues. No greater cause of attrition exists than to attempt to shield children from knowledge of, or to resist discussion about, church or denominational conflict.[3] Congregational criticism of pastoral family members portends future attrition of adult children.

While these attrition factors are serious concerns, informed clergy parents need not feel that the souls of their children are necessarily imperiled.

Preventing attrition of clergy children

Many negative factors are unavoidable in parsonage life, but parents can be proactive in safeguarding the spirituality of their children. Consider, for example, the prospect of entering ministry during one's 30s-that uniquely treacherous entry point for their children. College theology departments should offer older students specialized instruction and perhaps help them find family counseling to resolve issues that could eventually hurt their children in the parsonage. Employing conferences should provide PKs and their parents nurture and fellowship. Retired clergy in the congregation could serve as spiritual grandparents to their pastor's children and might even mentor these thirtysomething pastors and their spouses.

Most significant in avoiding attrition is being able to discuss church problems in the parsonage while sustaining togetherness in the family circle and giving teens sufficient freedom to develop their own faith experience without the expectation of being supersaints. The parents' best defense against attrition includes fostering the positive elements of joyous relationality and intrinsic spirituality in the family while avoiding negative factors such as suppression, rigidity, and legalism.

Perhaps unexpectedly, I propose another preventative infl uence against future PK attrition: a gracebased practical application of the Seventh-day Adventist fundamental belief about heaven's sanctuary and its celestial judgment.

In the heart of Romans 8, a passage beloved by Christians everywhere, is comfort and instruction that highlights the role of both Father and Son in the heavenly sanctuary, "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us" (Rom. 8:33, 34).[4]

Nobody in the church has the right to judge PKs-not even clergy parents. Pastors and their spouses do have a responsibility to train their children in the ways of God, but not even they possess the right to oppress older PKs by imposing human interpretations of right and wrong. God is the only Judge of human behavior. He alone has the authority to condemn, yet His predisposition is forgiveness and vindication. Jesus works with Him toward that purpose in the sanctuary.

In such a nurturing context of spiritual freedom, PKs as children and teens will feel safe about initiating spiritual conversations with their parents. Not only is this the greatest predictor of future faithfulness as adults, there is compelling evidence of what happens when PKs don't feel this freedom. Section III of my doctoral report notes that five PKs filled out questionnaires of their own and sent them to me. Their data is not sufficient in quantity to be scientific, but it provides anecdotal evidence of the spiritual carnage that comes from a lack of freedom.

All but one of these PKs described their church experience as rigid, not flexible; closed, not open; exclusive, not inclusive; unfair, not fair; cold, not warm; dark, not bright; and dull, not exciting.

They reported strong disagreement with Adventist lifestyle standards. They seemed particularly offended about what they experienced as heavy-handedness in enforcing these standards and unwillingness to even dialogue about it. It was interesting to note that most of these five alienated PKs still embrace many fundamental Adventist doctrines such as the Sabbath, yet they resolutely reject the church that teaches them. When asked if they might possibly be active members in the Adventist Church 20 years from now, if time lasts, they each replied "small chance" or "no chance."

One of the PKs responding to my questionnaire is not in attrition, being both a faithful attender and participant in church life who will "absolutely" remain committed to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He testified to the opposite in most of the above options, describing his parents' churches as warm, kind, bright, inclusive, fair, open, and exciting-yet still he experienced them as "stiff." It was interesting that this PK, an active disciple, seemed just as disappointed as the others with being "loaded down with restrictions" and rules that "almost always" "just didn't make sense." When asked whether programs at church while he was growing up made him think, he said it was "not at all true." Although he believes every Seventh-day Adventist fundamental belief, he seriously questions the church's traditional behavioral standards and particularly an unwillingness to dialogue about them.

Together these PK responses provide a nonscientific yet compelling need for a church atmosphere that

offers flexibility rather than rigidity and freedom rather than oppression. While not only essential for avoiding attrition-it is also scriptural: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17).

I believe from my data that many Seventh-day Adventists fail to realize not all moral issues are absolutes. While some things are clearly right or wrong, with other essentials God has left some ambiguity for the conscience to sort out. Prayer, for example, is a profoundly moral matter, but exactly how much to pray remains open to one's own conscience.

Modesty also is a moral issue- but standards of modesty are not universal absolutes, as evident from various cultures around the world. For Adventists, jewelry has been an issue of enduring controversy. Many PKs express frustration with church policies, written or informal, that permit "acceptable" adornments like cufflinks and gaudy gold pins but forbid even the most demure necklace. Also frustrating to many is when obviously out-of-shape adult members lecture healthy teens about dairy or caffeine consumption while not even mentioning exercise and other basic health principles.

None of the PKs in my research demand that the Adventist Church adopt their views on lifestyle issues; they just want some latitude in living out their own conscience. Indeed, this is scriptural: "Let each be fully convinced in his own mind" (Rom.14:5). Notice that Scripture doesn't say "Do what feels good" or "Do what you want to do" in moral matters that are not absolutes. Rather, do what the Holy Spirit persuades you to do amid moral ambiguity.

Worship music is one of the top five issues of congregational conflict reported by clergy in my data.[5] Some members canonize their personal musical preferences and go about imposing them upon the church. They care not that young adults and others want some variety. The psalms are thousands of years old, yet singing them in a contemporary tune becomes somehow problematic for many members who have no qualm condemning those who might see things a different way.

It may do little good to pray for PKs in attrition or other prodigals to come back to church if the person greeting (confronting) them in the church foyer stands as the frowning older brother of Christ's Lucan parable. Condemning and divisive members must themselves be confronted by the church and disciplined if they refuse to cease their ungodly oppression and gossip. Church discipline for such members is a sacred responsibility from Scripture, "Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition" (Titus 3:10). Warn disrupters of church unity once and then again. If they cause trouble yet a third time, subject them to church discipline as Christ outlined in Matthew 18.

Surveying the data of my research project, both positive and negative, I envision a church that will be a safe and healthy place for its clergy and their children. I propose the Hebrew concept of *shalom*, commonly and superficially translated as "peace." Some tend to regard peace as the absence of negativity, such as anger and conflict, guilt and shame. By contrast, biblical peace is proactive and energetic, fulfilling God's eternal purpose for the cosmos. *Shalom* includes wholeness, safety, fruitfulness, equality, and so much more, in the context of a loving faith community.

Jesus came to earth as the Prince of *Shalom* (Isa. 9:6). Being Jewish, He had *shalom* in mind when declaring, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Seventh-day Adventist clergy parents desperately need this blessedness, both ministering and receiving shalom within their churches and their families.

For the sake of preventing attrition of PKs and other young adults, the Seventh-day Adventist Church would do well to heed the time-honored wisdom: In essentials, unity. In nonessentials, liberty. In all things, charity.

1 To obtain the data found in my paper titled, Denominational
Attrition Among Adult Children of Seventh-day Adventist
Clergy, visit the Web site of the General Conference
Ministerial Association, **www.ministerialassociation.com.**

2 The Mid-America Union includes the nine-state region
of the United States stretching north and south from
Canada to the Oklahoma border and then from the eastern

boundary of the Mississippi River west to the border of Utah, plus the northwest corner of New Mexico.

3 Not that every detail of every church issue should be revealed to PKs, which would violate confidentiality. The point is that instead of pretending that nothing bad happens in the church, parents should dialogue with their children in an age-appropriate manner.

4 All scriptures are from the New King James Version.

5 The top five problems in Mid-America Adventist churches as reported by the clergy subjects of my study: (1) power struggles among members, (2) pastoral conflict with lay leaders, (3) worship music style disputes, (4) disagreement about lifestyle standards, and (5) general church gossip (perhaps surprisingly, church finances tied for only 14th).

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM FOR
TEENAGERS AND YOUNG ADULTS

by

Tara J. VinCross

WORKSHOP/SEMINAR PROJECT
Based on the required text by Jones & Jones

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Identity and Sexuality Development Curriculum for Teenagers and Young Adults

Teenagers and young adults are living in a 'sex saturated' world, constantly receiving input and feedback from this culture, primarily media and peers (Butler, 2007), about what sexuality is and what it means. Consider these recent statistics.

- The number of porn sites in 1998: 71,831, In 2001: 311,652, In 2003: 1.3 million

- The amount of money the porn industry makes in a year is more than that of the NBA, Major League Baseball, and the NFL combined.

- The average age for a child to see porn is 11 years old.

- 68% of all Prime-time programming and 84% of situation comedies, contain sexual content.

- The Justice Department estimates that 9 of 10 children between the ages of 8 and 16 have been exposed to pornography online. Software company Symantec found that 47 percent of school-age children receive pornographic spam on a daily basis. And representatives from the pornography industry told the Child Online Protection Act Commission that as much as 20 to 30 percent of the traffic to some pornographic websites is children. (Gamble, 2007).

As Jones & Jones report, "At fifteen, about one-fourth of both young men and women have already had intercourse. By age eighteen, about two-thirds have had sex. At the age when many kids are completing their first year in college, three-fourths have had sex. The percentages continue to climb through the college years." (Jones & Jones, 2007, p. 25-26). Christian, Seventh-day Adventist teenagers and young adults are no exception to these statistics and are

susceptible to the same pressures, media and influences of today's culture. They, too, see how the media portrays sexuality in general and wonder about their own sexuality and how it fits into the life of a disciple of Christ.

The problem is, most of the time the church community is not a part of the conversation (Martin, A. 2007). Where does God speak about lust, the dating scene, questions about self-image and worth or gender roles? As these issues bombard young people, where are the voices of adult, Christian mentors? As children enter their teenage and young adult years, they look away from their parents as their primary adult resource and instead look towards teachers and mentors to be the 'adult voice' in their lives, (Butler, 2007). This is the perfect opportunity for pastors, teachers, mentors, youth leaders and others to step into the lives of young people and lend a listening ear and a voice for purity in the midst of the media and hormone pressures that make up adolescence and young adulthood. "Our most important goal," says Jones & Jones, "is to equip and empower our children to enter adulthood capable of living godly, wholesome, and fulfilled lives as Christian men and women, Christian husbands and wives," (Jones & Jones, 2007, p. 13). The church can be the biggest asset to parents and resource to teenagers and young adults on their journey towards adulthood.

The Project

Each summer, Upper Columbia Conference employs 20+ students age 16-26 for an 8-week ministry and employment called Wenatchee Youth Challenge (WYC). WYC focuses on the spiritual, social and physical development of Adventist teenagers and young adults. We train and

teach them in personal spirituality, public speaking, social justice/community service, conflict

management, and other important life skills, targeted for adolescence and young adulthood. The

missing element, which is so crucial for this age group, is sexuality education and identity

formation. The intent of this curriculum is to bring this discussion into the open, and to approach

identity and sexuality education in a way that is fun, interactive, open and God-centered. By

talking about a subject that is so often omitted from church conversation, we are sending the

clear message that God cares about every aspect of life and wants to provide strength, grace,

healing and hope in the area of sexuality. Students will receive loving support and resources

from adults, as well as affirmation and strength from those in their peer group.

Through this curriculum, WYC students will engage in discussion and learning about issues such

as communication, assertiveness, self-worth, sex, culture, pornography, gender roles, and

relationships.   Each session will last 45 minutes, once per week over the course of the eight

weeks, totaling 6 hours of contact time. These lessons can also be adjusted and expanded for use

in a Sabbath School or youth group setting.

As a result of this sexuality education, the WYC teenagers and young adults will have an

increased knowledge and openness about identity and sexuality. They will be better equipped to

filter the culture around them by applying Biblical values to the worldly values and principle

suggestions that are being sent by the media each day. As they leave this summer program, they

will have the opportunity to make a commitment before God and friends concerning their own

purity, personal values and identity and feel their self worth as God has uniquely created them.

This curriculum is to facilitate understanding, prevention, and restoration in the areas of identity and sexuality.

During the summer we use the fellowship hall of the host church for our daily worship and meetings, which begin each day at 10:30am, Monday-Thursday. The time period for identity and sexuality education specifically is from 11:00 – 11:45am, every Thursday for eight weeks. This is the last 'ministry day' of the week, since Friday is a day off until vespers, and gives something for the group to look forward to over the course of the week. Audio Visual support is already available for each day we meet and no special arrangements are necessary.

Due to the fact that this is an employment setting, the group remains consistent throughout the eight weeks of the summer. No additional advertising is needed to procure an audience. In addition to this, the teenagers and young adults who are a part of the Wenatchee Youth Challenge Team have the opportunity to engage these issues on a deeper level because of their increased comfort and familiarity with one another through continued, day-to-day contact, which could not be achieved from a weekend seminar setting or a youth group with only weekly contact.

In the following curriculum, the text in gray boxes contains specific instructions to the facilitator as they are guiding the group through the learning process, whereas the plain text is group instruction.

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 1

Topic: Communication

Reference: "*Talking & Listening Together,*" Miller, S., Miller, P., Nunnally, E. & Wackman, D.

Date: Thursday, June 12, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Pens/Markers/Paper
- Bowl filled with candy
- Resources in Appendix 1, available for checkout
- "The Awareness Wheel" Communication Mat
- Book, "*Talking & Listening Together*"
- Laptop/Projector/Screen

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will understand the importance of clear communication.

- Students will realize what inhibits clear communication between individuals.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will take time to own their own feelings, stories and perceptions.

- Students will practice listening to others and acknowledging their feelings.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will value the practice of affirming others and receiving affirmation.

- Students will have a commitment to growing in their understanding and practice of clear communication, using the summer time as a catalyst for growth.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Communication 101	30 min.	The basics of communication via the "Awareness Wheel." This session allows students to be more aware of themselves in the communication process. This will help them to be able to take care of themselves in a healthy way and also to be able to hear the other person.
Affirmation... & candy too	10 min.	Using a candy bowl and rainbow colored markers, students will take time to affirm one another by writing affirming qualities of those in the group on the dry erase board and offering them a piece candy.
Wrap up & Prayer	5 min.	Have people divide into pairs for prayer, taking time to affirm and pray for the other individual, and their action step.

Communication 101

This lesson is taken from "Talking & Listening Together," Miller, S., Miller, P., Nunnally, E. & Wackman, D. (1991) and is found on pages 15-37. Below is an outline for teaching this section. Use the book to share each section with the group.

I. Introducing the Awareness Wheel

Using the "Awareness Wheel" mat on the floor, go through each of these sections,

describing what they are and how they come to play in our communication. This is a

"teaching style" lesson, and its important to use this visual learning piece.

A. Sensory Data - Verbal and Nonverbal Input, p. 16-17

B. Thoughts - The Meaning You Make, p. 18-19

1. Beliefs

2. Interpretations

3. Expectations

C. Feelings - Your Emotional Responses, p. 20-21

1. Feelings are Information

2. Feelings about Feelings

3. Using your Feelings

D. Wants - Your Desires, p. 22-24

1. Wants are Motivators

2. Wants for Self, Others, Us

E. Actions - Your Behavior, p. 24-25

II. Using Your Awareness Wheel

Give a few examples using the awareness wheel. Have volunteers come up and practice so that they can begin to grasp how this makes sense in their own communication.

A. Self-Talk, p. 26-29

B. Talking Skills, p. 29-37

1. Speak for Self - use of "I" statements

2. Describe Sensory Data - using specifics in conversation, owning the data

3. Express Thoughts - simply expressing what you really think or believe

4. Share Feelings - the definition of a feeling, not getting what you feel and what you think confused

5. Disclose Wants - what you want to be, to do or to have

6. State Actions - state what you have done, are doing or will do

Have the group break off into groups of 4-8 and practice using their own mat. Have them practice making "I" statements and knowing what feeling they are expressing. Have a leader working with each of the groups to gently "coach" them as to what they are feeling, expressing, thinking or the like. This will be a new process for many, but by the end they will have an increased awareness of how they can communicate clearly with one another.

Affirmation...& candy too

There are all different ways to communicate. As we found out today, we use "I" messages, we share our feelings, we practice honesty and clarity, and recognize our part in challenging communication situations. Our words have the power to uplift or to bring down those around us. In closing our lesson, we'd like to take some time to uplift one another with our words. We have a dry erase board at the front and a stack of markers. You are invited to come up to the front and write a specific affirmation about someone in this room. After you do so, come over here to this candy bowl, pick a candy you think they'd like, and bring it to them, taking a moment to affirm them in person. (Martin, A. 2007). You've been hanging around each other for only about five days now, but we'll be eager to see the qualities that we've already noticed and appreciated about each other.

Wrap up & Prayer

Find a partner in this room to pray with. Before you pray together, talk about what it felt like to give and receive affirmation just now. What is the one thing, the action step, that they are taking with them from today? Take turns praying over one another and bringing these requests before God.

Stand for our group benediction and in commitment to what we have shared today.

"May you find clarity, comfort and connection as you communicate with one another during this summer program. May we grow in our awareness of our own feelings and process and closer to one another and to God as we minister together on this team."

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 2

Topic: Assertiveness

Reference: Martin, D., and *"Boundaries,"* Gazley, J. [DVD]

Date: Thursday, June 19, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Pens/Markers/Paper
- Open space for students to practice
- Resources in Appendix 1, available for checkout
- "Boundaries" DVD
- Laptop/Projector/Screen
- DVD Player/Audio Plug-in

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will have increased familiarity with boundaries, personal space, abuse, and clear

  communication.

- Students will understand the need to maintain clear boundaries for safety when meeting

  people in door-to-door ministry.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will feel more comfortable asserting themselves and saying no.

- Students will be able to identify areas of their lives where they have not been asserting themselves, and have an action plan to begin to do so.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will feel empowered to stand up for themselves and act on their own needs and wants.

- Students will value the balance of acting on their own desires, opinions and needs, while remaining respectful of others.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Introduction - No, don't come any closer!	8 min.	This warm up exercise is great to introduce the concept of physical boundaries.
"Boundaries" DVD	31 min.	This educational video describes healthy boundaries, why we need them and how to implement them in our lives.
Wrap up & prayer	6 min.	Take time for question & answer time from the students. They may have things they are wondering after watching the video.

Introduction - "No, don't come any closer!"

Boundaries define where I end and another person begins. Understanding boundaries is what gives me awareness of my separateness and individuality to know what's mine and what's not. (Cloud & Townsend, 2007).

To begin this session, have each person choose a partner of the opposite gender. If there are more of either gender, have a few same-gender pairs, but only two persons

per group. First, find out what each person's "personal bubble" looks like by having

Person A take single steps in towards Person B, with Person B telling Person A to stop

when they've reach their personal boundary. Reverse the same process with Person A

stepping towards Person B. (Martin, A. 2007). What did you notice about your

physical boundary? Would it be the same with a stranger?

Next, repeat the same steps above, but this time, when the person is stepping into your

personal space, the one who remains still puts their hand up and says, forcefully, "No,

don't come any closer!" (Martin, A. 2007). This will be new for many of the people

in the group, depending on how they were raised, and many will have a hard time

asserting themselves. Allow them to practice until everyone has said it with force,

clarity and power.

As you are going door-to-door you may also meet individuals who will want to infringe on your

boundaries. It is then especially important to state in a polite, but forceful tone that you are not

comfortable with something. This could be in the form of someone inviting you into their home,

car or requesting that you give them your phone number. If someone is seeking to make you do

something you don't want to do, you must be primarily concerned about protecting your

boundaries and not about being "nice" or polite to the other person. In most rapes, sexual and

physical abuse, the abuser is someone known to the victim (Crooks & Bauer, 2007). This is what

makes these situations even more challenging because the victim often wants to 'protect' the

reputation of the abuser or is afraid of what the abuser will do to them if they tell. It causes

many to live in silence with horrible secrets. If you know anyone who has ever had this happen

to them, encourage them to get help as soon as possible. Keeping these kind of secrets is very

damaging.

What is rape? [Allow for a few answers from the audience and write these on the board]. Non-

consensual sex = rape. When someone forces another person to have sex against their will.

Rape is about power. (Martin, A. 2007). Sexual violation can take place for both men and

women. Recent studies by Crooks & Baur (2007) state characteristics of rapes and rape

attempted and the affect of assertive behavior. Although this example uses the most common

scenario of female as victim, male as perpetrator, the roles are reversed when men are sexually

assaulted.

> On locating a potential victim, many men test her to see if she is easily intimidated.
> Resistance by the woman is often responsible for thwarting rape attempts. Active and
> vociferous resistance - shouting, being rude, causing a scene, running away, fighting
> back- may deter the attack. This was the finding of a study of 150 rapes or attempted
> rapes: Women who used forceful verbal or physical resistance (screaming, hitting,
> kicking, biting, running and the like) were more likely to avoid being raped than women
> who tried pleading, crying or offering no resistance. (p. 489).

Even still, it is important to know that being raped or abused is not a crime. You cannot blame

yourself or the victim of such a crime. The blame falls on the person who has committed the

violent attack against you or the victim. It is never okay to harm or abuse another individual.

(Crooks & Baur, 2007, p. 489).

It is important to state your boundaries clearly so that there is no question as to what you are asking of the other person. This is true not only with our physical boundaries with those we don't know or those we do, but also for our emotional relationships with friends, parents and teachers. It is crucial for you to be able to ask for what you want and need. Even in a group like this, some of you really like to give hugs and receive touch. Others are uncomfortable with this form of expression. It is important to state what you are comfortable with and what you are not, and for the rest of us to respect what you have said. That's why we're going to take time to watch this next video - a lesson in boundaries. You'll learn more of what boundaries are, evaluate how strong your boundaries are and learn ways to develop them.

"Boundaries" DVD

Wrap up and Prayer

Invite students to ask any questions or make any comments that may have come up for them during the video. Ask, "what are you thinking, feeling, or processing after watching this presentation on boundaries?" Give time for honest feedback.

Close the session with prayer:

"Lord, thank you for making us the way you did, able to connect with one another. We want to do that in healthy ways and also to be able to protect ourselves from ways that will harm us. Teach us more and more what that looks like. May each of us be more connected with our feelings and desires and be able to communicate those with clarity to the ones around us."

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 3

Topic: Self-Worth

Reference: Townsend, A. "Irresistible You!" Seminar

Date: Thursday, June 26, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Pens/Markers/Paper
- Resources in Appendix 1, available for checkout
- Appendix 2 Handout
- Box with object lesson items: soccer ball, report card, day planner, mirror, scale, a math textbook, and Bible
- Individual, small mirror tiles for each student

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will have an increased awareness of the voices in their life that contribute to their

  feelings of self-worth.

- Students will recognize the importance of filtering messages and above all, to listen to the

  real message from God about their self-worth.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will practice honest sharing in a confidential, safe, community setting.

- Students will be more comfortable spending time publicly affirming their own strengths and acknowledging their weakness.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will make a commitment with themselves, God and a partner to listen to God's voice above others and practice loving, self-acceptance in the face of weakness.

- Students will honor the tensions of living in this culture and realize that they are living within a different value system than the world. They will make a commitment to live within God's values.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Ground Rules	5 min.	Essential for honest sharing, this time reassures each student that what they share will be kept confidential.
Who I Am	20 min.	The goal of this lesson is to get people to share their feelings, learn the foundation of self worth and to become more comfortable with who they are and the way God has made them. They will also learn to filter messages they are receiving so that they are able to hear God's message for them about their value.
Psalm 139, "Wonderfully Made"	15 min.	Scripture is the foundation of our self-worth, realizing that God formed us and knew us before any human being had anything to do it.
Commitment	5 min.	Making a commitment to self and with a partner to strive towards hearing God's voice above the voices of others, and to extend self acceptance, love and grace in the areas of personal weakness.

Ground Rules - 5 minutes

Before beginning the teaching time make sure to lay down ground rules:

• Whatever is said in this room, stays in this room

• Only share that which is specifically about your story!

Everyone must give a verbal commitment that everything stays in the room before

moving on to the teaching time, (Townsend, 2007).

Who I Am

Group Discussion: What are the ways that people judge other people? How do we judge people

as valuable? How do you judge other people?

On the white board, use different colored markers to write out group feedback &

discussion. Answers will probably include: grades, looks, money, personality, etc.

Transition: What are the ways in which we judge ourselves or determine our own self-worth?

Self-worth is defined by www.dictionary.com (2007) as: "the sense of one's own value or worth

as a person; self-esteem; self-respect."

Write out any additional comments that the students may have.

At the front of the room, have a box with various items in it, such as a soccer ball, report card, day planner, mirror, scale, a math textbook, Bible and other objects that fit the interests of the particular group. Each of these items represent different ways that people sometimes feel inadequate. Lay out all of these objects on the table and give the group a minute to walk by these objects, look at them and then return to their seats.

Hand out personal writing questions, Appendix 2, and a variety of colored markers and pass them out to each person. Have the students draw the object of their choice at the top of their paper and then write these questions below it: What is the negative message for me in this object? What is the truth? and What is God's perspective? Invite them to think, reflect and write about this particular talisman, which the online dictionary says, is "anything whose presence exercises a remarkable or powerful influence on human feelings or actions," (www.dictionary.com, 2007). What is the power that this thing has over me? Have the students write their feelings on their paper.

After the group has had 5-7 minutes to write, have everyone in the room pair up with someone next to them and share what they have written. Following this time of one-on-one sharing, go around the circle and have each person share the 30-second version

of what they wrote, including: the object, the negative message, the truth behind it and the real message from God.

Acknowledge with the group that there are real messages behind these cultural talismans, things that carry power over us and that we hold onto. For example, if someone were to choose the scale as their object, the truth may be that they are overweight and they can acknowledge that truth. The negative message behind the object is that they are not beautiful or lovable or attractive if they are overweight. It is the second message, the internalized belief, that holds so much power for each of us. This can come in the form of statements like, I'm not smart if I don't get good grades, or I'm not accepted if I'm not coordinated enough to play sports, or any other variations. Finally, the real message from God is that you are loved, accepted and beautiful just as you are, without changing a single thing about yourself.

It's interesting that often times the things that are symbols of inadequacy for us, are things that no one else would even think about us! It's totally true that it's in relationship and in community that we find wholeness. You see the things that we think are flaws or weaknesses are either, A) weaknesses that our friends and community see as weaknesses, but accept us anyway, or B) weaknesses that they don't see in us.

In a class once, the speaker had us look into a mirror and say to ourselves: "You look gorgeous!" or "You look handsome!" (Townsend, 2007). The prop she had with her was a small, square

mirror with the words "You are gorgeous" written in paint at the top. Maybe you've seen them

before at Old Navy.

It's true that its wonderful when someone tells you 'You look good!' There's something great

about someone pointing out that we look sharp, or put together, or peaceful, or confident, or

connected, isn't there? There is a difference, however, between someone telling you this and you

believing it's true in your heart, your inmost being. There's a difference between believing it on

certain days of the week or when someone tells you and *knowing* this at the core of your being.

We've all had friends that seem to be unable to accept a compliment, haven't we? You say, "Oh,

your hair looks great today!" They say, "Really, I don't think so..." Or you say, "That outfit

looks great on you!" They say, "If I wasn't so fat!" Or... You say, "You did a great job on your

speech in class!" They say, "I've never been very good at that sort of thing!" Sometimes you

want to pull out your hair and say, did you even hear what I said? I was complimenting you!

Yes, humility is a great thing, and it's up to the individual to determine if that's all it is, but

sometimes people don't know how to internalize the good things others say because they have

core beliefs about themselves that are in conflict with those good things being said. We all have

varying degrees of this behavior, or self talk.

We are more likely to become dependent on what someone else says about us if we are not

hearing the affirming message of who we are from ourselves, from God or from other important

people in our lives. That 'real message' we were talking about earlier. One thing my mom told

me was not to grocery shop when I'm hungry. It's true isn't it? No matter what it is, it suddenly

looks SO appealing because your body wants food. You get back home and after eating a good

dinner, you're going through your grocery bags saying, "Why did I buy these? I don't need

fruity, fruity juicy gummy snacks!" The same thing is true in relationships. If we're literally

starving to know that we have value, starving to know that we're good enough, that we are worth

something, or that we're smart, we'll put up with a lot or give into a lot just to get the "food" that

our emotional self needs to hear (Jones & Jones, 2007). Sometimes our own inner starving for

affirmation can prevent us from being in relationship with one another!

The truth is, there's no other person in the world exactly like you! No other woman that is

exactly like you! No other man that is exactly like you! Look in the mirrors that you have there.

Look into your eyes. For some of you, "You are gorgeous!" is exactly what you need to hear.

For others, as you looked into the box and talked with your partner about one of these items that

represents your own feelings of inadequacy, or your own, personal talisman, there is something

else that you need to hear. Look into the mirror and give yourself that message right now.

In conclusion, let us say with conviction: "I am created in the image of God. There is no one

else in the world like me." Say it again! "I am created in the image of God. There is no one else

in the world like me" (Townsend, 2007).

Psalm 139 - "Wonderfully Made"

Ask for volunteers to read each of the following five sections of scripture, Psalm 139,

(Townsend, 2007). For great variety, use different translations and paraphrases of the

Bible.

Psalm 139:1-5

Psalm 139:6-11

Psalm 139:12-17

Psalm 139:18-21

Psalm 139:22-24

Break up into small groups of three or four. In your small group discuss these questions (write

them on the board): What are some of the gifts/skills/qualities/inner strengths/features that you

appreciate most about the way God has made you? and How can see that you are "fearfully and

wonderfully made?"

To end this study on Psalm 139, as the leader, tell a personal story about how God

knew you and responded to you in a way that was unique to who you are. Affirm

students in the way they are put together by God.

Commitment

> Invite each student to join the partner they shared with earlier, this time for a time of
> commitment. As they are leaving this session, have each student commit to their
> partner to strive to understand how God sees, loves and accepts them. Allow time for
> them to make this commitment verbally and also through prayer together.

When asked by her five-year-old, "What does sexy mean?" Kristen Bell replied, "Sexy is when it feels good to be in your own skin. Your own body feels right, it feels comfortable. Sexy is when you love being you," (Bell, R. 2007, p. 46).

This is so true. This is what we hope for you today. That you would feel sexy, or smart, or loved, or valued, or free - feeling good to be in your own skin, comfortable, and loving being you.

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 4

Topic: Cultural Exegesis

References: Yeagley, S., Martin, A., and Townsend, A.

Date: Thursday, July 3, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Pens/Markers/Paper
- Laptop/Projector/Screen
- DVD Player/Audio Plug-in
- Internet Access
- Magazines (Cosmo, Seventeen, People, etc.), newspapers and TV/Internet ads that would be familiar to those in the group.
- Scissors, glue sticks and poster board
- Old air filter from a car (or home furnace)
- Resources in Appendix 1, available for checkout

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will have an increased awareness of western culture and how it portrays sexuality.

- Students will realize the necessity of filtering the information received from the media.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will be able to discern the source of the messages they hear, see and read about

  sexuality - God culture or worldly culture.

- Students will actively invite others into the process of purity and know their resources on this journey.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will commit to 'filtering' in order to live pure lives in a 'polluted' world.

- Students will value God and Christian community as a source of strength for maintaining a pure life.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Introduction: Culture	3 min.	Defining culture & society. What are the positives & negatives of culture?
Interactive Learning & Discussion	25 min.	An important, hands-on lesson in cultural exegesis, understanding what today's society is really saying about sexuality.
Godly Filters	15 min.	A Biblical lesson from James 1 on filtering out the garbage of this world and turning towards things that are good, pure and holy.
Commitment	2 min.	A time to commit to value God's perspective and what he's developing in us.

Introduction: Culture

Culture is defined by www.dictionary.com (2007) as: "the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another." Culture is how society, an organized group of people, transmits a way of life from one generation to another and this can happen in a variety of ways. What are some of the ways that we understand the culture

we live in or the culture we grew up in? [Write audience input on the dry erase board] So what

about sexuality and our culture? What does our culture say about sexuality?

Interactive Learning & Discussion

Have the participants divide into groups of 3-4 people. Write one question on the dry

erase board: What does society say about sexuality? Give each group a stack of

magazines & newspapers, scissors, glue sticks and a poster board. Give them about 15

minutes to go through the magazines, and ask one another what the images, articles

and advertising say about sexuality. Have them cut out messages that they see, glue

them to the poster board and write a caption underneath, saying what the underlying

message is about sexuality.

Bring the group back to the circle and use a laptop connected to the internet and a

projector to show television and internet commercials, music videos, movie trailers

and a few other clips portraying sexuality in the media. Intersperse clips with each

group sharing one of the images they cut out and the message that it says about

sexuality, taking about 10 minutes. Encourage honest sharing about the real life these

kids face everyday.

Sexualization is when a person's value comes only from his or her sexual appeal or behavior, to the exclusion of other characteristics. In many of the clips we've been looking at, men are sexualized to have sexual prowess and women to be sexual objects. Women are portrayed that they are always ready for sex (Townsend, 2007). How is this detrimental?

Godly Filters

With all of these messages inundating us each and everyday, what can we do to maintain a God-like view of the world? How are we able to focus on God's values, principles and ways when we are surrounded by a culture that seems to go so far against what God has planned? The Bible speaks about temptations and trials that we face in James 1.

> Utilize student participation in the reading of the following scripture passages, using different voices around the circle for active involvement.

James 1:2-5

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."

Two observations about this first section. First, James offers us an alternate perspective on trials and temptations. He says to consider it joy because it means that God is producing perseverance,

maturity and completeness in us. God is developing our faith through these things - and that's a good thing. Second, if we lack any wisdom, which I know each of us do, we have an open invitation to ask God who promises to give generously - with complete abundance for all we need to understand.

Let's read on... James 1:12-17

"Blessed are those who persevere under trial, because when they have stood the test, they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each of you is tempted when you are dragged away by your own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

So, we clarify even more here. James asks straight out, so if God is producing perseverance, maturity and completeness in me through these things, then these trials and temptations come from God? The answer is no. We are not tempted by God, who has no part in evil, but instead we are being dragged away by our own evil desires, our own sin. There's no mincing of words here, James says these sin lead to death.

James 1:22-25, 27

"Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Those who listen to the word but do not do what it says are like people who look at their faces in a mirror and, after looking at themselves, go away and immediately forget what they look like. But those who look intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continue in it—not forgetting what they have heard but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

There is such a thing as 'moral filth' and evil. God says to take action on the word of God, not just hear it, and to keep ourselves from "being polluted by the world."

A helpful illustration for me is that of a filter. Here's an old car filter, full of dust and other junk. [Bang the air filter on the ground, producing a cloud of gray dust]. The engine is constantly sucking in air, like a vacuum cleaner, and if it wasn't for this filter, the sand, dust, sticks and other things would get into the engine itself. As the engine is taking in oxygen for the combustion process that is taking place, it is this filter that makes sure that the air is pure, to make sure the car keeps on going down the road. The filter keeps the engine from 'being polluted by the world' outside as it roars down the road.

We, too, need filters to keep our lives from being polluted by the world. We need the filter of

Scripture, the filter of prayer, the filter of the conviction of the Holy Spirit, the filter of Christian

friends whom we are accountable to, the filter of godly mentors, teachers, pastors and parents

who will help the air coming into our engines to remain pure.

Philippians 4:8-9 says:

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is

pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think

about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put

it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."

These are the things that God deems pure. This is a filter, a test of the things that we've been

looking at in magazines, internet and videos today. Many times what culture and society says we

should focus on is in direct opposition to what God says we are to focus on. Sometimes the

things that we hear in our Christian culture are not what God says we should focus on. Some-

times the things that we hear in church are not what God says we should focus on.

These filters in our lives are not just for "the world," but for every aspect of our lives. It's

something that the Bible sometimes calls discernment, or judging. Since we know there is evil

and there is good in the world, the act of discernment, judgment or filtering, is prayerfully

deciding the source of the input you receive. Whether you're discerning the source of something

you heard on TV, read on the internet or listened to from a Sabbath school teacher, the

importance is still the same. As a unique, individual, moral being you are called to judge the

source of the information so that you can respond by either letting it into your life (as pure air) or

leaving it outside. We can use the resources that we talked about - Scripture, prayer, Christian

peers, accountability groups, and mentors/teachers/parents - to help us in this process.

Commitment & Prayer

Jesus says, "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes

and as innocent as doves. Be on your guard..." Matthew 10:16-17.

You can be wise, discerning *and* aware of cultural pressures around you. By God's strength you

can filter the pollution from your life and live purely before God in this world.   May you have

strong filters in a polluted world and judge what is from God and what is from evil.

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 5

Topic: Sexuality

References: "*Sex God"* Bell, R., Butler, S. and Martin, A.

Date: Thursday, July 10, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Laptop/Projector/Screen
- DVD Player/Audio Plug-in
- Play Dough for each student in a variety of colors
- Nooma, 002 Flame DVD
- Resources in Appendix 1, available for checkout

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will realize their own understanding of sexuality.

- Students will recognize the beauty of sexuality as God designed and created it.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will spend time reflecting on how God created them as sexual beings.

- Students will strive towards living in a complete understanding of their sexuality.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will have a positive attitude towards the gift of sexuality, as God has made it.

- Students will set limits and boundaries to maintain purity in their sexuality before marriage.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Play Dough Creations	5 min.	Give each student a small container of play dough and have them create anything that they want. Take a few minutes to have people hold up and share what they created.
Free Association	5 min.	Ice breaker: Sex/Sexuality, free association segment, writing everything on the dry erase board.
As God made it	15 min.	A discussion of sexuality from Scripture
Defining Terms	5 min.	Group discussion using the dry erase board, answering the question, what does 'sexually active' mean?
Conclusion	2 min.	Bringing it all together
Nooma, 002 Flame DVD	11 min.	Great video on the beauty of sex the way God made it.
Commitment & Prayer	2 min.	Cementing our understanding and commitment to purity before God - reconnect in ways that are healthy.

Play Dough Creations

Allow each student to choose a small container of play dough from a variety of colors. Tell them that they have 3 minutes to create anything they like. After everyone has made something, have volunteers hold up their creation and share with the group what they have made, (Martin, D. 2007).

With their play dough creations still out and on their tables, transition seamlessly into the next exercise.

Free Association

Write the words "Sex" and "Sexuality" on the dry erase board. Ask students to say all the words, people, and places - anything that comes to mind - in association with these words (Martin, A. 2007). This is a great exercise to really see where people are in regards to their comfort in speaking about sexuality, and to help them to feel comfortable sharing in a group setting, especially in the church.

After you have enough written on the board and people are warm, comfortable and getting into it, step back, read what's there and transition into the next segment.

As God Made It

Looking at all we've written on the board, you have to wonder, what was the original supposed to be? You know, what did the Creator have in mind when God made us sexual beings? [Take one of the creations from the table]. Do you mind if we use your creation for something? [Sure.] Let's see what we can do here... [drop the play dough on the ground, sit on it, place your own finger prints on it]. After awhile, the creation you originally made [name the object] is no longer recognizable. We've put our finger prints on it so that we are not able to see what you

originally had in mind. It's the same with what we've written on this board - what culture, Hollywood, media, and society have done in placing their fingerprints on God's creation of sexuality and sex. So, what did God make it to be anyway?

Let's go back to the beginning. Turn in your Bible to Genesis 1:26-31.

Get a couple of volunteers to read the verses aloud.

Genesis 1:26-31

"Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day."

The picture we see here [pointing to the board] is one of disconnection, separation, pain and even abuse. The picture we see here [holding up the Bible] is one of connection - with God, with people and the environment - hope, love, balance, and abundance. As Rob Bell says, "The story begins with humans in right relationship - in healthy, life-giving connection - with their maker. All of their other relationships flow from the health of this one central relationship - people with God," (Bell, 2007, p. 39). It goes on later to say in the scripture that "they were naked and knew no shame," Genesis 2:25. It's a beautiful picture of completeness.

Then, everything changes and "goes south," (Bell, 2007, p. 39). Humans choose another way. Our first parents become disconnected. Disconnected from God. Disconnected from each other. Disconnected from their environment. And here we are [gesturing towards the board]. This is where we find ourselves. That's why we talk about things and say, "It just isn't right! This isn't the way things are supposed to be!" And God answers, "You're right. This isn't what you were made for." "We feel it in every fiber of our being," (Bell, 2007, p. 40). We know that we are disconnected on so many levels, in so many ways and we long to be connected again. We speak of community, we speak of friends...we desire to reconnect. (Bell, 2007).

Bell's (2007) research states the following:

> 'Scholars believe that the word sex is related to the Latin word *secare*, which means to sever, to amputate, or to disconnect from the whole.' Our sexuality, then, has two dimensions. First, our sexuality is our awareness of how profoundly we're severed and cut off and disconnected. Second, our sexuality is all of the ways we go about trying to reconnect. (p. 40).

So, when we hike up to Mt. Rainier and watch the pink and golden colors of the setting sun cast their rays on the wildflowers... or when we're walking at the state park along the Puget Sound and a seal, a baby seal, pops it's head up in the water 1-2 feet off the shore where we're standing. Suddenly we're starring into each other's eyes...we're so close. The words we use to share these experiences are those of "nearness, connection, sometimes even intimacy," (Bell, 2007, p. 41).

When we join the volunteer effort in the "Unite to End Homelessness" campaign, working with homeless teenagers in downtown Seattle, making sure they have access to medical, dental, food, clothing, housing, education and training, we realize we're connected with one another. That it could be us there, going through what they're going through, and suddenly, we know the truth that we're more alike than we are different.

As Rob Bell says, all of these stories have a "Sexual dimension. They help us become reconnected. They go against our fallen nature, which is to be cut off," (Bell, 2007, p. 41). When we have experiences together, in the prayer circle when your friends are praying with you, when you're arms are around each other, when we're united in one mission and purpose to share God's love with people, it connects into the way we were made to be. We're involved in something bigger than ourselves, and uniting together to do it!   This is what God desired us to experience all the time. When you send emails after YC saying, "Why is this so hard? How can I have the connection I did during the summer?" you are expressing the frustration of living in disconnection after you've experienced the connection that God made you for. This is how

things were supposed to be. This is what God wanted you to experience all the time. (Bell,

2007).

Defining Terms

There's all sorts of discussion about the question: What does the term 'Sexually

Active' really mean? Now its time to bring that discussion into the open and help the

group to process what it means in the life of a Christ follower, especially in light of the

last teaching from James and Philippians the previous week.

To begin the discussion, write the following on the dry erase board (Martin, A. 2007):

What does it mean to be 'sexually active?'

> Foreplay – Romance

> Making Out

> Heavy Petting

> Oral Sex

> Intercourse

Friends with Benefits

> Sexual benefits

> No commitment

Where does all this fit in with what we're talking about? It's possible to do all this [pointing to the 'sexually active' section on the board] and be completely disconnected. The more sex you have, the more alone you feel. It's also possible to be alone, and be very sexual, connected in love with many. It's possible to be married to somebody, having sex regularly and yet be disconnected. (Bell, 2007).

Allow for some questions and discussion.

Conclusion

So, maybe we need to broaden our understanding of sexuality. Maybe there's truth in the scripture from James that we read last week which says, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world," James 1:27. I'm suggesting that one of the ways we keep from being polluted by the world [pointing at the board] and its definitions of what God made is by reconnecting in ways that remind us who we are and who we were created to be. James says, 'looking after orphans and widows in their distress' is that pure and faultless religion. Purity and depth of reconnection - that's what we're striving for.

You've heard the quote that says most of the time people are looking for a fight because they're not in one? The same is true with sexuality. We all want to reconnect. At the deepest parts, the core of our being, we feel our separation and we don't like it. People ask the question, "How far

can I go in my relationships?" We're asking the wrong question. The truth is, sex as a physical

act of pleasure between two people, can wait (Butler, 2007). The physical act of pleasure, sex, is

to connect yourself with another human, and is to become "one flesh" as the Scripture speaks of,

with them. Heavy petting, or oral sex or other things we do in our attempt to reconnect, begins

this process of becoming "one" with someone that you do not intend to be with the rest of your

life. There are no guarantees that you will be with them. (Jones & Jones, 2007).

Instead we can begin to look at a more complete picture of who we are. "Our sexuality is all the

ways we strive to reconnect with our world, with each other and with God," (Bell, 2007, p. 42).

The passion, "energies for connection" and love that you have are good. They are beautiful.

They are what you were made for. Instead of reconnecting in ways that are unhealthy, damaging

and ultimately more hurtful than helpful, we can reconnect in beautiful, complete and healthy

ways that are at the core of who we are.

Nooma, 002 Flame DVD

Commitment & Prayer

"Lord, the beautiful gift you created in making us sexual beings has so often been distorted.

Sometimes our fingerprints and Hollywood's are all over it and we cannot even recognize your

original intent. Today we have seen the beauty, joy, wholeness and completeness of how you

have made us. May we live into this connection. May we once again have peace between you

and us, and may that flow into our connection with others and the earth. Today we make the

commitment to appreciate our sexuality and to ask you to help us to live out our sexuality in ways that can be described as pure, holy, complete and passionate. Give us strength and courage to be a part of the bigger picture of what you've made us for."

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 6

Topic: Pornography

Reference: Gamble, M. www.pureintegrity.org

Date: Thursday, July 17, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Laptop/Projector/Screen
- DVD Player/Audio Plug-in
- Internet Access
- Speaker Handouts
- Paper/Pens
- Resources listed in Appendix 1, available for checkout
- Snacks such as fruit, pita chips, hummus, pretzels, veggies, etc.
- Water

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will have an increased understanding of the pornography industry and the ways it

  pulls people into sexual addiction.

- Students will have a new appreciation for God's grace in the midst of our weakness.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will have access to resources (people, mentors & books) and have action steps

  towards prevention or freedom from sexual addiction.

- Students will have a sense of openness in dialoguing about sexual addiction and pornography so that when questions or issues come up, they know where to turn. They will view the church, adult mentors and Christian peers as assets in their fight for purity.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will see God's great power to rescue us from addiction through His grace, prayer, community and accountability.

- Students will be committed to purity in what they view, as well as other areas of their sexuality.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Introduction	5 min.	Introduce guest presenter, Pastor Matthew Gamble, and students to one another.
Speaker Presentation	30 min.	Guest Presenter, Pastor Matthew Gamble will be sharing with the group from his own personal testimony and from recent statistics about pornography. Also ways to gain victory in the battle again sexual addiction and the maintaining of purity.
Question & Answer Time	8 min.	Facilitated Q&A with questions asked directly from students or questions down and passed to the leader.
Prayer of Commitment	2 min.	Dedication to a life of purity.
One-On-One Sharing	--	Providing time and space following the formal group setting for individuals to speak with Matthew on a one-on-one basis. Statistically, there will be students struggling with this issue and its important for them to have the opportunity to share beyond the presentation.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Resource Follow-Up	--	Make the resource library available following this presentation to provide additional information and reading to those who will desire it.

Introduction

At the beginning of this session, welcome guest presenter Pastor Matthew Gamble to the group by giving a short bio and saying how glad you are that he is here to speak. Introduce the specific topic and why what we're talking about today is so important.

To pave the way and break the ice for this important discussion, it is also important for the students to get involved right from the start. Have them go around the circle introducing themselves with their name, where they're from, how many years they've been a part of the Youth Challenge program and one special interest or hobby. This will give people needed time to laugh and get comfortable talking with a new person added to the group setting. Tell students that following the presentation there will be a time to ask questions so if something comes up during the time they can write their question down and put it in the box that will be passed around the circle at the end.

Speaker Presentation

The next 30+ minutes are for Pastor Matthew Gamble to share, primarily from his

personal testimony, about the affects of pornography and his continued striving to stay

'clean,' by God's grace. A powerpoint presentation on the screen will be used at

various times during this presentation.

Question and Answer Time

It is now time for you to ask questions that you may have been wondering or to share your own

story, if you feel comfortable. Can you relate to this journey that Pastor Matthew so honestly

shared about? You are welcome to ask your questions directly or to write your questions down

and put them in the box as it goes around the circle.

Prayer and Commitment

Close out the session thanking Pastor Matthew for being willing to share so honestly

with us. There are many in the room that may have dealt with or may be dealing with

similar issues and need to talk and share.

End with prayer:

"Lord, thank you for your grace and the way that you continue to bring us through and work through us in spite of our weaknesses. Some people here in this circle know the struggle that Pastor Matthew was talking about today. They are very closely aquatinted with the pornography battle and they may even be struggling with it now. May you give them courage to break the silence and get help, as Matthew did so that they can experience victory. There are others who are dealing with other addictions that are just as real, and just as destructive - food, relationships, romance, movies, gossip, or other issues. Lord, we want to have freedom from these things. We thank you for your acceptance of us just as we are. Your grace meets us where we are today. We also thank you for your love that won't leave us where we are - in our confusion, sin and destruction. Instead you journey with us and transform us. Thank you Jesus. May we leave with hope, not because of us, but because of your love, grace and goodness." Amen.

One-On-One Sharing

On this day, lunch time will take place in the fellowship hall of the church with the sack lunches students bring themselves, plus additional snacks provided. Pastor Matthew will get to mingle with kids and also have a separate table (and a private Sabbath school room available) should students need to talk with him one-on-one.

Resource Follow-Up

A resource library with additional materials, books and DVDs should be available at the conclusion of this session. Invite students to 'check out' these books for follow up reading and guidance from other sources. See Appendix 1 for this list.

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 7

Topic: Gender Identity & Stereotypes

Reference: Martin, A.

Date: Thursday, July 24, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Laptop/Projector/Screen
- DVD Player/Audio Plug-in
- www.youtube.com media clips and advertisements chosen to shed light on gender stereotyping.
- VeggieTales video, Minnesota Cuke, "Handling Bullies"
- Resources in Appendix 1, available for checkout
- Appendix 3 Handout

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will understand gender discrimination and stereotypes and the affect they have on people.

- Students will know that in Christ, all human beings are equal.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will be able to discern stereotyping in various forms of media.

- Students will practice speaking up and making room for those who are marginalized by telling their story and honoring their experience.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will believe that both girls and boys are able to do anything they are called by God to do.

- Students will value the importance of Christ-like submission and strive towards the character traits that he desires to foster in all of us, both men and women.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Discussion & Involvement	20 min.	An introduction to the whole discussion about gender and what we expect from men and women. A deeper look at stereotyping, marginalization and the Biblical perspective on gender roles, leadership and submission.
Veggie Tales, Minnesota Cuke, "Handling Bullies" - Short Feature: Junior Asparagus in "Bully Trouble!"	10 min.	In dealing with a playground bully, Junior Asparagus shares an important lesson about standing up to a bully - it takes one person stepping out and standing up, as well as others joining in to back them up. Standing up to systems takes courage.
Small group discussion about the video	12 min.	Have you been bullied or been a bully? What was it like? What did you see in the video? Make a list of your observations.
Wrap up & Prayer	3 min.	Scripture meditation & prayer

Discussion

On the board write: "Girls" and "Boys" on each section of the dry erase board.

What does society expect from each as they mature? Have the students come up and write different characteristics on each side of the board using the multi-colored markers. (Martin, A. 2007).

You will get a great variety of responses, but some will inevitably be:

<u>Girls</u>
• Purity
• Proper
• Refined
• Nurturing
• Domestic
• Appearance - modesty
• Submissive
• Spiritual

<u>Boys</u>
• Rough and tumble purity
• Leader/Aggressive/going after what he wants
• Outgoing/fun loving
• Domineering
• Protector
• Provider
• Mischievous
• Strong
• Loving
• Show off
• Macho
• Shallow
• Unemotional
• Logical
• Responsible
• Professionalism

What characteristics are Biblical for both genders?

> Have students again come up to the board and circle the "Biblical characteristics,"
> referencing both lists and putting an 'b' next to ones for boys and an 'g' next to the
> ones for girls.

In response to this, Dr. Allan Martin says, "Why is it in our culture that we prepare our daughters for marriage and prepare our sons for war? If we prepare our sons for marriage, we prepare them for honor and responsibility, which would help them no matter what circumstance they find themselves.   If we prepare our daughters for servant leadership, we prepares the way for them to lead our country."

Social roles are always in flux, but what is the transcendent role of Christ in this process? Since Christ is transcendent of culture - meaning Christ goes beyond our cultural scripting - what role does he want us to play? What character are we to have?

The word that really makes up leadership and healthy relationships is one: submission. Submission has almost become a 'dirty word' because people are confused by its meaning and it has often been spoken of to oppress and marginalize groups of people, specifically the female gender and those of other races. This is not what we see in the Bible or the life of Christ.

What character traits do we see in our Savior?

Humility – Surrender, Submission, Sacrifice ⎯⎯⎯⎯→ Savior

So, true leadership according to scripture is to:

Serve
Nurture
Sacrifice
Influence
Action

Jesus takes the cultural definition of leader and smashes it on its head. In his kingdom, which we're about, we are asked to submit our will, our desires and our everything to Christ. People who have surrendered their lives to Christ don't care about being first or last or what position they are in.

We have cultures based on gender bias [either patriarchy or matriarchy], but Jesus sets up a different model. If we are going to encapsulate roles for girls and boys it would look like:

<u>Girls</u>

Love
Submit

<u>Boys</u>

Love
Submit

"We've divorced the God-family when we marginalize each other according to gender and race," (Martin, A., 2007). To marginalize is to place on the outer edges of social status. To give someone a lower position in the group. (www.dictionary.com, 2007). Have you ever known what it was like to not get something based on your God-given race or your God-given gender? Take time to share with a partner next to you about a time when you, or someone you know, felt marginalized because of your God-given gender, nationality or race. Maybe you know someone who's an immigrant to this country and has experienced oppression, maybe you know a girl who wanted to be something and her parents told her no because "that's just not what girls do." Share those experiences now.

Stereotyping

Stereotyping is defined by the Media Awareness Network as "simple, one-dimensional portrayals of people, based on generalizations based on gender, race, age, etc." Going back to the original lists we created of boys and girls, when you look at movies, music and cartoons, how are boys and girls, men and women usually portrayed?

> Show a few clips from current ads, youtube.com and others and keep a running list on the dry erase board of how the media portrays men and women.

How close is this to reality? How does this affect real women and men? How does this affect you?

Be cautious of assumptions based on gender assignment. Instead, God says to us, "This is the opportunity of who you can be" (Martin, A. 2007) and he opens up the whole world to you. The world is open and full of possibilities. Because culture is in conflict with this message from God, we must be aware of what the media is saying so that we know the source of our information.

Veggie Tales: Minnesota Cuke, Short Feature - Junior Asparagus in "Bully Trouble"

Small Group Discussion about the Video

Have the students separate into groups of 3-4. Have them answer the questions that follow [found on the handout, Appendix 3]. Have you been bullied or been a bully? What was it like? What did you see in this video? Make a list of the observations of your group. In light of what you saw, what can you do collectively advocate for Biblically based roles for boys and girls? (Martin, A. 2007).

When dealing with bullies and systems that keep people stuck, afraid and scared, it takes all of us stepping out together to make a difference.

Wrap Up & Prayer

Let's listen to the Words of Scripture found in Galatians 3:26-28: "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed your-

selves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Today, may you seek to know how you are gifted and pursue the dreams God has given you - whether that means running for president, being a stay at home dad or mom, missionary doctor, mechanic, computer programmer or teacher. Whatever you're called to, pursue it with all you're might. May you stand up, speak out and make room for those who have been stereotyped and marginalized in our society and our church. May you have the strength to submit and the humility to lead as a servant. May we internalize the message of unity from Galatians and realize that we are all your children, all equals.

Identity and Sexuality Development, Session 8

Topic: Relationships: Dating, Courtship and Marriage

Reference: Nelson, T. "*Song of Solomon Series for Students*" [DVD]

Date: Thursday, July 31, 2008

Length: 45 minutes

Preparation:

- Tables/Chairs
- Dry Erase Board/Rainbow colored markers
- Laptop/Projector/Screen
- DVD Player/Audio Plug-in
- Resources in Appendix 1, available for checkout
- "*Song of Solomon Series for Students*" [DVD]
- Appendix 4 "My Commitment"

Desired Learning Outcomes

Knowledge

- Students will have an increased understanding of what the Bible has to say about dating, courtship and marriage.

- Students will understand the importance of staying sexually pure in their relationships.

Behavior and Skills

- Students will spend time in honest sharing with others about their desires for relational purity.

- Students will participate in active listening to others.

Attitudes, Values and Commitments

- Students will make a commitment to stay pure in their relationships and save themselves

    for their future spouse.

- Students will have an attitude of trust in God regarding their dating and future marriage

    relationship. They will surrender this area of their life to God.

Title	Time	Teaching Notes
Introducing the Video	2 min.	Short intro of the speaker on the video & prayer.
Video: Song of Solomon Series for Students - Dating, Courtship & Marriage	30 min.	Teaching from the Song of Solomon about three crucial topics for teenagers & young adults.
Small Group Discussion	10 min.	Time for groups of 3-4 to discuss what they've just heard and share what they agree/disagree with.
Prayer of Commitment	3 min.	Students will dedicate themselves and their relational lives to God and sign a commitment statement with their small group.

Introducing the Video

Share a short bio of the speaker and introduce the videos as one perspective on dating,

courtship and marriage. Encourage students to get past the speaker's accent and see

what scripture and God is teaching them about their relationships. Have prayer before

beginning the movie.

"Lord our relationships are so important to you and we want to take this time to learn from your Word. Teach us. Help us to be open to what you want to say."

Video: Song of Solomon Series for Students - Dating, Courtship & Marriage

Small Group Discussion

> Have the students separate into small groups of 3-4 people. Write the following
>
> questions on the dry erase board: Out of what you've just heard, what's one thing that
>
> stands out to you, was new to you, or connects with you? What do you agree or
>
> disagree with from this presentation?

Prayer of Commitment

In your small groups, share one commitment or change you would like to see in your life and one way you'd like to move forward. Challenge each other to make a commitment to remain pure before God in all areas of your life. Take time to write out this commitment or change, action step, accountability persons, and sign the paper with your group (Appendix 4). Pray for each other by name about these specific changes and commitments as you close your small group time.

Appendix 1

Identity and Sexuality Resource Library,
Available for students to borrow during the summer program, Wenatchee Youth Challenge

Anderson, B. (2007). *Breaking the silence.* Hagerstown, MD: Autumn House.

Arterburn, S. & Stoeker, F. (2002). *Every young man's battle*. Colorado Springs, CO:

    Multnomah.

Bell, R. (2002). *NOOMA Flame 002*. [DVD]. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Bell, R. (2007). *NOOMA Name 018*. [DVD]. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Bell, R. (2007). *Sex god*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Blake, C. (1999). *Searching for a god to love*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press.

Bundschuh, R. & Highway Video. (2006). *Dating game: dating, the bible and teenagers.*

    [DVD]. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan/Youth Specialties.

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<u>Appendix 2</u>

Personal Reflection and Discussion Questions for Session 3, "Who I Am"

Draw your object:

What is the negative message for me in this object?

What is the truth?

What is God's perspective?

Appendix 3

Discussion Questions for Session 7, "Gender Identity and Stereotypes"

Have you been bullied or been a bully? What was it like?

What did you see in this video? Make a list of the observations of your group.

In light of what you saw, what can you do collectively advocate for Biblically based roles for boys and girls?

<u>Appendix 4</u>

"My Commitment," for use with Session 8 small group time

The commitment or change I am making before God and these friends is:

I would like to take one action step towards this commitment by:

Those who will hold me accountable to this commitment are (name, email & phone number):

Signed:

Date:

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: THE PROCESS AND ADAPTATION OF THE MINISTRIES OF THE
 WAUSAU SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE POSTMODERN
 MATRIX TO THOSE BORN AFTER 1964

Name of researcher: William S. Bossert

Name of faculty adviser: Barry Gane, D.Min., Ph.D.

Date completed: October 2005

Problem

It was apparent to many of the Wausau Seventh-day Adventist Church members,

as well as the pastor, that there was an apparent lack or minimal level of participation of

young adults (ages 17-35) in the life of the church. It was the strong desire of the pastor

and many of the members of the congregation to be inclusive of young adults, provide

ministries for and by them, and to foster an environment for them to be able to grow in a

deeper relationship with Jesus. It was evident that the current practice and ministry levels

at the church were not meeting the needs or attracting this important segment of the

population.

Method

A two-year process began with many elements that included (1) the introduction of the local elders to the current literature to assist them in what were the possible issues involved in the rejection of the young adults of the church, (2) a social/spiritual ministry (called Face2Face) at the onset of the project which was aimed specifically to college-aged young, (3) worship liturgy changes that included the inclusion of more contemporary service feel, and (4) a development and adoption of a document defining the new ministry and philosophy of Wausau.

Results

At the conclusion of the project's two-year time period, the church had more than doubled in attendance at the worship services. A generational shift of those born after 1964 went from 45.5 percent of the congregational attendees to 63.1 percent. All generational groups experienced growth, but those between the ages of 17-40 experienced the greatest and most significant increase.

Conclusions

The project was effective in achieving a significant increase of young adults' participation. It is evident that the process of laity education and change was effective in bringing about a new atmosphere or new church culture in which participation and growth could take place. The process of change that happened at Wausau Church may serve as a model to other local churches wishing to reach their young adults.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

THE PROCESS AND ADAPTION OF THE MINISTRIES OF THE
WAUSAU SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE
POSTMODERN MATRIX TO THOSE
BORN AFTER 1964

A Brief Summary

of the Full Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

By

William S. Bossert

December 2005

CHAPTER 1

The Purpose of the Dissertation

Statement of the Problem

Upon my arrival in June 2003 at my new church district,[1] I noticed that within the Wausau Seventh-day Adventist Church (Wausau Church) there were very few young adults (ages 17-35) participating. Yet, on the current church membership records at least thirty-two youth and young adults' names appeared. Upon further investigation, it became apparent that these young people were choosing (actively or passively) to not participate in the regular local church programs nor were they choosing to attend any of its worship services. Many of these young adults were the grown children of active members of the Wausau Church. It was apparent to me that there was a serious disconnection between the local church and those young adults.

Statement of the Task

It was the purpose of this project to: (1) discover the causes for the "disconnect" of the young adults from the life of the church; (2) develop workable strategies, processes, educational and event programs, along with the inclusion of various related ministries to change the trend and re-establish them into active participation again; (3) to find and encourage other youth and young adults not associated with the Wausau Church to participate and for them to develop a spiritual relationship with Christ; and then (4) to evaluate the results.

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[1] The Wausau District includes Antigo, Merrill, Moon and Wausau Seventh-day Adventist Churches in Wisconsin.

Methodology

The project process proceeded with the following methodology.

1. Historical and statistical assessment: A brief assessment of the Wausau Church's recent history as it relates to youth and young adults, and their participation in the church's worship and ministries, was evaluated. This assessment required examining membership records, as available, informal interviews with long-term members, and any other related materials that might be helpful. A quick review of the demographics of the Wausau community noting trends and groups was taken.

2. Examination of theological considerations: An examination of the Scriptures searching for theological instructions, counsels, and/or commands of Christ, the prophets, or apostles that might be relevant to the project was done. Special attention was given to Jesus' commands to work for the salvation of all people groups, and any statements on relational or generational issues that might be applicable to cultural society shifts.

3. Research and evaluation of current literature: A brief overview of the current literature available was given which related to the project. Of necessity, a discussion of issues found in *modernity* and *postmodernity* was included because of their potential influence upon the youth and young adults in Wausau, as well as these cultural influences upon the Wausau Church membership as a whole. Included within an overview of the current literature was a discussion of the presence of generational issues, and intergenerational relationships, as well as possible influences of the appropriate stages of personal spiritual growth and development.

4. *Relationship of building events and ministries*: The Wausau Church is presently in the process of building a new church. The building project should not necessarily be viewed negatively. Certainly it did take time and resources from normal church ministries as one might expect. But it also afforded opportunities for youth, young adults and adult members to work together towards a common goal. Although it might be difficult to fully measure the impact of the building program, it should be noted that it all likelihood it did have a positive effect on the youth and young adults.

5. *Church and conference informational and educational events*: Educational events on generational issues, modern and postmodern culture and their possible impact upon the local church, young adult ministry needs, etc., were conducted. Those educational events occurred through the use of sermons at the worship services, Saturday afternoon seminars, numerous small group discussions, providing key leaders with relevant books or articles on the topics, and personal interviews and discussions. Interaction with the Wisconsin Conference leadership usually took the form of sharing current books or articles of the issues, requesting my attendance at the National Pastor's Conference in March of 2004, and leading in the young adult/college-aged camp meeting pavilion using postmodern elements.

6. *Interviews with non-attending young adults*: Using the qualitative method of research, a few informal interviews were conducted to asses their beliefs, levels of commitment to the local church and/or denominational loyalty, and what may have triggered their decision to not participate. These informal interviews also sought to discover what avenues might still be open for them to again be active in church ministry

and worship. I conducted the evaluations, and therefore there may be some effect on the results from y presence as a pastor and representative of the organized church.

7. *Evaluation of the project*: Although the ministry for young adults is a continual process and elements of the project hopefully will be ongoing into the future, a June 30, 2005, deadline was arbitrarily set for the project evaluation. Young adult interviews were gathered, data collected, and person observations noted. These make up the evaluations and recommendations listed later in the dissertation document.

CHAPTER 2

Analysis of the Young Adults' Relationship to the

Wausau Seventh-day Adventist Church

Several ways of evaluating or assessing the Wausau Church in June 2003 could have been done. To help arrive at as an objective understanding as possible with the available or known information, more than one statistical instrument was used. The first and maybe most obvious method was to simply check the official church membership records. As of June 2003, the book membership of the Wausau Church stood at ninety-four.

Although membership records may be helpful for some statistical analysis, they do not really give a complete picture of the attendance at the local church on any given Sabbath morning. The project process, therefore, attempted to gather types of information that might lead to a greater sense of actual participation activity and provide

another method of more realistic evaluation. In advertly, the Wausau Church directory became a valuable source for providing additional participation information.

In the June 2003 Wausau Church directory, a total of 127 names are listed. Closer evaluation of the June 2003 directory indicates that many of those listed are indeed the children of members living at home. The church directory then suggests that the church family is larger than what appears on the membership records.

A closer look at the listings of the names in the 2003 directory indicates that there are 36 who might be classified as young adults (ages 17-41). That would suggest that those young adults occupy almost 28.3% of the 127 names listed in the church directory.

Of the 127 listed in the church directory, 77 could be considered regular attendees.[1] When the review of the church directory listing focuses on the young adults only, it lists 36 names. Of those 36, 17 could be considered as regular attendees at worship. When the 17 are compared to the 77 who are considered to be active in their attendance at the worship service, just 22% of that possible group attends.

From the church directory, the church family was divided into the generational five groups. *Builders*[2] numbered 30 and occupied approximately 24% of the 127 names listed. *Boomers*[3] numbered 30, as well, and again occupied approximately 24% of the 127 names listed. *Busters*[4] numbered 19 and occupied 15.2% of the names listed.

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[1] A regular attendee would mean that individual attended the worship service one to two times each month. It will also exclude those listed on the church directory list who lived too far to attend on a regular basis.

[2] *Builders* are those born before 1946 for the purpose of this project.

[3] Boomers are those born between 1947 and 1964.

[4] *Busters* are those born between 1965 and 1983 in this project.

Bridger[1]s came in at 17 or 13.6%. The children's group contained 29 names or 23.2% of the church directory names.

But when compared to the active attendance listing of 77, the percentages shift. Considering the 77 as 100 percent of those attending, the Builders occupy 27.2%. Boomers have exactly the same numbers – 27.2%. But the Busters attendance is at 11 or 14.2% of the whole. The Bridgers have 6 attending or 7.7%. The last grouping, the children under the age of 17, have 18 attending or 23.3% as of June 2003.

These statistics reveal a serious drop-off in attendance that begins to appear with the Busters and is most serious among the Bridgers. The congregation's concern of "where are all the young people" is clearly justified when one looks into the facts contained in the church directory.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter Summary[2]

The recognition of the change and creatively working in the new postmodern era may, in actual fact, be the church's greatest opportunity. Andy Crouch comments, "There is every reason to believe that postmodernism is calling forth new ways of reading the Scriptures and the Christian tradition that expose vitality in the unlikeliest places. Why should we not hope that our generation, prompted by the new challenges of postmodernism, will discover new depths and previously uncharted territory in the

---

[1] *Bridgers* are those who were born after 1977.

[2] This summary is the chapter summary as seen in the full dissertation. Chapter 3 covers many different areas of the issue of postmodernism, the church, and young adults in our complex society. There is also a section discussing the theological framework and implications. Space limitations do not allow for even a partial development of those topics. If the reader wishes to see the fuller discussion, please see the full dissertation.

Gospel? . . . We are in the midst of an intensely exciting period in which the church,

under the duress of new questions, is finding new languages and new songs."[1]

Perhaps the dawning of the postmodern world can help the church repair the rift

between natural sciences and theology.[2] Perhaps the church can lead in inviting people to

see their lives holistically, and not through the microscope of rationality. Perhaps the

postmodern culture will revitalize worship and deepen the authentic spiritual lives of our

people.

Whether we like it or not, God has placed the contemporary church here in the

most interesting of times. The shift in culture may cause anxiety, but it can be the

adventure the church needs to survive. Rather than shrink from the culture, the church

needs to embrace the new realities and learn to live within its worldview while

maintaining an identity.[3] "The future can no longer be an assumption. The future is now

an achievement. This is a race to the future. Who will get there first? Will the Christian

Church? The time to save God's dream is now. The people to save God's dream is

you."[4]

The challenge is enormous. The cultural change continues whether the church

likes it or not. The church's choice may be to either find its footing in the new

postmodern world or live out its days without relevancy. Perhaps it is not for the

membership to see what is happening to the church, but to see what is happening to

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[1] Leonard Sweet, ed., *The Church in the Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 92-93.

[2] Jim Kitchens, *The Postmodern Parish: New Ministry for a New Era* (Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 2003), 10.

[3] For specific ideas and strategies, see Brian McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000).

[4] Leonard Sweet, *Soul Tsunami: Sink or Swim in the New Millennium Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 34.

Jesus' church.[1] Perhaps the prayer to be offered is to simply ask, "Lord, show me your

church today."

CHAPTER 4

The project program and its strategies were built on a number of factors. In order

to initiate an effective ministry program for Busters and Bridgers, the entire Wausau

Church program needed to be considered.

General Program Elements Initiated

Local Elder Awareness of Postmodern Issues

In the summer and fall of 2003, three books were provided to the four serving

local elders. The first was Dan Kimball's book The Emerging Church.[2] Giving each

elder Rick Richardson's book, Evangelism Outside the Box, soon followed Kimball's

work.[3] And the third book was Brian McLaren's *More Ready than You Realize*.[4]

Sharing these books was the first step in providing the elders with background

information concerning postmodernism and the shifting culture. It is noteworthy that

raising the awareness of the elders to postmodernism and its relationship to the struggles

of ministry in Wausau did help in the overall process of change at the church.[5] But it was

also observed that the elders *as a group* did not take an active leadership role in the

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[1] Steve Ayers, *Igniting Passion in Your Church* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2003), 14-15.

[2] Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church: Vintage Christianity for New Generations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003).

[3] Rick Richardson, *Evangelism Outside the Box: New Ways to Help People Explore the Good News* (Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000)

[4] Brian McLaren, *More Ready Than You Realize: Evangelism as Dance in the Postmodern Matrix* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002)

[5] John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996)

change process. Three of the four did actively participate in the change process, but not through the group of elders as a leadership team.

Personal Ministries Committee Awareness of Postmodern Issues

At the same time that the local elders were reading and in discussion of postmodernism, the Personal Ministries Committee was presented with reading selections as well. Each member of the committee was given a copy of Brian McLaren's book, *More Ready Than You Realize*. As a group, these committee members seemed to get more into the issues presented than did the elder's group. This group was also exposed to Richardson's book, *Evangelism Outside the Box.*

In the spring of 2004, the Personal Ministries Committee changed its name. It was felt that the name Personal Ministries Committee suffered from "bad press" of a sorts and did not reflect the present work of the committee. The name *Cross Ministries* was chosen.

In the summer of 2004, the pastor provided the Cross Ministries Committee a copy of the Markham Woods Seventh-day Adventist Church[1] document on their philosophy of ministry. Following the basic outline of the Markham Woods document, the Cross Ministries Committee developed its own version or philosophy document. After many months of discussion and careful review, a final document was presented to a Wausau Church business meeting and voted in the spring of 2005.[2]

This group took a crucial step in the fall of 2004 when it saw that the Cross Ministries Committee needed to expand and broaden its ministry scope. Although

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[1] Markham Woods Seventh-day Adventist Church is located in Longwood, FL. Markham Woods Church has been developing materials on postmodernism, as well as other local church ministry programs.

[2] See copy of document in the full dissertation in Appendix B.

anyone who wished to attend the committee meetings was welcome, the members sought

to broaden the ministry by inclusion of the Sabbath School departments, the worship

leadership team, and the elders. The inclusion of these other leaders led to the united

coordination of the different ministry departments or ministries with the church. Soon a

unity of purpose and ministry mission began to formulate a united church family.

Reorganization of the Worship Service

In the summer of 2003 I initiated an ongoing process of change to the worship

service. Wausau had been following a rather traditional worship liturgy as might be

found in a vast majority of Adventist churches across North America. With the presence

in the Wausau Church of the four generational groups and their own individual

preferences, worship service elements or liturgy changes had to be considered with each

generation's preferences noted. The worship changes were not all done at once. Every

month or so, some new element was added or previous element modified.

The worship service took on a new, fresher feel in the fall of 2003 when a

consistent praise team was formed to lead the congregation in 12-20 minutes of singing.

Those 12-20 minutes of singing included three to five praise-type choruses followed by a

praise hymn from the *SDA Church Hymnal*. The words and worship elements were

projected via PowerPoint onto a large screen. All these changes (including sermons

made visual on PowerPoint) seemed to find excellent acceptance among the four

generational groups.

Changing the Church's Name

The idea of changing the church's name was mainly a product of urgency from the Boomers within the church family. The Buster group seemed open to a name change as well. Yet, it was mainly a *Boomer* driven change.

Changing the church's name was perhaps the most controversial issue of the entire change process. Opposition to a name change came from basically two groups. The first and largest group to object were those who might be classified as belonging to the Builders generation. Some within this group voiced their fear that the church was moving once again to a more *liberal* position, and would soon be abandoning the denomination entirely.

The second group might be indentified as the *fundamentalists*. Although fundamentalists occupy a high percentage of the Builders generational group, a few can also be found among the Boomers as well. This group held a fundamentalist worldview.[1]

Through the process of several church business meetings, the name "The Shepherd's House, An Adventist Community of Love" was finally selected. It is not possible to really ascertain during the time span of the project the effect of this name change on the community of the church family for that matter. Yet, informal comments seem to suggest that people genuinely like the name, and are happy to share the church name where they attend with others.

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[1] Further discussion of the fundamentalist worldview was beyond the scope of this project.

Congregation Attitude Change

Another key element in the process of addressing the issues the church faced with postmodernism is the change in the general attitude of the congregation as a whole. This element is almost impossible to measure, but people who now attend say, "Things are different here now." Most observers would probably say that a positive, expectant attitude now marks the church family.

Congregational attitude change could be categorized in at least two areas. The first is the change from an inward focus upon the church to a more outward focus on the community as a whole. Although the process of attitude change in this area is nowhere near complete, substantial strides have been accomplished.

A second area of attitude change would be to speak of and believe positive things about the Wausau Church. I encouraged members to lay aside negative historical issues, whether they be personal strained relationships or conflicts over group decisions made, and now move on to a new day.

Change in Organizational Process

In order to increase the percentage of active participation in the ministry, changes in the Nominating Committee process were made. It was observed that the traditional nominating committee process might have run its effectiveness course in Wausau. A change in the number of positions to be filled by the nominating committee was initiated in the last spring and early summer of 2004. Less than half of the positions filled by the nominating committee in 2003 were even asked by the committee in 2004. This was by

choice. As a result, actually more people took individual responsibility and became active in the various ministries of the church.

Another factor appears to be a clear indication of the postmodern influence of the church at this time: Without the nominating committee selecting everyone who is to serve during the "church" year,[1] the issue of church authority ("Who's in charge?") moved more from the elected leaders to the group of volunteers gathered at any given event or ministry. The element of inclusiveness was then fostered. People took responsibility and ownership of the church and its ministries. People did not have to be asked or told to participate or do some ministry function. They just did it. Perhaps this change in organizational structure make the church more open to the leading and influence of the Holy Spirit on the true body of Christ.

Program Elements Initiated for Bridgers

The program directed towards the Busters and the Bridgers (ages 17-25) was divided into two parts. I initiated the first program components in the middle of the summer of 2003 towards the Bridgers.

Friday Night Meetings

The first element for Bridgers was starting informal gathers on Friday nights. These gathers were called *Face2Face* and met bi-weekly. They were all head at our home, creating a less formal church program feel. *Face2Face* is a unique social/spiritual gathering for a few hours on Friday evenings. It always includes refreshments or snacks,

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[1] July 1 to June 30

a casual atmosphere, opportunities to meet new people, and an hour or so of inclusive[1]

spiritual emphasis. *Face2Face* soon grew from four to six attendees to include about 25

to 30 *Bridgers*. On any given Friday evening, half of the group might consist of

individuals from very different faith backgrounds.

Bridger leadership with the *Face2Face* group did not materialize during the

project's time period. This may have seriously hampered its effectiveness overall. So, in

the late spring of 2005, *Face2Face* did not meet as regularly.

Other Social Events

During the project's duration, other social events took place. Such social events

provided other opportunities for the Bridgers to socialize and "hang out." Some of these

social events might include celebration of engagements, marriages, baby showers, and

graduations.

Program Elements Initiated for Busters

Any program elements that happened to benefit Busters (ages 26 to all those born

before 1964) were generally the changes that took place in the church as a whole.

Renewed worship services, expansion of ministries, additional Sabbath School divisions

for children, and other elements all contributed to the benefits of Busters.

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[1] Bridgers from different faith backgrounds attend *Face2Face*.

Ministry for the Buster's Children

Perhaps the most significant element of the project for the Busters was the improved ministries for their children. The previous three Sabbath School departments of (1) Junior/Youth, (2) Primary, and (3) Kindergarten/Cradle Roll were divided into five separate divisions. Almost like magic, more and more children came to participate. Busters stepped up and provided excellent leadership for these new or expanded departments.

As the growth of the church started to take place, Busters also began to expand the Pathfinder and Adventurer Clubs. Buster leaders encouraged other Busters to enroll their children in these two organizations. These two organizations are fulfilling a Buster need to have the church provide ministry opportunities and programs for their children.

Ministry/Social Gatherings for Busters

In the fall and early winter of 2005, I worked with two Buster couples to start a ministry to meet some of the social needs of the Busters. These two couples quickly organized their first social. They chose a local restaurant and invited other Busters to attend. Invitations to participate were made in church via the bulletin and announcements, but also personal contacts were made. Lists of non-attending Adventist Busters who resided in the area were provided to the two organizing couples.

Throughout the winter and spring of 2005, these popular social gatherings at area restaurants took place. These events gave wonderful opportunities for those Busters with

non-Adventist spouses to bring their mates to a non-threatening "church" sponsored event. As a result of these social evenings out, a couple of the non-Adventist spouses have begun to attend church regularly.

Bible Chat Class

Although originally designed for anyone interested, the Bible Chat Class (previously known as the Pastor's Class) became a ministry primarily attended by Busters. This class moved to the local *Barnes & Noble* bookstore and held their meetings at 9:30 AM on Sabbath mornings. The class itself is rather free flowing, allowing those attending to ask questions or make comments on issues they are interested in on that particular day. It is amazing how the discussion tends to focus on what the Bible can offer for today's issues and how to know Jesus personally. I did not attend the Barnes & Noble class allowing the Buster leadership control over content and discussion. Soon, those non-Adventists who are attending the Barnes & Noble class began to attend the church worship services.

CHAPTER 5

The project time parameters ran from June 2003 to the end of May 2005. Over this two-year period, the program described in Chapter 4 was developed and initiated. The following summaries, conclusions, and recommendation flow from the results of the project during that time frame.

Project Survey Process and Summary

At the conclusion of the project time period, a small, oral survey was conducted by the pastor of twenty young adults who had had exposure to at least some of the elements of the project as listed in Chapter 4. The sample was controlled in order to solicit the opinions from a wide variety of individuals and not focus only on those who had had the most active participation. The purpose of the survey[1] and the size of the sample were designed to glean what those twenty young adults might be thinking concerning the church by the end of May 2005.

Summary of the Survey Responses as They Related to the Project

Out of the list of purposes and the responses given to the survey, a number of factors of summary issues might be formulated.

Relationships and Commitments

What became clear is that first and foremost in the minds of these young adults was the relationship they had with their immediate family. The survey did not try to define the difference between the interviewee and their parents, or (if they were married) between the interviewee and their spouse. Several, however, did indicate that even as adults they would consult their parents when facing serious life-changing decisions. They also indicated that these relationships were primary in being the main source for their personal beliefs, values and attitudes.

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[1] See full dissertation for the complete explanation of the list of specific cautions that should be understood about the survey results and the purposes the survey in general.

An apparent secondary influence on their beliefs, values, attitudes and major decision-making processes was what might be referred to as the "spiritual influences." Those spiritual influences included the information gleaned from Scripture, seeking God through prayer, and their church family relationships.

The potential of the influence of postmodern thought may be seen in a few of the questions in the Relationship and Commitment section of the survey. When asked to describe their beliefs or values that most guide their lives, a wide variety of answers were given. The more "established" or longer church attending young adults tended to answer these types of questions with a more biblical or scriptural response. Those who were relatively new, or had not been so active in their participation in the church until recently, tended to have more a secular or personal response. Perhaps this latter group perceived the world by trusting the inner self as the source for guiding one's life.

Religion

Almost all the respondents indicated that they saw themselves as religious people. And they thought of themselves as having a religious outlook that was "true." But there was a division in the group as to whether or not other religious traditions were also true even though they may be totally opposite to one's own beliefs. Almost a third of those surveyed felt that other religious traditions were also true or generally true. A tentative conclusion might be drawn, however, that the postmodern influence of valuing all belief structures as somewhat equal in their possession of truth had had some impact.

Another possible postmodern cultural influence might be seen in the responses to the question about what sin is. Although several did respond, "sin is transgression of

God's law," there were others who never saw sin as a factor in relationship to God or his

holy law. This may suggest that to these young adults the concept of sin is more a

personal, inner belief of what is right or wrong, and how one violates the personal values

structure.

Those Having an Adventist Background

Participants who had a Seventh-day Adventist background were asked to respond

to a series of commonly understood Adventist behavioral standards.[1] Refraining from the

use of alcohol, tobacco, recreational drugs, and not participating in gambling were firmly

held by the majority of those in the survey sample. When asked about the behavior

lifestyle standards of refraining from the wearing of jewelry, dancing, listening to rock

music, and attending movies in a theater, a real shift away from these traditionally held

standards can be seen. This shifting reflects national trends[2] and indicates that those who

participated in the project survey are not convinced of their value or importance in their

lives.

When asked about what changes they had noticed in the Wausau Church in the

last two years, many responded that they noticed the change within the church to a more

non-judgmental and accepting atmosphere. The level of comfort and acceptance for

those who were surveyed overshadowed the doctrinal concerns.

One final question that is particularly noteworthy and that has to do with the

question of what are the major factors in securing one's personal salvation. When given

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[1] The standards listed in the survey closely reflected those used in the *Valuegenesis* project and the ten-year follow-up study.

[2] See Table 7 in Roger Dudley, *Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 40.

the statement, "If I want to go to heaven, it is important that I carefully follow God's

Holy Law for it's a vital key to salvation," 55% indicated that statement was true. Such a

works-oriented thinking reflects the understanding of so many other members within the

Adventist Church.[1]

We might conclude from the survey that the young adults are generally happy

with the changes that were made to the ministry program, do wish to participate in greater

numbers, and do bring with them some postmodern influences into the church as might

the general population of which this church wishes to minister.

Young Adult Participation at the Conclusion of the Project

The following are the general observations about any changes in the levels of

young adult participation following the close of the project in May of 2005. Several

ways of evaluating the church status in June of 2005 could be employed to help arrive at

an objective understanding as to what actually took place.

The first method employed was to simply check the official church membership

records. From the church clerk's records, the Wausau Church membership had suffered

an almost 18-year decline beginning in January 1985. But as the project began in June

2003, a sharp membership increase occurred.

As of June 2005, the book membership of the Wausau Church stood at 118. This

is what the book membership was in January 1985. The 118 is also an increase in

membership of 24 individuals since the project started in June 2003. Church leaders on

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[1] Dudley, *Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church*, 58.

the local and conference level should be pleased with this change from years of declining

membership to a period of consistent growth.

Comparing the Listings in the Church Directory

Comparing the names listed in the church directories at the beginning and at the

end of the project proved to be very helpful. In June 2003, the church directory indicated

that 125 individuals were associated directly with the Wausau Church. At that time the

membership was officially 94. But in June 2005, the church directory indicated a total of

185 names that would be considered as associated with the local church. This indicates

an increase of 60 names over the 2003 directory.

Of the 185 listed in the 2005 church directory, 149 could be considered regular

attendees. That would mean that approximately 80.5% of those who could attend

actually do at the time the project concludes. In the summer of 2003, that same

comparison was approximately 61.6%. The actual record of weekly attendance indicates

that somewhere between 90 to 115 attended the worship service on any given Sabbath

morning by late spring of 2005.

In June of 2003, the Builders and Boomers made up 54.6% of those who were

worshipping regularly at the Wausau Church. Sahlin's "graying of Adventism"

evaluation would be true of the Wausau Church in 2003.

But the 2005 church directory indicates that the "graying" trend has been

significantly reversed. Today, Builders and Boomers occupy only 36.9% of those

actively attending worship. The question many Builders and Boomers asked in June of

2003, "Where are all our young people?" could be answered in June of 2005, "They're back in church."

Project Conclusions

The following are the project conclusions drawn from the current literature, the impact of the project elements, the project data gathered, and my personal observations.

1. The project did discover many possible causal effects on the lack of attendance of young adults (those 17 or older yet born after 1964) with the Wausau Church. Those elements of the church that were impacting the young adults the most tended towards programming generally that was aimed at those born before 1946, church leadership resting almost exclusively in the hands of the Builders and Boomers, lack of adequate facilities for the needs of young adults and their children, and a traditional worship service that failed to inspire young adults in their spiritual growth.

2. The project did highlight that fact that postmodernism is not as much a part of the culture in Wausau as may be found in other more metropolitan areas of the Western World. Yet, its presence is certainly noticeable in the attitudes of the young adults with and outside of the church.

3. The project's evaluation that young adults in the Wausau area, who were choosing not to be part of the church, could be encouraged to participate in the life of the church was correct.

4. The project's plan to educate the leadership to the issues the church was facing through the use of current books, articles, and formal discussions greatly increased their

awareness of what could and should be done to stop the attendance and membership decline of the previous 18 years.

5. Initiating *Face2Face* for Bridgers at the very start of the project created an atmosphere that my wife and I were intentional about involving the church in young adult ministries.

6. The project was successful in empowering people to develop their own ministries and to open the way for more volunteers and participation from anyone who wished to share their gifts in ministry.

7. The project was successful in transitioning the worship service from a traditional format to a more "blended worship" style that seemed to be accepted by all generational groups.

8. Because of the changes in the atmosphere in worship, there is little doubt that the Busters became more active in church and rapidly increased their attendance at worship.

9. In the winter and spring of 2005, the growing Busters group developed its own social/evangelistic-type program that included non-Adventists. It is self-sustaining and enthusiastically attended.

10. Although a Pathfinder and Adventurer Club did exist prior to the project, after other project elements got going, renewed enthusiasm and participation affected each of these groups in a positive manner.

11. The construction of the new building was a significant, but not a dominant factor in the project. It gave the church the needed floor space to develop new ministries,

increased Sabbath School division rooms, more intimate worship center, and more noticeable community awareness that the previous location.

12. Closely associate with the building construction was the addition of lighted crosses on two sides of the new facility. The inclusion of the crosses actually was an expression of the changes within the congregation from an Adventist traditional makeup to a more evangelical mix. They became a point indicating that this Adventist church was indeed truly Christian.

13. The changing of the name of the church from the *Wausau Seventh-day Adventist Church* to *The Shepherd's House: An Adventist Community of Love* appears to have been a very positive step.

14. The preparation of the philosophy of the ministry brochure was at time a daunting task, but with a few weeks of the project coming to a conclusion, it has definitely set a ton and a way of introducing people to the church as it now is. It also helped clarify to the church family how we are going to operate and what our ministry is to be about.

15. The project was inadvertently helped by the almost year-long rental of the *Mountain of the Lord Lutheran Church* while the new facility was under construction. It provided opportunities for the Wausau Church family to see the possibilities of divergent ministries. Such inspired the church to actively think and do activities in other ways.

16. Perhaps the most important element and the greatest change was the collective attitude of the congregation. The change from the feeling of helplessness in the presence of steady decline to one of a sense that God is definitely leading us now – is the most important and crucial element of the entire process.

Recommendations

Recommendation to the Wausau Church

1. It is recommended that the pastor and the leaders of the Wausau Church consistently seek through prayer and study the leadership of the Holy Spirit in looking for guidance to the future steps in ministry.

2. It is recommended that the church leadership continue to keep abreast of the social change factors and current literature on the topic of postmodern cultural trends.

3. It is recommended that the church leadership participate in North American worship and music conferences (within and outside the Adventist denomination) by sending delegates to glean ideas and obtain resources that might assist in the development of effective worship elements for the local church as well as continued enhancement of present worship services.

4. It is recommended that the church leadership participate in North American pastor/laity ministry conferences (within and outside the Adventist denomination) by sending delegates to glean ideas and obtain resources that might assist in the development of additional ministries in the church as well as continued enhancement of present ministry elements.

5. The ministry for the Bridger age group did not expand as was hoped. It is recommended that the church family seek individuals who would be committed and gifted in this important area.

6. It is recommended that development of church community involvement projects and ministries be initiated as soon as possible. Participation in community-wide, faith-based programs should be a regular occurrence at the Wausau Church.

7. It is recommended that the pastor and his elders preach a series of sermon messages clearly outlining what a *grace-oriented* life in Christ is and how it stands in contrast to a *law-oriented* life.

8. It is recommended that the church family assist in the teaching and practice of a *grace-orientation* to all church attendees, Sabbath School divisions, and the many ministries of the church.

9. It is recommended that the church not only practice the ministry of cultural relevance, but endeavor to continue to educate the membership to the importance of understanding postmodernism and its impact on the community.

10. It is recommended that the church leadership recognize that size or growth changes in attendance have implications on ministry programming. The church leadership needs to be proactive and not reactive in planning ministry changes as the growing attendance demands.

11. It is recommended that the church leadership develop a more structured process for assimilation of seekers of Christ into the church family and into the faith.

Recommendations to Denominational/Conference Administration

1. It is recommended that local conference administration assist in the education of local church leadership personnel in becoming aware of the issues of postmodernism, the possible conflicts between the generations within the local church, the possible

changes to pastoral church leadership, and how evangelism might be shifted to reach the postmodern culture.

2. It is recommended that the conference, union, and division administration take a proactive approach into what the postmodern cultural shift may have upon the financial viability of the local church, various levels of the conference structure, and the world-wide mission of the denomination. It is recommended that all levels of church organization that are affected by the influence of postmodernism seek ways to survive with financial viability for the foreseeable future.

3. It is recommended that denominational leadership continue to look at the growing opportunities for evangelism through the usage of the Internet. It is recommended that the denomination assist conferences and local church in how to use the Internet more effectively in assisting evangelism, community awareness, and community involvement.

4. It is recommended that denominational leadership assist the local church and local church pastors in the use of the Internet and other electronic media in communication and organization structure to help all levels to access resources and information.

5. It is recommended that denominational/conference leadership become conversant on the issues of postmodernism, the effect of the cultural shift on the local church, and the emergence of a new type of church that is taking place across North America.

Recommendation for Future Research or Review

1. It is recommended that future research be done specifically related to the Buster generation and their children in relationship to their needs and wants from the local church. Perhaps study could be given to how postmodernism might affect the parental influences on the children of Busters as they participate in the life of the local church.

2. It is recommended that future research be done specifically related to the Bridger generation and their needs as might be affecting their participation in the local church. Perhaps study could be given to Bridger's ability to absorb multiple sources of information at once, and how that might relate to the worship service.

3. It is recommended that future research be done into the effect that personal, short-term[1] mission excursions (domestic or foreign) might have upon those born after 1964 in relationship to their participation in the life of the local church.

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[1] Two weeks to a month.

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The ABCs & Ds

of Young Adult Relationships

A Conceptual Model for
Discipling New Generations

Dr. Roger Dudley

"While there are many factors in retention, I really think that the congregational climate is perhaps the most important thing of all…"

"If that congregation is a warm, accepting place, then Seventh-day Adventism must be a good thing."

Dr. Robert Wuthnow

"My view is that congregations can survive, but only if religious leaders roll up their sleeves and pay considerably more attention to young adults than they have been."

Authenticity

The Art of Being Real

Authenticity

- Real & Honest

- Transparent

- Genuine & Sincere

- Humble

- Human

Belonging

Feeling Accepted and Involved

Belonging

- Included

- Involved

- Integration

- Collaboration

- Trust & Risk

- Responsibility

- Purpose

Compassion

Do Something Now

Compassion

- Service

- Social Activism

- Justice

- Advocacy

- Abroad & Local

Discipleship

On the Journey Together

Discipleship

- Relational

- "Guide on the Side"

- Mentoring

- Longitudinal

- Inside Out

Being Authentic...
Fostering Belonging...
Expressing Compassion...
Purposefully Discipling...

Questions & Responses

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THE ABCs & Ds OF YOUNG ADULT RELATIONSHIPS:
A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR DISCIPLING NEW GENERATIONS

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Abstract

The literature points to relationship-building as a primary ministry methodology when nurturing the spiritual growth of adolescents and emerging adults (Setan, 2008). Yet the relevant praxis of young adult ministry is all but absent from the current Protestant landscape (Wuthnow, 2007). This paper offers practical elements in fostering spiritually-nurturing ministry relationships with those post-high school through pre-parenthood.

Young adults, those post-high school through pre-parenthood, seek quality relationships in all spheres of life (Martin, 2009b; Setan, 2008; Wuthnow, 2007). In the realm of faith development and spiritual community, this search is both crucial and daunting for young adult and church alike. For the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the quest for meaningful, transformative, young adult relationships is a significant barometer for an aging denomination (Center for Creative Ministry, 2006).

During a recent interview with noted ministry researcher Roger Dudley, I was struck by his comment:

"While there are many factors in retention, I really think that the congregational climate is perhaps the most important thing of all. To them [young people], Adventism is that congregation. . . If that congregation is a warm, accepting place, then Seventh-day Adventism must be a good thing. If that congregation is a place that is struggling, then they wonder what's

the matter with Adventists. I guess adults do that too, but young people do it particularly. . . I have story after story of that kind of thing—people who were offended because of the congregation and people who love their church because of the warm way they are accepted (Martin, 2009c)."

Dudley (2000) found that young adult perceptions of the quality of relationship with religious authority figures played a significant role in their faith which has been echoed across the denomination:

"The reasons most frequently cited by persons who leave local church fellowship are found in the realm of relationships, the absence of a sense of belonging, and the lack of meaningful engagement in the local congregation and its mission." (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee, 2007, para. 5).

Robert Wuthnow (2007), professor of Sociology at Princeton University, endorsed, "My view is that congregations *can* survive, but only if religious leaders roll up their sleeves and pay considerably more attention to young adults than they have been (p. 230)."

It should be asserted here that every adult member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is perceived by new generations as an authority figure or leader, to varying degrees and contexts, within the local congregation (Martin, 1998). And the need is significant enough to call on every Adventist adult to foster a relationship with a young adult, lest we succumb to the bystander effect that has crippled our faith community for so long (Martin, 2008).

If indeed relationship-building is the ministry modality where we make a meaningful and positive difference in young adult lives, what are the essential characteristics to foster in these realtionships?

Authenticity: The Art of Being Real

Young adults are desperately looking for relationships that are real, honest, and transparent (Martin, 1998; Stetzer, Stanley, & Hayes, 2009). Kinnaman and Lyons (2006) found young adults both inside and outside of the church to perceive it to be "hypocritical" and "out of touch with reality." They advocate for a corrective perception where "Christians are transparent about their flaws and act first, talk second" (p. 41). Opposed to the faux facade of "having it all together," young adults are seeking out genuine interaction with Adventists that are human, willing to admit they too are working through issues and challenges (Martin, 1999). Young adults want significant adults to be more relationally involved in their lives (Martin, 1995). Leaders who are willing to be authentic offer young adults a priceless opportunity for rich relationships.

This is not to say that adults are to develop an awkward relational climate by divulging too much and creating a confessional-type codependency. Nor does cultivating authenticity suggest that every conversation be centered on self-disclosure. Be gradual and genuine. The simple steps of building trust validates one's reliability. The humility to admit mistakes, then pursue forgiveness goes a long way towards authenticating a young adult relationship.

Sincerity is a vital facet to authentic relationships (Martin, 1999). An honest interest in a young adult, fueled by virtuous intention, builds relational bridges to new generations that have seen so little attention from parental and adult figures (Martin, 1995). Christ's authentic interest in the people He encountered stands out just as much in the 21st century as it did in the first.

Young adults want genuine, bona fide relationships. Don't pretend perfection, be human. Those who are willing to be real, honest, and sincere offer young adults a cherished opportunity for rich relationships (Martin, 2009a).

Belonging: Feeling Accepted and Involved

Dudley (2000) noted a contributing factor to young adult attrition is the "lack of inclusiveness of youth involvement in congregational life and leadership" (p. 206). According to Dudley's research respondents, an ideal church is one where young adults are "active in the life of the group." Young adults are of an age and ability where involvement and participation are vital to a sense of inclusion and importance (Martin, 1995). Contextualization occurs naturally when intentional efforts are made to integrate young adult leadership in the church. Leaders who are willing to minister collaboratively with young adults solidify their sense of purpose and significance as part of their faith community.

Dudley identified what makes the church attractive to new generations, "I think one of the things is [that] they found a place of belonging there; they felt like they were a part of a family; they felt like they were needed; they felt like the church depended on them; they felt acceptance there; they had friends there; it was a pleasant experience for them (Martin, 2009c)."

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists president, Jan Paulsen (2006) contributed, "We [church leaders] need to hear and understand what they [young adults] are saying, for it comes across clearly and strongly from those who are under thirty in our church. The point they are making is this: Being included, being trusted, being considered responsible, for elders to be prepared to take some risk with inexperience, are sentiments and attitudes which senior leadership must be willing to show, or we [young adults] are gone! We are gone simply because we have no ownership responsibility in the life of this church" (para. 14).

Dudley continued, "I think helping young people find tasks where they can use their various gifts is really important, because if you take this whole idea about wanting to be an adult—wanting to grow up, as it were, wanting to make that change that you need to do in your

life—then being really useful doing an important job is one of the things that makes you feel most adult (Martin, 2009c)."

Often these skills and abilities will take very different forms than ones recognized by generations past (Martin, 2000). Was it that long ago that we played music on vinyl discs and composed papers on typewriters? Our dexterity to integrate young adult skill sets and value their talents not only impacts their sense of belonging, but also our relevance to their peers. Being needed and feeling involved also bolsters their experience of security and meaning.

Young adults bring tremendous skills and talents along with mental dexterity to apply their knowledge with relevance. Adults who intentionally work synergistically alongside these new generations make a tremendous impact on their sense of belonging and purpose (Martin, 2009a).

Compassion: Do Something Now

All sociological markers seem to endorse the high value of service and characteristic social activism of emerging adults (Setan, 2008; Smith & Snell, 2009; Wuthnow, 2007). Their desire to be a compassionate contributor to society is widely expressed from environmental concerns to animal rights to humanitarian causes and beyond.

Unfortunately, compassion, which was once the trademark of faith communities, is not among the adjectives new generations place on religion any longer. Seventy percent of young adults perceive Christianity as "insensitive to others" (Kinnaman & Lyons, 2006).

Social action is high on the priority list of young adults, and their perception of an attractive church is one actively involved in helping people in need (Dudley, 2000). Funding missionary endeavors in far off lands is fine, but one-dimensional. Young adults are clearly

interested in being a community of character that does more than outsource compassionate endeavors (Martin, 1995). Global is good, but young adults also gravitate towards ministries that meet local needs in their neighborhoods and communities. They're eager to align with causes and advocacy that transcend denominational and socio-political lines for the sake of making a good difference in the world.

From short-term mission trips to protests against sweat-shop labor, young adults are adamant about the human responsibility to enact the ideals of God's kingdom here on earth (Dudley & Walshe, 2009; Setan, 2008). And it is in this humanitarian context where they could conceivably find value in religious organizational structures—the church has real meaning for them to the degree it lives out Christ's call to help those in need.

It is the Adventist who shares this passion for the good of people-kind and rolls up their sleeves to work alongside new generations that garners young adult admiration and the opportunity to build relationships. Life-changing relationships are forged while joining efforts, sharing in the self-sacrifice that offers relief from suffering.

Social action is high on the priority list of young adults, and their most meaningful relationships are built while helping others. Leaders who are passionate about making a difference among the marginalized and rally their community to action will find young adults joining them in the fray (Martin, 2009a).

Discipleship: On the Journey Together

Christian demographer George Barna (2001) suggested, "The chief barrier to effective discipleship is not that people do not have the ability to become spiritually mature, but they lack the passion, perspective, priorities, and perseverance to develop their spiritual lives."

This appears to be especially true during the young adulthood years that are marked with significant identity and relational transitions (Barna, 2006; Kinnaman & Lyons, 2007; Smith & Snell, 2009). Barna (2001) further indicted, "This [discipleship barrier] is partially attributable to our focus on providing programs rather than relationships that support growth."

The modernistic structure of ministry departments, the fear of crossing the daunting "generation gap," the human tendency to "flock together" with our own kind, and Western individualism are among many contributors to the relational isolationism that has been perpetuated for generations (Martin, 1998).

However, contrary to popular myth, bolstered by the rebellion of Boomers and angst of Generation X, today's young adults are different—they are looking to be discipled by adults and others (Martin, 1995; Stetzer, Stanley, & Hayes, 2009). Elmore (2008) describes young adults as not seeking a "sage on the stage," but rather, they long for a "guide on the side." Mentoring relationships foster life legacy and attachment, for both the young adult and the mentor (Dudley, 2000; Martin, 1999). When Christ's followers "go and make disciples," this impacts not only new generations but also the expansion of Christ's kingdom. Leaders who disciple young adults fulfill the Great Commission and, further, equip them to reach out to others.

"Clearly the reasons young people leave are a reflection both of their past experience in church and the new opportunities they have as young adults," noted Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research (2007). He continued, "To remain in church, a person [young adult] must have experienced the value of the teaching and relationships at church and see the relevance for the next phase of life (para. 19)."

The Great Commission challenges Adventist adults to go beyond superficial relationships with new generations. Although small talk and social mixing has its vital role in relational introduction, young adults crave deeper relationships that look beyond the exterior.

Dudley admonished, "I think we have to develop the capacity to see beyond the outward shell, to look inside. In my experience, I've seen all kinds of young people, some of whom apparently are very secular and have no religion at all. But if you really get to know these kids, they may be a little different from ours, but there are aspirations. I can hardly ever remember a time where I didn't find something good in them (Martin, 2009c)."

It is discovering and affirming young adult virtues that benchmarks effective discipling. As Christ was able to transcend the initial characteristics of His twelve disciples and reveal the noble attributes He was shaping in them, so too He calls us to nurture young adult lives.

The process of discipleship is not an overnight endeavor. It requires significant investments that don't promise certain and immediate dividends (Martin, Bailey, & LaMountain, 2009). However, there is no lack of evidence that such diligent discipling fosters life transformation (Martin, 1998).

Young adults are eager to be mentored by spiritually wise adults willing to pour their life experiences into new generations. Don't dictate direction, rather explore possibilities and lend guidance. Leaders who mentor young adults fulfill Christ's call to make disciples and, empower these new generations to expand His kingdom (Martin, 2009a).

As Simply Complex as ABC. . . and D

Being authentic. . . fostering belonging. . . expressing compassion. . . purposefully discipling – the acrostic creates the impression of simplicity. And in some ways, young adult relationships are simple.

Reflecting on religion, relationships, and new generations, Dudley commented, "It's not some kind of behavioral code, some complex theoretical experience. I want them [young people] to see it as a relationship experience. I want them to see that it is first a relationship with God, who is a Friend, and a relationship with their fellow human beings, where they help and support each other. At the center of true religion is this question of relationship (Martin, 2009c)."

As simply as Christ stated the Great Commandment, He bids us to fulfill the Great Commission in the lives of new generations.

Being authentic, fostering belonging, expressing compassion, and purposefully discipling launches the leader into meaningful relationships with young adults (Martin, 2009a).

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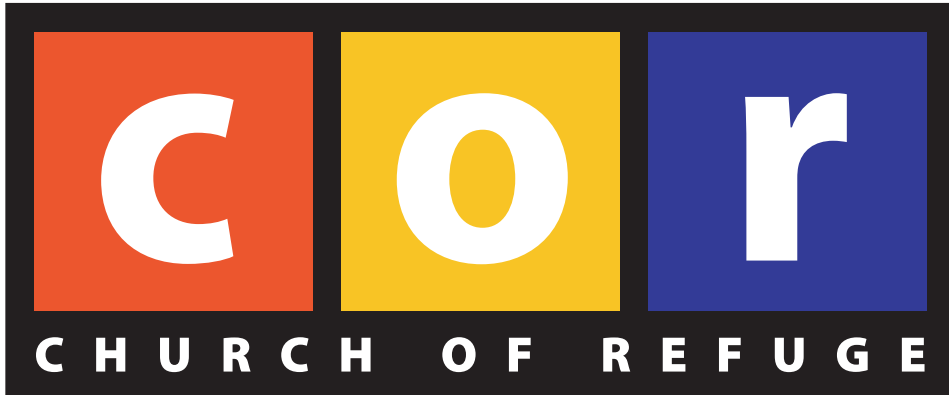
Certification Guide

— a guide to help your church become a supportive spiritual home for senior youth and young adults

A Ministry of the Center for Youth Evangelism

Revised 04/08/10

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INTRODUCTION

At least 40 to 50 percent of youth and young adults leave the Seventh-day Adventist church. To reverse this trend by helping local congregations meet the spiritual, social and community impact needs of youth and young adults, the Center for Youth Evangelism has launched Church of Refuge (COR). This organization supports churches in incorporating Nine COR Principles in their master planning. After demonstrating the inclusion of these principles, local congregations are certified as Churches of Refuge and are promoted to youth and young adults through web and print materials.

MISSION

Church of Refuge (COR) is a ministry support network sponsored by the Center for Youth Evangelism that assists local churches in providing meaningful, Christ-centered ministry that attracts and holds senior youth and young adults (age 18 – 35).

THEOLOGY

As Israel shifted its focus from the wilderness to Canaan, the promised land, Moses established an infrastructure for justice by calling for three cities of refuge (Deuteronomy 19:1-2). Individuals who had accidentally killed another person could escape vengeful family members by seeking shelter in one of these cities where they would find security and community (19:4-6).

Easy access to a city of refuge was of paramount importance (19:6). Consequently, Moses made three key provisions regarding access. First, he ordered that roads be built to these cities (19:3a) so those on the run would have an easier journey. Moreover, "road signs had to be put up on all crossings showing the way to the refuge… and all roads leading to a city of refuge had to be straight and level and always kept in good repair…" (Skolnik, 2007, p. 742).

Second, the locations of the three cities were strategically placed by dividing the land into three regions (19:3b). This ensured that no one would have to travel a great distance to find rest and security. "The cities of refuge were all upon the level plain or in valleys, in well-known areas. They were at convenient distances from one another, for the benefit of all the tribes" (Nichol, 1976, p. 278).

Third, in Deuteronomy 19:8, Moses made plans for increasing the number of cities of refuge from three to six to match the expanding territory given by God. Because the existence of safe cities was so important, provision had to be made for future adaptations so the population would continue to have access to the desired benefits. The cities of refuge must be where the people were, not simply where tradition had originally placed them.

Moses further confirmed this plan by designating six of the Levite's 48 towns as cities of refuge—three on each side of the Jordan River (Numbers 35:6, 14). Among other considerations, he instructed that the cities were to be inclusive; they were for Israelites, aliens and temporary residents (v. 15). Later, Joshua implemented the plan by adding Kedesh, Shechem, Kiriatharba (Hebron), to the three cities originally named by Moses—Bezer, Ramoth Gilead and Golan (Joshua 20: 7-8; Deuteronomy 4:41-43).

One significant benefit to using priestly cities was that these societal refugees could receive support from the religious leaders. "Hence, the place of refuge could become… a source of real blessing to the slayer as the priests and Levites taught him the way of Jehovah" (Nichol, 1976, p. 278).

Following this tradition, churches of refuge are inclusive, accepting, community-oriented, strategically placed, safe, spiritual environments for young adults. They are faith communities that

accept people for who they are, where they are. That is, friendship and acceptance are not given or withheld due to personal history, appearance, current belief system or other factors. Also, members know they will not be disrespected or excluded because of mistakes, questions or doubts. In these communities designed to meet their needs, young adults can seek God and grow in Him.

Furthermore, CORs are safe places for members to experiment with innovative spiritual expressions and community outreach. Some projects will succeed, while others will not; however, creativity continues to be fostered and appreciated. CORs take seriously Ellen White's (1946) statement that, "God would have new and untried methods followed" (p. 125).

While the Jewish "cities of refuge were a sanctuary, and thus a type of Christ," (Nichol, 1978, p. 947), churches of refuge are modern spiritual sanctuaries where young people are free to thrive in Christ.

PURPOSE

Church of Refuge is a ministry organization established by the Center for Youth Evangelism that performs the functions of consulting, certifying and marketing. The mission of Churches of Refuge is to help churches provide meaningful and relevant young adult ministry with the goal of keeping Adventist youth in the church while also reaching out to those who are not currently participating in a Seventh-day Adventist congregation. The target age range is 18 to 35.

Church of Refuge is also a designation given to a local church that can demonstrate it is following the Nine COR Values established by Church of Refuge (described below). These churches are also referred to as COR-certified churches.

Jimmy Phillips (2008) is an example of the type of person who could benefit from a Church of Refuge. Having recently graduated from college and facing a move to California to start a new job, he shares, "I don't know where I'll be going to church, or who I'll meet when I get there." He has other questions: "And what if I go to church? Will anyone notice I'm new and invite me over for lunch? Will people stop and ask me how I'm doing? I mean, really ask me how I'm doing...?"

A Church of Refuge understands that young adults have options in the area of spiritual growth. A local Adventist church is not just competing with the next closest SDA church for young members. It is also competing with other denominations, religions, social groups and even leisure activities like sleeping, shopping and attending sporting events. Churches cannot presume that college students and young professionals will choose to spend their free time at church simply because it is the right thing to do.

With this insight, CORs strive to meet young adults' spiritual, social and community impact needs. Churches must also develop the support systems that empower young people and makes it possible to meet these important needs. Diagram 1 illustrates how these factors form a model for considering young adult ministry.

Diagram 1: Young Adult Ministry Factors:

A. Spiritual Growth
B. Community Impact
C. Relationships
D. Empowerment
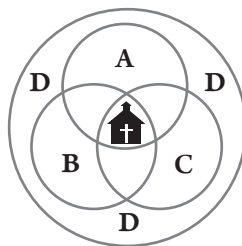
Neglecting any one of these areas will result in a ministry set that leaves some vital need(s) unmet, making it more likely that young adults will join a different faith community or no community at all.

The four components of this diagram can be broken down into nine critical factors. *Spiritual Growth* includes (1) the Sabbath experience and (2) discipleship that takes place throughout the week. *Relationships* is composed of (3) acceptance, (4) community and (5) support. *Community Impact* is (6) volunteer service to church members, the local community and the global community. Finally, the primary *Empowerment* factors are (7) leadership, (8) budget and (9) a commitment to change.

These nine principles are supported by biblical teaching, pastoral experience, the writings of Ellen White and original research conducted by the Center for Youth Evangelism.

Following is a brief summary of the Nine COR Values along with a comparison table. Each principle is described in more detail later in this guide, and further information is available online. Please visit us at www.churchofrefuge.org to learn about member benefits and registration.

NINE COR VALUES – *Summary*

Spiritual Growth

1. Sabbath – CORs are committed to providing a meaningful Sabbath experience.

2. Discipleship – CORs are committed to discipleship through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Relationships

3. Acceptance – CORs are committed to accepting people just as Jesus did.

4. Community – CORs are committed to building community.

5. Support – CORs are committed to supporting young adults with their life challenges.

Community Impact

6. Service – CORs are committed to demonstrating God's love through acts of service.

Empowerment

7. Leadership – CORs are committed to young adult leadership.

8. Budget – CORs are committed to investing money in young adult ministry.

9. Change – CORs are committed to change that leads to improved young adult ministry.

COMPARISON: COR, GC Strategies and NCD

Nine COR Values	SDA GC Youth Min. Dept. Strategies '06–'10	Natural Church Development (Christian Schwarz)
1. Sabbath	ST3 – Emphasis #1 ST4 – Emphasis #3, 5	Inspiring Worship Passionate Spirituality
2. Discipleship	ST2 – Emphasis #1 – 8 ST3 – Emphasis #6, 8 ST4 – Emphasis #4 ST5 – Emphasis #3, 6	Passionate Spirituality Holistic Small Groups Gift-oriented Ministry
3. Acceptance	ST3 – Emphasis #7	Loving Relationships
4. Community	ST3 – Emphasis #3	Loving Relationships
5. Support	ST4 – Emphasis #2	Loving Relationships
6. Service	ST7 – Emphasis #1 – 4	Need-oriented Evangelism
7. Leadership	ST5 – Emphasis #1	Empowering Leadership
8. Budget	ST7 – Emphasis #4	Functional Structures
9. Change	ST4 – Emphasis #3	Functional Structures

BEFORE YOU BEGIN ...

Before you begin the certification process, we want to highlight the need for personal and communal prayer throughout the endeavor. Success in youth and young adult ministry will not come from new methods, market research or leader networking without the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. What is God's dream for your church in your neighborhood? What is the next step the Holy Spirit is leading you to?

Also, please keep in mind that the Nine COR Values are not intended to be used in a cookie-cutter fashion. These principles can be expressed in very different ways. For example, urban and rural churches may look very different, but they can both meet the needs of local youth and young adults. We believe that the Nine Values can be implemented in unique ways that fit the needs and desires of young Adventists on any continent, in any neighborhood, and in any setting (e.g., the university, inner city or suburbs).

With this awareness of local needs, please view the *How To* portion of each of the following principles as a list of possibilities. No church will do all of these activites, and the lists are by no means exhaustive. Each *How To* list is intended to spark your creative thinking about what is possible and applicable in your situation.

Churches will not be certified based on doing prescribed ministries, but on living the Values in ways that are relevant for the target group in the church's local environment.

FIVE STEP CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Step 1: Become a member of the COR network by registering with Church of Refuge. There is a non-refundable one-time registration fee of $75.00 (plus $7.00 per week after certification).

Step 2: Prayerfully incorporate the Nine Values into your ministry mix. This process requires time and member involvement. The higher the involvement level of church leaders and members in the planning process, the greater will be the buy-in when plans are implemented. See Principle Implementation on page 8.

Step 3: Document your ministry activities for all nine ministry principles. Demonstrate that you are successfully incorporating the Nine Principles into your ministry planning and delivery and submit your report to Church of Refuge for review. See Principle Documentation on page 18.

Step 4: Upon successful completion of this review process, the church will be certified as a Church of Refuge and added to the list of churches approved and promoted by COR. If a church is not successfully approved as a Church of Refuge, it may re-apply when it believes it is ready.

Step 5: Certification will be renewed on a yearly basis upon submission of documentation regarding ministry practices and member opinions. This is to ensure that the ministry principles continue to guide the local church's activities as pastors, members, demographics and desires change over time. After two successful certifications, a three-year cycle for recertification will begin. Recertification will be required within six months after a change of pastors.

REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

While we believe revocation of certification will be a rare instance, we do want to make provision for this possibility. A church that has been certified may be reviewed if significant information comes to light of principles being ignored or negatively implemented. No status changes would be made without extensive communication with the local church under question.

VALUE IMPLEMENTATION

The following questions will guide your self-evaluation and future planning in the context of each of the Nine Values:

1. In what specific ways is our church working to fulfill this value? What are we currently doing?

2. How successful do we feel these activities, programs and processes are?

3. What new ministries, approaches or methods might God be calling our church to engage at this stage in our history?

4. What would be the benefits of these changes? Who would benefit and how?

5. What steps will be required to implement these new ideas? What human, material and financial resources will be needed?

VALUE DOCUMENTATION

Once you feel that your ministry is sufficiently in line with each principle, please submit documentation that includes a description of:

1. What you are doing to meet the needs of senior youth and young adults in each Value area.

2. How you concluded that these activities are meeting young people's needs (e.g., surveys, interviews, word of mouth, reports from young leaders, etc.).

3. How you plan to change and grow in this area in the next two to three years.

Please see the following examples and notice the differences in ministries and methods of verification. Also, Example 3 uses a slightly different format. Just be sure to present the information in a clearly understandable manner.

VALUE ONE

The Sabbath Experience – *CORs are committed to providing a meaningful Sabbath experience for senior youth and young adults.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs provide a meaningful Sabbath experience for youth and young adults by offering time and space for collective study, worship and socializing. Young leaders actively shape the activities and meetings for this age group.

COMPONENTS

- Vespers
- Sabbath School
- Corporate worship
- Music
- Preaching
- Worship service style
- Sabbath afternoon

HOW TO

- A space is available for young adults to meet at a desired time on the Sabbath (Friday night, Saturday morning/afternoon).

- A second service is available if the main service does not meet the needs of this group.

- Greeters at church are friendly and reach out to visitors.

- Visitors are recognized, welcomed and invited to return.

- Retention is analyzed from database numbers.

- Conversational Bible study groups are informative and practical.

- Music is worshipful and desirable for local young adults.

- Preaching is engaging, biblical, relevant, grace-filled, Christ-centered and action-oriented.

- Alternate vespers, Sabbath Schools and worship services are developed as desired.

SCRIPTURE

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
Hebrews 10:25

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

If there are those who prolong religious exercises to weariness, they are leaving impressions upon the mind of the youth, that would associate religion with all that is dry, unsocial, and uninteresting. ... Ardent, active piety in the teacher is essential. Morning and evening service in the chapel, and the Sabbath meetings, may be, without constant care and unless vitalized by the Spirit of God, the most formal, dry, and bitter mixture, and to the youth, the most burdensome and the least managed with plans and devices to make them not only seasons of pleasantness, but positively attractive.
EG White (Christian Education, p. 47)

Values

VALUE TWO

Discipleship – *CORs are committed to following Jesus Christ in all areas of life.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs foster a deep experience with our Creator by helping young members grow in their relationship with Jesus and by training them to live for others as Jesus did. Leaders model authentic spirituality and members are led to grow in the Spirit as they follow Jesus. Members spend quiet time alone with God. In-home groups foster faith and community. Ministry opportunites match members' spiritual gifts, passions, abilities and maturity.

COMPONENTS

- Small groups
- Ministry involvement
- Spiritual gifts
- Private devotions
- Doctrinal Bible studies
- All other 8 principles

HOW TO

- Leaders routinely pray with members.

- Members are encouraged to be alone with God for prayer, meditation, reading, jounaling and listening.

- Prayer summits and retreats are scheduled.

- Members participate in ministry, rather than merely observe it. Opportunities are made available for both inreach and outreach.

- Home groups for Bible study and community building are encouraged and supported. Bible truths are applied to current life situations in ways that foster open and honest personal sharing.

- Members are trained to personally engage in spiritual disciplines.

- Members are shown how to live for and like Jesus in all areas of their lives.

SCRIPTURE

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.
John 15:5-8

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Into the lives of the workers there must be brought frequent periods of reflection, study, and prayer. This is positively essential…. Now is your time for developing deep spirituality.
EG White (Pamphlets/SpTB09, p. 11)

VALUE THREE

Acceptance – *CORs are committed to accepting people just as Jesus did.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs accept people for who they are. We embrace all humanity regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, personal history, appearance, odor or other characteristic. We worship a God of variety, and we embrace those who are dissimilar to us. We acknowledge that our role is to love and to show respect. Regarding those who are dealing with sin in their lives (all of us), while we do not approve of sin, we also do not believe sinlessness is a precondition for friendship.

COMPONENTS

- Church greeters
- The Golden Rule
- Respect for all
- Cultural diversity
- Inclusion of visitors and new members into church life

HOW TO

- Greeters are friendly and hospitable to all.

- Members and visitors are recieved warmly.

- Leaders embrace all members rather than showing favoritism.

- Social and spiritual inclusion are quickly offered to all.

- Opinions and ideas are valued even if they are not accepted as orthodoxy.

- People of various backgrounds are valued as brothers and sisters. Cultural diversity is warmly accepted.

- The Golden Rule is lived.

- Social networks are on-ramps to church life, not barriers to it.

SCRIPTURE

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.
John 13:34-35

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Christ ate with publicans and sinners, as well as with Pharisees. When He was invited to their homes, He accepted the invitation. In this He offended the scribes and Pharisees, who thought that a Jew should not thus forget the wall of partition that tradition had erected. But with God there is no sect or nationality.

EG White (Daughters of God, p. 236)

VALUE FOUR

Community – *CORs are committed to building a caring and friendly community.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs incubate healthy, active relationships. A friendly atmosphere is created where people can connect. Steps are taken to ensure that visitors and new members are included in formal and informal social activities.

COMPONENTS

- Potlucks
- Social activities
- Book clubs
- Music groups
- Trips
- Outdoor activities
- Sports

HOW TO

- Meals are shared in homes and at church.

- Contact information for members and visitors is kept current.

- Social events are planned outside of church time.

- Newsletters keep all informed.

- Non-active members are invited to **belong** even before they **believe**.

- Cards are sent as appropriate.

- Missing members are contacted with care and tact.

- When activities are planned, extra energy is spent to ensure members at the margins are included.

SCRIPTURE

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
Acts 2: 42-47

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Christian sociability is altogether too little cultivated by God's people. . . . By social intercourse acquaintances are formed and friendships contracted which result in a unity of heart and an atmosphere of love which is pleasing in the sight of heaven . . . .
The warmth of true friendship . . . is a foretaste of the joys of heaven.
EG White (My Life Today, p. 204)

VALUE FIVE

Support *– CORs are committed to supporting youth and young adults with their life challenges.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for people to deal with life's stresses and their deepest questions. We also acknowledge that meeting people's material needs is a highly spiritual act.

COMPONENTS

- Career advising
- Pastoral counseling
- Medical care support
- Support groups
- Referral service
- Marriage enrichment
- Divorce recovery
- Financial management training
- 12-step programs

HOW TO

- Individuals in need are treated respectfully.

- Pastor makes referrals as necessary to supporting agencies.

- Members are encouraged to support each other emotionally and physically.

- Support in the form of health care, career advisement, and other life issues is available as far as possible.

- Members dealing with emotional issues (depression, suicide, self-esteem, etc.) are encouraged, not excluded.

- Members dealing with lifestyle issues (sex, gambling, shopping, etc.) receive support.

- Members dealing with substance issues (alcohol, smoking, drugs, etc.) find help to be free.

SCRIPTURE

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
Galations 6:2

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

There are souls who err, and who feel their shame and their folly. They are hungry for words of encouragement. They look upon their mistakes and errors until they are almost driven to desperation. Instead of ... reproving and condemning and taking away the last ray of hope that the Sun of Righteousness sheds into their hearts, let your words fall as healing balm upon the bruised soul. Be not like desolating hail that beats down and destroys the tender hope springing up in the hearts. Leave not the hungry, starving soul in his helplessness to perish because you fail to speak words of tenderness and encouragement.

EG White (Our High Calling, p. 295)

VALUE SIX

Service – *CORs are committed to demonstrating God's love through acts of service.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs actively engage the community in practical and relevant ways. Taking care of "the least of these" is in fact helping Jesus in his most distressing disguise. Service opportunities exist at three levels – giving fish, teaching people how to fish, and advocating for all to have equal access to the pond.

COMPONENTS

- Meeting the needs of church members
- Meeting the needs of the local community
- Meeting the needs of the global community
- Volunteering with established organizations
- Offer church-based services
- Knowing the local community's needs

HOW TO

- Acts of service are done in a way that respect the person served and evoke praise for our Father in heaven.

- Partnerships are formed with local service agencies (Habitat for Humanity, Red Cross, Amnesty International, United Way, ACORN, etc.)

- Acts of service benefit church members, community members and the global village.

- Activities may include:
  - *Renovating homes*
  - *Tutoring children*
  - *Responding to disasters*
  - *Cooking meals*
  - *Visiting homeless shelters*
  - *Hosting homeless individuals*
  - *Offering ESL classes*
  - *Conducting conflict resolution and peace initiatives*
  - *Advocating for those without a voice*
  - *Advocating for environmental stewardship*
  - *And countless others*

SCRIPTURE

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
Ephesians 2: 8-10

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

I have been shown that in our labor for the enlightenment of the people in the large cities the work has not been as well organized or the methods of labor as efficient as in other churches that have not the great light we regard as so essential. Why is this? Because so many of our laborers have been those who love to preach (and many who were not thoroughly qualified to preach were set at work), and a large share of the labor has been put forth in preaching.
EG White (Medical Ministry, p. 301)

VALUE SEVEN

Leadership – *CORs are committed to youth and young adult leadership.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs develop leaders by involving individuals with leadership potential in ministry and administration. The pastoral staff mentor and encourage young leaders and involve them in ministry planning and implementation.

COMPONENTS

- Recognition of leadership ability
- Resources for training and leadership
- Opportunities for involvement
- Budget and calendar development

HOW TO

- Young adult leaders are recognized by existing church administrators.

- Young adults are in church leadership positions beyond just youth and young adult ministry.

- Churches provide training and support for young leaders.

SCRIPTURE

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.
Romans 12: 4-8

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

We need to make use of the youth who will cultivate honest industry, who are not afraid to put their powers to task. Such youth will find a position anywhere, because they falter not by the way; in mind and soul they bear the divine similitude.
EG White (Messages to Young People, p. 34-35)

VALUE EIGHT

Budget *– CORs are committed to investing money in youth and young adult ministry.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs financially support young adult ministry by budgeting a set amount per person in this age group. This amount should reflect the size of this group relative to the rest of the church body and may be a constant percentage of the budget or a set amount for each senior youth and young adult.

COMPONENTS

- Budget for youth and young adult ministry
- Young adult involvement with the use of budget

HOW TO

- Church budgets include funds designated for youth and young adult ministry.

- Monies are used for resources and activities valued by young adults.

- Fundraising activities are undertaken.

SCRIPTURE

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
Luke 12:24

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Money is a blessing when those who use it consider that they are the Lord's stewards, that they are handling the Lord's capital, and must one day give account of their stewardship. It is the love of money which the Bible condemns as the root of all evil…
EG White (This Day with God, p. 280)

VALUE NINE

Change – *CORs are committed to change that leads to improved youth and young adult ministry.*

DESCRIPTION

CORs recognize that new programs, methods, styles and services will always be needed. What was effective yesterday may not meet the needs of people tomorrow. And new methods will be needed to reach those not engaged with the current ministry mix.

COMPONENTS

- Ongoing evaluation of programs and processes
- Experimentation with new ideas

HOW TO

- Ideas for change are sought, listened to, and fairly evaluated.

- Thinking outside the box is encouraged.

- Creativity is praised.

- Unsuccessful experiments are viewed as learning/training experiences.

SCRIPTURE

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.
Isaiah 43:19

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

We are to study the field carefully and are not to think that we must follow the same methods in every place…. Whatever may have been your former practice, it is not necessary to repeat it again and again in the same way. God would have new and untried methods followed.
EG White (Evangelism, p. 125)

EXAMPLE 1 – High Point SDA Church
COR Certification Application

December 1, 2008

Value 1: *CORs are committed to providing a meaningful Sabbath experience for senior youth and young adults.*

CURRENT MINISTRY

1. Friday evening vespers
    a. *Description*: Young members expressed little interest in a Friday evening meeting or get-together, so we are not currently pursuing this. If the need or desire arises in the future, then we will revisit this ministry option.
    b. *Verification:* In a series of brainstorming and planning sessions with youth and young adults, it was expressed that they are too tired on Friday night to meet for a religious service. Spontaneous, informal in-home get togethers were preferred.

2. Sabbath School
    a. *Description*: Previously, youth and young adults were expected to attend the regular joint Sabbath School and individual lesson studies. However, a separate group has been started for this age group. They have been given a room that fits their needs, and young adults with experience in ministry are leading this gathering, which includes singing, prayer, and conversational Bible study. This is the ministry that best caters to the spiritual needs of this age group.
    b. *Verification:* After three months, the group has grown to include 15-20 people on an average Sabbath Young church members have brought non-SDA friends, showing that they view it as a safe place for spiritual growth. Informal conversations with group members reveal that this is the favorite part of Sabbath for several individuals. Pastoral leaders continue to work with Sabbath School leaders to ensure continued development of this ministry.

3. Corporate Worship/Church Service
    a. *Description*: While the worship service itself remains a fairly traditional Adventist service (music, order of service, etc.), two changes have been made. First, youth and young adults are included on the podium to a greater degree. Each week, at least one young person participates by leading prayer, music, the children's story or other activity. Second, the pastor is working to present teachings that are relevant for this demographic. While the topics are useful for all, care is given to provide examples and stories that young people can relate to.
    b. *Verification*: Each week the lead pastor reviews the sermon with different young people for feedback and input. This gives the pastor insight into the questions and thoughts of young members. This ministry involvement lets the youth and young adults know they are valued and that their ideas matter.

4. Sabbath Afternoon
    a. *Description*: Currently, there are no church-organized events on Sabbath afternoon, though members are encouraged to use this time to socialize with peers or serve those in need. For a description of current Sabbath service activities and future plans, see Principle Six—Service.
    b. *Verification*: During planning sessions with young leaders, it was decided to keep Sabbath afternoons free. Young people didn't want to have their whole day planned for them. They desired to hike, serve in various local capacities, have in-home Bible studies, and just relax on different weekends rather than have set programs or activities planned for them.

FUTURE PLANS

1. We plan to offer periodic training for Sabbath School leaders. We will also purchase additional teaching and study resources for this class.

2. We are pursuing the possibility of hosting casual vespers in a church member's home once-a-month where a meal and discussion will be shared.

EXAMPLE 2 – Bayside East SDA Church

COR Certification Application

December 1, 2008

Value 1: **CORs are committed to providing a meaningful Sabbath experience for senior youth and young adults.**

CURRENT MINISTRY

1. Friday evening vespers

    a. *Description*: Youth and young adults meet in a church member's basement on Friday evenings at 8:00 PM (called Friday Night Live). They lead the event from start to finish, and each week is a different mix of music, prayer, games, activities, discussion, Bible study and/or projects. A group of 4 leaders plan the weekly gathering, but they involve others in planning and delivery. This group has grown to about 30 people per week, mostly university age students and unmarried people in their twenties. Sometimes this group goes until 10:00 or 11:00 PM. Sometimes the host family heads to bed, and guests leave through the back door. Group leaders make sure it is cleaned up and locked. The meeting generally has as much focus on connecting people socially as in feeding them spiritually.

    b. *Verification:* In the past the church has had no on-going vespers program. The fact that this has grown to 30 people in six months demonstrates that it is making "the Sabbath a delight." The church's youth pastor coordinates with the 4 leaders to give any support they need. He hears from them that people really like the meeting, and want it to continue. The youth pastor has also started a 10-question survey on www.polldaddy.com to get feedback on a periodic and systematic basis.

2. Sabbath School

    a. *Description*: The church already had a class for those age 20-29 (called Twenty-something). While those who attend say they value this class, it is not a widely attended meeting. This is because most young people in this church are students at the local university who have a chronic condition of morning sleepiness.

    b. *Verification*: Current Sabbath School members were asked if they are content with the class as led by the Youth Pastor, and they expressed being pleased with the current ministry. Other young adults who attend church but not Sabbath School were systematically called, and it was found that they wouldn't come to Sabbath School even if it had their favorite music and engaging activities. What they did want was something on Sabbath afternoon. See below.

3. Corporate Worship/Church Service

    a. *Description*: Greeters at the door keep an eye out for visitors and new members rather than spending extra time with old friends. We have a contemporary church service with a simple order of service, lots of music, and Christ-centered preaching. Rotating music teams have many young adult members who help choose the music as well as lead the praise times. After church, visitors are invited to join the 10-minute party in a convenient room where we can get to know them if they in fact want to be known. Otherwise they can slip out the door without any pressure. Snacks and drinks are provided at the 10-minute party, and friendly church members as well as pastors have the chance to meet new people and welcome them to the church. A database is used to keep track of member attendance. This is used to phone members who have missed more than 2 or 3 weeks. Calls are done in a manner that show concern rather than instill guilt.

    b. *Verification*: The Poll Daddy survey also collects information about opinions on the church service. The 10-minute Party also gives church leaders a weekly insight into who is coming and how they view the experience, though negative comments would not be collected here.

4. Sabbath Afternoon

    a. *Description*: This is the second main program or time dedicated to our youth and young adults, besides Friday evening. University students expressed a desire to meet on Sabbath afternoon for social and spiritual rejuvenation. At 2:30 PM, they meet in the church basement for 15 minutes of singing and a 15 minute presentation on some spiritual topic or story. Then they divide into groups to discuss the topic

with questions written by the presenter (who is different every week). Questions help participants dig deeper in the Bible and apply truth to their lives and situations. The discussion rarely goes longer than 30 minutes. After this hour that combines elements of Sabbath School and corporate worship, the group has an activity. They alternate between a service project (cooking at a homeless shelter once a month, and doing smaller projects the other week) and a social activity (e.g., Frisbee, walking, watching a religious film, or cooking something for the evening)

b. *Verification*: This group has been meeting for about a year and regularly has 40-50 people—both single and married attendees. The frequent inclusion of non-members demonstrates the fun and safety of this spiritual meeting. The same Poll Daddy survey shows that 85% of attendees highly value this get-together. We are always looking for new projects and activities, for new ways to keep the event fresh and energetic.

FUTURE PLANS

1. We are really happy with how things are going right now, so we aren't planning any major changes.

2. We will continue to support Friday Night Live and the Sabbath afternoon gathering. We will listen to ideas and implement them as changes become desirable.

EXAMPLE 3 – Rangeview First SDA Church
COR Certification Application
December 1, 2008

Principle 5: CORs are committed to supporting senior youth and young adults with their life challenges.

CURRENT MINISTRY

1. Pastoral Counseling
   a. Youth and young adults can make appointments with the head pastor to discuss relational and spiritual issues.
   b. For other counseling needs, referrals can be made to community counselors who respect the Christian philosophy and have affordable rates.

2. Career Advising
   a. Two church members who are active business people are available to review resumes and give career advice on a per-case basis.
   b. A third member works with the Better Business Bureau and is available for interview advisement.

3. Support Groups and 12-Step Groups
   a. The church does not operate any 12-Step Groups, but phone numbers are on-hand for those seeking group support for various addictions.
   b. Once a year the church sponsors a Dave Ramsey financial planning video series for young people.
   c. Other seminars are planned occasionally on relationships or other topics of interest.

4. Verification of Effective Ministry
   a. Pastoral follow-up with those who have been referred to other services has shown positive results. People voice feeling safe asking the pastor for help, while not assuming he can deal with every type of issue.
   b. Paper surveys are distributed at the end of every seminar to see if the material presented and format of the meetings was useful. Adjustments are made as advised.
   c. Twice a year questionnaires are distributed at church to find out what types of groups, classes or services would be useful over the next six months. In this way, services offered better matches the current needs of the church.

FUTURE PLANS

1. We plan to develop a better network for medical care support. This church has a number of young people lacking medical insurance, so we are putting in place a group of trained church members who would be willing to care for a set number of church patients per quarter. As we grow, we believe this will be an important ministry to build up.

ignition

RLED676
Selected Bibliography

Appendix D:

Selected Required Articles

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Frantic plans and desperate measures

Bill Bossert

Bill Bossert, D.Min., at the time of this writing, was pastor of The Shepherd's House: An Adventist Community of Love, Wausau, Wisconsin, United States.

Men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do . . ."
(1 Chronicles 12:32, NIV).

Recently, I walked through a downtown section of a small community here in central Wisconsin. I was shocked to see that within just a few blocks of each other, five church buildings stood without their congregations. They had been transformed into law offices, an art museum, and the like. Each congregation had either folded or merged with some other struggling group. It was a very sobering walk that day.

The Wausau church, where I am pastoring, seemed to have had a similar destiny. Twenty-five years earlier, it was a thriving church family. The membership numbers, however, told the awful truth of steady year-by-year decline. We all could see that the congregation was aging. Monte Sahlin calls it the "graying of Adventism."[1] He could have been observing our church family. We were slipping each year more and more into a boomer/builder congregation. We were also discouraged, frustrated, and didn't know what to do about it. All our previous efforts had pretty much failed.

The temptation, of course, was to panic. But we had already pushed the panic button, and nothing had changed for the better. Some of us wanted to do something very quickly to fix the problem, because desperate times called for desperate measures. Others seemed resigned to the inevitable. Who should be designated to turn out the lights for the last time?

But over the next three years, the Wausau church turned completely around. Remarkably, it actually found within itself those "men of Issachar." It found the men and women who came to understand the times, and then worked diligently to know what to do. It worked, and today the Wausau church has blossomed and grown. It turned from lots of empty pews into not knowing where everyone is going to sit. In times past, attendance lagged way behind membership. Now, attendance far exceeds membership. Today, more people under age 45 than over age 45 attend. The children's divisions are overflowing with eager, happy participants. Skeptics who wondered if anything would ever change are shocked.

Those who know the story and have witnessed the changes in Wausau often ask, "How in the world did you do that?" That's a good question. We had nothing really special to bring to the table. We are, and were, just a normal struggling church with normal people. No supertalented, supereducated leaders. We're just people from the heartland of America. But we were determined to do something, and we begged the Lord to lead us out of our impending disaster.

There were several things that helped us as we made our journey. Here is what we learned. Perhaps it will be helpful.

Who's to blame, and who's responsible?

It was a crucial first step for us to find out who was to blame and who was responsible for the serious problem we were in. In coaching other church groups, we have discovered that, like us, they tend to blame a lot of people and programs that are actually not part of the problem. Yet, they are frequently targeted as the culprits. Usually, these blamed leaders were not present, so it was a lot easier to verbalize the accusations.

You could probably add your usual suspects to the following list, but we felt that it was important to us to let these (and many others) off the blame hook. It really was a giant step forward toward addressing our issues and problems to not bring them up for blame anymore.

The last evangelist who had meetings at the church. Yes, the one who worked so hard to baptize only four or five people who didn't "stick" with it very long. The very one we had agreed wouldn't be very effective even before he started. We all agreed he was not the problem.

The conference/denominational leadership. We did give them half of 1 percent blame. But even at that, they really were not the problem.

The lack of spirituality among the members. We acknowledged that we all could get closer to Jesus in our personal walk. Suggesting that it's *a lack of spirituality* may be just a way of excusing doing nothing about the problem. The hope would be that if we all could "get more spiritual" the problem would be solved. We took this off the table believing we had plenty of spirituality to know we had to follow Jesus. We did this not in arrogance but in humble submission to Him.

The community is just too secular. We asked ourselves if we thought Jesus had written off our community. It was easy to look around and see evidences that He hadn't. We saw that He was indeed working in our community—we just weren't a part of that.

The mass Adventist media. We've handed out tracts and books, blanketed our town with TV and radio, put *Signs*

magazine news boxes at key spots—you name it. They didn't do the trick to make our church grow. We had accepted the fact that they were not the problem.

It was a bitter pill to swallow, but we had to admit we were to blame. The reason people, even our own young adults, were not walking into our church was what we were doing. That hurt. Our young adults told us that church was "boring." We later learned that really meant the church wasn't relevant to their lives. Why should they bother?

But the truth of facing who is to blame was somehow freeing. Recognizing the truth was our first step into taking responsibility for what happened or didn't happen at our church. Oh, we saw glimpses of the Lord working in our church family, but it seemed He was doing it in spite of us or outside our ministries.

What really is the problem?

It would seem this is the easiest part: defining the problem. And quickly we started saying what we thought (knew)

the problem was. Actually, we didn't really know. Congregations often think they know exactly what their problem is and how to fix it. Although they may come close at times to some of the issues, generally we all tend to miss the heart of it completely.

We determined not to do the "quick" fix but pour time and effort into seeing if we could discover what the problem really was within our church and out in our community at large. Although it wasn't rocket science, it did take some careful digging. Our research, data gathering, and study took almost four months. As we worked on it, a clearer picture of what had happened and why it happened opened before us. One of our elders exclaimed at just such a discovery work session, "Now I know why my kids don't come to church anymore. I can't believe how clueless I was. I finally get it!"

After we discovered what we thought were the issues in our growth problem, we didn't immediately jump into fixing them. Carefully, we built a process of change[2] that would hopefully make a

significant difference in the life of our church and keep our congregation together. We had already learned that creating frantic plans and implementing desperate measures were ministry program killers. We knew that if we weren't careful, we could split the church and have a dogfight on our hands. We also knew that a lot of us were skeptical that anything could really change and that many were somewhat insulated to any new ideas proposed.

Our change process

1. *Don't assume you know what the problem is.* This is the most crucial place to start real change. Most of the churches want to skip the first four steps in our process. We have learned that to do so can spell for a quick failure or lead to conflict and disaster. Starting here also helps the pastor move from being the "person with the correct answer," to just another traveler taking the discovery journey with the church family. The pastor needs to be a fellow traveler, not the expert. This keeps the issues from being clouded with personal agendas. This helps so much in allowing the church family to take ownership of the process, and to not just be dragged along as participants in another of the pastor's new programs.

2. *Gather as much data as you can before drawing any conclusions.* The more details and facts we gathered, the easier it was to see the true scope of the problem we faced. We checked out everything we could find including our community demographics with the United States Census online data.[3] Our church clerk gave us our church's demographics that included our membership, membership attendance at worship, and the attendance at worship of nonmembers,[4] as well. We wanted to know if our church reflected the community demographics around us. It did not. Facts and details here can be a pastor's friend, as it relates to helping the church accept the case for change. I didn't have to convince our church we needed change. The facts did that work for me. I just had to travel along with them toward the obvious conclusion.

3. *See who is missing.* We took the church clerk's reports and pitched the names listed there into the common generational groupings. We could easily divide our whole group into five categories (builder, boomer, buster, bridger, children).[5] Placing the data results in a bar chart made it easy for all to see exactly where we were not being effective. Clearly, our huge hole was reaching young adults. That missing group of people affected everything in the church. It was most visible every Sabbath in our children's divisions and our youth ministries.

4. *Start reading.* Once we knew exactly who was not attending, we then went in search of current information and solid research on how to reach that group. We read books by authors such as Roger Dudley, Dan Kimball, Brian McLaren, Reggie McNeal, Loren Mead, Thom Rainer, and Mike Regele. We looked for everything we could find on how to reach the young adults who were right around us. But once we started reading the wealth of information on the postmodern culture and its effects on young adults, we saw a much larger picture. We quickly saw that we needed help (1) to address the larger issues (the effects of postmodernism on our church) and (2) to accomplish a number of needed changes. We learned that we could change the way we did church and yet not compromise our faith. Understanding this helped relieve a lot of anxiety among us.

5. *Start making a list of areas that need to be addressed.* This is exactly where most churches want to start fixing the problem. We had to fight the urge to quickly fix it without doing our homework first. Even today, it is still a temptation as we continue to progress on our journey. But we frequently asked ourselves if we are again trying to do the "quick fix." We firmly believe real change cannot happen without carefully doing the preceding four steps first.

Once we had done our initial homework and got a good handle on the

reading, the list of what we needed to do was more reliable, easier to create, and more workable to implement. For us, we had to do something immediately about our boring (irrelevant) worship service. We clearly understood that if people couldn't encounter the Living God at our worship services, then something was desperately wrong. For other churches, it may be other things that are blocking effective growth, but the worship service frequently needs addressing.

Working together, we developed a list of about eight items to start. Since then, we have kept adding other items to that list. Our process of change continues even today. It really must. If you're doing the same thing now you were doing a year ago, you're falling behind. We understand that our society is in constant change. Therefore, we must move ahead and adapt our methods as well.

6. *Decide,* as *a group, what to do first.* We all recognized that we had to think first of the needs of those born after 1964. Yet, we didn't want to alienate our stalwart group of builders. We carefully crafted an 18-month strategy to keep all our members informed and moving together. The development of information that everyone could understand was crucial. This element of change brought people together by meeting in small groups in people's homes after our worship service. We divided our church family into those small meeting groups (8–12) to share a potluck lunch and chat through the issues with a prepared discussion leader. We sought input and permission from all our generational groups to move forward. At those sessions, people were allowed to ask questions, express their concerns, be heard, and receive information.

Since we are in the process of changing all the time, it is important for us to move together. Today we still work our process, but it is much easier now when people understand we're not going to dive off the deep end, and that what we are talking about they can have a part in making it happen. Through working the process, we have established trust and confidence in where we are and where we want to go. Of course, it's really not possible to get 100 percent on board, but we are close to it.

7. *Remember that change brings conflict.* We all knew that change would bring some conflict. By taking our time and bringing people along with us, we avoided a lot of incoming flak. Some at first grumbled about things being different than what they were used to. Some weren't sure if we were changing simply to justify abandoning our Adventist roots somewhere down the line. Some thought we were trying to be "like

the world." Some thought we were just trying to be popular. Time and process, however, helped settle those fears—to change the culture of our church. Our membership would tell you now that they believe the changes we made were Spirit-led.

8. *Keep moving forward. Don't give up.* There were times when we felt like giving up. Turning a church around is just plain hard work. When challenged in meetings about what we were trying to do, we knew we had to do a better job at providing information, a better job listening to the members' concerns, and a better job seeing if the Lord was really the careful Prompter behind the question. When we grew weary at times, we would remind ourselves of our predicament. That would push us forward again. We sought to have the longing desire for our community that is found in the heart of Christ. We knew we just couldn't give up if He was still out there working.

Here at The Shepherd's House, we believe we're at the beginning of our adventure, not at the end. There is an excitement about what may be just around the corner for us. We are being more aggressive in looking around us to find where the Lord is working right now in our community. We want to know how we can go to where He is and how we can work together with Him. We have determined that we want to actually follow Christ into our community. We know that if we keep doing the same things over and over again, we're not where He is. He is on the move. We believe we should be too. **M**

For further study

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3 *U.S. Census 2000 Demographic Profiles* (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Available from http://censtats.census.gov/

4 Nonmembers generally included the small children of attending members.

5 See Gary L. McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002).

Reaching out:
Making a difference with young adults

A. Allan Martin

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Editor's note: This article addresses a critical issue from the perspective of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and primarily in the context of North America. We believe, though, that similar challenges exist in other denominations and in other parts of the world.

I first learned the term, *the bystander effect*, in my undergraduate social psychology class. Wikipedia defines it as "a psychological phenomenon in which someone is less likely to intervene in an emergency situation when other people are present and able to help than when he or she is alone."[1] The article references a variety of horrific incidences in which dozens of bystanders "stood by" and did nothing as homicides occurred before their eyes.

I am still appalled by *the bystander effect,* but in another way. I found myself perplexed by how it may be impacting the church, allowing us to "stand by" and do nothing as a whole generation disappears from our ranks.

Disengaging, disenfranchised, and disappearing

In light of his landmark study of Adventist adolescents, Roger Dudley of the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University noted, "It seems reasonable to believe that at least 40 to 50 percent of Seventh-day Adventist teenagers in North America are essentially leaving the church by their middle 20s. This figure may well be higher."[2]

"This is a hemorrhage of epic proportions," warned Dudley and he suggested that, "the decline in membership of many mainline Protestant churches has been shown to be largely traceable to the shortage of young adults in the congregations."[3] Demographer George Barna noted that across Christianity, "the most potent data regarding disengagement is that a majority of twentysomethings—61% of today's young adults—had been churched at one time during their teen years but they are now spiritually disengaged (i.e., not actively attending church, reading the Bible, or praying)."[4]

David Kinnaman of the Barna Group elaborated, "The current state of ministry to twentysomethings is woefully inadequate to address the spiritual needs of millions of young adults. These individuals are making significant life choices and determining the patterns and preferences of their spiritual reality while churches wait, generally in vain, for them to return after college or when the kids come."[5]

This disengagement threatens the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America (NAD), Don Schneider, said, "We must [also] concentrate on the young adults of our Church. . . young people need to become more fully integrated into the Church. . . Is there some way of allowing young people to worship in a way that is meaningful while making it safe for them to do so? Young adults must be heard at leadership levels, and their feelings must be given validity."[6]

Paul Richardson of the Center for Creative Ministry, with headquarters in College Place, Washington, United States, reported that the median age for the Seventh-day Adventist community in North America, "including the un-baptized children in church families, is 58 . . . Among native-born White and Black members the median age is even higher."[7] The frightening implications of this figure are seen when that median age, 58, is compared to the median ages of the United States and Canada respectively—which are 36 and 37!

These trends are serious. There are more than 1,000 local churches (out of a total of about 5,500) in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America that have no children or teens at all. Fewer and fewer congregations have enough teens, young adults, or even young couples to provide "the critical mass necessary to conduct a youth group and other activities that have always been the life beat of Adventist churches."[8]

The departure of young adults from the local faith community has not gone unnoticed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church General

Conference president, Jan Paulsen, who has over the past several years entered into broadcasted conversations with this younger generation (http://letstalk.adventist.org). Paulsen noted: "They [young adults] have perspectives, they have hopes, they have dreams, and they have visions for the church which need to be considered seriously. If we don't, they will feel disenfranchised, as many of them already do."[9]

This trend would not be as perplexing if we have promptly identified it and addressed it with all the immediacy it deserves. Yet, the fact is, we haven't.

Over a decade ago in research on Generation X, I found comparable statistics of young adults disappearing from local faith life.[10] Dudley's research reflects more than three decades of scrutiny regarding the departure of new generations from the church. His book, *Why Teenagers Leave Religion,* was published back in 1978.

Beyond the statistical analysis, most of us know young people who have parted ways with our church. Many could exchange stories of peers or grown children and grandchildren who no longer participate in Adventism. We've known that young adults have been leaving our church for some time now and have been nothing but bystanders. Hence, the terrible "bystander effect."

Why they leave

The first question is, Why do they leave? Dudley found that young adult perceptions of the quality of relationship with religious authority figures played a significant role in their departure.[11] Leadership across Adventism concurred, stating that the reasons most frequently cited by persons who leave local church fellowship are found "in the realm of relationships, the absence of a sense of belonging, and the lack of meaningful engagement in the local congregation and its mission."[12]

Young adult Kimberly Luste Maran noted that "too often the negative words and actions of more mature church members push the younger set to feelings of anger, resentment, bitterness, and fear. . . Satan will employ any methods, including the use of church members, to tear us away from our loving Father."[13]

As part of the *Let's Talk* broadcasts hosted by Pastor Paulsen, 25-year-old Kadene said, "I think the best thing that church leaders can do for the youth of our church is get acquainted with them. Too often, church leaders sit on their high horses and judge our youth without having the slightest idea of what they are going through."[14]

Paulsen added, "We [church leaders] need to hear and understand what they [young adults] are saying, for it comes across clearly and strongly from those who are under thirty in our church. The point they are making is this: being included, being trusted, being considered responsible, for elders to be prepared to take some risk with inexperience, are sentiments and attitudes which senior leadership must be willing to show, or we are gone! We are gone simply because we have no ownership responsibility in the life of this church."[15]

Robert Wuthnow, professor of sociology at Princeton University, noted various trends that are impacting young adults and contributing to the fading American religious landscape. "My view is that congregations *can* survive, but only if religious leaders roll up their sleeves and pay considerably more attention to young adults than they have been."[16]

Why are young adults leaving? Although the responses may be as diverse and personal as each young adult, clearly the lack of mutually valued relationships that engender trust and shared support have left both parties, young adults and Seventh-day Adventism, at risk of going under.

Pointing out heroes

So what is the solution? The Wikipedia article on "the bystander effect" made a fascinating recommendation. "To counter the bystander effect when you are the victim, a studied recommendation is to pick a specific person in the crowd to appeal to for help rather than appealing to the larger group generally. If you are the only person reacting to an emergency, point directly to a specific bystander and give them a specific task such as, 'You. Call the police.' These steps place all responsibility on a specific person instead of allowing it to diffuse."[17]

To burst through the bystander effect, I am pointing TO YOU as a potential hero in the lives of young adults:

Parents. During the important transitional years of young adulthood, you play a vital role not only in the life of your child but also their sphere of friends. Make your home and your presence one that engenders hospitality, safety, and wisdom.[18]

Connie Vandeman Jeffery shared a simple formula of food, friendship, and follow-up that made her home a safe harbor for young adults.[19] If you are an adult without grown children in your home or don't have children of your own, make the simple effort of building an authentic relationship with a twenty-something. It's as simple as a lunch invitation, for starters.

Pastors. If the statistics are correct, your influence and impact on the climate of your church is desperately needed. Setting the culture of young adult inclusion is heavily dependent upon your vision and leadership.

Bill Bossert described how his dying church recognized their fate and took heroic steps to turn the tide. With careful self-analysis, practical research, and courageous yet inclusive change steps,[20] the Shepherd's House reversed the attrition tide, resulting in a 60 percent increase of young adults in their church.[21] Change does not come without challenges and discomfort, but in order to break through the bystander effect, pastors need to be heroic so as to inspire their congregations to be likewise.

Professors/Teachers. There is a profound influence that educators have in the lives of young adults. Beyond academic or professional prowess, you are called upon to invest in young adult spiritual development as well.

While teaching at Spicer Memorial College, Falvo Fowler found that his simple initiative to start a Sabbath School with his students made a profound impact on what was once a "nominal" Adventist experience in the lives of many students.[22]

Jimmy Phillips noted the "invisible majority"[23] of coeds are in schools outside of our Adventist system, and I suspect many Adventists are among their faculty and staff. Thousands of Adventist young

adults will benefit from your efforts to collaborate with local churches and your respective college to establish student groups, faith fellowships, and discipleship communities.[24] Adventist Christian Fellowship (http://www.acflink.org) is a great resource to support your initiative. Your advisement and mentoring are keys to battling the bystander effect, so rampant on these campuses and in the churches adjacent to these colleges and universities. The journal *Dialogue,* published by the Education Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,[25] is also another great resource.

Leaders. Vision-casting leaders offer momentum towards constructive change. You are pivotal heroes with the ability to rally the crowd to action.

Mike Cauley, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Florida, challenged his constituency, "Do we care enough to learn the language of kids [young adults]? I'm as serious as a heart attack. We have a broken world. We have a society of Millennials [young adults] who are hungry for the gospel, and we aren't cutting it. . . . But I'm going to be asking them [Conference Executive Committee] to begin to plant churches to reach kids under 25. I'm going to be asking them to help us figure out how to become churches in the biblical, New Testament sense. . . . Somehow we have got to bring those kids, not to a place of entertainment, but to be fully committed disciples. . . . We need to give them the Church."[26]

Not only your endorsement, but also your conspicuous actions[27] as a leader will serve as a catalyst to transform young adult attrition statistics into retention trends.

Peers. There are stellar young adults who have not only remained in the church but are faith activists.[28] You are among the most influential and powerful—not only in taking heroic action with your drifting peers but also in rejuvenating Adventism and fostering a movement that will draw new generations.

"Many of the Adventist pioneers first began their work when they were teenagers. Pioneers such as Ellen Harmon White, John Loughborough, J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, and John Harvey Kellogg were teenagers and young adults when they began making an impact in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They were young, vibrant, and on fire for God!"[29] Other denominations also were started by youthful leaders.

In fact, it was the same age group (young adults) that was passionate about the early Adventist movement. "J.N. Andrews was 22 when he started on the publishing committee. 22! He was a kid. . . Uriah Smith was 21 when he joined the publishing work, and James White was 21 years old when he came upon the scene and began to preach the Advent doctrine."[30]

We need a movement of that caliber right now. Those heroes from our Adventist heritage took valiant steps to save a drowning world. Today, young Adventists are just as essential in the embrace and encouragement of their peers. Peers, as well as parents, pastors, professors, and presidents must build restorative relationships with young adults.[31]

Bystanders no longer

If the principles of social psychology hold true, you may have come to the end of this article and are now saying to yourself, *That's a fine article. I'm glad that the issue of young adults leaving the church is being addressed. It's good that someone is doing something about it.*

That sentiment is the tragic reality of "the bystander effect." It's a phenomenon that has already seen generations of young Adventists fall away, while potential heroes have been spectators. We must no longer be bystanders. So I am pointing you out. If you've read to this point, I am pointing at you: *take a step today to begin an authentic relationship with a young adult.* Become a mentor. Have lunch with them. Listen carefully. Open your home. Offer your heart. There are as many options as there are young adults. Start with one action with one young adult today.[32]

We're horrified when we hear stories of "the bystander effect" when someone is being murdered. Yet, what are we doing when we stand by and do nothing when young people, perhaps right in front of our eyes, are leaving us and, as so often is the case, leaving the Lord who died for them? M

1 Wikipedia, "Bystander Effect," December 18, 2007, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bystander_effect (December 19, 2007).

2 Roger L. Dudley, *Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church: Personal Stories From a 10-Year Study* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 35.

3 Ibid., 22.

4 George Barna, "Most Twentysomethings Put Christianity on the Shelf Following Spiritually Active Teen Years," in *The Barna Report,* September 11, 2006, http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=245 (September 12, 2006), paragraph 6.

5 Ibid., paragraph 8.

6 North American Division, "2005 Year-end Meeting #3," *Friday Fax* [Electronic Newsletter], November 1, 2005, paragraph 6.

7 Center for Creative Ministry, *INNOVATIONewsletter, 12(19)* [Electronic Newsletter], November 11, 2006.

8 Ibid., paragraph 2.

9 Jan Paulsen, "Paulsen Sermon: Service–An Attitude," in *Special Report: Annual Council 2006,* http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=774 (December 20, 2007), paragraph 1.

10 A. Allan Martin, "The ABCs of Ministry to Generations X, Y, and Z," *Journal of Adventist Youth Ministry,* 5(1&2) (Winter–Spring, 1995): 37–46. [Also posted at http://www.tagnet.org/dvm/ABCs.html.]

11 Roger L. Dudley, *Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church,* 2000.

12 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee, "Conserving Membership Gains—An Appeal," April 10, 2007, http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/other_documents/conserving-gains.html (December 19, 2007), paragraph 5.

13 Kimberly Luste Maran, "Where Is the Joy?" in *Adventist Review,* November 16, 2000, http://www.adventistreview.org/2000-1551/story1.html (December 26, 2007), paragraph 23.

14 Let's Talk, "Have Your Say," http://letstalk.adventist.org (December 21, 2007).

15 Jan Paulsen, "Paulsen Sermon: Service—An Attitude," paragraph 14.

16 Robert Wuthnow, *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty- and Thirty-somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 230.

17 Wikipedia, "Bystander Effect," paragraph 5.

18 North American Division Family Ministries, http://adventistfamilyministries.com/, offers an array of resources and support to parents in the discipling of new generations.

19 Connie Vandeman Jeffery, "My Starbucks Kids," in *Adventist Review,* January 16, 2003, http://www.adventistreview.org/2003-1503/story1.html (December 24, 2007).

20 Bill Bossert outlined the steps his congregation took at http://adventistreview.org/article.php?id=1300 offering further specificity to their strategy.

21 Bill Bossert, "The Wausau Church Story," in *Adventist Review,* August 9, 2007, http://adventistreview.org/article.php?id=1299 (December 24, 2007), paragraph 27. See also B. Bossert, "Frantic Plans and Desperate Measures," *Ministry* (August 2007): 9–12.

22 Falvo Fowler, "Real," in *Adventist Review,* July 18,

2002, http://www.adventistreview.org/2002-1529/story2.html (December 24, 2007), paragraph 16.

23 Jimmy Philips, "The Invisible Majority," in *Adventist Review,* September 20, 2007, http://www.adventist review.org/article.php?id=1371 (December 24, 2007).

24 Ron Pickell, North American Division Adventist Christian Fellowship Coordinator, offers some insights as to what college students are looking for in a church at http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=1372.

25 For more information, go to http://education.gc.adventist.org.

26 Mike Cauley, "2007 Florida Camp Meeting Sermon" [MP3 audio file], June 2, 2007, http://www.floridaconference.com/campmeeting/MP3/2007/FLCM_06-02-07_1930.mp3 (December 25, 2007) (also available as transcript from http://www.floridaconference.com/campmeeting/cauley2007.html), paragraph 48.

27 It is conspicuous actions of leadership that reveal their most important values. A couple of local conference presidents have already instated young adult ministry directors at the conference level. The Christian Leadership Center, http://www.andrews.edu/clc, recently endorsed the development of young leadership training, challenging presidents and all church officials to mentor new generations of leadership.

28 Kimberly Luste Maran, Wilona Karimabadi, Omar Bourne, "Adventist Review's Top 20 in Their 20s," *Adventist Review,* September 14, 2006, http://www.adventistreview.org/article.php?id=715 (December 24, 2007).

29 Lynette Frantzen, "Young Adventist Pioneers," *Adventist Review,* May 27, 2004, http://www.adventistreview.org/2004-1522/story2.html (December 24, 2007), paragraph 2.

30 Mike Cauley, "2007 Florida Camp Meeting Sermon," 2007, paragraph 11.

31 For over a decade, dream VISION ministries, http://www.dreamVISIONministries.org, has offered training and resourcing in building authentic relationships with new generations. I offer a theological model for young adult ministry, http://www.adventistreview.org/2000-1556/story2.html, challenging young adults to see their role as ministers to their peers.

32 A. Allan Martin, "Won by One: What if I Did Just One Thing. . ." *Adventist Review,* 175(36), September 1998, 20, 21.

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LETTERS *continued from page 3*

when he gave Bible studies in the homes of people.

I think the Bible text used by Pastor Lawrence at the beginning of his article (Acts 20:28) is very basic for the training of pastors. Pastoral visitation in the homes of our church members needs to be promoted.

—*Vernon L. Chase, Goldendale, Washington, United States*

Nebuchadnezzar syndrome

I wish I had learned—early in my ministry—the lesson that Laurence Turner discussed ("The Nebuchadnezzar Syndrome," March 2008). I had a "healthy" dose of that disease.

I thought I was a good preacher, and my wife backed me up on it. I thought I had a large number of Bible studies; and compared to other pastors, I did. I had a lot of baptisms to show for it. But, as you can see from this letter, I'm still struggling with the syndrome.

I'm retired now and should have learned my lesson long since. God has surely given me enough grass to eat through the years, and even now I taste it from time to time. Thank you, Pastor Turner, for putting into words a message I've needed all my life.

—*Thurman C. Petty Jr., Burleson, Texas, United States*

First person preaching

Thank you for Derek Morris's article, "First-Person Narrative Preaching: A Fresh Approach for Telling the Old, Old Story" (May 2008). Such a method brings the Scriptures alive. There is tremendous hunger in our churches for expository sermons that let the Scriptures speak for themselves. God's Word has power—if only the preachers would let it speak.

Philosophy, psychology, social programs, and the media have their own place. But they can't be substituted for the Word. We as a people are Bible illiterate because we are starving for the Bread of Life. Young people are fleeing the church because of the shallow and lifeless messages that don't nourish their souls.

Dr. Morris makes an excellent point that creativity and engaged Bible study will revitalize sermons. I join the author in the plea to all ministers: "Please, let the Scriptures speak!"

—*Iryna Bolotnikova, Cincinnati, Ohio, United States*

The common touch

Marguerite Shuster's article, "Love God, Love Your People" (March 2008), reveals a warm, caring character in the writer. Her material is excellent; she is not carried away by her high position at her seminary. She writes with a sense of lightheartedness, no theological jargon—all too common in many journals. And she tells her story without being shackled by an overdose of holiness.

This is one of your better articles. The rest are of high quality too.

—*Reverend E. Bruce Ross, retired pastor, United Church of Canada, email*

Doing God's will

I very much agree with Nikolaus Satelmajer's editorial in the May 2008 issue ("Titles Do Not Make Leaders"). However, I slightly disagree with his closing statement. In it he wrote that God will, in the final analysis, ask us, "What have you done?" According to Matthew 7:21–23, many who are lost when Jesus returns will have done many wonderful things in His name. But the issue is, Have we been faithful in fulfilling God's will (Matt. 7:21)? So instead of God asking us "What have you done for Me?" I believe He will ask, "How faithful have you been in following My will in ministry?"

If we are following our own plans and ideas in ministry, we will be building with "wood, hay, stubble" (1 Cor. 3:12), that will not abide. But if we are following the will of the Father in our ministry, we will be building with "gold, silver, precious stones" that will endure eternally.

—*Dennis Smith, pastor, New Haven, Connecticut, United States* M

My MacGyver View of YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

A. ALLAN MARTIN

ALL YOU NEED TO HAVE AN EFFECtive young adult ministry is an identification card, an extension cord, and silly putty.

ID Card:
Ephesians 3:14-21; Acts 2:17, 18

OK, I will admit it, there are times that I am very guilty of coveting. When I go to a concert I confess to envying those who have an "all access pass." I have this fantasy about being in the middle of all the action instead of being in the audience. Even if it was something as relatively unimportant as stocking the artists with bottled water or carrying away mike stands, I would still relish being identified with the performers. To be able to flash my ID pass and have security let me through with a hint of familiarity—to kid around with the stars, to have a part in the performance—OK, so it's wishful thinking.

But in my view, it's not a dream. Christ has given young adults an identity. No, it isn't a badge or a little plastic sleeve on a string. It is something internal (Eph. 3:16), something metaphysical that gives us supernatural abilities to believe (Eph. 3:17), to love (Eph. 4:1-3), and to dream (Acts 2:17, 18).

In this world it's no small task to believe. With all the broken promises, fallen role models, and superficial frauds/clones, it's no wonder our generation is skeptical. But I believe that Jesus has empowered Christian young adults to exhibit faith, and faith really sticks out in our world. A belief in the midst of unbelief is powerful. I feel God has called young adults to be true believers. Beyond knowledge, our belief is based on something far more existential, more at the core of us. So instead of looking at a badge for our identity, people can look into our eyes.

And in our eyes they will see love. Love that we don't even understand. All right, so it sounds a little goofy, but authentic love is scarce these days. Sure, there's lots of utilitarian love and sexual love and hedonistic love. But you'll be hard pressed to find Christlike love among our peers. Christ has, however, given us an identity that is character-

ized by an ability to love. To love the unlovely. To love the enemy. To love the lonely. To love ourselves. It is a love that is both noun and verb. Young adults whose eyes exude love have hearts that act on it. People are drawn not only to our eyes but also to our actions.

In our actions we can reveal our dreams. I am convinced that Acts 2:17, 18 is talking about us. Christ has called our generation to dream the dreams and envision the visions that will bring about His return. Not only prophetic dreams; Christ is using our creative dreams, our holy ambitions, and our powerful visions to transform our world. A revolution is happening. Not like a political campaign, this movement is spiritual, and I get the keenest sense of this when I chat with young adults. God is molding our dreams, and I am taken back by how powerful and parallel these visions are. In local, regional, national, and global ways Jesus is using young adult dreams and visions to change our world and bring about the next.

Extension Cord Evangelism:
2 Corinthians 5:17-21

I believe that young adult ministry is like an extension cord. Christ is the power that surges through us; every bit of our wiring is filled with His Spirit. Our ministry is to be a conduit by which others are empowered by His love. Paul says that Christians (I take that to mean *all* believers, not just pastor types) are new creatures who are given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:17-19). So to translate liberally, in the same way Christ plugged in to God and served as our extension cord to God Paul is saying we are extension cord ministers, connecting others to Christ. This is key. God is not opting to do this thing called ministry without us. He is doing it "through" us. And to me that makes lots of sense.

As good as some of our churches are, I feel very few young adults will step into a church without someone they know and trust going with them. As eloquent as some of our preachers

are, I feel very few in our generation respond to a talking head as well as they relate to a personal relationship with you or me. As sound as our doctrines are, I feel very few of my seeking friends and associates are convinced about Adventist Christianity unless they see what my beliefs are doing to make my life attractively different. God's approach makes a lot of sense. In the same way He used Christ to connect with you and me, He is calling us to connect with our peers,

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You have an ID card, an extension cord, and Silly Putty. What are you going to do with them?

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allowing His powerful love to surge through us.

So young adult ministry as I see it is based on the power of relationship. Creating relationships of integrity not only with believers but also with seekers is something that young adults do every day. It's reality. The other reality is that sometimes Christian young adults opt to disconnect from the Power Source during the workweek so as not to be spiritually "live" in their secular circles. But my sense is that our ministry is based on the idea of empowering ourselves to be who we have been called to be—extension cords. To be connected 24/7. I, like my peers, am drawn to people and places where I feel connected, where I feel safe to be vulnerable, where I can sense there is a power bigger than myself. That was what was so magnetic

about Jesus Christ. And Christ is what is so attractive in Christian young adults and the communities we create.

Silly Putty Community:
1 Corinthians 12

I like to think of the Christian community created by young adult ministers (that's you and me) as being made of Silly Putty. Some may have thought of the church at one time being like a wooden Peg-Board that only certain-shaped pegs had rigid slots to fill. Only square-shaped pegs could fit in, only certain forms of ministry, only certain types of roles.

Not our church. Ours is one in which each believer is able to take their unique shape, stick themselves into our Silly Putty church, and find a perfect fit. Our Christian community is able to lift even those with comic-strip-like gifts right off the page and into our church. Silly Putty can do that. Paul talks about a variety of spiritual gifts, ministries, effects, but the same Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-7). In my mind, the Holy Spirit is the Silly Putty of our church that, even with the diversity of our gifts, is the unifying common denominator that embraces us all.

So we embrace our diversity and welcome every form and shape of spiritual ability. Why? Because we need it. Paul's metaphor of the body is so on target (1 Cor. 12:14-27). Who wants a body of all noses?

But further, we embrace each other because, like a body, we need each other. The living out of our Christianity is not an act of isolation; it is an act of communion, an act of relationship, an act of interdependence. It is community. Young adult ministry, in my view, is the admission on our part that we need each other and are willing by His Spirit to be the church. Our worship happens not only between the opening and closing hymn, but in the midst of our lives. In our fragmented and divorced world I want to be part of a Silly Putty community that sticks together. I want to be where I fit in. I want to be where I am needed. I want to be where I can

relate. I want to be lifted right off the page. Silly Putty can do that.

MacGyver View of Young Adult Ministry

I never watched faithfully, but in the midst of my channel surfing I was always amused by the show *MacGyver*. In a space of little less than an hour he could foil any criminal plot by rigging up a piece of chewing gum, a staple, and three Mentos. Between commercials it was fun to see him take what he had in hand and put it to use to save the day.

OK. So you have an ID card, an extension cord, and Silly Putty. What are you going to do with them? That's the synergy question of young adult ministry. This spiritual revolution is not about some big religious program or some great event. It is not about a dramatic change in some organized religious institution or the election of some visionary young adult to regional office. It is about you and me deciding to take what God has given us—an identity, a mission/ministry, and each other—and live it out 24 hours, seven days.

I am convinced that your role in young adult ministry is vital and just as important as anyone else's (1 Cor. 12:22-25). You know your own struggles to love yourself as Christ loves you. You know someone who doesn't know Christ who may see Him only through your eyes. You know a Christian sibling who is hurting and needs your support. And if I were a gambling man, I would be willing to bet that no pastor, no church program,

no religious tract can address these issues better than you. So I would consider you indispensable to young adult ministry in this regard. God gives you the power; Christ gives you the call; the Holy Spirit gives you the support. Card, cord, and putty? Go ahead. Save the day.

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Recommended Reading

T. Hershey, *Young Adult Ministry* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Books, 1986).

H. R. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951).

M. Senter, *The Coming Revolution in Youth Ministry: And Its Radical Impact on the Church* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1992).

Christian Education Journal

Guest Editorial
Introduction to the Mini-theme:
College and Young Adult Ministry

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In this mini-theme issue of the *Christian Education Journal*, we explore the area of college and young adult ministry. While age 18 is the typical marker for the beginning of collegiate ministry, the precise age range indicated by "young adulthood" is currently a hotly contested topic among psychologists and sociologists. Psychologist Jeffrey Arnett (2000) has recently posited a new life stage—emerging adulthood—to span the years (roughly 18 to 25) between adolescence and true adult status. With the typical marks of adulthood—the completion of education, marriage, financial independence, and the beginning of a career—delayed both by social factors and personal choices, "emerging adults" experience a prolonged stage of exploration and self-definition that carries its own unique challenges and opportunities. "Having left the dependency of childhood and adolescence, and having not yet entered the enduring responsibilities that are normative in adulthood," he notes, "emerging adults often explore a variety of possible life directions in love, work, and worldviews" (p. 469). On the other end of the age spectrum, sociologist Robert Wuthnow (2007) has recently suggested that young adulthood in America actually lasts into the early 40s. Delays in adult status and stability, combined with the extension of the life span, indicate that the middle of adult life does not occur until closer to age 50. In light of such research, perhaps it would make sense to consider college and young adult ministry as inclusive of individuals ranging from ages 18 to 40.

While there is little consensus as to the specific ages that mark the beginning and end of young adulthood, there is general agreement that this life stage constitutes a pivotal and formative time of life and faith formation. Even a surface analysis of the years between age 18 and 40 reveals a dizzying array of critical life tasks: choosing a college, choosing a life calling and vocation, moving away from home for the first time, buying an apartment or home, making independent financial decisions, forging new friendships and

relationships with members of the opposite sex, and the potential for engagement, marriage, and parenting. These years also mark a formative stage for developing a worldview and faith stance while being confronted with a wide array of competing perspectives. Leaving home, as Sharon Parks (2000) has described, is often attended by the need to take ownership of one's faith—to "set one's heart"—and to select mentors and communities that will challenge and nurture that faith over the long haul (p. 64). As Rick Dunn's (2001) helpful "flight" metaphor suggests, young adulthood can be a wonderful "runway" enabling students to take off into a life of productive service for the kingdom of God (pp. 208–209). For others, it can be a very difficult and lonely journey.

Family-oriented congregations that prize stability often have difficulty determining how to address this transitional population. Despite the variety of ministries aimed at college and careers, twenties and thirties, young adults, young marrieds, and singles, the gap between high school ministry and middle adult ministry continues to plague both evangelical and mainline churches. Wuthnow (2007), in fact, contends that the institutional church has largely abandoned young adults at the time they are most in need of communal support:

> The amazing thing about this pattern of support and socialization is that it all comes to a halt about the time a young person reaches the age of twenty-one or twenty-two. After providing significant institutional support for the developmental tasks that occurred before then, we provide *almost nothing* for the developmental tasks that are accomplished when people are in their twenties and thirties. . . . It means that younger adults are having to invent their own ways of making decisions and seeking support for those decisions. . . . It is little wonder that social critics write about the problems associated with *individualism*. In the absence of any institutional sources of support and stability, young adults are forced to be individualistic. They have no other resources but themselves. (pp. 12–13)

Reflecting this neglect, the research literature on college and young adult ministry is quite sparse when compared with work on children and youth. Wuthnow (2007) asserts that most decisions regarding ministry to young adults emerge from the speculations and anecdotes of "self-styled cultural experts" rather than from systematic research and understanding of social change (p. 2). The six articles that follow, therefore, serve as an attempt to initiate research in this much-needed domain. While the focus in this issue is largely upon collegians and emerging adults, our hope is that these analyses will spark further work on the later years of young adulthood, a population ripe for more advanced exploration.

Chris Kiesling's introductory article provides a broad and thoughtful perspective on the changing nature of young adulthood in contemporary North America. Analyzing the psychological and sociological factors shaping today's collegians and young adults, he provides a model of how we should think biblically about young adulthood and how we should begin to formulate ministry strategies marked by theological depth. Following this introduction, the three subsequent articles all address issues related to "emerging adulthood." Wes Black takes a look at the factors most responsible for declines in active religious participation following the high school years. Stemming from his expansive survey research on the faith journeys of young adults, Black identifies the issues most clearly correlated with collegiate religious decline, analyzing influences from both the teenage years and from the new collegiate setting. In a similar vein, Kara Powell shares the results of the first wave of a 3-year longitudinal study of high school seniors, looking specifically at attitudes about youth group, levels of religiosity, and elements of both support and risk. Her conclusions provide very helpful information for college and young adult ministry leaders as they consider how to form a bridge between youth group experiences and this new context. Finally, Andrew Smith examines the intriguing issue of emerging manhood during the young adult years. Based on interviews conducted in the New Zealand context, he takes a look at the ways in which mentors, Christian schools, and churches have helped young males move from boyhood to manhood. While the findings may not be very encouraging, they provide a strong incentive to begin thinking hard about how we help emerging adults embrace ideas of Christian manhood and womanhood during this formative time of life.

The final two articles look specifically at the social domain of college and young adult life, dealing with issues that have strong currency in contemporary America. Donna Thoennes addresses the issue of community among Christian college students, seeking to understand the ways in which these students conceptualize effective group relationships. By looking specifically at collegians' desire for authenticity, she provides helpful means of guiding students to think biblically about vulnerability and confrontation in communal settings. Following this, Evan Hunter takes a look at the widespread interest in social justice and social action among current Christian college students. Arguing that such interest is often divorced from proper biblical and theological grounding, he proceeds to describe a framework for helping students combine activism with a proper conception of the kingdom of God. For both Thoennes and Hunter, the desire is to take helpful impulses—for vulnerable community and for social justice—and provide a stronger theological vision rooted in the power and promise of the gospel.

As the church attempts to address these challenges more forcefully, there is a great need for research that will assist college and young adult ministry

leaders, college professors, chaplains, and others who are called upon to mentor this population. It is our hope that these articles—addressing psychological, sociological, and theological themes—will serve as a beginning call to enhance our understanding of this age group so that we might more effectively equip the next generation for gospel transformation and gospel ministry.

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GUEST EDITOR:

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A Long Adolescence in a Lame Direction?
What Should We Make of the Changing Structure
and Meaning of Young Adulthood?

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Abstract: Sociological data confirms what we have often felt: (a) adulthood is now a more difficult status to attain; (b) transitioning to adulthood admits to different pathways, complicating ministry with young adults; and (c) the meaning people attribute to being "adult" is more varied than when societal roles were more ascribed. This article offers sociological analysis of these trends, especially as they impact how Christian identity is shaped. It also suggests strategic foci for Christian educators tending the life course of young adults.

Introduction

For several years I have found it intriguing to ask people of various ages the following questions:

> "When did you know or how will you know when you have become an adult?"
> "Was adulthood something you acquired/grew into or was it bestowed upon you (i.e., did it require others to change their perception/ expectations of you?)?"
> "What meaning(s) do you associate with adulthood today?"

The answers I typically receive are indicative of how complex and individualized the journey to adulthood has become, especially in North American culture. Some people in their mid-to-late-40s report that they are not sure they feel fully adult, whereas others report feeling "grown up" when their parents divorced and they were launched into a caretaker role. Some collegians point to moving out of the house, becoming financially independent, or starting a family; while mid-lifers say that becoming fully adult only occurred for them when the older generation died and they became the matriarch/patriarch to whom the family now looked. In my own family constellation, I wonder

about the confusion created when my 13-year-old son is given an "adult dose" of medication and encouraged to attend confirmation classes in the church, while having to wait several years before attaining "adult" status permitting him to drive at age 16, vote at age 18, drink at age 21, or consider a presidential campaign at age 35.

Sociologists and life course theorists have historically monitored five key social events as indicators of the adolescent journey into adulthood: leaving home, finishing school, landing a job, getting married, and having children. Furstenberg, Rumbaut, and Setterstein (2005) give clear evidence that the timing and sequencing of these traditional markers are now "less predictable and more prolonged, diverse, and disordered" (p.5). The Network on Transitions to Adulthood (2006) report that in 1960, over two-thirds of young adults had attained all five of these markers by the age of 25; by the year 2000, this was true of less than half of females and less than a third of males. Researchers studying these trends observe that: (a) the post-adolescent experience is now prolonged in length and without a fixed endpoint (Côté, 2000), (b) adulthood no longer begins where adolescence ends (Transitions to Adulthood, title of web page); (c) adulthood is now the longest and least understood stage of the life course (Côté, 2000); and (d) the logic undergirding one's journey to adulthood may differ widely across geographic contexts within the United States, often functioning as the greatest constraint to adult development (Waters, 2005). Hence, what once was a rather seamless transition to adulthood is now pluriform in shape (Schweitzer, 2004) and much more complex to navigate.

I realized how quickly these shifts have occurred and how monumental they may be when playing the Milton Bradley board game LIFE with my 8-year-old son. The presuppositions undergirding this game were stunning in the way they reflected the social structure, cultural scripts, and meaning of the life course in the post-World War II era. The game, crafted for play in the 1960s, does not begin at birth, underscoring perhaps the reality that by this time in the nation's history one's place in society was not determined by "accidents of birth" (i.e., gender or the family one was born into). One's role in life was not predetermined by the sequencing of generations, nor ascribed by a family role one was expected to assume when a member of the older generation vacated their place at the table (Schwietzer, 2004). Instead, the game begins with a choice constituted by the options endemic to modernization. One may either enter college and pursue a career—with the expectation that this choice, once made, will structure the family income and define one's vocation for the rest of LIFE, in accord with an apprenticeship model of career—or one may forego this option, risk a lower salary, but enter a quicker engagement of the life course.

After rounding this first bend toward adulthood, the pathway suddenly becomes uniform and carefully sequenced. Everyone, without choice and by the necessity of the way LIFE is structured, must soon stop and attain a second social marker—getting married (at the church no less). Interestingly, one's spouse does not come with a salary or a career choice of his/her own. Instead, they accessorize the key player's pursuit of life, and there is no option of decoupling. Subsequently, for the first time in the game's sequencing of life events, a player may now land on a space that enables one to add children. If so, a player is awarded a life card, suggestive of a moral valuation that having children enhances the life course. Another throw of the dice and the game structure once again mandates attainment of a sociological marker—buying a house. This is typically a single occurrence, anticipating that the family will occupy this geo-physical space, presumably within a stable and interrelated community, for the rest of LIFE; unless of course this player proves to be the best competitor by attaining the greatest wealth, thus finish the game first and attaining the consummate prize of retiring at millionaire estates—nuclear family intact, identity never altered, and immortality never pondered.

In this Milton Bradley world, the social structure couples and orders events in a way that makes cultural expectations clear and navigation through the life course relatively easy. Education is the requisite pathway to career; marriage precedes and is enjoined with childbearing; a normative pattern establishes what it means to live a good life; few choices are required, and those that are determine a relatively stable place in society. Adherence to these passages and cultural expectations provides a high sense of belonging within families and communities and relatively little conscious deliberation to make the journey. But consider what is required of a young adult when the sequencing and timing of these societal markers uncouple, when the conceptual itinerary by which to navigate the life course becomes scrambled, and when identity is no longer restricted by social ascription! Further, consider the impact this has on the individual if we take seriously Mead's (1934) understanding that the organization of the self reflects the organization of society.

Côté and Levine (2002) deepen my understanding of society's reorganization of personhood by distinguishing social identity from personal identity. Social identity is constituted by an individual's position in the social structure, especially as that position is influenced by cultural factors and social roles. Social identity is that part of our self-concept that we derive from membership in a social group whether defined by sex, nation, religious origin, political ideology, social class, family, age, or profession (Zavalloni, 1975). Historically, cultural norms exercised considerable pressure on an individual to fit into and share the values, beliefs, attitudes, role enactments,

and expectations associated with a particular social identity mold. The options available to a person were heavily limited by gender, family background, or other accidents of birth. Thus, if you belonged to the social class of "woman," your social identity was largely constituted and constrained by being a mother and a housewife. Likewise, if Catholic, you would be expected to attend mass and confession as well as adhere to certain beliefs; if Republican, you would be expected to vote the party ticket.

In more recent decades, what many pundits have regarded as "postmodernity" may better be described as a further ordering of Western society around a specific kind of individualism. Liberation movements, educational attainments, economic mobility, medical advancements, and the effort to "give children a better life than we ever had" removed previous restrictions of social identity, freeing individuals from traditional statuses. With social identity diminished, or at least reconstituted around self-selected affinity groups, the search for meaning is largely sought within oneself (Klapp, 1969). Whereas life in an agrarian society may have been characterized as the *sequencing of generations*; and whereas life in an industrial society may have been characterized as *career*; life today, contends Schweitzer (2004), is an *individual project,* primarily a "matter of personal choice" (p.10). In other words, North Americans today find less self-definition from collective or traditional structures, thus relegating social bonds (church, denomination, political party, family) to a voluntary status (Côté & Levine, 2002). Often these affiliations are engaged only insofar as they contribute to self-interest or self-development rather than carrying any collective, familial, or intergenerational obligation.

From interviews with young adults, Jeffrey Arnett (2006) discovered that most did not point to traditional sociological markers as constituting for them the meaning of adulthood. Rather they named psychological, intrasubjective, and personal measures as more salient indicators. Arnett concluded that the hallmark of adulthood is now associated more with taking *responsibility for the self* than with taking *responsibility for others* or in making lifelong commitments (e.g., marriage or childbearing). Taking on family roles is no longer perceived as synonymous with adult responsibility (Transitions to Adulthood, title of web page). Biased toward independent self-construal, North Americans claim the right to choose which duties and relationships oblige allegiance (Markus & Kitiyama, 2001). They recognize that in the absence of structural support and social markers to signify a normative pattern, attaining adulthood now requires a highly self-directed maturational process (Côté & Levine, 2002). Côté and Levine (2002) comment that today the task is not for people to fit their brick into an already established blueprint; instead, they must engage in constructing the whole house.

The implications emerging from such a monumental reorganization are profound.

1. Such freedom requires much of people. If a social role is not predefined and there are few guiding norms, a person is likely to constantly reappraise themselves in light of their most recent relational exchanges. If the task of adulthood involves acquiring responsibility for developing the self one becomes and if a person recognizes that they have to live with whatever choices they make, then they may feel assaulted by the culpability that neither childhood nor societal limitation can provide an alibi for failure or limitation. If social markers are no longer sequenced such that attaining one leads toward the next, there is a consequent need to keep thinking ahead in regard to how one might navigate the life course. Questions of identity that in previous eras were addressed and resolved decisively in adolescence now become prolonged adult dilemmas (Côté & Levine, 2002). Consequently, the task of simply knowing what one wants for oneself may enjoin one on a lifelong quest (Côté & Levine, 2002).

Furthermore, to formulate identity in a fluid society now means a person cannot guarantee the trajectory that any particular resolution may at one time have been able to predict. The average adult today purportedly changes work roles six times across his working years (Transitions to Adulthood, title of web page). Without an underlying social structure, a person's identity choices are more often experienced as questioned than confirmed (Côté & Levine, 2002). So much is this the case that Côté (2000) contends that whereas the industrial revolution produced "the economic man" of that generation, contemporary society has created "psychological adulthood." Colloquialisms capture this shift: What used to be sought in "making one's way" (what can I do well?) has become "finding oneself" (who can I be?); and the consequent new right being heralded is to "be whatever one pleases" (Klapp, 1969).

2. For those with familial support and financial resources, and a maturational process that facilitates self-directed agency, this new moratorium may open the door to more fulfilling levels of personal development (Côté & Levine, 2002). However, less advantaged populations, especially those "graduating out" of public systems (foster care, juvenile justice, and special education), often fail to acquire the life skills, or to feel enough in control of their life to navigate adult passages well (Foster & Gifford, 2005). In such a context, Côté and Levine (2002) foresee widespread problems with identity making. Important to recognize is that the primary emotion haunting contemporaries in their struggle toward attaining "psychological adult" is not that of *guilt*, but *anxiety*. Further, the high value being placed on individualism may allow psychological payback for some, but it may also contribute to a society of "cultural narcissists" (Klapp, 1969), who rarely make decisions on the basis of what contributes to community cohesion.

3. With individualization heralded as a cultural good, inevitably marketers commodify it. Mass production creates the need for mass consump-

tion, and mass consumption depends on marketing strategies targeted at convincing people of restless, perpetually unsatisfied desire (Beck, 1992). Default individualization, driven by marketers, creates the conventional strategy to attain identity capital by fashion statements, body shaping, impression management, etc. Such strategies create the illusion of individualization, while actually setting up further diffusion (Côté & Levine, 2002).

4. The ascendancy of individualism and the elevated necessity of identity-making shift the value-base for morality. When identity is socially ascribed and reinforced by tradition and culture, consensual morality is natural and is experienced as objective fact (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). However, as personal choice becomes ensconced as the requisite for living a full life, enlisting voluntary support for a communal moral ethos becomes at least parochial and often carries little power to produce social cohesion. Without consensual morality in the public sphere, the cultural script shifts toward educating people to respect different values (i.e., coexisting without insisting on conformity). This too increases the psychological burden on an individual who often finds no clear basis by which to adjudicate between competing group claims. Inevitably, the implicit cultural dictum becomes "find within oneself what feels right."

Baumeister and Muraven (1996) point out that traditional values, culturally engrained, lent positive values to certain ways of doing things—that is, by orchestrating one's life to align with these proximal values, persuasive criteria aided everyday choice-making and endowed life with personal meaning. Though liberation in many sectors came as a result of relativizing the authority and consensual power of these value bases, history has shown that once destroyed such value bases are difficult to replace (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). Culture may often try to find something that carries a shared sense of value and/or power (Fowler, 1981) and elevate it to a cultural or vocational ideal (work ethic, romantic love, sexual pleasure, nuclear family, sports heroes, or the self), but as ends in themselves they can easily become new idolatries. Furthermore, with societal restructuring creating a preoccupation with identity and with culture convinced that individuality is the preeminent value, a revolutionary shift occurs. Morality and self-interest are joined in the pursuit of the development of the self (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). The ancient posturing of morality operating to restrain and oppose self-interest for the sake of the common good now releases people to freely engage with clear conscience in whatever may be presumed to be one's right. Distrustful of the ascriptive and the traditional, persons are less likely to turn to a minister or to Scripture for direction and wisdom, and instead become more inclined to follow the conventional directive to look within, discover one's own truth, or find one's voice.

These shifts may largely account for the widespread interest in spirituality at the same time that religion, perceived as an organization that freezes identity exploration, is regarded with diminutive valuations. Spirituality in conventional understanding is individualistic, associated with the subjective and experiential, whereas religion is regarded as more formally structured, associated with institutions, prescribed theology, and rituals (Roehlkepartain, Benson, King, & Wagener, 2006).

Focusing Christian Education to Tend the Young Adult Life Course

Not long ago I attended the Refresh Conference, a networking and training event for campus ministers sponsored by the Foundation for Evangelism. In the context of addressing the deep cries and longings of college students today, a hallway conversation took an intriguing and insightful turn. The friend I was talking with shared insights gleaned from a book authored by a mental health chaplain. I tried to reconstruct the conversation later: "Ever since Luther's Reformation, we in the Protestant church have largely relied on words to communicate the gospel. Much of what we understand of God and His ways depend upon our capacity to communicate through written and spoken words. We emphasize the creeds as statements of belief; we focus the primacy of worship on the sermon; and we encourage personal Bible study. Although all are important, none are of particular help in ministry with the mentally challenged. In fact, the only way to present the gospel to those with limited intellectual capacity is for the people who daily surround them to become living incarnations of grace whereby something of the character of God gets mutually transferred."

It struck me in that setting that there are thousands of young adults who may be equally spiritually illiterate, not because they suffer an intellectual disability but a relational/spiritual one. The journey toward wholeness involves finding a spiritual community that fosters plausibility for the Christian life. Critical is recruiting the attention and insight of those who can mediate hope, mercy, and grace in their journey toward discipleship in such a manner that it provides an embodied apologetic (Long, 2004). However, the national Spiritual Life of College Students study from the Higher Education Research Institute (http://spirituality.ucla.edu/spirituality/reports/FINAL%20REPORT .pdf) reported that although more than half of all college students regard it as "essential" or "very important" for their colleges to encourage spiritual development, the academy rarely addresses these concerns. If the sociological crises predicated on fundamental changes to the life course create problems of social integration and personal meaning among our young adults, what might focus Christian education in a way that tends the life course of young adults?

Trinity as the key to personhood

Each year I teach classes at Asbury Seminary aimed at equipping future campus ministers to function as practical theologians on the college campus and in churches as ministers with young adults. The early curriculum for the class is an introduction to Trinitarian theology drawn from several of Dr. Dennis Kinlaw's presentations (Kinlaw, personal communication, 2005) Kinlaw's message, hardly done justice in an abbreviated format, proclaims that if God is fundamentally Trinitarian, then the key to understanding the nature of God is not to be found in His omnipotence, nor in His sovereignty, but in His relationality—His fatherhood. If so, then the key to relationship with God is not primarily a legal one (penalty paid for sin, being declared righteous under the law, justified), but something more relational and personal. The human predicament, and the subsequent anxiety of this generation, originates fundamentally from distrust of the goodness of God and from separating ourselves from Him as the source of life. My colleague, Joe Dongell, recently imaged this as an astronaut on a space walk who decides in the interest of liberation to cut himself free from the mother ship, inevitably becoming totally preoccupied with supplying his own means for survival (Dongell, unpublished sermon).

To begin with a view of personhood that reflects being created in the image of a Trinitarian being, Kinlaw (personal communication, 2005) observes, is to recognize that "none of us are self-originating, none of us are self-sustaining, none of us are self-explanatory, and none of us are self-fulfilling." Akin to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, any one of us can only be explained by the web of relationships in which we find our being (Kinlaw, personal communication, 2005). The Trinity is love within the divine being itself; love is not something God does, but something God is. Sin or self-interest is the reversal of the nature of God, because it reflects a heart turned in upon itself. Sanctification therefore involves the re-orientation of the heart to reflect this love, becoming free of self-interest to offer oneself for the sake of someone else (Kinlaw, personal communication, 2005). Holding Trinitarian theology in contrast to sociological currents in the culture as definitional for personhood provides a fertile and fundamental pedagogical dialectic for discipling young adults (Groome, 1980).

Koinonia as the formational center

As Trinitarian theology forms our understanding of personhood, so can it shape our pedagogical methods for forming and transforming young adults. E. Stanley Jones (1955), missionary to India, wrote a marvelous devotional commentary on the book of Acts, titled *Mastery*. Jones notes that if the

way of salvation and kingdom living offered in Jesus was simply proclaimed, we would only have words. To understand God, we needed an incarnation so that we could see God lived out among us. We needed demonstration, and we were offered it in the person of Jesus. Then Jones argues that just as we needed the Divine Person to understand God, so do we need the Divine Order enfleshed so that we can grasp the Kingdom of God. The book of Acts offers a portrait of the Holy Spirit upon the framework of human living in such a way that we are given a demonstration of the Divine Order—"the Kingdom in cameo" (p. vii).

Jones (1955) points out that the Greek word for church (*ecclesia*) does not occur until Acts 9. Although we celebrate the birth of the church at Pentecost, what is actually birthed in the early chapters of Acts and what becomes the formational and missional center for the early disciples is the fellowship (*koinonia*). Jones makes the case that as the soul is to the body, so is koinonia to the ecclesia. Koinonia gives life to the ecclesia; but when the koinonia loses its savor, "church" can feel as if it is a body without a soul. There likely is no other period in the life course when the lifestyle patterns and developmental needs of people are conducive to forming and being formed by koinonia than the young adult years. I hesitate to regard campus ministries or young adult worship centers as ecclesia because such homogeneity in age is not representative of the whole people of God. Rather, I think they are koinonias, made up of those whose mobility and freedom for sacrificial commitment holds unlimited possibilities for birthing new demonstrations of the Kingdom of God in mission, mercy, social justice, evangelism, reconciliation, worship, healing, and redemption. Like the book of Acts, the fruit of these movements can then emerge as a revitalized ecclesia.

The summative work from the Commission on Children at Risk (2003) entitled *Hardwired to Connect* provides scientific evidence that humans are hardwired to form the kinds of attachment represented in koinonia communities and that social bonding actually manifests itself bio-chemically in the way specific genes behave. The undeniable conclusion purported by the 33 scientists connected with the study is that the crisis in America's young with depression, anxiety, attention deficit, conduct disorders, and suicide is fundamentally caused by (a) a lack of connection to other people, and (b) a lack of connection to moral and spiritual meaning. The commission makes an unashamed call for "authoritative communities" characterized by such dynamics as a shared understanding of what it means to be a good person; a philosophy oriented to the equal dignity of all persons and to the principle of love of neighbor; work performed primarily by non-specialists; and encouragement for spiritual and religious development. These are helpful directives for ministers working at facilitating the conditions for vital koinonia in the educational context. Addressing community from a more theological

understanding, my Christian ethics colleague at Asbury, Christine Pohl (in press), has identified four key practices that shape authentic Christian community: promise-keeping, truth-telling, gratitude, and hospitality. Each of these, Pohl notes, has its deforming counterparts of deception, betrayal, envy, and grumbling. For ministers working with young adults embedded in the developmental task of consolidating identity with resolutions that promote a sense of fidelity (Erikson, 1963), sensitivity to such relational and contextual dynamics are crucial.

Missio Dei as the vocational ideal

In positing Trinitarian theology and koinonia as antidotes to cultural trends, a final parameter must be added. In a presentation referred to earlier, Dr. Kinlaw (personal communication, 2005) reflected on an article whereby he sought to name the core obsession evangelicals carried across the 20th century. He determined that the predominant message spoken to the world has been an evangelistic word, namely the message "*receive Christ.*" To a great extent, he felt, the campaign has been a successful one. However, turning to the New Testament, Dr. Kinlaw noticed that the fundamental proclamation Jesus issued was not "*receive Me,*" but "*follow Me.*" *Receiving* far too often attends to what we get out of the relationship, inadvertently perpetuating the cultural narcissism of the age. However, Jesus' call to "follow him" leads instead to a cross—a cross that moves our understanding of vocation from elevated individualism and self-absorption to sharing God's burden in working for the world's redemption.

The sociological analysis offered earlier suggests that the conceptual itinerary most young adults implicitly follow leads toward responsibility for the self, autonomy from one's family, and a greater sense of liberation. Campus ministers, wise in understanding, will honor these journeys toward maturity, differentiation, and heightened agency. Yet, they will also share the conviction and structure educational experiences that enable young adults to discover the joy and significance of participating in the *missio Dei*, or mission of God for the sake of the world. Missiologists keen on seeing mission as the organizing principle for discipleship are right on insisting that our *Christology* must shape our *missiology,* which in turn must shape our *ecclesiology* (Hirsch, 2006). Thus, the person of Jesus, who became incarnate and dwelt among us, patterns our life as missional to engage people within their cultural context rather than extracting them to a designated sacred space. The most innovative young adult ministries today are those experimenting with how to be incarnational, messianic, and apostolic (cf. Frost & Hirsch, 2003; Hirsch 2006). Indeed, when the fundamental understanding of vocation changes in the life

of a young adult, they are re-storied into a different trajectory of what they might become. Following Jesus posits that the outcome of the developmental journey does not end in autonomy and achievement, but in centeredness, receptivity, surrender, and mission.

In light of the sociological shifts recorded in the first part of this article, it is predictable that the process of vocational discernment and identity will be a long process for many young adults. Those who traverse these waters best will be those who have around them mentoring communities and compatriots who encourage their moral visions and share together in a common life (Garber, 1996). The following passage from James Fowler (1984) offers a good description of what may be essential for the educational process:

> The shaping of personal vocation is a matter of corporate discernment and imagination as much as it is a concern of the particular person involved. . . . Rather than thinking of one's vocation as a kind of Platonic ideal form, waiting for us somewhere in the future, this kind of approach to the question of vocation urges us to take a frankly "negotiatory" stance . . . an approach that combines giving attention to one's gifts and inclinations with careful listening to the Christian Story and vision, both in dynamic relation to the structure of needs and opportunities presented by the surrounding world. Vocation, in this case, is not found so much as it is negotiated. We shape a purpose for our lives that is part of the purposes of God by means of proposal and counterproposal, by means of inclinations and the nudges or real lures and shoves of the divine calling. Communities play a critical role in this process by providing relationship contexts where we are known personally (over time), where we are taken seriously, and where we are invited to submit our images of ourselves and our vocations to trusted others, who are informed by the communities 'script' and core story, for correction and confirmation. The community of faith at its best, is an 'ecology of vocation.' In a microscopic way, Christian community is a sign and anticipation of a universal community in which our callings will be complementary and where our talents, energies, passions, affections and virtues will coalesce in the praise and service of God. (p. 103)

Shaping best practices for spiritual formation

As the journey to adulthood becomes increasingly pluriform, one can expect unique and unpredictable ways that individuals encounter God. Discipleship curriculums that once relied on programmatic emphases, lesson plans, and/or unilateral exhortations offered from a distance are shifting from

asserting religious truths to offering experiences of faith that actively engage young adults in putting faith into practice. Hirsch (2006) contends that action needs to be added to the educational equation and that the context in which ministry practice is learned is every bit as formational as the content. Indeed, involvement in a missional communitas, mission trips, urban immersion experiences, and summer work crews like Youth Works often become cornerstone events in the construction of young adult Christian identity. Intensive prayer vigils emboldened by transformative experiences at IHOP (International House of Prayer), contemplative retreats, practices of solitude, Sabbath and fasting experiences, have been structured means of deeper surrender, spiritual warfare, and attentiveness to movements of the Spirit. Worship movements like Passion are enabling fresh encounters with the Spirit and recovery ministries that embed 12-step practices in spiritual community are facilitating liberation from addictions. Richard Dunn (2001) profiles a template for shaping the lives of young adults by creating a relational safe place, a meaningful learning place, an experiential worshipping place, an interpersonal prayer place, and a cultural impact place.

Yet, ministries are also recognizing that crucial moments in someone's spiritual journey are most transformative when the "event" is preceded and succeeded by integrative formational processes. Alpha, for example, recognizes that conversion is made sustainable when the underlying worldview that supports it is shared and incorporated across many weeks. Likewise, the impact of short-term mission experiences is more sustainable when processed within a team willing to consider ethnocentric biases and lifestyle reorientation. Christian educators are finding Mezirow's (2000) transformative learning theory an especially salient pedagogy incorporating events of imbalance into processes of high reflexivity and perspective taking.

As curricular shifts promote development through heightened reflective processes, so must the role of the campus/young adult minister shift to accommodate to the fluidity of often-disjointed adventures. Dunn (2001) characterizes the role of the minister with students as spiritual caregiver—first *pacing with*, and then *leading* students. The gifts and graces for ministry call for the capacity to listen attentively so truth can be shared from within a deeply personal context where trust is high and care is faithful. Listening and tending are imperative because the patterns toward adulthood may be varied. Osgood, Ruth, Eccles, Jacobs, and Barber (2005) began a statewide study with 12 year olds in 1984 from which his team has now collected nine waves of data. Using a latent class analysis, they have identified six different ideal types of paths to adulthood: fast starters, parents without careers, educated partners, educated singles, working singles, and slow starters. Similarly, Côté and Levine (2002) offer a typology characterizing different identity strategies young adults employ in either moving toward or evading adulthood:

Refusers—lack childhood structure; with a learned dependence often refuse adult responsibilities and remain with peers in perpetual adolescence.

Drifters—possess more personal resources but may regard adult roles as conforming; often lack the skills to win favor in adult roles.

Searchers—have unrealistic expectations for communities/mentors; dissatisfaction with themselves leads them to sabotage stability.

Guardians—well-structured childhood enables engagement in adulthood, but this can turn rigid or neglectful of further growth.

Resolvers—engage holistically in identity making; utilize reflexive appraisals of self to deepen competence in social and emotional intelligence.

These typologies, though abbreviated here, are important because they caution against overly simplistic generalizations of young adults. Prolonged journeys to full adulthood vary in motivation and predicted outcomes from "failure to launch" to personal explorations to advancing educational preparation. Stereotypes that label a generation as "stuck in adolescence," or characterizations of parents as "helicoptering" over their college-age children, can implicate a misguided response if the complexity of diagnosing a particular young adult journey is not carefully considered. Parenting, mentoring, and spiritual caregiving require careful and sustained discernment of the idiosyncratic attributions and decisions young adults are making in constructing subjective meanings for their life narrative and in interpreting their competence in various social contexts.

Re-symbolizing Christian meaning and identity

Alan Hirsch (2006), in his challenging book *The Forgotten Ways*, comments that "if we don't disciple people, the culture sure will" (p.111), and it may often do so by co-opting the language and symbols that previously bestowed powerful meaning and identity on generations of Christians. Marketing today is largely about managing a perception of value in such a way that a consumer becomes convinced that a product offers what religion does— identity, purpose, meaning, and community. Needed is a prophetic challenge to the control of consumerism, what Hirsch (2006) regards as the greatest threat to Christianity's viability today.

Several decades ago Klapp (1969) developed a theory of symbolism positing that with fluidity of change, social systems deprive people of psychological payback, the lack of which manifests as meaninglessness, alienation, and problems with identity. This shortness of meaning at a collective level motivates a *mass groping* for activities or symbols that restores identity.

The term *groping* signifies what people do when they do not know what is wrong, when it is unclear what they are searching for, and when having found it they may not know what they are seizing. When the symbols that have bestowed meaning to a life are disturbed, so is the person disturbed; witness the *ego screaming* (Klapp, 1969) inherent in contemporary fads of tattooing, fashion makeovers, style rebellion, and ornamentation. In mass society, even under success, people may ask what meaning goods and luxuries hold for me.

In Klapp's (1969) theory, identity is a symbolic matter. One is forever attempting to create and hunt for symbols that give meaning to the self, often with the help of others. Society fails to supply adequate identity when symbols are disturbed to the extent that they no longer provide reliable referent points by which people can locate themselves socially, realize themselves sentimentally, or declare to others or themselves who they are. Writing decades ago, Klapp recognized that symbolic catastrophes were happening everywhere and that meaning symbols once destroyed were not easy to rebuild. Intriguingly, Klapp felt that technology might serve to wipe out symbols more than it replaces them. Indeed, the deconstruction implicit in postmodernity yields a symbolic deprivation of images that once served as landmarks for the Christian faith journey. Just as 9/11 desecrated the skyline of New York City and now requires the rebuilding of structures to incorporate that traumatic history into new referential meanings, so too must the symbols that once constituted and bestowed Christian identity, now compromised by scandal, colonialism, patriarchy, manifest destiny, and consumerism, become re-endowed with new symbolic meaning.

A few years ago at Asbury Seminary, our annual Kingdom Conference focused on creation care, noting how all of creation groans together with us for full redemption (Romans 8:18–30). We confessed lifestyle patterns that abuse others and creation and sought a better stewardship of the natural resources God has entrusted to us. In preparing for Friday's communion service, I was struck by the acts of consumption that frame the biblical narrative—Eve and Adam *taking* the fruit and *eating*, juxtaposed with Jesus *taking* and *eating* at the Last Supper. One act of consumption sends all of humanity into enmity, while the other redeems and reconciles. Recognizing the significance of a single act of consumption, we entered communion that day asking ourselves what our patterns of consumption effect and what they require of the world we inhabit and of the people who produce the products we consume. I garnered further insight from Andy Crouch's (2003) summary of an article by Fr. Mark Broski. Broski taught that the practice of the Eucharist offers a truer way to consume. Where capitalism urges that the more costly something is, the more value it contains; we receive communion in simple el-

ements. We take a piece of bread, scarcely enough to nourish our bodies, and with it claim this is the "Bread of life" (John 6:35). In the world's economy, where one sits and who one sits beside is based on social standing; the rich get front row seats, the table of honor, and the five-course dinner (Crouch, 2003). At the Lord's Table, we gather as one and we share a common loaf. As noted by the apostle Paul, consumption without sensitivity to social justice is unthinkable. Where the economic enterprise is compelled by competition, operating best with multiple options to choose from, the Eucharist offers no lengthy menu to read, no novelty, no list of options to order according to preference (Crouch, 2003). Instead there is the profound simplicity of the Lord of the Universe inviting—"here is my body and my blood—come and eat together as daughters and sons of God."

Conclusion

Sociological analysis reveals that in the post-World War II era, the fairly predictable transition that most adolescents historically took to adulthood has been radically altered. Young adults today encounter multiple possibilities of being, with few conceptual itineraries in place to mark the trail and provide reassurance. A wide variety of pathways to adulthood have emerged, making ministry difficult with a group that is no longer homogenous and does not transition as a cohort through predictable marital or family statuses. The requisite task of identity making through multiple choices can be exhilarating for those with material and psychological resources. For others, however, it may simultaneously create anxiety, stagnation, and/or multiphrenia—the splitting of the self into a complex multiplicity of investments (Gergen, 1991). Gergen (1991) contends that this contemporary saturation of technology results in an overpopulated self, compelled to absorb myriad divergent voices on a daily bases. Discipleship in such a context entails (a) teaching people to discern which voices hold truth about themselves, (b) helping them to evaluate what is unwittingly being given authority in their lives, and (c) offering them practices that produce freedom from the compulsive use of technology (e.g., Sabbath keeping, abstaining from cell phone and laptop use, solitude, and silent retreats).

Sociologists predict increased difficulties with social integration and personal meaning (Côté and Levine, 2002). In such a context, the church has a great stake in how personhood is regarded, how vocational ideals are shaped, what symbolic images confer life's meaning, and the ways in which identity formation is being restructured in the lives of young adults today. In this article, I have proposed several ways, theologically and formationally, the church may be poised to address these challenges.

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Stopping the Dropouts:
Guiding Adolescents Toward a Lasting
Faith Following High School Graduation

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to explore the role of religion and faith in the lives of recent high school graduates and to seek better ways to prepare teenagers for faithful participation in church and religious life beyond the youth years. Finding answers to why youth drop out following high school graduation has been a persistent problem for youth and young adult leaders, church leaders, and parents for some time. Quantitative surveys were completed by 1,362 young adults aged 18–30. Qualitative group interviews were conducted with 24 groups (n=178) including both active and non-active young adults, exploring factors involved in lifestyle, relationships, and religious participation. Active church attendance was defined as attending two or more times per month. Results indicated four domains that influenced young adult dropouts: relationships, discipleship and spiritual depth, family influence, and intergenerational influence.

Introduction

One of the persistent questions confronting youth leaders, parents of teenagers, and church leaders is how to deal with the large number of high school graduates that drop out of church participation when they leave home for college or the work world. Youth leaders point fingers of blame at young adult ministries while college and young adult ministers respond with accusations of shallow youth ministry practices. Pastors seem to be confused about what to do, while parents simply wring their hands and hope that somebody will do something to nurture the faith of their young adult children.

Pollster George Barna (2006) reported that about 6 out of 10 young adults who had been churched at some point during their teenage years were no longer active in church or religious participation, including church attendance, Bible reading, or praying. Only one out of five twentysomethings seemed to maintain the same level of church participation as they did during their teenage years.

Regnerus, Smith, and Fritsch (2003) report that parents are among the strongest influences on the faith formation of teenagers. Myers (1996) suggests that the influence of parents, whether positive or negative, is so strong that "religiosity, like class, is inherited" (p. 858). In the National Study of Youth and Religion, Smith and Denton (2005) conclude, "The vast majority of U. S. teens are not alienated or rebellious when it comes to religious involvement. Most are quite content to follow in their parents' footsteps" (p. 260). They go on to say that, contrary to some popular viewpoints, "we believe that the evidence clearly shows that the single most important social influence on the religious and spiritual lives of adolescents is their parents" (p. 261).

But the influence of parents on future young adult spirituality is not automatic. Smith (1998) stated that young adult children of evangelical Protestant parents seem to maintain better church attendance after high school than do those of mainline Protestant parents. According to Benson, Masters, and Larson (1997), mothers tend to be more influential than fathers in the development of religiousness in adolescent children (see also Bao, Whitebeck, Hoyt, and Conger, 1999).

A pilot study for the Spirituality in Higher Education research project, conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (Astin & Astin, 2003), found that college students report weakening "religiousness" and "spirituality" during their college days (p. 7). One of the most dramatic changes occurred in attendance at religious services. However, Regnerus and Uecker (2007) argue that college experience does not have the corrosive effective on faith that is often assumed. Rather, the influences of friends, marriage, cohabitation, and conflicting choices have more impact than other elements of college life.

Arnett (2004) suggests that lack of maturity and poor spiritual preparation complicates the challenges of new choices and freedoms faced by young adults. He asserts, "Something changes between adolescence and emerging adulthood that dissolves the link between the religious beliefs of parents and the beliefs of their children" (p. 174).

The role of youth and church ministry is often assumed to be the culprit for the drop-off in the continuing faith of adolescents. In a study of "twentysomethings" with the Barna Group (2006, Research Perspectives section, ¶ 1), David Kinnaman, director of the research project concluded,

Much of the ministry to teenagers in America needs an overhaul—not because churches fail to attract significant numbers of young people, but because so much of those efforts are not creating a sustainable faith beyond high school. There are certainly effective youth ministries across

the country, but the levels of disengagement among twentysomethings suggest that youth ministry fails too often at discipleship and faith formation. A new standard for viable youth ministry should be—not the number of attenders, the sophistication of the events, or the "cool" factor of the youth group—but whether teens have the commitment, passion and resources to pursue Christ intentionally and whole- heartedly [sic] after they leave the youth ministry nest.

These concerns point to the need for empirical study of the reasons youth drop out. The Faith Journey of Young Adults was a study conducted during a sabbatical leave in 2004–2005, involving 1,360 young adults between the ages of 18–30. The purpose was to explore the role of religion and faith in the lives of those just out of high school and to seek better ways to prepare teenagers for faithful participation in church and religious life beyond the youth years.

There were two approaches to the study: (a) a 60-item questionnaire that asked basic questions about the role of faith in the lives of young adults; and (b) in-depth interviews with groups of both active and non-active young adults. Active church attendance was defined as attending two or more times per month.

Sample

The sample for the study was drawn from college and university campus student ministries (noon lunches, worship times, leadership meetings), college classrooms, and church collegiate ministries. Locations for the study included 10 churches, 9 campus ministries (including a variety of 13 meetings), and 7 classes in 4 different colleges. The colleges and campus ministries included five state universities and five church-related (Baptist) universities. The universities and churches were located in Texas, Missouri, and Alabama. The campus ministries were all Baptist Student Ministries drawn from a listing of collegiate ministries in the three states included in the study. The scope of the study limited sites to personal contacts, word of mouth, and referrals by youth and collegiate leaders known by the researcher. While churches and collegiate ministries were Baptist, subjects for the study represented a variety of faith communities, including non-Christian faiths.

Method

A two-pronged strategy was used for this research, involving both quantitative and qualitative methods. A 60-item questionnaire was used to collect

quantitative data from college students and other young adults (ages 18–30). In-depth interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data from both active and non-active young adults. Active church attendance was defined as attending two or more times per month.

The quantitative survey was developed and field-tested with over 150 young adults (ages 18–30) over a 2-year period. The questionnaire contained items dealing with demographics (8), family relationships (11), family faith (9), teenage church life (7), church youth-adult relationships (8), teenage spiritual life (5), young-adult spiritual life (10), and older adult friends (2).

One-hour interviews were conducted with 13 small groups (3 to 12 per group) of active young adults (attending church or religious services two or more times per month) (n=198) and 11 groups of non-active young adults (attending less than two times per month) (n=72). The interview protocol for the group interviews included open-ended questions about life in general; relationships with parents, friends, and opposite sex; priorities, worries, concerns, and goals; and the role of faith in young adult lifestyles. There was a time for open discussion at the end of the interview to cover any areas the group felt needed to be addressed.

Results

Results of the Faith Journey of Young Adults study yielded 1,362 completed and usable surveys. To analyze the questionnaires, the group was filtered to include only those who indicated that they were active in church attendance during their teenage years. Then every item in the 60-item survey was compared with an item that asked about church attendance during their young adult years. The Chi Square statistic was used to determine if there were any significant relationships between church attendance during the young adult years and the items in the survey.

The chart below shows the significant items that were related to church attendance following high school graduation. An item was considered statistically significant at the .05 level if it exceeded the Chi Square value for the corresponding degrees of freedom (df). For items with 1 df the critical value was 3.841, and for items with 2 df the critical value was 5.991.

The survey items were grouped into topical areas of relational components, family components, teen faith and religious practices, and young adult religious practices. The results show that the following 24 items were significantly correlated with active or inactive church attendance among young adults who were active during their teenage years.

Table 1

Significant Items from the Surveys

Conclusion	Question Item	Chi Square Value	df
Relational Factors during Young Adulthood			
1. *Attendance of friends:* If their friends don't go to church, young adults don't go to church.	How often do most of your closest friends attend church, Bible study, worship, or a prayer group?	82.118	1
2. *Spiritual depth of friends:* If young adult friends are shallow Christians, young adults are less likely to attend church.	How would you describe the spiritual depth of most of your closest friends (think of your closest friends, whether Christian or non-Christian)?	36.522	1
3. *Number of older adult Christians:* Those with two or less older adult friends attend church less often.	How many adult Christians, older than you, do you know fairly well and see on a regular basis?	9.024	1
4. *Spiritual life of other adults:* If teenagers have older adult friends (teachers, coaches, employers, neighbors, co-workers, etc.) who are shallow Christians or not Christian at all, the teenagers are less likely to attend church when they enter young adulthood.	Think of current adults, either Christian or non-Christian, whom you respect and look up to (teacher, coach, employer, neighbor, co-worker, etc.). In general, how would you describe their faith or spiritual life?	24.767	1
Relational Factors during Teenage Years			
1. *Number of adult Christian friends during teenage years:* Those with two or less older adult friends attend church less often in their young adult years.	How many adult Christians, other than your parents, did you know fairly well and they influenced you as a Christian during your teenage years?	4.885	1

Table 1 (continued)

Significant Items from the Surveys

Conclusion	Question Item	Chi Square Value	df
2. *Number of volunteer youth leaders* during the teenage years is associated with attendance. Those who reported two or less volunteer leaders attend church less often during their young adult years.	How many volunteer youth leaders were in your church (teachers, group leaders, etc., not just chaperons for activities)?	3.938	1
3. *Talking about faith with Christian friends during teenage years:* Those who talked about their faith with Christian friends less than once a week attend church less often during their young adult years.	How often did you talk to a Christian friend about your faith or the things of God?	4.729	1

Family Factors

Conclusion	Question Item	Chi Square Value	df
1. *Church attendance of mother:* Teenagers whose mothers attended church once a month or less during their teenage years go to church less often during their young adult years.	How often did your MOTHER attend church?	22.389	1
2. *Spiritual life of mother:* Teenagers who perceive their mothers to have deep spiritual faith tend to go to church more as young adults.	How would you describe the spiritual life of your MOTHER?	16.316	1
3. *Church attendance of father:* Teenagers whose fathers attended church	How often did your FATHER attend church?	15.124	1

Table 1 (continued)

Significant Items from the Surveys

Conclusion	Question Item	Chi Square Value	df
once a month or less during their teenage years go to church less often during their young adult years.			
4. *Volunteer leadership by father:* Teenagers whose fathers were involved in three or more volunteer leadership roles tended to go to church more during their young adult years.	Were either of your parents involved in volunteer leadership position(s) in the church, such as a teacher, deacon, or committee member? (Father) (Number of programs)	6.328	1
5. *Marital status of parents:* Teenagers whose birth parents are not married go to church less than two times per month during their young adult years.	What was the marital status of your birth parents during your teenage years?	16.458	1
6. *Custodial parent:* Those who lived with a single parent during their teenage years go to church two times a month or less as young adults.	Whom did you live with most of the time during your teenage years?	12.494	2
7. *Step siblings:* Those who lived with step siblings during their teenage years attended church less in their young adult years.	Did you have step brothers/sisters?	12.366	1
8. *Family meal:* Those who ate a meal with the family once a week or less during their teenage years go to church less during their young adult years.	How often did your family have a meal together with most of the household present?	9.959	1

Table 1 (continued)

Significant Items from the Surveys

Conclusion	Question Item	Chi Square Value	df
9. *Family discussions about faith and the things of God:* Those who reported family religious discussions once a week or more during their teenage years were significantly more likely to go to church as young adults.	How often did you have discussions, between you and either or both of your parents, about things of God or faith?	6.928	1

Teenage Religious Practices

1. *Church attendance:* Those who attended less than twice per month often attend less than twice per month following high school graduation.	How often did you attend church during your teenage years?	69.343	1
2. *Number of church programs attended:* Those who attended fewer programs during the teen years attend fewer during their young adult years.	What programs did you attend during your teenage years? (Number)	56.379	1
3. *Bible or Christian club at school:* Those who participated in a Christian club during their teenage years attend church more during the young adult years.	Did you participate in a school campus Bible or Christian club?	11.448	1
4. *Leading church programs:* Those who led church programs are more likely to attend church as young adults.	Did you lead other youth (your peers) in your church during your teenage years? (Number of programs)	10.374	1

Table 1 (continued)

Significant Items from the Surveys

		Chi Square	
Conclusion	Question Item	Value	df
5. *Prayer:* Those who prayed less than a few times a week tend to attend church less during their young adult years.	During your teenage years, how often did you pray, other than grace at meals?	7.875	1
6. *Reading the Bible:* Those who read their Bible daily during their teen years attend church more during their young adult years.	How often did you read the Bible, outside of church?	4.989	1

Young Adult Religious Practices

1. *Bible study group:* Participation in a Bible study, prayer group, or worship service, other than those at church (such as a campus ministry or para-church group), during young adulthood is associated with higher church attendance.	How often do you attend a Bible study, prayer group, or worship service, other than your church (such as a campus ministry or para-church group)?	66.008	1
2. *Number of church programs:* Those who attend more programs tend to attend church more often.	What church programs do you now attend? (Number)	43.418	1

In addition to the quantitative surveys, 24 1-hour group interviews, involving both active (n=198) and non-active (n=72) young adults, were conducted to explore the role of faith in the lives of young adults. These interviews shed light on the quantitative data and served to flesh out the stories of the daily routines and lifestyles of young adults.

During visits to college campus ministries, students attending noon lunches were invited to participate in small group interviews. An invitation

such as "if you were active in church as a teenager but have not been able to get as involved since you came to college, I would like to meet with you for a small group discussion" was extended and often resulted in participants who were willing to discuss their present church involvement. Visits to churches, college classrooms, and other campus ministry meetings were used to recruit students who were more actively involved in church life.

During the small group meetings, a typical interview protocol included open-ended questions related to the following topics:

- Introductions, purpose of the interview, permission to tape record the discussions
- General lifestyle questions—daily routines, fun activities, how life now is different from teenage years
- Relationships—with friends, roommates, opposite sex, parents, how relationships now are different or similar to high school relationships
- Priorities, worries, concerns, goals—problems, obstacles, goals, concerns for the future
- Role of faith in your life—what role does faith play, how often do you think about God, is faith important to young adults, why do young adults either attend or drop out of church, why do you attend or not attend church
- Closure—are there any thoughts about faith or God that were overlooked

Tapes of the small group discussions were transcribed and reviewed to note recurring themes and patterns to responses given to the open-ended questions. Using the techniques of qualitative analysis, transcriptions of the interviews were coded and the patterns and themes that emerged were grouped into broader domains to describe the results from the group interviews.

A careful analysis of the interviews, alongside the findings from the quantitative surveys, revealed four domains of influence that emerged to better understand why young adults do or do not participate in church activities. Since the interviews were conducted in separate groups between active and non-active young adults, it was possible to hear the voices from both sides and determine some of the motivations that characterize each group.

These four domains are:

- Relationships
- Discipleship and Spiritual Depth
- Family Influence
- Intergenerational Mentoring Relationships

Discussion

What role does relationship play in dropouts?

One of the most commonly heard assumptions about young adult church participation is related to relationships. This is old news for those who have been around adolescents and young adults for any period of time. When young adults were asked, "How often do most of your closest friends attend church, Bible study, worship, or a prayer group?" their answers corresponded very closely to their own attendance and participation. This was the highest correlation (Chi Square value) among all the answers in the entire study (see the first item in the table above).

A close second was the response to the question, "How would you describe the spiritual depth of most of your closest friends (think of your closest friends, whether Christian or non-Christian)?" This was also one of the highest Chi Square values in the study. In addition, the perceived spiritual life of teachers, coaches, employers, neighbors, and co-workers is related to the church life of young adults.

Parents and youth leaders often pay close attention to the friends of their adolescents in the teenage years without realizing that the ability to choose new friends later will make a major difference in the spiritual life of the young adult. It seems that peers and older adults, other than parents, take on increased importance once the young adult has left home, away from the day-to-day influence of their parents. Perhaps church leaders should consider strategies to help families and teenagers develop skills and priorities in choosing friends.

These same concerns were echoed in interviews with young adults. An analysis of comments from active young adults suggested that lifestyle and choice of friends play an important role in their church attendance. For example, one young adult who was active in church participation commented about teenage relationships: "In high school they have a relationship with people when you grew up there. When you go off to college, no one is urging you to go and it's hard to get started. If you're in the dorm and no one else is going, you're not going to go to church either." Non-actives voiced similar concerns as heard in this quote: "When you first go to college you see all these things trying to get you involved and it looks glamorous."

One of the most common themes voiced by those who were non-active young adults had to do with previous hurtful church experiences. In most cases, these resulted from relationships with Christians who were hypocritical in their attitudes or actions. These non-active young adults harbored a number of hurts and dissatisfactions with their experiences in church, youth group, or with individuals in their prior church experiences, unlike the active young adults who seem to have more appreciation and positive recollections

of the contributions of prior church experiences. One non-active student said, "My first experiences with church weren't so good. All over the walls in the youth room the posters looked good and everything looked good. But during the youth services, someone over here is not paying attention, passing notes, breaking up with their boy friend. It seems like even the youth leaders wanted to be somewhere else."

This reflected similar findings from the quantitative surveys. In one question concerning why young adults do not attend church, non-actives selected among their top four choices the following three items: turned off by Christians who are fake (1st choice for non-actives), other priorities (2nd choice), and lifestyle would have to change if they attended church (4th choice) Each of these three hints at relational aspects.

Other items in the surveys and interviews call for student ministers to help adolescents in basic personal skills—how to meet and develop new friends, how to choose a church, how to make the transition to a new location, and how to set priorities. Youth must learn the skills to be influencers with their friends, not just responders.

What role does discipleship and spiritual depth play in dropouts?

Simply coming to youth activities, especially when the attendance pattern is sparse, does not automatically translate into continued attendance during young adult years. This highlights the importance of discipleship and spiritual depth over simply attending youth group meetings during the teenage years. Those who attend fewer activities, such as only coming to music practice or mid-week youth group meetings, fare less favorably in attendance in the long run than those who are more actively involved.

Involvement in a Bible or Christian club on a middle school, junior high school, or high school campus related significantly with church attendance following high school graduation. Perhaps students who attend campus clubs are doing so on their own initiative more than church attendance with their family. This translates into a personal decision to remain active when they are away from parents. There is real value in religious participation beyond the walls of the church building, and youth ministers who see the scope of their leadership and influence confined to the church property miss the signals of this finding.

Other findings in this study also highlight the need to evaluate strategies. Involving youth in leadership roles and encouraging prayer and Bible reading outside of church services should be key strategies to employ among teenage youth group members. Those who led church programs during their teenage years are more likely to attend church as young adults. Youth ministers would do well to take note and find ways to determine gifts and skills of teenagers and involve them in leadership whenever possible. Youth ministers must find

ways to bridge the gap between Sunday and the rest of the week and encourage youth to develop the disciplines of personal prayer and regular Bible reading, rather than only doing this in church meetings.

A couple of findings from the study should be of interest to those who work with young adults in churches and campus ministries. Young adults who are actively involved in many kinds of Bible study groups and church activities tend to attend church more often. This leads to the conclusion that meaningful involvement in a variety of young adult religious groups translates into more faithful participation in churches.

Comments from both active and non-active young adults during small group interviews underscore the findings regarding discipleship and spiritual depth in the quantitative surveys. Young adults who actively attend church see the main reason for drop outs as a lack of commitment or weak faith. They equate church non-attendance with a weak or immature faith. An active college student said, "I think their faith in high school was not much to them. When they got out on their own their faith didn't mean too much to them."

Both active and non-active young adults think that lifestyle choices play an important role in their church and religious participation. An active young adult said, "I have a lot of friends that get into college and see the party scene, and the choices, the sex, and they want to try it all. They think they can settle down later but now they want to try it all." A non-active young adult said, "My friends just got too busy with school, too much homework, stayed out too late Saturday night, played Nintendo too late. God wouldn't want me to sleep during church. It won't hurt to sleep and miss church."

What role does family influence play in dropouts?

An abiding puzzle for many parents is this: Why do their young adult children, who were so faithful in attending church as a teenager, never go to church now that they are out on their own? Does the home really matter, especially if the parents are Christians and regularly attend church? During the course of this study, many faithful Christian parents expressed concern and frustration about their sons and daughters who no longer go to church or participate in any kind of religious program. Still, this study showed strong correlations between the attendance and spiritual depth of parents and the faithful attendance of their young adult sons and daughters. Perhaps some of the more specific findings can shed light on this question.

Church attendance of both mothers and fathers during the teenage years was significant, along with the spiritual depth of mothers and the volunteer leadership of fathers. The Bible speaks clearly about the responsibility of the home in nurturing faith in children (Deut. 6:4–7; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:1–4). For youth ministers who work hard to disciple their youth, perhaps they should pour some increased attention into discipleship approaches that include

equipping and motivating parents to be models and teachers of faith to their teenagers.

Teenagers whose parents were divorced, those who lived with a single parent, and those who lived with stepsiblings during their teenage years tend to drop out following high school graduation. The increasing number of teens who live in single parent, remarried, or blended families should call for renewed efforts to help parents in their parenting skills and parenting styles.

Teenagers who regularly ate meals with their families and talked about spiritual matters with their families had different attendance patterns during the young adult years from those who did not. Youth ministries with a calendar full of activities can add to the busy schedules of families and even contribute to lack of family time together. Youth ministers should consider the value of encouraging families to sit down together over a meal and have a family discussion, particularly regarding spiritual matters. Parents may need help with their parenting style to accept probing questions about faith and lifestyle. These meal and discussion times can be valuable times to talk about future plans of maturing adolescents as they move toward young adulthood.

During interviews with young adults, they often reflected on the influence of their parents. One student said, "When you go off to college and parents are not forcing you to go to church anymore it's easy to fall away. On Sunday morning no one is telling you that you have to go to church."

An active young adult voiced this sentiment, "Sometimes parents push you so much so that when you get away you want to do something different." They perceive that some young adults drop out of church simply because they were only going because of parental pressure in the first place.

The need for help with parenting styles and guiding older adolescents toward young adulthood can be heard in this quote about parents from a non-active young adult: "I was so glad to be out from under them and do what I want to. . . . After about a year I started to realize my parents weren't all that bad and I really had it good. You start to rebuild. It's so important for kids to get out of the house and experience something besides home."

Still another spoke of parenting style with this statement, "When I was going off to college, my parents and my grandparents all said, 'Just do everything! Drink it all in! Yeah, work on school but this is your one chance in life to really do a lot of things you've never done before so just fill it up!' So that's what I've done."

What role does intergenerational mentoring play in dropouts?

The National Study of Youth and Religion found that religiously active teenagers had a number of adults in their congregations whom they could turn to for advice, wisdom, and encouragement. Even those who did not have

such adults around them wanted such a relationship (Smith & Denton, 2005, p. 69). This study confirms the importance of that relationship on continued church participation beyond the teenage years.

The quantitative surveys revealed the importance of mentoring relationships with adults and peers in continued faithfulness in church. The following items from the surveys were significantly related to church attendance:

- Spiritual life of adults in the teenager's life (teacher, coach, employer, neighbor, co-worker, etc.). Young adults who did not have close adult mentors during their teenage years seem to drop out more than those who did.
- Friendship with adult Christians. Those with two or less older adult friends attend church less often in their young adult years.
- Talking with a Christian friend about your faith or the things of God. Those who talked about their faith with Christian friends less than once a week attend church less often during their young adult years.
- The number of volunteer youth leaders in church during the teenage years is associated with attendance in later years.
- Those who reported two or less volunteer leaders during the youth years attend church less often during their young adult years.

These findings point toward a need for mentoring during the teenage years, by both peers and older adults. The opportunity to talk about faith with peers during the teenage years correlates with faithful participation in later years. Those teenagers who did not talk with friends about their faith seem to be the ones who drop out of church attendance in later years. Similarly, the opportunity to see models of faith among adults and talk about what God is doing in one's life is an important contributor to continued attendance once high school is over.

Comments offered during the interviews with young adults provided subtle affirmations of the value of intergenerational relationships. One active young adult said, "When I was in college I went to church a few times and didn't know anybody so it was easy to sleep in on Sunday mornings. I would just sit there by myself and no one would say anything at all." Another said, "I think when they go away and visit, when they go into a church, I think they're asking, 'Does anyone here really care about me?'"

The need for adult role models can be heard in this statement, "I think people stop coming because their faith is not their own. I know a youth pastor who really pours his faith into the youth, but their faith never really becomes their own. He always asks them about their quiet time. But they never really learn how to grow on their own."

Both active and non-active young adults point toward Christians who are fakes to explain why their peers drop out of church. This was the top

choice for both groups in a forced answer question about why young adults do not attend church in the quantitative survey.

Implications

Implications for young adult ministry

Young adult ministers have a daunting challenge facing them as they reach out to those who have just graduated from high school. They must form new relationships and gain their attention in the "beer and circus" of college life (Sperber as cited in Arnett, 2004, pp. 126, 131). It may be easy for parents and youth leaders to blame young adult leaders for failing to keep these emerging adults actively engaged in church and religious life. In turn, young adult leaders too often turn the blame toward parents and youth leaders for not preparing adolescents for the new challenges facing them in young adulthood.

This study suggests several implications for those who minister with young adults:

Acceptance. Pastors, youth ministers, collegiate ministries, and young adult ministries must work hard to develop a loving, supportive environment for young adults.

Meaningful involvement. Young adults want to be needed, not just entertained. They seek out churches where they can do something significant.

Intergenerational approach. Churches must find ways to enhance intergenerational activities for youth and young adults. College and young adult ministries that only cater to the age group miss the opportunity for young adults to have positive mentoring relationships with older adults.

Churches, youth ministers, and college and young adult ministers should explore strategies for transition from adolescence to youth adulthood. Parents need to be involved in these discussions as they relate to the home and church working together to make the faith journey into young adulthood pleasing and glorifying to God.

Implications for youth ministry

Scope of youth ministry. There appears to be a gap between high school graduation and young adulthood, and no one is attending to the gap. Youth ministry leaders should strongly consider extending the traditional limit of youth ministry from high school to include at least 1 year beyond high school. This does not imply that youth ministers must take responsibility for young adult ministry, but someone needs to be the lead voice in mobilizing the resources of churches and families for the purpose of nurturing adolescents as they step over the gap into young adulthood.

Discipleship. Youth ministry must do a better job of discipleship. This includes as a minimum (a) teaching the basic, biblical concepts of Christianity; (b) instilling a love and appreciation for intergenerational church relationships; (c) building a personal commitment of faith in the lives of teenagers and helping adolescents internalize their faith; (d) teaching youth how to select and get personally involved in a church that may be different from their home church; (e) providing opportunities for students to discover spiritual gifts, talents, and interests; and (f) finding ways to get them personally involved in leading in ministry. Youth is a time for striving for great ideals and meeting challenges. Simply attending church or youth activities during the teenage years is not a clear indicator of faithful discipleship.

Relationships. Youth ministry must help adolescents in basic personal skills—how to meet and develop new friends, how to choose a church, how to make the transition to a new location, how to set priorities, and leading students to be influencers, not just responders.

Mentoring. Churches and youth ministries need to develop mentoring strategies that match spiritually strong adults (in addition to parents) with adolescents. An effective peer ministry program could also be helpful. These significant adults and peers can help in the transition to young adulthood. In addition, student ministry that is totally separate from intergenerational relationships with a wider range of ages is doomed in the long term. Teenagers need to see what a walking, talking adult Christian is like. They need the opportunities for interacting and dialoging with a number of adults who care for them.

Implications for family ministry

Parents often sense their major task of parenting has drawn to a close as their teenage sons and daughters move out on their own. They pray that their parenting efforts during childhood and adolescence will develop into a continuing life of commitment and service to God for their young adult children.

Three specific implications emerge:

Moving teens toward adulthood. The transition from adolescence into young adulthood can be confusing. Parents can be helped through (a) training to help understand the transition of their adolescent into young adulthood, and (b) models of how to bless their adolescents and free them into the world of young adulthood.

Parenting style. Parents need help in adjusting their parenting style as their adolescent grows toward young adulthood. Parents need help in the transition of their role from "parent" to "adult friend" for their maturing adolescent

Spiritual leaders in the home. This is a wake-up call for family ministry. The faithful attendance and perceived spiritual depth of parents is a signifi-

cant element. Parents need practical, in-depth guidance in how to be spiritual leaders for their teens.

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Study

Additional work has already begun to develop a scale using interval data that more closely define attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to the role of faith following high school graduation. The Lasting Faith Scale, develop by the author, uses the significant findings from the Faith Journey of Young Adults surveys and interviews to form a scale to indicate potential for future church participation. The goal is to produce a valid, reliable instrument that church leaders and parents can use to track their efforts and determine if their teenagers are on the trajectory toward a faith that continues into young adulthood.

There is need for longitudinal studies to track actual attendance patterns of youth moving from adolescence into young adulthood. By using a predictive scale, such as the Lasting Faith Scale, youth can be tracked and domains of influence on church attendance patterns can be more closely identified.

Much of the previous work in the area of youth dropouts has taken the nature of hunches, perceptions, and anecdotal evidence rather than empirical research. Several current research projects are under way to measure factors influencing adolescents in their faith journey and help in the transition toward young adulthood. For more information on some of these projects, see the following web sites:

Center for Youth and Family Ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary—http://www.cyfm.net/College_Transition_Project_Intro.php. This is a 3-year longitudinal study with the goal of understanding the dynamics involved in the transition to college life, and what components of students' youth group experiences helped them make that transition.

Center for Parent Youth Understanding's College Transition Project—http://www.cpyu.org. Helping teenagers and parents transition smoothly to the "world of the university."

LiveAbove—http://www.liveabove.com. LiveAbove.com is an outreach of the Youth Transition Network, a coalition of youth, college and military ministries that are working together to transition students.

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High School Youth Group Seniors Transitioning to College: Risk Behavior, Social Support, Religiosity, and Attitude toward Youth Group

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Abstract: Youth workers devote a great deal of energy to creating and maintaining vibrant high school ministries in local congregations. But what happens to these youth when they graduate and move away to college? What can high school youth workers do to help students navigate this transition more effectively? The College Transition Project is an ongoing quantitative and qualitative study of this transition. The present article focuses on the first wave of a 3-year longitudinal study of 222 high school seniors who were graduates of youth groups across the United States with the intention of following them as they make their transition to college. This article examines seniors' attitudes regarding youth group, engagement in risk behaviors, sources of support, and levels of religiosity. Potential philosophical and programmatic implications for youth and college workers and church leaders working with youth and college students are also discussed.

Introduction

Both evangelical and mainline churches have expressed an increasing interest in the attrition rate of high school students involved in church youth groups as they graduate and transition to college and late adolescence/emerging adulthood. Surveys conducted over the past decade among late adolescents and emerging adults from ages 18–30 have provided results that have generated much concern among a wide range of denominations and parachurch organizations (Barna, 2001; Clydesdale, 2006; Lytch, 2000; Parks, 2000; Smith, Denton, Faris, & Regnerus, 2002).

The mission of the Center for Youth and Family Ministry (CYFM) at Fuller Theological Seminary is to translate research into resources that transform youth and family ministry. The dropout rate among college students

and young adults from churches in the United States prompted a team from CYFM to explore the meaning of the reported numbers and to examine the characteristics of students who remain in church or parachurch faith communities as they transition out of youth group as well as those who drift away from such communities during this time frame. It was assumed that if significant differences could be documented between these two groups, information and recommendations could be provided that would assist churches, youth ministries, and college ministries in retaining more students.

In 2004, CYFM initiated a pilot phase of the College Transition Project, surveying a group of college students who were alumni of a single youth group in the Northwest (Kubiak, 2005). The preliminary results suggested a link between a college student's current spiritual state and the quality of key relationships during the high school years, including the youth group environment itself. This study was limited by the fact that the survey group consisted of members from only one youth group. Furthermore, the survey data were retrospective; students were not polled during their youth group experience.

During 2005–2006, CYFM designed College Transition Project I (CTP-I) in an effort to move beyond the limitations of the pilot phase. Students involved in church youth groups during the spring of their high school senior year were surveyed using a longitudinal design. To participate in the survey, students were required to be over 18 years of age, be listed on the roster of their church youth group, and intend to attend a college or university (including a junior college) upon graduation. Students were recruited through CYFM's nationwide network of youth leader contacts, with special effort placed on geographical diversity. However, the sample of 162 students did not represent the desired geographic and ethnic diversity.

Thus, in 2006, CYFM developed College Transition Project II (or CTP-II) in order to overcome the limitations related to the samples in both the initial pilot study and CTP-I. Made possible by funding from the Lilly Endowment, CTP-II was conceived as a nationwide longitudinal study of approximately 200 high school seniors connected to church youth groups to examine their experiences at five points: the spring of their senior year in high school, the fall and spring of their first year in college, the spring of their second year in college, and the spring of their third year in college. This article provides a profile of the participants from the first wave of the study.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of a non-random sample of 222 high school seniors drawn from different regions across the United States. Over half (56.3%)

of the respondents were female while 43.7% were male. The sample was predominantly White/Caucasian (78.0%). Asian/Asian American students comprised 11.0% of the sample, while Hispanic/Latino students accounted for 5.0%. African-American and Native American students each accounted for 1.4% of the sample.

CTP-II participants reported a median grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 to 3.99, with 63% of the sample having GPAs above 3.5. This is higher than the average GPA for college-bound seniors nationwide, which was reported in 2006 as 3.28 (*Nation's Report Card,* 2006).

Participants were mostly from intact families, with 83.8% reporting that they lived with both their father and mother; another 4.1% lived with a parent and stepparent. Those living with single parents were more likely to be living with their mothers (8.1%) than with their fathers (1.4%). Overall, the parents of the participants were also well-educated. Over two-thirds (69.7%) of the mothers held at least a college degree; this figure was nearly three-quarters for the fathers (73.0%). Fathers were also more likely (37.7%) to have completed a graduate degree than mothers were (22.0%). By far the majority of the fathers (88.2%) of the participants were employed full-time, while fewer than half of the mothers were (42.5%).

The majority of the participants came from larger churches. The median youth group size was 51–100 students, while the median church size was reported to be over 800 members.

Procedure

From October 2006 to February 2007, members of the CTP-II research team who had developed networks in four geographical regions of the United States (the Southwest, the Northwest, the Southeast, and the Northeast) identified churches representing appropriate size, denominational, socio-economic, and ethnic diversity. For this study, only churches employing full-time youth pastors were recruited. From March to June 2007, the youth ministry staff of each participating church was asked to invite the students listed on their high school senior roster to participate in the study. As with CTP-I, in addition to being listed on the youth group's roster of high school seniors, students were eligible only if they were 18 years old or over and intended to attend a university or college upon graduation.

Students who agreed to participate in the study could do so in one of three ways: They could complete out a paper-and-pencil version of the survey together (facilitated either by their youth pastor or a member of the CYFM research team), they could complete a paper version of the survey individually at a time and place convenient to them, or they could complete an online version of the survey. In addition to the survey, each student was required to complete a consent form assuring confidentiality. Signed consent forms also

contained an identification code that was unique to each individual, as well as contact information (i.e., an e-mail address and a physical address) in order to track each student for future waves of data collection. A $25.00 gift certificate to Target or Amazon.com was given to each student as an incentive to complete the survey.

In June 2007, the CYFM research team recognized that the Northeast had fewer large youth groups from which to draw respondents. As a result, two larger churches from the Southwest were recruited.

Instruments

Spirituality/religiosity. Three measures of religiosity were employed. For both of the first two measures, participants were asked to rate their agreement with each item on a 5-point scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The Intrinsic Religious Motivation scale (Hoge, 1972) is comprised of 10 items measuring the extent to which an individual's religiosity is not simply external and behavioral, but internalized in terms of one's values and motivations. Sample items include, "My faith involves all of my life," and "I try to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life." In combining the items into a composite scale, 2 of the 10 were excluded due to missing data: "In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine," and "Although I am a religious person, I refuse to let religious considerations influence my everyday affairs." The scale comprised of the remaining eight items was internally consistent, at a Cronbach's alpha of .80.

A similar measure, the *Narrative Faith Scale* (Lee, 2004), was developed to assess the extent to which one's decisions are influenced by the sense of having a relationship to God. Sample items include, "If and when I date someone, it is (or would be) important to me that God be pleased with the relationship," and "In choosing what college to attend, it was important to me to seek God's will." This scale also showed good internal consistency, with an alpha coefficient of .85 in the present sample.

The third measure was a measure of religious behavior created for the CTP pilot. Ten items assess the frequency of engagement in a variety of behaviors, including such items as "pray alone" and "read the Bible by yourself." Responses are given on a 6-point scale, ranging from *less than once a month* (1) to *once a day or more* (6). Due to missing data, only 5 items were retained for a composite measure of religious behavior: talking with another Christian outside church, praying alone, attending a worship service for high school students, small group, and reading the Bible. This scale showed adequate reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .70.

Attitude toward youth group experience. Two sets of items were created from qualitative data from earlier stages of the College Transition Project in

order to assess students' attitudes toward their youth group experience. First, participants are presented with 22 statements representing why students go to youth group, including, "It's where my friends are," and "I learn about God there." Students are asked to rate how true each statement is for them using a 5-point scale ranging from *not true at all* (1) to *completely true* (5). Second, students are also asked what they would want to see more of and less of in their youth group. Thirteen items are presented, such as "One-on-one time with leaders," and "Mission trips." Participants respond on a 5-point scale ranging from *much less* (1) to *much more* (5).

Social support. Students were presented with five groups of people and asked how much support they felt they received from each. The groups were (a) teens in your youth group, (b) other teens outside your youth group, (c) your youth group leaders, (d) your parents, and (e) other adults in your church. Participants were asked to rank order these five groups from highest to lowest, with "1" representing the group from which they received the most support, and "5" representing the least supportive group.

Risk behavior. The frequency of engagement in the risk behaviors of alcohol consumption, sexual contact, and the use of Internet pornography was measured by items used in previous CTP studies, adapted from the Attitudes and Behaviors measure of the Search Institute's *Profiles of Student Life* (1996). Students were asked how often they have engaged in various risk behaviors in the previous 12 months and the previous 30 days. Responses were given on an 8-point scale, ranging from *0* (1) to *40 or more* (8).

Results

The following is a descriptive profile of the sample by their responses on the measures described above.

Attitudes toward youth group

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the 22 reasons students attend youth group. Items are listed in rank order, with the highest mean response at the top of the list. The rightmost column shows what percentage of the students answered either *very true* or *completely true*. Table 2 uses a similar format, with the rightmost column showing what percentage of the respondents answered either *more* or *much more*.

For the present sample, the top reason for attending youth group was liking the youth pastor. Negative reasons, like feeling guilty for not going or being forced to go by one's parents, ranked last. The aspect of their youth groups that respondents would most like to see more of is time for deep

Table 1

Reasons for Attending Youth Group

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	% responding *very true* or *completely true*
1	Like youth pastor	4.20	0.94	78.9
2	Learn about God there	3.87	1.00	65.8
3	Feel comfortable there	3.73	1.16	61.7
4	Can really worship God	3.68	1.08	59.0
5	Have always gone	3.67	1.34	64.0
6	Experience real fellowship	3.67	1.08	60.4
7	Learn to serve	3.65	1.11	59.9
8	Reinforces what I believe	3.65	1.05	56.3
9	Helps me grow spiritually	3.64	1.09	60.8
10	Feels like real community	3.62	1.19	60.8
11	It's fun	3.57	1.09	55.4
12	Feel like I belong	3.53	1.16	51.8
13	Like pastor's sermons	3.50	1.11	51.4
14	Learn the Bible	3.41	1.10	46.0
15	Safe to talk to peers about doubts and questions	3.27	1.23	46.4
16	Safe to talk to adults about doubts and questions	3.41	1.10	46.0
17	Where my friends are	3.14	1.20	37.9
18	Adults take time to really listen	3.04	1.18	35.1
19	Parents encourage me to go	2.89	1.36	35.1
20	Escape from the world	2.78	1.39	32.9
21	Feel guilty if I don't	2.20	1.13	14.5
22	Parents make me go	1.73	1.20	11.3

N=222

conversation. Less than one third of the students said they wanted more games; this item ranked last.

Sources of support

As described above, participants were asked to rank order five different groups of people from most to least supportive. Parents were ranked as most supportive, with a mean ranking of 2.36 out of 5 (again, "1" represents the highest support). Youth group leaders, teens outside the youth group, and

Table 2

Desired Changes for Their Youth Group

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	% responding *more* or *much more*
1	Time for deep conversation	3.90	.78	69.4
2	Mission trips	3.81	.79	62.5
3	Service projects	3.79	.72	64.3
4	Accountability	3.76	.74	60.8
5	One-on-one time with leaders	3.73	.74	60.2
6	Retreats	3.69	.72	56.3
7	Time for worship	3.67	.76	53.0
8	Bible study	3.66	.72	54.8
9	Small groups	3.58	.76	45.2
10	Camps	3.55	.73	47.0
11	Time for questions	3.47	.67	41.7
12	Student-run	3.42	.67	42.0
13	Games	3.18	.82	30.5

N=222

teens in the youth group followed, with mean rankings of 2.93, 3.06, and 3.08 respectively. Other adults in the church were ranked last at 3.62.

Repeated-measures analysis of variance was used to determine if these differences were significant. The F-ratio, with a Greenhouse-Geisser correction for violation of sphericity, was significant, $F(177.91, 1447.09) = 27.17$, $p < .001$. Post-hoc polynomial contrasts demonstrated both a significant linear trend, $F(1, 221) = 76.15$, $p < .001$, as well as a cubic trend, $F(1, 221) = 14.13$, $p < .001$. This suggests that the rankings of the three middle groups are not that different. Thus, parents are clearly ranked highest and other adults in the church lowest. The remaining three groups are ranked between these two and have similar rankings to each other.

Frequency of religious behavior

Table 3 lists the 10 religious behavior items in rank order, with the item having the highest mean at the top of the list. The rightmost column shows the percentage of respondents who reported engaging each activity at least once a week. Prayer was the most common activity, with 82.9 % of the students praying at least weekly; nearly half (46.8 %) prayed daily. Bible reading, however, was less frequent: while 41.9 % reported reading their Bibles at least weekly, only 11.7 % read their Bibles daily.

Table 3

Frequency of Religious Behavior

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	% at least once per week
1	Pray alone	4.86	1.46	82.9
2	Worship service for students	3.81	1.21	71.6
3	Small group of peers	3.35	1.29	61.7
4	Speak with another Christian about the faith	3.35	1.53	45.5
5	Volunteer to serve	3.20	1.46	44.6
6	Worship service with parents	3.19	1.47	58.7
7	Read Bible alone	3.15	1.77	41.9
8	Meet with spiritual mentor	2.55	1.49	35.0
9	Speak with non-Christian about your faith	2.03	1.13	10.4
10	Minister with adults outside youth group	1.96	1.32	16.9

N=222

Risk behavior

Students were asked how many times in the past month and year they had engaged in each of three behaviors (alcohol use, sexual contact, and viewing pornography). As a group overall, they were not heavily engaged in any of them; in each case, the majority reported not having engaged in the behavior in either the past month or year. Alcohol was the most common behavior: over a third (34.1 %) reported using alcohol at least once in the past month, and nearly half (48.6 %) used alcohol at least once in the previous year. Of those who used any alcohol, the median number of drinks was once in the past month, and 3 to 5 in the past year.

About a fifth (20.5 %) reported engaging in sexual encounters in the past month, and one-fourth (25.5 %) in the past year. Of those who had such contact, the median was 3 to 5 encounters in the past month and 10 to 19 in the past year. Finally, over a fifth (21.2 %) of the students reported viewing Internet pornography at least once in the past month; the median was 3 to 5 times. Over a third viewed pornography in the past year; here, the median was 10 to 19 times. Thus, while a larger number of students report using alcohol than engaging in the other risk behaviors, those who do participate in the latter seem to do so more often.

Table 4 shows these data distributed by gender. A higher percentage of the male students report engaging in each of the behaviors. One-way analyses

Table 4

Risk Behavior Participation by Gender

| | % reporting at least once | | | | |
	Male	Female	*F*	*df*	*p*
Alcohol					
Month	42.7	27.3	5.33	1, 218	.02
Year	55.3	43.5	4.87	1, 216	.03
Sexual contact					
Month	23.9	17.9	3.35	1, 213	.07
Year	27.8	23.8	.81	1, 210	.37
Pornography					
Month	45.9	4.0	58.67	1, 206	.000
Year	71.8	10.6	126.73	1, 206	.000

N=222

Table 5

Religiosity and Risk Behavior

| | Alcohol | | Sexual contact | | Pornography | |
	Month	Year	Month	Year	Month	Year
Narrative faith	−.31***	−.32***	−.20***	−.24***	−.17*	−.18*
Intrinsic religiosity	−.39***	−.37***	−.27***	−.30***	−.22**	−.21**
Religious behavior	−.34***	−.39***	−.23***	−.28***	−.24***	−.23***

N=222
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

of variance comparing group means on each of the risk items shows that there are significant gender differences on the frequency of use of alcohol and pornography, but not for frequency of sexual contact. The difference is most striking with respect to pornography, where roughly 7 times as many young men as women have viewed pornography on the Internet in the past year.

Table 5 shows the results of an exploratory correlational analysis examining the relationship of the frequency of risk behavior to the three measures of religiosity. As can be seen, all coefficients are negative and statistically significant. Students who report a higher level of religiosity, extrinsic or intrinsic, are less likely to engage in risk behavior. The pattern of coefficients suggests that this relationship holds most strongly for frequency of alcohol use. Because the data are correlational in nature, a directly causal relationship

cannot be inferred. The extent to which religiosity directly accounts for levels of risk behavior (or abstention from the same) is not known. Furthermore, even if a causal relationship could be established, the coefficients are moderate; religiosity only accounts for approximately 3 to 15% of risk behavior.

Discussion

In this first of five planned waves of CTP-II data collection and analysis, initial observations that may be of interest to adults who work with high school and/or college students are beginning to emerge.

Students' ranking of "I like my youth pastor" as the top reason for attending youth group might engender mixed responses from youth leaders. On the one hand, it is probably positive that students feel connected with adult leaders. On the other hand, given the difficulties students often experience in making the transition to college, perhaps some youth group seniors have become overly dependent on individual youth group leaders, requiring additional support that may be pragmatically beyond the capacity of the leadership to provide upon students' graduation from high school.

Nevertheless, based on seniors' connection to youth leaders prior to high school graduation, college leaders would be wise to ask youth group graduates about their relationship with their youth pastor, to ascertain both the degree of past connection as well as current contact between youth group leaders and youth group graduates. College leaders who sense that youth group graduates are missing their youth group leaders might consider encouraging youth group graduates to call or e-mail their former leaders and not wait for the leaders to make contact. Given the limited resources of youth leaders to care for those who are currently in their charge as well as those who used to be, it would make more sense for the students to initiate the contact as needed. Likewise, youth leaders can help high school seniors anticipate this transition by issuing an open invitation for such contact.

While respondents valued their relationships with their youth pastor, they rank their parents as a greater current source of support than adult youth leaders, teens inside or outside their youth group, or other adults in the church. This is encouraging news for parents of youth group seniors, a finding that should be incorporated into youth workers' philosophies and programs to aid seniors in transitioning to college. It would be prudent for both youth workers and parents to build upon and leverage this extant support as seniors are transitioning into college. In a similar vein, these responses for youth group seniors suggest that it would be very appropriate for college leaders to have some training in family dynamics. While it is true that the transition to college may mark an important period of developing independence, youth may need help negotiating how to balance that increased free-

dom with their continuing emotional ties to their parents. Such training would allow for relevant discussions of family dynamics with college students.

Perhaps not surprisingly given the tendency among churches to offer youth ministry programs that are by and large held separately from the overall life of the church, respondents ranked the support they receive from other adults in the church as the lowest of five possible sources of support. In CTP-I, there was some evidence of a relationship between two variables anecdotally related to support from other adults (involvement in overall church life and church worship during high school) and greater spirituality/religiosity during college. It will be interesting to determine if this finding is replicated in future waves of the current study.

In future waves of data collection, once subjects are in college, we will be analyzing the relationship between involvement in overall church life and church worship during college and greater spirituality/religiosity during college. If the same sort of relationship appears as in high school, parachurch college leaders would be especially wise to encourage college students to become involved with a local church as well as model such church involvement themselves.

As respondents evaluated improvements they would suggest for their youth ministries, the top suggestion was increased time for deep conversation. Students also expressed a need for greater accountability and one-on-one time with leaders. It would benefit youth leaders developing fellowship and discipleship opportunities to incorporate these findings into their ministry philosophy and schedule. It is possible that students in 9th, 10th, and 11th grades might report a different set of suggested improvements, so youth leaders should not assume that these findings can be generalized to younger students.

This desire for deep conversation is potentially welcome news for college leaders. As college leaders are preparing to greet and disciple these youth group graduates as they transition to college, it would be very appropriate to provide accountability and other opportunities for deeper conversation that reflect the mature relationships that can be built over time between college leaders and college students.

Increased opportunities to participate in mission trips and service projects were the second and third highest ranked changes that seniors would suggest for their youth ministries. As with the desire for deeper conversation, youth leaders would be wise to reflect upon the quantity and quality of service opportunities currently offered to their students in light of this data, as well as potential variances for younger students.

While many youth leaders and parents will likely be encouraged by respondents' levels of prayer, their levels of reading the Bible alone on a weekly

basis might leave them a bit disheartened. Given students' desire to engage in greater relationships and mission opportunities, both college and youth leaders would be wise to integrate Bible reading into these opportunities so that students understand the scriptural rationale underlying the community and service in which they desire to participate.

For most graduating seniors, the opportunities to engage in the risk behaviors assessed will increase upon their transition to college. Youth leaders who want to prepare their students for college life would be wise to focus not only on the risk behaviors of alcohol, sex, and pornography, but to also keep in mind the greater male participation in risk behaviors in general and Internet pornography specifically. Similarly, college leaders could consider offering special seminars on these topics, perhaps even occasionally separating the genders, so that issues can be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

These are preliminary findings at the front-end of what we hope to be a fruitful longitudinal investigation into factors that influence youth group graduates' transition to college. These students will continue to be surveyed as they proceed through college in an attempt to discover what aspects of youth groups are related to the longevity of students' faith.

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Facilitating the Transition to Manhood: Themes from a New Zealand Study

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Abstract: Literature identifies individuals and institutions as potentially significant contributors to the development of gender identity in young males. However, the views of the men interviewed for the study reported in this paper, which was undertaken in New Zealand, suggest that potential is not being realized. The experiences and perceptions of the men interviewed provoke consideration of the maps and signposts that are provided for those on the journey to manhood.

Introduction

Eddy was 18 at the time of our meeting. A third generation New Zealander, he has married parents, both in professional occupations, a twin sister, an older sister, and a younger brother. He had just finished school and was about to go overseas for a year before embarking on a University course. He had been at a Christian/church-based school throughout his education. In our conversation I asked Eddy about growing to manhood—his own experience and his ideas in general. He commented,

> I don't think you're gonna have a smooth transition through from a boy to a man, you're gonna go through some pretty wild times, just going up and down, almost like a roller coaster. . . . I also think that you think you're there and you're nowhere near.

> Mum and Dad have always brought us up in quite a strong Christian environment and then when I went up to school it was a [denomination] church school and you went to chapel three times a week. . . . I've always known in my own faith that God's kind of always gonna be there around the corner but it's kind of, do I want to turn that corner or just do I want to stay in my comfort zone? . . .

> You can't expect anyone else to be there telling you, "Say your prayers, read your Bible, do this, do that," or it all becomes more of a chore if you

> have someone telling you and it should never, never become a chore—
> you should just be doing it out of your own free will.

I asked him if there were significant mentors that he saw looking back on his teenage years.

> No, not really. I suppose at times the chaplain at school's been pretty
> good but then you pick out things in him you don't like so you kind of
> rubbish—my cousin was the youth pastor at ___ for a while, he's pretty
> staunchly Christian and he's kind of set the bar. I've always measured
> myself to him kind of thing so he's been a bit of a mentor.

Eddy commented that the mentoring was by observation more than by active input.

Eddy is a young man on his way to adulthood. But how does a boy become a man? Using a familiar journeying analogy, the question could be expanded: How do boys experience the journey to manhood? Is the territory the same today as it was for previous generations? What maps are provided for the journey? Who or what act as guides and signposts along the way? This paper reports on one facet of a recently completed doctoral research project (Smith, 2006) exploring the transition to manhood with particular focus on Christian spirituality and faith communities in relation to that transition. The project was set in New Zealand and contributes that particular perspective to the wider literature, which has principally come from North America and Australia.

Review of the Literature

This review of the literature focuses on the transition to manhood in terms of the contexts, both relational and institutional, within which that transition takes place. The broad-brush background will be considered first, and subsequently the review will consider three specific contextual areas: mentoring, school, and church.

In considering spirituality and the transition to manhood, the literature acknowledges that this is an area in which research is sparse. Writers have commented on the paucity of research in the area of spirituality in general, and of spirituality specifically as it relates to men (Boyd, Longwood, & Muesse, 1996) and boys (Grossoehme, 2001; Markstrom, 1999; Smith, Faris, Denton, & Regnerus, 2003). Tilton-Weaver, Vitunski, and Galambos (2001) observe that there are few studies that look at adolescents' subjective perceptions of maturity. Latshaw (1998) states,

Though many surveys have observed the transmission process from a quantitative angle, few have delved deeply into the subject using more qualitative methods. As a result, the literature . . . is relatively ignorant of how it works from the inside—the motivations, struggles and triumphs of the process from the viewpoint of the ones experiencing it. (p.1)

My observation would be that studies like that of Latshaw (1998) focus on the experience of fathers rather than that of adolescents. It seems that in the literature there is little that seeks to link themes of spirituality and masculinity with the adolescent male's transition to adulthood.

The Role of the Larger Community

Much has been written about the role of the family in religious socialization (e.g., Bartkowski & Xu, 2000; Dollahite, 1998; Hayes & Pittelkow, 1993). That, however, is not the focus of this review. However significant the role of the family may be in the adolescent's transition to manhood, it is evident that the family does not act in isolation. Be it conscious or not, the family's influence is being worked out within a wider context. Many writers, including both those who explicitly acknowledge the place of spirituality and those who do not, acknowledge the significance of the community setting (Kagan, 1999; Mahdi, 1996; McCann, 1999). Sullivan (2000) states, "The health and well-being of our children, young people and their families is inextricably linked to the systems and values of local communities" (p. 2).

In considering the significance of this wider context, two points need to be made. First, those situations that have emphasized the role of the wider community—the tribe, the village, the gathering of men—have also focused on the spiritual nature of the transition to manhood in the process. Second, within much of Western society, there appears to be an increasing disintegration of active, supportive local community and extended family. Within the nuclear family, current social trends mean that many boys grow up in homes without a father or significant male role model. McCann (1999) pointedly states that even when fathers are involved in parenting, if they are divorced from the wider community, "you have nothing to compare your parenting experiences with except the television" (p.166).

Having very briefly set the scene, we can focus in on the first of the three specific contextual issues—mentoring.

Mentoring

Recent literature highlights a belief that the development of constructive relationships beyond the family is a significant contributor to the well-being

of young people (e.g., see Benard, 1997; Garbarino, 1999; Greenberger, Chuansheng, & Beam, 1998; Smith & Carlson, 1997; Walsh, 1998; Werner, 2000; Zimmerman, Bingenheimer, & Notaro, 2002). In examining what it is that these "very important people" (Greenberger et al., 1998) contribute, Garbarino (1999) and Walsh (1998) highlight three aspects: a sense of acceptance, a sense of meaning to life, and a sense of stability. Walsh discusses the role of heroes who inspire strength and success. Young people searching for a hero reflect their own innate sense of desiring someone to respect, of having someone to affirm them. It would seem that if adults fail to take the initiative to "commit themselves unconditionally to meeting the developmental needs of kids" (Garbarino, 1999, p.150), young people will take the initiative themselves to search for a hero—either real but distant, or imaginary.

The significance of non-parental adults is illustrated in the rise of mentoring and the development of mentoring programs, notably in the United States (Freedman, 1993), but also in New Zealand (Evans & Ave, 2000). In the literature, a distinction is made between "relationships that arise naturally" (natural mentors) and "those formed through programs" (volunteer mentors) (Rhodes, Bogat, Roffman, Edelman, & Galasso, 2002, p.150).

In their quantitative study looking at natural mentors, Zimmerman et al. (2002) interviewed 770 adolescents. Their results demonstrated no apparent effect on levels of anxiety or depression, and while there were positive outcomes in relation to problem behavior and attitudes to school, the levels of benefit were only mild. However, the authors comment that even mild benefits may be significant.

Turning from natural mentoring to volunteer mentoring, much time, energy, and finance have been invested in the development and maintenance of mentoring programs (Freedman, 1993). Significantly, however, DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, and Cooper, in their 2002 meta-analytic review of 55 evaluations of mentoring programs, found "only a modest or small benefit of program participation for the average youth" (p.1). They note that two factors significantly improve outcomes: first, the use of both theoretically based and empirical "best practice," and second, and particularly relevant to this discussion, effects are enhanced when "strong relationships are formed between mentors and youth" (p.1).

In a study specifically looking at mentoring and spirituality, Cannister (1999), using pre- and post-questionnaires, found positive differences in "spiritual well-being" between groups of first-year college students who were involved in small mentoring groups compared to students who did not participate. It is worthy of note that when students were asked to identify the member of the teaching faculty who best fitted the role of mentor, half of the students involved in a group named someone other than the group facilitator. This affirms the view of Evans and Ave (2000) who "argue that natural

environments which are mentor rich are preferable to artificially designed programmes with short-term or haphazard matches between mentor and young person" (p. 41).

The Role of the School

Within the secular arena, in recent decades a considerable volume of academic literature has accumulated discussing the situation of boys in schools. This section inevitably will be a brief overview. The literature reflects a significant level of concern regarding the perceived educational underachievement of boys as compared to their female peers (Education Review Office, 1999; Kirby, 2000; Rutledge, 2000). Much of the literature, however, appropriately places the concerns about achievement in the context of a wider discussion of gender (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Pollack, 1999; Salisbury & Jackson, 1996; West, 2001).

Connell (2000) discusses the role of the school as a site of gender formation. He makes the distinction between a site as agent—the structures and practices of the school that consciously or unconsciously influence pupils—and the school as setting—the environment within which other groups contribute to gender formation. Beyond simply a discussion of the problem, a number of authors have proposed practical strategies for addressing issues of both agency and setting (e.g., Browne & Fletcher, 1995; Connell, 2000; Martin, 2003; Salisbury & Jackson, 1996). In 2005, Lashlie reported on the New Zealand based "Good Man Project,"

> which was undertaken in the hope that it would facilitate discussion within and between boys' schools about what makes a good man in the 21st century. It was intended to be a small piece of work that would involve 'just a few' boys' schools and take 'just a few' months, but the project grew and in the 18 months between September 2002 and March 2004 I worked in 25 boys' schools across New Zealand. . . . During the Good Man Project, discussions about the concept of contemporary manhood flourished among teachers, parents and the students themselves, and it began to seem that this was an idea whose time had come. (p.12)

Since the initial project, many of the schools involved have continued to incorporate discussions of "being a man" into school activities.

Of particular interest to this review is the literature on spirituality in education and the contribution of the Christian school. Andrew Wright's (2000) book *Spirituality and Education* is a careful and comprehensive look at the educational philosophy and practice around issues of spirituality and re-

ligion in both historical and contemporary contexts. The latter part of the book contains his agenda for spiritual education, "avoiding the extremes of traditionalist authoritarianism and progressive anarchy" (p.125). He believes, "Teaching concerned to induct children into a received cultural tradition and teaching concerned to cultivate the habit of critical autonomy may be seen as complementary processes" (p.125).

A considerable body of literature exists exploring the philosophy and practice of Christian education, and on the shaping of personhood in that context (e.g., Palmer, 1998; Van Brummelen, 1994). Much of this does not specifically discuss gender formation, but occasional articles have addressed the issue of Christian education and the development of boys (e.g., see the October 2003 issue of *Christian Teachers' Journal).* It would seem that the place of the Christian school as an agent of gender identity development merits further exploration.

The Place of Church

The concept of agent and setting that Connell (2000) uses in relation to school could equally be applied to church (using church in the sense of the local congregation). However, the literature on the role of church in gender formation is as small in quantity as that on school and gender is voluminous. The search conducted for this review revealed very little that specifically addresses the issue. Writers looking at broad issues of masculinity, from both academic and more "popular" perspectives have not included religion and church in their writing (e.g., Biddulph, 1997; Connell, 2000; Kimmel, Hearn, & Connell, 2005; Pease, 2002). Those writers who have addressed the issues of church structure and practice in relation to contemporary young people have not brought gender specifically into their discussion (e.g., Flory, 2000; Streib, 1999; Sweet, 1999).

Cook (2000) reported a study of American inner-city teenagers. Half of her group were involved in a Protestant church, while half had no church involvement. She did not address issues of gender specifically but concluded that "the interviews revealed that churched teenagers were less stressed and less likely to have psychological problems than were teenagers in the comparison group" (p.1). More recently, Junkin (2002) has written about the role of faith communities in identity development, but again issues of gender formation are not specifically discussed. It seems there is a gap in the literature here that merits attention.

In bringing this review to a close, it would appear that in this gender-aware environment, there has been little attention paid, at least in academic circles, to the role of the wider Christian community in gender identity formation in general and the transition to manhood in particular.

Method

Acknowledging the sparseness of qualitative research in this area, the research project from which this paper is derived used a life-history research approach (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Triads of son (aged between 18 and 22), father, and paternal grandfather were interviewed on a one-to-one basis, exploring experience, family themes, and perceptions of social trends, with a particular focus on how spirituality and faith-community are seen as part of the experience of growing up. The aim was to foreground the experiences and perceptions of the sons, using the interviews with the older generations to contribute depth and context. The main criterion for selection, apart from availability and willingness to be interviewed, was that each participant have a current involvement in, or association with, a Christian church. Of the sons, two were 18 at the time of interview, two aged 20, and two aged 22. One of the 20-year-olds was married with an infant son. All were Caucasian second or third generation New Zealanders. The interviewees were involved in churches across the Protestant denominational spectrum: Anglican, Presbyterian, Open Brethren, and Pentecostal. Each participant was interviewed individually. The three main foci of the interviews were:

- the nature of transition,
- the destination of transition—perceptions of masculinity,
- the facilitation of transition—the key people and institutions involved as support.

The interviews used a semi-structured approach. Within each conversation the following questions were addressed:

- What do you think makes a man a man?
- Where would you see yourself in the transition to manhood?
- Where do you see faith or church fitting for you in that transition?
- Who or what would you see has been a part of influencing your transition?
- What events or experiences do you think have contributed?

Each interview was audio-taped, transcribed, and examined for themes using the principles of life-history research as discussed in Goodson and Sikes (2001). In keeping with Gadamer's (cited in Sharkey, 2001) caution around reliance on pre-set standardized methods of interpretation, no formal analytical tool was used. Rather, reading and re-reading interview transcripts served to highlight comments on experience and insight around the three major themes. Each son was given a pseudonym (e.g., Dan) and the others in the

triad referred to accordingly as Dan's father and Dan's grandfather. This approach was used as part of highlighting the interviews with the sons. This paper selectively reports on the findings from the interviews in relation to the third of the themes—thoughts on how the interviewees saw the role of mentors and faith communities in their development of ideas about masculinity and manhood.

Themes from the Interviews

This section highlights the comments of the participants in relation to the facilitation of transition beyond the family context.

Mentors

In each interview, I asked specifically if the young man could identify significant people who had contributed to his sense of developing manhood. The responses could be seen as paradoxical. On the one hand, in talking about the people they recognized as significant mentors to them, they felt their learning was largely by observation and "osmosis" rather than by intentional discipling. On the other hand, when they talked about mentoring in general, they saw relationship as being the most important element.

> [Name] used to be a good friend . . . he's a few years older than me but for some reason took a liking to me and he just took me under his wing and called me up, just see how you're going and he'd invite me round and taught me how to drive and things like that.
> (Martin)

> All young people or all everyone's about really, it's all validation you know, like everyone just wants to be valid. . . . If it is valid cherish it man, hold onto it because there are a lot of people in that person's life that are probably gonna try and chip away at that validation.
> (Steve)

> I mean it's just being part, being in their home you're kind of exposed to how they do it and how [name] is, how he is.
> (Theo)

The contrast lies in, on the one hand, their experience of learning by observation with, on the other hand, their desire for relational closeness. Admittedly, for most of the young men, the learning by observation was learning from people with whom they had some level of relationship—an employer, a

family friend, an older personal friend—rather than a complete stranger. The sense, however, was that the sons saw greater potential within the relationship for being taught. But then the paradox continues.

> I think more often than not if you're not trying to teach me something I would have just learnt something off you. If you're trying to pound something down my throat then what I would've learned from you is exactly the opposite of what probably what you were trying to teach me.
>   (Steve)

> When I said they could've forced that, now thinking back again about that, if they had enforced it I might have not wanted to.
>   (Dan)

> I guess you could probably teach until you're blue in the face but if the attitude of the person doesn't really want a mentor anyway . . .
>   (Theo)

There came the insight that "being taught" might not necessarily be effective, depending on the responsiveness of the learner.

Most of the people that the sons mentioned either specifically or in general terms as mentors would not be a great deal older than themselves. Martin's mentor friend was only a few years older than him, and Dan commented,

> Too old would be over 35 I guess, for someone who's a teenager to talk to about their problems . . . maybe someone who's late 20s, early 30s type of thing.

These comments on the importance of relationship would seem consistent with current mentoring literature (e.g., Cannister, 1999; Freedman, 1993). It would also appear to fit with writing on contemporary generational characteristics that stresses desire for relationship as significant (Goodliff, 1998; Mahedy & Bernardi, 1994).

Church

I asked where the participant saw the church fitting in supporting boys growing to manhood, both in potential and in actuality. As in other themes, the responses were consistent. Although there was a feeling that the church could have a role, and needed to have a role, in reality it was generally perceived to be either not very effective or totally irrelevant. These responses were not just from the sons, but from the fathers and grandfathers as well.

Not well I don't think. I mean for me I don't think it was that well in terms of—I don't know, maybe I'm being a bit harsh.
     (Theo)

The reality of Christianity, the way it's kind of portrayed at (school), it's an old traditional kind of part of history, it's not that modern and I think that's the trap that quite a few pastors of youth groups fall into.
     (Eddy)

I think that the church service on Sunday is probably often the most in-efficient way of reaching young people, because it is often geared to older people.
     (Martin's father)

At the moment—where I see it? Totally irrelevant. Maybe that's an indi-cation of where I'm at but I find it irrelevant because it's irrelevant for me and I don't think if it's irrelevant for me it can be relevant for my boys and it's not. I can only sort of speak to that in terms of the experience I've had and as I've observed it.
     (Eddy's father)

In many ways I think the church is totally irrelevant to where people are at today.
     (Steve's grandfather)

It is important to remember that these responses are all coming from men who are involved in a church—some of them in significant roles. The inter-views did not develop why the men felt as they did about the current involve-ment of churches, but I did ask more about the potential part that could be played. The responses related to offering relevant teaching and support, but specifically within the context of relationship. While generally the comments were consistent across the three generations, there did appear to be more fo-cus on relationship from the sons and greater emphasis on teaching in the views of the grandfathers—although Dan's grandfather was clear that "*words alone are not enough.*" Two words that I seemed to hear repeatedly were the need to be "relevant" and the need to be "real."

     For Eddy's father, the failure was seen in the light of the bigger issue of how churches relate to men in general. It would be interesting to pursue the dialogue to see whether the same views are held in relation to supporting girls growing up or whether this is more indicative of concerns relating specifically to men in churches. Eddy's father's observations have been shared by move-ments such as Promise Keepers, which has seen the motivation of Christian

men as one of its key roles. This, of course, begs the question as to what comes first: Has men's lack of motivation or involvement created a feminized church ethos, or has a feminized ethos discouraged men from participating? However the question is answered, for the situation to change, it must address both sides of the issue.

School

Of the sons, three had attended a Christian or church-based high school. Dan's primary education was at a Christian school, but he had attended a State secondary school in keeping with his father's philosophy:

> A Christian school is good through the primary years, I don't know if it's any good through the high school years. . . . There's got to be a time when they get integrated into the world as such and I'm not certain which is the best time.

The other two young men (Steve and Theo) had been at State high schools. There were no major differences in the way the six described their experiences between the State schools and the Christian/religious foundation schools.

In general terms, school and schoolteachers did not feature significantly in an explicit way as the sons reflected on what or who had supported their journey to manhood. Where comments were made, school seemed to be more significant as "setting" rather than agent, to use Connell's (2000) framework. Theo described how school had given him opportunities to develop responsibility:

> My final seventh form year I was involved in everything. I was the lead role in the school production and I was involved in the counselling department working with younger students and I was a prefect and I had various responsibilities so that was great and I guess all that helped shape me.

In Eddy's account, the environment of his school had been significant. It appeared, however, that his father's interaction with, and affirmation of, that environment added significantly to its influence.

Michael mentioned,

> You sort of recognized in some of the teachers that there wasn't sort of a sharp transition, that their course was always a bit of fun and sort of,

they're not just, you know, you don't hit a certain age and you lose all the fun and stuff like that and turn into an adult.

Steve's father thought that some of Steve's teachers had contributed, although Steve himself did not mention them.

While it would be hard to believe that school had not had a significant shaping effect on their transition to manhood, the influence seems to have been "hidden" rather than overt. It seems there is scope for Christian schools to consider their role as "agents" of gender identity formation.

Conclusion

Given the methodological stance of the study, it is not appropriate to attempt to pull the paper together in a set of tidy conclusions and generalizations. My hope is that the voices of the young men interviewed will speak for themselves and provoke reflection on the issues raised. In keeping with highlighting those voices, however, I want to conclude with some comments aimed at provoking further thought and discussion.

The first is perhaps more implicit than overt in the reported interviewee comments. It is, however, foundational to the practical implications of the topic. It is the issue of how we conceptualize gender. Significant discussion is outside the scope of this article. There are many resources available as starting points for exploring the topic. However, the challenge is to find sources that are clearly rooted in Scripture, well thought-out, pragmatically useful, and relevant to the contemporary cultural environment—not as easy a task as it may first appear! As Christian people, we need to consider the maps that we are providing to those on the journey to manhood—and womanhood. What is needed is neither an avoidance of the issues nor a falling back to the apparent safety of historical gender stereotyping, but rather a reasoned, sensitive exploration of these complex but vital issues.

The second comment relates to the role that Christian communities can play in providing signposts and guides to supplement the maps. The 2003 report of the Institute for American Values, *Hardwired to Connect*, while not talking specifically about Christian principles, seems relevant. The main thesis of the report is that research evidence suggests human beings are "hardwired to connect" and also that people are "hardwired for meaning, born with a built-in capacity and drive to search for purpose and reflect on life's ultimate ends" (p.14). The report continues,

Meeting this need for connectedness is primarily the task of what we are calling authoritative communities—groups of people who are committed

to one another over time and who model and pass on at least part of what it means to be a good person and live a good life. (p.14)

The writers of the report believe that the lack of such communities contributes to the failure to flourish of increasing numbers of young people. With the awareness that Christian churches are not the only groups who could fit the description of "authoritative communities," it would seem that there is some match between the comments of the interviewees and this report. Christian communities, be they local churches, youth groups, or schools, have the opportunity to be agents of gender identity formation, not simply passive settings where this formation will occur. Wright's (2000) *Spirituality and Education* was referred to in the literature review. While not specifically addressing the issue of gender, his belief in the importance of balancing the communication of traditional values with developing and encouraging the skills of critical thinking is relevant here. Thinking about gender needs to be a part of both congregational teaching and school curriculum. There are a multitude of ways in which this might happen—the challenge, it seems to me, is to be proactive in providing opportunities for discussion and exploration, rather than falling into a more prescriptive approach.

The third comment develops out of the previous point. It concerns thinking through transmission to the next generation as a relational and proactive task. One-to-one mentoring within a school or congregational setting would obviously be logistically challenging and possibly unrealistic. However, working with groups in a way that relies on role-modelling by example, or on assuming that what I teach is what you learn, is clearly vulnerable to the vagaries of recipients' perceptions. This leaves each group with a responsibility to be prayerful, thoughtful, and creative in its provision of structures within which transmission of ideas and practicalities of "doing gender" might occur.

Finally, I would like to highlight my perception of the need to listen and respond appropriately to the thoughts and experiences of the young people whom we are seeking to walk alongside. In conducting the interviews, I was struck by the insights and maturity of the young men and reminded of the need to respect their experiences and their views, even when different from mine. I do not wish to undervalue the contribution that can be made by parents, mentors, or pastors, but neither do I think that adopting an "I know what's best for you" attitude that devalues a young person is beneficial.

To conclude, in Tacey's (2003) discussion of the prevalence of interest in spirituality among young people, he challenges traditional religion to continually be reviewing its stance, and maintaining a sense of freshness. Christian organizations—local congregations, schools, community groups—are faced with the task of adapting to significant social change while retaining their un-

derlying ethos. To reiterate the key words used by the sons in this study, we need to consider the extent to which we are relational, real, and relevant.

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Keeping it Real:
Research Findings on Authentic Community

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Abstract: Thirty undergraduate senior students at two Christian colleges participated in a semi-structured interview designed to gain a better understanding of students' conceptions, experiences, and ideals of community since they became college students. The interview yielded tape recordings, then transcribed raw data. Authenticity emerged as a prominent theme resulting from verbal analysis and will be the focus of this paper. Implications are drawn for the Christian college campus or church-based college ministry.

Introduction

Over a latte, two college students express affirmation of that morning's chapel speaker. Because it is easier to criticize than affirm, my ears perk up. What drew them in and evoked high praise? The speaker was "real." He "shared his struggles." He did not "pretend life was easy." Comments like these catch my attention because they confirm my doctoral research findings.

One of my compelling passions is to contribute to the discipleship process of college students, to do my part to present them complete in Christ. I have known the joy of watching some "discern what is pleasing to the Lord" and choose to make those things a priority in their lives. I have also grieved when they have chosen rebellion, wallowed in negativity and cynicism, or gloated over past sin because it creates an edgy identity. My personal interest in the topic of community among college students was furthered through exploration of related literature. Educators, developmental psychologists, philosophers, and theologians have sought to understand the cultural milieu and current trends among students and have drawn conclusions about their unique convictions and needs.

Willimon and Naylor (1995) researched college students and concluded that higher education has undergone a radical shift and is in a state of crisis. One of the symptoms of crisis is the absence of community. Students continue to communicate a longing for connectedness and relationships. They are no longer seeking freedom but belonging. The disintegration of the

American family has resulted in lack of stability and has caused students to search for belonging in social groups, clubs, and relationships with other adults. Willimon and Naylor, believing that no intellectual life occurs outside community, that humans long to belong, and that students are eager to have adult interaction, define community as "a partnership of people committed to the care and nurturing of each other's mind, body, heart, and soul through participatory means" (p. 145). The authors' ultimate test of whether or not a college or university is a community is whether students and faculty are seriously concerned with each other's well being. While all involved must be committed for a community to function, Willimon and Naylor challenge faculty by putting the onus for community on their shoulders; the vision and implementation is essentially their responsibility.

Boyer (1990) proposes six principles to guide decision-making and to define the ideal college community (p. 7). A college community should be educationally purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative. Boyer defines caring as "a place where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged" (p. 47) and suggests that this aspect is the glue that holds it all together. Perry (1968), informed by Erikson, Piaget, and Kohlberg, states the importance of an atmosphere of community in which supportive relationships encourage learning and development.

In *The Critical Years* (1986), Sharon Parks explores the developmental stage of college students and concludes that they have particular needs to be in community. Following the work of Kenneth Keniston (1965), she considers the new post-adolescent stage between adolescence and adulthood. Bridging James Fowler's (1981) stages 3 and 4, this "threshold into adulthood" (Parks, 1986, p. 75) is characterized by dissonance, search for identity, and rising questions of relationship between self and society. Parks writes, "Ambivalence, wariness, exploration, and tentativeness are the warp and woof of the tapestry of faith woven in the young adult era" (p. 82). The disequilibrating effect of this transition time can be minimized by the presence of community.

> Young adulthood is nurtured into being most powerfully by the availability of a community that poses an alternative to an earlier assumed knowing, vividly embodies the potential of the emerging self, and offers the promise of a new network of belonging. A critical awareness of one's conventional ethos alone is not enough to precipitate a transformation in faith—a transformation in the meaning that grounds one's very existence. Typically, a critical awareness and a single mentoring figure, while influential, are by themselves insufficient to reorder faith itself. Rather, it is the combination of the emerging truth of the young adult with the example and encouragement of the mentor, grounded in the experience of

an ideologically compatible social group, that generates the transforming power of the young adult era. An ideologically compatible, mentoring group serves to confirm the faith that one will be held in a new knowing—that there will be a new "home." (Parks, 1986, p. 89)

Students, faculty, and administrators alike appear to desire some sense of community and belonging. Kuh et al. (1991) state that the collegiate sense of community has diminished in the past 25 years. According to Kuh et al., three factors contribute to this loss: (a) colleges and universities are large and complex, thereby complicating if not eliminating social interaction between students, faculty, and administrators; (b) the student body is more heterogeneous, including greater numbers of students who are non-traditional age, part-time, female, of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, and representing different sexual orientation; (c) faculty members are expected to devote more time to solitary activities such as writing and research rather than social activities such as teaching and advising.

The emphasis on community in the literature confirms that the concept is vitally important to a student's college experience. In an effort to understand college students' inclination toward and interpretation of "real" relationships within community, I undertook a qualitative research project to explore how Christian college students conceptualize community. The data showed that they highly value community as long as it is authentic; their emphasis on authenticity is the focus of this article.

The research involved a descriptive study conducted among students from two Christian liberal arts institutions that are members of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) (Thoennes, 2001). The inquiry involved four steps. First, the sample of 30 senior students was selected according to a predetermined Demographic Profile. To determine students who were typical of CCCU schools, the "Report on the 1996 CCCU First-Year Entering Students" was used to craft the Demographic Profile which included six points: (a) at least 60% female students; (b) students between 18 and 22 who had entered college the same year they graduated from high school; (c) Caucasians; (d) approximately 60% of students from families with annual income $25,000–$75,000 with a median income of $50,000; (e) students who had parents who were "living with each other;" and (f) United States citizens who spoke English as their first language. Seniors were interviewed because they had entered college in 1996 when the CCCU Report was conducted.

Second, after agreeing to participate and upon arrival at the interview, students gave written answers on a short Personal Profile, which included questions on gender, major, housing arrangement, church background, whether they self-identified as a Christian, and family income level.

Third, an interview, informed by precedent literature, was conducted with the sample of 30 seniors. The research was guided by four research questions:

RQ 1. Where have students experienced community while attending a Christian liberal arts institution and what have been the characteristics of that community?

RQ 2. How do students who attend a Christian liberal arts institution conceive of an ideal community?

RQ 3. How do students who attend a Christian liberal arts institution conceptualize Christian community?

RQ 4. In what ways are the experiences and ideals described by students similar and dissimilar and how do these descriptions intersect with postmodern, theological, and historical categories of community?

In a 60-minute interview, each student was asked 20 open-ended questions. Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. Permission was obtained from appropriate administrators and staff members before conducting any of the research.

Finally, step four involved verbal analysis of interview data. Analysis was carried out in three phases. In phase one, two questions guided the analysis. What themes recurred throughout the data and what differences surfaced in interviewees' answers? While the interviews were transcribed, attention was paid to recurring themes and differences that occurred throughout the data. As the transcription was read, a research software program entitled Non-numerical Unstructured Data-Indexing Searching, & Theorizing 4 (NUD*IST 4) was used to code text units that seemed to be significant based on the two questions above. Text units were given a code or address. Subsequent text units that communicated a similar theme were given the same address. Thus, a list of categories containing ideas and phrases was constructed.

In phase two, categories with the highest number of references emerged as the major themes. The NUD*IST 4 program allowed codes to serve as the "parent" or major theme codes and others to serve as "child" or sub-theme codes. It was therefore possible to discern that some codes were broader and some narrower in focus. Throughout the coding process, the NUD*IST 4 program constructed a network of related themes; this "tree display" graphically demonstrated the relationships between themes. This display provided the structure for the writing phase.

In phase three, the major themes were the basis for writing. Each theme and its sub-themes became broad, comprehensive, descriptive sections

portraying students' conceptions of community. Once this backdrop was established, conclusions could be drawn about effective teaching and ministry with college students.

Findings

As students responded to interview questions, consistent responses allowed for seven themes to surface as the main categories for organizing the dissertation. The seven main categories, listed here in no particular order, were (a) commonality: students reported that Christian community only exists when members hold their faith in Jesus Christ in common; (b) diversity: students mentioned that difference within a community often results in discomfort but that it is beneficial; (c) living together: students said that living with others allowed for daily interaction which gave rise to emotional intimacy and sharing of belongings which are crucial to community; (d) leadership: students recognized the need for leaders within community to act as role models, nurturers, and encouragers; (e) interaction: students state that sharing, acceptance, confrontation, and love should characterize communal interaction; (f) activities: according to students, community is fostered by spiritual disciplines and shared purposes including evangelism, missions, residence life work, or sports. Finally, (g) *authenticity* will be the focus of this article as it is explained below. Within each main category, subcategories could be determined, which further defined students' conceptions. Two sub-themes related to authenticity surfaced as students communicated communal values: their desire *to be known* by others, which is accomplished by vulnerability, and freedom from others' *judgment*. Each of these aspects of authenticity will be considered individually.

Being Known

According to the data, one of the identifying markers of a true community is an individual's awareness that she is known by others. Such knowledge is highly valued because it results in the individual feeling loved. One's knowledge of another is contingent upon whether that person is willing to share her weaknesses and needs. The kind of sharing students desire involves mutual trust and sensitivity to hear the needs and struggles of others. A male student said that in a community "there's a level of openness." Describing community, a female education major stated, "It's based on trust and openness, confidentiality and trust."

According to these students, among others, community members must make strides toward self-revelation if their group is to be properly considered

a community. Regarding her college house experience, one student reminisced, "The silly fun moments are not the ones that matter but when we said 'we will be ourselves here.'" To one woman, trust in the response of others fostered transparency: "We were able to be real and vulnerable. We weren't shot down but embraced and upheld." Students reported that members of the community bear the responsibility for being vulnerable if they are to be known. Clearly students do not consider self-revelation a safe endeavor; rather it is risky. Yet, when asked about what activities define a community, they often listed vulnerability. One senior defined community as "a safe place where you can share and be vulnerable." Another had a similar definition: "Christian community has to do with holding one another up and vulnerability and being able to be in a place to be free to be who you are." When speaking about the positive outcomes of the community experience, several students included lessons learned regarding vulnerability:

> They (my community) challenge me to put down a lot of my defenses and be who I am.

> You grow a lot through our community, we had a lot of trials and you take risks and open yourself up to get hurt and you grow as a result.

> I've learned how to be vulnerable and how to be wise about being vulnerable.

Their community not only required that students reveal their intimate selves, but also determined how they did so. Students not only refer to authenticity when relating their community experience or discussing essential elements of community, but also when hypothesizing about an ideal community situation. A female athlete says that in the ideal community it is important to "include honesty in sharing who you are and what you want to be about." Another concurred, "Loving each other and sharing struggles as well as triumphs would be in an ideal community."

Students were asked whether an assigned small group was a community and if it was not, how might it become one. When describing how a small group evolves into a community, some believe the group only becomes a community when people are vulnerable and real. Vulnerability among members distinguishes a manipulated conglomeration from a true community. Students balk at feeling a forced sense of openness. Examples of this include a small group from church or a short-term missions team that is assembled by someone other than the students themselves. Students also mentioned that college itself is not real life, and that fact necessarily contributed to a negative

community experience. In their thinking, anything contrived or institutionalized is less than real. Unless intimacy occurs naturally and unprovoked, it is not genuine or heartfelt and true community is not possible. Institutional prodding only aggravates the situation and encourages facades.

Students were asked to delineate the negative aspects of their community experiences in college. Four students said their community experience was negative because it was not real. What made it something other than real? Other students who over-spiritualize things, have a "holier-than-thou" attitude, and were unwilling to honestly reveal the sinful and bad things about themselves. One student suggested that until a person chooses to reveal negative information, others are limited to knowing something less than real. Her comment represents many others as she spoke of her living situation: "Sooner or later everybody's struggles come out and the real person comes out." When these comments are combined, it becomes clear that students believe personal sharing is necessary to community. This task requires risk because the personal sharing necessary involves negative traits or experiences. Yet the question arises, are the positive characteristics or dispositions of persons, their victories, their examples of obedience, or demonstration of the fruits of the Spirit less than real?

No Judgment

The second subcategory under authenticity is that of "No Judgment," and it is closely tied to the subcategory of "Being Known." How do students recognize when they are part of a community? First, they are known by others by means of their own vulnerability and sharing of negative information. Second, those who receive the information accept rather than judge them critically. In fact, openness and vulnerability are essential elements to Christian community to the extent that it does not exist without it. Yet, students qualified their emphasis on vulnerability by adding that it must be followed by full acceptance. That is, even when their ugliness is apparent, they want to be loved unconditionally. This element of "no judgment" is vital to understanding their concept of authenticity in community.

Students want freedom from the fear of being judged by others. One man, whose view represents many, put it this way:

> There's a level of openness and transparency and vulnerability that doesn't happen far too often, but to have a healthy community it needs to happen, to be real. (You) need to not worry about being judged by people because along with love comes (a) reciprocal level of love and acceptance.

The lack of judgment is translated into acceptance or love. A young woman states that community must provide "unconditional love; regardless of who I am or what I show you that you're still going to love me."

When asked to describe the nature of their own experience of community, students comment on an atmosphere where they could be themselves, share even the bad and not worry about being rejected. Students' comments suggest that they believe people are normally loved because they are perfect, without problems, or easy to love. They are impressed that when they revealed their lack of perfection, they were still loved. They found this tremendously freeing. Another student described the nature of her community: "There were times when we've listened without speaking and understanding and love the person where they're at even if they're not perfect." A female senior depicts her community experience: "There's acceptance and if I had a fault I was still accepted and loved. There's trust, openness, honesty for the most part. We shared things."

Implications

The data is both encouraging and disheartening. On one hand, there is a fresh commitment to "walking in the light" among collegiate Christians and a desire "to do life together" rather than live in isolation. Such desires have the potential to enrich the body life of local churches and be a profound witness to a watching world. On the other hand, such tendencies, if they remain unchecked, may hinder future ministry within the American church. What will the church be like in 20 years when these students are in leadership? Their ideas about vulnerability will influence their sermons, service, and discipleship. Will leaders wallow in their inadequacies rather than claim the power that is theirs in the risen Lord? Will they experience the power of the Word in their lives and model it for others or prefer conversations that never judge sin or rejoice in victory? Perhaps more serious is the possibility that they choose not to lead for fear of high expectations to appear perfect. There is a lot at stake.

Perhaps we can help students rise above the tendency to assume that only "what is negative" is real and only "lack of judgment" is loving. Here are some ideas for those who minister to students:

1. *Model confidence in God's transforming power.* Are our students afraid to voice their victories because they doubt whether God really does provide a way out of sin and temptation (1 Cor 10:13)? Do they fear they will sound ignorant for trusting God to do a miracle in their lives? Perhaps they are so influenced by a culture that believes each person has the power within himself

to bring about change, that depending on God to do it seems irresponsible or weak. We can set an example of turning our eyes to God and waiting on him to bring about change in us. Chambers provides a helpful corrective:

> The one marvellous [sic] secret of a holy life lies not in imitating Jesus, but in letting the perfections of Jesus manifest themselves in my mortal flesh. Sanctification is 'Christ in you.' It is *His* wonderful life that is imparted to me in sanctification, and imparted by faith as a sovereign gift of God's grace. Am I willing for God to make sanctification as real in me as it is in His word?
>   (Chambers, 1935)

Any victory we experience is because of God's grace, not our efforts at perfection.

We can be careful to discourage language that minimizes the power of God's Word and work in our lives. Quite often I experience something along these lines. One student shares a personal struggle. Another well-meaning student responds, "I know this sounds trite, but the Bible says we can draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we might receive mercy and may find grace in our time of need" or "I know you probably don't want to hear this, but God works all things together for good." In these instances, we must remind our students that if they are communicating truth, especially biblical truth, they never need apologize for sounding redundant or clichéd. Rightly applied, it has more power than any other words they could utter.

2. *Share our victories with humility.* Do college students avoid sharing about the good decisions they have made because they have only seen others do so with an arrogant spirit? Do they assume that evidence of sanctification is shared with pride or desire to be the center of attention or appease the adults in their lives? How can we teach them to give voice to their victory with humility? Like everything else, we do this by modeling it. With humility and recognition of God's amazing grace, we share the transformation he has wrought in our lives. When our students share their victory over sin, or an example of turning from temptation, let us pause to publicly praise God for his faithfulness.

3. *Express our dependence on God to bring about change.* We can emphasize for our students our inability to bring about spiritual progress without the intervention of a loving and holy God. That is, we simply recognize our fallenness. Paul asks the Corinthians, "What do you have that you have not received?" (1 Cor 4:7). We must model this kind of dependence on God for any power to overcome sin—it is not our own doing. All the more reason we must

talk about it—to fail to do so is to be ashamed of the gospel. Sharing such stories is a means of ascribing praise to God.

4. *Recall God's work in students' lives.* As Paul often did in his letters, remind students of the evidence of God's good work in their lives with comments such as, "remember what you were like freshmen year when you found your identity in being smart? God has been so good to you, and look how far you have come!" Do not let students forget that God has been and continues to be at work in them.

5. *Use examples of believers throughout history.* Use good biographies of Christian leaders or missionaries that honestly include the person's shortcomings and thereby demonstrate that God can use a faithful servant who is less than perfect.

6. *Emphasize theological truths about believers.* While I agree with students that honesty is a means of loving one another, most "real" are the theological realities that Christ has brought about by his blood. In Christ, we are holy and blameless (Eph 1:4). The most loving thing we can do (for others and for God) is try to live accordingly and share that with others. Not only are our efforts at holy living a means of loving, but also they are truly efforts at being authentic—authentic followers of the God-man who gives us the power to do this. If we ignore victories in our life in an effort to appear authentic, his transforming power is ignored. To begin our journey following Christ, we had to recognize our need and decide to become more like him. We can make successes and victories a normal part of our class or small group discussions.

7. *Use Paul as a model of authentic relationships.* Certainly Paul sets an example of loving, authentic relationships. He develops his relationships by often reminding the recipients of his letters of his ministry among them. Paul reminded them of his example, not because it was perfect, but because it was evidence of God's sanctifying power and therefore worthy of emulation. He was bold enough to say, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1). This is truly "being real." It is saying, "The Lord has commanded us to make disciples, teaching them to obey all he has commanded, and I have shown the best I know how to obey those commands, try to do the same." Paul did not hide his past; he gave the sordid details of his life before Christ, confessing before King Agrippa that with "raging fury against them I persecuted them" (Acts 26:11). He spoke also of the worldly things in which he found his value. These were glances back at what Paul was before his radical Damascus road encounter. His gaze did not remain on his former life but turned upward to

God's grace and mercy in his life. Paul's authenticity included victory over sin and evidence of the Spirit's work in his life. He sought to live in a manner that new believers could emulate. While the young adults interviewed appeared to see vulnerability in community as an end in itself, Paul was concerned that his honest testimony demonstrate the grace of God. He certainly cannot be accused of being phony, but he was wholeheartedly trying to be like someone else—Jesus. He was trying to die to himself and put on Christ.

8. *Teach students the goal of authentic community*. In *Preaching the Cross* (2007), Mahaney calls readers to watch their lives and doctrine closely (1 Tim 4:16) by practicing confession of sin in a group of trusted godly friends. Many students readily practice this open sharing in their communities.

The significant difference between what Mahaney advocates and what the students practice is the goal. The students' efforts at vulnerability are for the purpose of authentic community. They want to be fully known so that they might be genuinely accepted and loved. Mahaney (2007), on the other hand, humbly reveals sin to those who care for his soul because of hope. Likewise, he calls his readers to be vulnerable with one another with "hope for ultimate fruitfulness . . . and hope that our life will increasingly reflect the transforming effects of the gospel." He assures the reader that great reward follows vulnerable sharing: "As you watch your life, . . . you can be confident that you will see the Savior work" (p. 135). Mahaney's motivation for vulnerability is not simply to be known, but to serve God more effectively and witness God's transforming power. This is a far cry from simply wanting to experience warm fellowship. It means the sharing cannot end with the confession of sin, but has to include stories of how it was overcome.

Both the research findings and Mahaney emphasize authenticity. Yet another stark difference exists between the two: the students want their vulnerability to be followed by "no judgment." Mahaney on the other hand, wants his soul doctors to judge his attitude and actions against the Word and call him to a higher standard.

9. *Share our shortcomings honestly*. It appears that students believe that the normal reaction to another's faults is to pull away, end the friendship, or stop loving the person. Students mention the pairing of vulnerability and acceptance as out of the ordinary. Only one student explicitly stated that he experienced both and that it ought to be normative in community: "You can tell people who you are and not be afraid to disappoint them. I can be rebuked or I can rebuke someone and that's part of the expectations of the community." Often when students had experienced acceptance, they believed it was an exception to the rule. Somewhere in their lives they have witnessed the opposite—that honesty leads to rejection and, therefore, isolation. As leaders, we can speak vulnerably with students about our lives and give them the oppor-

tunity to learn to love less than perfect people! Perhaps they will develop a similar willingness to trust the body of Christ and practice forgiveness.

Conclusion

I knew a man who regularly answered "I'm perfect, thank you" to the question "how are you?" He responded this way even when suffering from illness. Perhaps today's students are reacting to a generation of such men. Even if students' commitment to being known through vulnerability is a reaction to the perception of falsehood in the preceding generation, such a desire is admirable. However, to enjoy true depth of relationship within community, those moments of self-revelation must include joy, gratitude, a desire to be an example for someone younger, and praise to God for his transforming power. Let us help students properly nuance their commitment to communal authenticity so that Christ will be exalted and his church will be edified.

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"Converted to the Kingdom:"
Social Action Among College Students Today

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Abstract: A renewed interest in social action has captured this generation of Christian college students. This movement represents a change from previous generations, in which those committed to the truth and evangelism kept a distance from social justice issues. Conversely, those who embraced action often did so at the expense of scriptural authority or the exclusivity of Christ. A new generation of students does not see the divide, but for the most part cannot articulate why the two should be linked. By teaching a holistic gospel that proclaims the Kingdom of God, Christian educators have the opportunity to help these students ground their action in their faith. Students can move beyond simply doing something that makes them "feel good" to embracing the Kingdom of God in a way that gives meaning to their actions, develops an integrated life, and demonstrates the power of the gospel as a witness to the world.

Introduction

For 15 years, the Ivy Jungle Network has supported campus ministers and sought to keep a finger on the pulse of collegiate ministry. Through national and regional conferences, a biannual survey, and dialogue with national leaders from ministry organizations, the network leaders are constantly asking what is working, what is challenging, and what is surprising. Over the past 2 years, a clear trend has emerged in the growing interest of college students—Christian and non-Christian alike—in social justice issues. The recent Katrina catastrophe brought this issue into clear view for the leaders at Campus Crusade for Christ. To date, more than 15,000 college students have participated in trips to the hurricane-ravaged area. Like other campus ministry groups, Campus Crusade anticipated a strong response to this opportunity to serve the people and communities of the Gulf Coast. However, they did not plan on so many students from outside their groups showing interest in these trips. National leaders report that between one-third and one-half of participants on many of the trips were not regular Campus Crusade participants—and many were not believers.

The biannual Campus Ministry Survey underlines this growing interest in community engagement and social action. Every 2 years, the Ivy Jungle solicits volunteer responses to the survey. Since 1999, the Ivy Jungle database has grown from 6,000 to more than 10,000 men and women who work with college students. The survey began in 2001, asking questions about the size, scope, and breadth of campus ministries. Statistics on ministry growth, size, salaries, affiliation, and the students are collected. Each survey has received more than 400 responses from all forms of campus ministries across the United States and Canada. While the percentage of campus ministry workers taking the survey has remained small, the distribution of ministries, geographies, age, and experience indicate a demographic consistency among survey takers. Some caution must be used in imputing absolute value to the percentages, but the survey has proved an effective tool for gaining a big picture view of campus ministry and for watching for trends (both positive and alarming) among campus ministries. The picture that has emerged is also compared with the reports from national organizations and denominations engaged in college ministry. In each instance, the survey has proven consistent with the national groups' reports and has often given statistical validity to their anecdotal stories.

Since 2003, involvement in programming elements such as worship and teaching has remained steady. Evangelism as a programmatic part of the ministry has continued to drop steadily; only about 50% of groups are now doing it. Only three elements have seen growth: small groups (engaged in by more than 85% of all groups—the most common activity in campus ministry), mission trips (75%—up from 71%) and service projects (71%—up from 68%). In addition, when asked about their importance in attracting students, worship/singing and teaching/speaking saw declines in their draw, while community/fellowship, service, and mission trips saw gains. The gains in service and mission were the largest of all.

Interest in a variety of ministries on campus bears this out. New college-focused programs run by groups like International Justice Mission (IJM) and World Vision have experienced great success. IJM currently has 140 campus chapters in the United States. They have also recently initiated the "Relentless" campaign, which specifically involves college students in their work. The World Vision "Acting on AIDS" campaign visited 60 campuses this past year. Compassion International continues to provide chapel speakers and artists for college ministry gatherings as part of its ministry to encourage students to sponsor children from impoverished areas of the world. Last year the Urbana Student Mission conference was the largest ever. Urbana's director referred to the current group of students as "serious in purpose" and "an assertive global generation." Nearly 5,000 InterVarsity students participated in their Global Urban Trek and other mission trips (www.intervarsity.org/aboutus). Other

campus ministry organizations and denominational groups have also seen similar interest.

Outside the church, other efforts have captured the interest of college students as well. They include organizations like The Invisible Children, which brings thousands of young people together to sleep out for a night to raise awareness for child soldiers and street children in Africa. The One Campaign, founded by U2 lead singer Bono, has been very popular among college students. The campaign recently launched an official "campus challenge" to mobilize college students in the fight against global poverty, rewarding the most engaged campuses. Christian students are joining both religious and secular groups in social action efforts. Wheaton College now boasts the second largest chapter of Student Global AIDS Campaign, a secular group founded at Harvard that now has 85 chapters across the United States.

Perhaps this involvement should not be so surprising. Children of the Baby Boomers have gone off to college in record numbers. Whether hearkening back to the activism of their parents or embarking on a more personal search for meaning and significance, they are a generation motivated by issues of social justice. Because of technology, they are more globally connected than any generation in history, with access to friends all over the world. Many (particularly Christians through the short-term missions boom) have had experience serving the poor and traveling cross-culturally. Their interest in activism has manifested itself in three concrete areas: justice, racial reconciliation, and care for the environment. Each of these areas represents a unique opportunity for Christian educators to connect discipleship with service and help students develop a holistic, kingdom-focused worldview.

Students Today: Engaging the Kingdom but not the King

The movement toward social engagement, however, is often disconnected from biblical theology. Wheaton College has reported some of the lowest biblical literacy rates in its history among incoming students (Mission America Coalition, May 2007). George Barna continues to see a decline in knowledge of biblical truth (Barna Update, 2005) Students are largely involved because it makes them "feel good," adopting what Smith and Denton (2005) have referred to as "moralistic therapeutic deism" (p.164). And until most recently, most of the best resources for social engagement came from outside evangelical circles, as dualistic theologies divided good news and good works in such a way as to leave the former to the "conservatives" and the latter to the "liberals."

The current interest builds on discussions that have been a part of evangelicalism for more than 30 years. Yet the recent trend is receiving greater emphasis and broader acceptance than in years past. Documents such as the *Chicago Declaration for Evangelical Social Concern* (1973) and the *Lausanne*

Covenant (1974) have clearly expressed an evangelical concern for engaging in social action as part of the kingdom work of the church. Leaders such as Ron Sider at Evangelicals for Social Action and Jim Wallis at Sojourners have long been advocates of social justice within the church, but often as voices from the fringe. More recently, voices such as Shane Claiborne have captured the ear of many students. Perhaps building on that prophetic call, a renewed emphasis on the teaching of the Kingdom of God has emerged within the church. Following in the footsteps of Mark Noll, Sider has gained an audience among Christian college students with his book *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience* (2005). More and more, the old lines between evangelicals strong on proclamation and mainline Protestants strong on justice have begun to blur.

Within the current interest in social action, it seems that many students embrace the Kingdom before they open up to the King. The challenge and opportunity for Christian educators is to bring a theological grounding to this longing within the soul of this generation. As these young people search for meaning and significance through experience, they need a biblical lens to translate that experience in a way that moves past simple personal fulfillment to the glory of God. Wright (2006) refers to the arena of social justice as a "prophetic opportunity" for the church (p. 438). The current generation of young adults exemplifies this timely opening, where holistic discipleship can build on the activity that already exists, infusing meaning and context into those actions and displaying the power of the gospel lived out as a witness to the world.

How We Got Here: Incomplete Theologies

Over the course of the last century, a sharp dualism arose within the church. Evangelicals denounced personal sin, while mainline Protestants denounced social sin (and in more recent years, some would argue both sides have been virtually silent about any sin at all). "Dualistic Theologies" emerged in which preaching either focused on individual salvation without social transformation, or social involvement without personal conviction to Christ (*Rice,* 2004). Snyder (2001) laments the acceptance of the "body-soul dichotomy" in which the church became supremely concerned with souls while neglecting all concern for lives here and now.

The "cheap grace" warned of by Bonhoeffer (1959) became a common theme, in which the gospel message was boiled down to a transaction that secured a heavenly address, but lost implications for the totality of life. Sider (2005) sums it up saying, "Cheap grace results when we reduce the gospel to forgiveness of sins; limit salvation to personal fire insurance against hell; misunderstand persons as primarily souls; at best, grasp only half of what the Bible says about sin; embrace the individualism, materialism, and relativism

of our current culture; lack a biblical understanding and practice of the church; and fail to teach a biblical worldview" (p.73). In *Kingdom Ethics* (2003), Stassen and Gushee link cheap grace to the steady growth of the secular/sacred divide. As the Platonic dualism of the spiritual and natural influenced theology, it led to the separation of the inward realities governed by God (as suggested by Luther) from the outward actions left to the governance of the state. Ultimately, cheap grace takes hold when the forgiveness of Christ is separated from repentance and the teachings of Christ.

Gabe Lyons (2007) of the Fermi Project describes the theological shift as telling "half stories" (p. 8). The "full story" traces the grand narrative of Scripture, moving from creation, to the fall, to redemption, and culminating in restoration. In *The Drama of Scripture* (2004), Bartholomew and Goheen enumerate six acts by breaking out the work of redemption into Israel, Christ, and the church. However, too often the "gospel" as presented tells only the middle portion of this story. In the "half story," the gospel is limited to a transaction at the cross. While this is the heart of the gospel, to preach it as the full story may lead to "decisions" and not to the fullness of reconciliation.

For justice to have meaning and once again connect to the gospel—and the Kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus Christ—a recapturing of the full story is needed. From creation through culmination, the gospel announces a transformative message. Love of God and love of neighbor encompass both *proclaiming* the good news and *engaging* in good works.

The Case for Social Justice: Grounded in Creation

Social justice begins with teaching about creation. Stephen Mott (1982) argues that all human rights are grounded in the cultural mandate of the opening scenes in Genesis. Human rights are bestowed as an aspect of bearing God's image: "God is the provider and protector of human rights; we accept them as duties as we perceive God's love and acknowledge God's authority over us" (p. 52). Wright (2006) also points to creation as essential in understanding humankind as the image bearers of God. People are addressable by God, accountable to God, and possess dignity and equality because they are made in God's image. God's goodness and blessing are not reserved just for the final special creation of humankind, but can be found in the repeated "it was good" statements of the opening chapter of Scripture. The cultural mandate given to humans was to care for this creation, which reflects the goodness of the Creator. The God with a mission gives humanity a mission to extend his reign throughout all of creation (Wright, 2006). Proverbs proclaims that the one who oppresses the poor shows contempt for the Maker. By extension, this applies to the fullness of creation—humankind and the very planet itself. Justice begins with understanding that the Creator stands with his creation.

This beginning of justice also gives Christian students a more complete understanding of their own efforts in caring for creation. College students' zeal for the environment has led to recycling programs, sustainable and organic foods in campus dining halls, and even the design of "green buildings" for college campuses. Groups such as A Rocha Trust, Restoring Eden, Revision.org, and the Evangelical Environmental Network are gaining notoriety. Last spring, *Christianity Today* published an article on how student concern for creation care has impacted Christian colleges (Crosby, 2007). The interest in caring for the planet already exists, though most students cannot articulate a biblical rationale for their concern. By beginning with Genesis 1, we have the opportunity to connect their passion to a broader theological framework.

Moving forward in the story, we see that in the fall all of humanity received the taint of sin. Wright (2006) describes it as the "whole environment of human life" affected by sin (p. 432). Bartholomew and Goheen (2004) diagram the relational damage as impacting four aspects of life (p. 39). This creates a need for a four-fold reconciliation—with God, others, self, and creation. The fall impacts each of these relationships profoundly, creating a need for reconciliation in every one. As Wright (2006) states, "Holistic evil demands holistic response" (p. 438). That holistic response unfolds as God reveals his plan from the proto-evangelium of Genesis 3 through the call of Abraham and the formation of Israel. The prophets point to the coming Christ who inaugurates the Kingdom and purchases redemption at the cross. The church continues the ongoing mission, looking toward the ultimate fulfillment in the New Heavens and New Earth to come. Throughout this redemptive work, God brings about the reconciliation of all things in Christ Jesus. That reconciliation impacts all of life—with God, with others, with self, and even with creation.

While the fall and the cross are the problem and climax of the story, they come out of the context of creation and lead to the culmination in the return of Christ. Telling the "whole story" manifests the universality of the hope of Christ for all people everywhere, as all are made in his image and are therefore objects of his love. It also provides for the breadth of holistic reconciliation—which ultimately is the "overall context for evangelism and discipleship making" (Lyons 2007 p. 11). Rather than competing with evangelism, a holistic approach completes the work of evangelism by connecting the blessed hope found in redemption with the ultimate end of restoration.

A Theology of the Kingdom

To embrace the "full story" of holistic reconciliation is to embrace the fullness of God's mission. This requires a more integrated theology, grounded in the metanarrative of Scripture. Rather than a view of the gospel that is *only* transactional, it taps into Jesus' own proclamation that the Kingdom of God is

at hand. Jesus announced the gospel in Kingdom language, referring to it more than 90 times in the Gospels. In *The Cost of Discipleship* (1959), Bonhoeffer combats "cheap grace" by examining the Sermon on the Mount. The work of Jesus is validated and expanded when we study and embrace the teachings of Jesus. However, as the transactional gospel has taken hold, that key piece of Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom has come to be viewed as simply idealistic—one more pedagogue that points to our need for a Savior. Stassen and Gushee (2003) offer an alternative view, which they describe as "transformative initiatives" (p. 133). These kingdom teachings relate very directly to the words of the prophet read by Jesus when he began his public ministry at the synagogue in Nazareth, saying: "Today this scripture is fulfilled" (Luke 4:21). The way of discipleship therefore includes the practice of Jesus' commands.

Kissinger (1975) has noted that for the first three centuries of the church, "the biblical passage most often referred to was the Sermon on the Mount" (p. 6). Kingdom theology recaptures this teaching. The Kingdom encompasses all four aspects of redemption in a way that tells the whole story of the cross. Kingdom theology recognizes the reign of God, not just on the throne of the heart of the individual, but a reign that stretches into every aspect of life (Wakabayashi, 2003). As the Kingdom advances, the King (most often through the agency of the church) makes things right. To turn back to the promise of Isaiah 61, the sick are healed, the oppressed set free, and the Lord's favor turned towards his people.

Psalm 33:5 reads, "The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is filled with His unfailing love." In God's view of his Kingdom, love of neighbor intrinsically includes meeting real needs and delivering from oppression (individual and social). The Gospels put both John 3:16 and the Sermon on the Mount in the mouth of Jesus. Kingdom theology does not separate the two, but teaches evangelism as a corner piece of the ongoing holistic mission of reconciliation.

To teach about the Kingdom, however, is to teach a radical, costly discipleship that brings all things under the headship of Christ. Unlike "decisions," reconciliation is a messy process (*Rice,* 2004, p. 13). Yet it calls the followers of the King to work for peace—for God's shalom—in public and private. This approach boldly proclaims the victory of the cross and the future reconciliation of all things under Christ (Colossians 1:20).

Implications for Christian Education: Help Students . . .

1. Connect Meaning to Experience:

As stated previously, many of today's college students are looking to participate experientially in acts of justice—to stand up for the poor and op-

pressed, to push for racial reconciliation, and to protect the environment. While college will always be a self-focused time for many students, more and more are increasingly looking for ways to "do" for others as part of their search for meaning and significance. However, the meaning behind the action remains incomplete. As Stassen and Gushee (2003) have stated, political theories and philosophies are inadequate "to communicate the will of God in the biblical teaching of delivering community restoring justice and righteousness" (p. 346).

Under common grace, good happens when anyone picks up a hammer for Habitat for Humanity and helps bring affordable shelter to a family in need. However, as students seek experience after experience, they need some way to understand and coherently connect those experiences to a broader purpose. Altruism only stretches so far. The ongoing redemptive story of God provides a theological framework in which their own stories connect to a greater movement of God. Real peace making must be theologically grounded in Christ alone as the source for lasting hope and peace (*Rice,* 2004).

This change also supplies a reason beyond the simplistic "it makes me feel good" emotion heard so often in the research of Smith and Denton (2005). In moralistic therapeutic deism, God exists simply to solve problems and make people feel better. Right actions, and even religious faith, are largely pursued simply because they "feel good" to the doer. By grounding these "feel good" (which are in fact "real" good) actions in a theology of reconciliation and the Kingdom, justice will become part of life—long beyond the moment when the endorphin rush fades.

One of the practical things that educators and ministers can do is to begin to encourage students to read books that expand their thinking about Jesus and social justice. Books such as Gary Haugen's *The Good News About Injustice* (1999) or Allen Wakabayashi's *Kingdom Come* (2003) can help link meaning and experience. Bible studies and teaching play an obvious role as well. Teaching the whole counsel of Scripture, from creation to recreation, in broad strokes can give the theological framework upon which students can place their experiences. Leaders can spend time on Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom or open up to the prophets and help students see the heart God has not only for personal holiness, but also for people who do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God (Micah 6:8).

2. Develop an Integrated Life:

Unlike "cheap grace" which proclaims a one-dimensional, transactional gospel, holistic reconciliation proclaims a reconciliation of God and the whole person—including implications for social, psychological, and even

environmental issues. Because God reigns over all things, following him means submitting all of life to his will. The "sacred/secular" divide cannot exist. Faith is not a private matter, but rather one that touches all of life. Discipleship calls on the whole person—head, heart, hands and feet—to follow "in His steps." Discipleship thus stretches beyond quiet times and Bible study to a full understanding of vocation and career, politics and civic duty, family and relationships, and even personal emotional growth.

Foster (1998) has written that what the world needs is not smarter people or more gifted people, but deeper people. Spiritually formed disciples see all aspects of life changed because of Jesus. However, this process of formation is often messy. One of the positive attributes of this generation is that many are willing to embrace the mess. In a postmodern milieu, process has a place. The tensions of "already" and "not yet" can exist much more freely than in the hyper-rationalism of the modern age. Holistic discipleship recognizes the complexity of life with its multiple issues, challenges, and relationships, "nurturing the journey in worship, prayer, and scripture" (*Rice,* 2004, p. 15). Justice helps shade in some of these complexities. As one Christian student has said about her involvement with the homeless in Chicago, "The way my parents' faith worked for them is not the way mine will work for me. My faith is a lot messier than just going to Community Bible Study" (Jarosz, 2007, para. 8).

In addition to teaching about God's heart for justice and asking questions from the safety of the Bible study circle, we should engage in the mess of ministry and serving people with our students. Experience is a powerful instructor. "Doing" cements the message in many ways. Intentionally engaging in service projects (and in debriefing, particularly if students have stepped beyond their usual comfort zones in service) can add significant weight to biblical instruction. It can also demonstrate that such action is a part of the integrated life and not simply one more program "add on" that good Christians do with their spare time.

3. Demonstrate the Power of the Gospel and the Power of God:

In a more postmodern age, the question for many regarding Christianity is not only "is it true?" but "does it work?" This is a not a question of validity, but of potency. By embracing and encouraging social justice, we demonstrate that power, in the lives of the oppressed and for those observing from the outside. In justice, the church confronts evil; looks squarely at the defeated foe, death; and proclaims hope that the injustice of this world and the darkness of the grave are not the end of the story.

Wright (2006) describes the AIDS pandemic as one arena where the church can do just this—bring the power of God and the power of the gospel

to bear on one of the most deeply penetrating scourges of sin in our world today (p. 433). The church has much to contribute, because a Christian worldview embraces "the material, psychological, social, cultural, political, and spiritual aspects of life, a worldview that unites evangelism, discipleship, social action, and the pursuit of justice" (Campbell, 2004, p. 64).

Rather than action that simply makes the doer "feel good," the gospel brings real impact into the lives of real people. In the pursuit of social justice, the church has the opportunity to lead in three of the areas already engaged by many students today. In racial reconciliation, the church can model true community in which ethnicity, color, and heritage are part of a God-ordained diversity, celebrated in the midst of unity in the cross. In caring for the environment, we point to the Creator behind the creation and show respect and delight in all that he has made. In the pursuit of justice, we echo the heart of God, caring for the poor and oppressed, demonstrating compassion in acts that cannot be repaid. We defend the weak because they too bear the image of God and matter to him.

Most campuses already have student groups who engage in these areas, and one question to ask is where are the Christians in these groups? Rather than always creating a special "Christian" version, partnering with the racial reconciliation group on campus or joining the environmental group on campus can bring the potency of gospel into a realm that too often lacks Christian presence. One of the InterVarsity leaders at Northwestern University tells a powerful story that took place during the growth of the multiethnic chapter on their campus. The group spent the year studying Scripture and intentionally developing a multiethnic presence and culture within their organization. During that time, a racial incident took place on campus. At a chapter meeting later that week, the students were discussing a rally for solidarity that took place on campus. When the leader asked how many attended the gathering, to her shame, not a single hand went up. Some time later, a second racial incident took place on campus. As students from the offended ethnic group rallied on campus, several members of the InterVarsity group joined the gathering. When asked why they came, one of the white students in the group spoke up and told them that they came to stand with them against the injustice of racism on campus. The power of the gospel suddenly became real to a room full of people.

4. Stand as a Witness to the World:

Historically, when the church has led in the realm of social justice it has caught the attention of the world—and often grown considerably. Snyder (2001) writes that discipleship brings about effective, "Spirit-guided evangelism *and* social witness, both of which find their justification, focus and goal

in the kingdom of God" (p. 83). When the church acts like the church, the world takes notice. Historically, the influence of Christianity has been tied to social justice. Christianity grew tremendously in the first few centuries, as it brought both the ideas of hope and charity to the Greco-Roman World (Stark, 1996). More recent work, such as ending the slave trade, combating child labor, founding the Red Cross, and caring for widows and AIDS orphans have all stood as a significant witness to the world of the efficacy of the gospel.

By engaging in social justice, Christian college students (at both secular and religious schools) are finding unique opportunities to share about Christ with their peers. Campus Crusade was shocked by the number of unbelievers signing up for their Katrina trips. InterVarsity has found that chapters who participated in Habitat for Humanity projects ended up sharing a worksite with the GLBT (Gay Lesbian Bi-Sexual Transgender) group from campus so often that some chapters intentionally signed up to work with them. The campus is amazed to see two seemingly polar opposite groups working together for a common good. Christians engaging in environmental conservation find they get to meet people who would never darken the door of a church. The world sees the Kingdom at work—and often those doing the work have the chance to share authentically about their reason for engaging in such works.

Finally, the church gains a voice to be heard as it engages in the good works of the Kingdom. To date, more than 2.4 million people have joined with U2 front man, Bono, in an effort to wipe out poverty. Whether because of youthful idealism or the hope of actually doing something significant, a great number of those people are college students. By engaging in holistic reconciliation, by teaching the full story of Scripture and a Kingdom-oriented worldview, and by actively engaging in social justice, we have the opportunity to give young people a voice for something even bigger than wiping out global poverty—the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We enable them better to proclaim (in word and deed) the hope that comes in knowing that the culmination of that Kingdom will one day arrive, and that in that day the words of the prophet will be completely true: the poor will rejoice in the good news; the blind will see; the oppressed will stand tall; and the captives will be set free. Until that day, we can join in advancing the work—for the sake of the Kingdom and the sake of the King.

Conclusion

In many ways, the college students of today are becoming converted to the Kingdom: standing for justice, advocating for the oppressed, pushing for reconciliation, and caring for creation. But for many the ethic remains distant

from their faith. Public action has been separated from private faith. However, by educating students in the holistic reach of the gospel, we can help them push forward in their causes, not just because it "feels good," but also because it really does matter to God.

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