

My story of Youth Ministry started while I was earning my Undergraduate Degree at Azusa Pacific University in Social Science. I started volunteering at a local Nazarene church with their youth ministry. At that time I wanted to be a High School teacher and I felt that I needed to spend as much time with the youth in my community as possible. During school I spent many years learning about adolescent psychology and development, different techniques of how to teach adolescents, and learning to study cultural trends and how to meet the needs of those cultures. As we all know God has a sense of humor and put all of those resources to work for Himself in the local church. For the last seven years my I have been serving at Highland Ave. Community Church of the Nazarene in Southern California as the Youth Pastor there.

Since then I have continued my Youth Ministry training at Fuller Theological Seminary and have received a call into a different type of Youth Ministry. We have been called to do Youth Ministry in Uganda, East Africa. The call to Africa was confusing at first but then I realized that God had been grooming me for this assignment for many years. Starting in Sept. 2010, my wife and I will be moving to Uganda in order to partner with the Nazarene Churches there and starting the process of building an infrastructure of Youth Ministry in that country. We will be working with around 70 churches there as we travel around and hold training seminars for the Pastors and leadership from those churches.

The reason why God has called us to that country is because in 2008 Uganda was the youngest country in the world. Due to HIV/AIDS and civil war almost an entire generation of parents and grand-parents has passed away, leaving a country full of adolescents. Youth Ministry is the most important ministry in that country and the Nazarene churches there are not trained to focus on ministry to adolescents yet. That is our task.

The purpose of the training manual is to start the conversation of Youth Ministry training with the leaders of the Ugandan churches there. This manual is meant to be a generic statement of the theology of discipleship that enables the church to do ministry to everyone in their church body and community. The heart of the manual is discipleship and more specifically, a discipleship that produces disciples who in turn produce disciples...therefore, spreading the gospel through relationship, the way it was intended.

I hope that all who use this manual find it helpful in some area of their ministry and/or relationship with God.

-Eric West, February 2010

Purpose of Training: To Make Disciples of Young People Who, In Turn, Make Disciples in Relationship with and in Service to the Body of Christ (Church).

Definition of "Ministry: Intentional loving relationships between believers and non-believers and within the family of God.

Basics of Youth Ministry:

The Image of God - [God the Father] - "Who You Are..."

Genesis 1:27 (NIV) *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

God did not create unimportant people; He created every person **in His Image**. Every person is a creation of God and therefore has value. However, not every person is living reconciled to God.

Truth to Teach: God the Father considers ministry to everyone important and so should His people!

Discipleship - [Jesus the Son] - "Go and Do..."

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV) *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Acts 1:8 (NIV) *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Jesus came to make ministry possible by the Grace supplied with His death and resurrection **or** Jesus has been given "All authority in Heaven and on Earth..."

Truth to Teach: Jesus the Son calls His reconciled people to introduce the lost to God, and to teach them to live with God.

Unity - [Holy Spirit] - "Who You Are Becoming..."

Galatians 5:24-25 (NIV) *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature... Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

The Holy Spirit is the presence of God both in a person and on Earth. One cannot follow the Great Commission with out the partnership of the Holy Spirit.

Truth to Teach: The Holy Spirit calls His reconciled people to stay daily dependent on the union with God through the Holy Spirit.

How Does Youth Ministry Fit into the Church at Large? [Pt. 1]

Different Roles in the Body of Christ

> Youth, Children, Parents, and Grandparents all have different roles in the family system; therefore, Youth Ministry has a specific role **INSIDE** the church family.

1 Cor. 12:20-23 (NIV) *As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor...*

> Certain ministries will have different roles **INSIDE** the church, but all share the same goal of "making disciples of all nations". It is necessary to have all parts of the Church (body of Christ) working together to function in a healthy way. **(1 Cor. 12:4-6, 14-31)**

> Communication between all Church Ministry Leaders is the key! Clear and Consistent Communication will assist in avoiding conflict, keeping the Ministries working together, and growing the Church body.

> The local church leadership will decide the specific purpose of their Youth Ministry in their environment.

- These questions are here to assist in deciding a Church's specific Youth Ministry Purpose.

- Please discuss these questions with the entire church leadership team.

Questions to Help Churches Decide Specific Purpose of their Youth Ministry...

1) *What Are the Specific Needs of the Youth in your Community?*

2) *Would a specific "Youth Ministry" benefit the Youth in your community?*

3) *What Are the Current Goals of the Church and How Can the Youth Help to Fulfill those Goals?*

4) *How Does Your Church Visibly Value the Youth? And Youth Ministry?*

4) *Are there any Youth Ministry Leaders already at your church? People interested in Youth Ministry Leadership?*

Ministry Leadership Training

Description of a Christian Leader

Taken from "In the Name of Jesus" by Henri Nouwen

As a Christian Leader, one cannot be defined by anything other than our relationship with God. We are not defined by our Worldly Importance, How Powerful We Are, or how Popular we are.

Three Temptations for a Christian Leader...

#1 - The Bread Temptation – "The Temptation To Be Defined By "What I Do."

Luke 4:1-4 (NIV): *The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."*

Jesus responded, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"

Teaching Point: Whenever mankind tries to live "by bread alone" and apart from God it ends in disaster. As a Christian Leader, it is not what we can "do" that makes us qualified for the job. As a Christian Leader we are not defined by our duties but instead by our relationship with God.

#2 - The Kingdoms Temptation – "The Temptation To Be Defined By "What I Control."

Luke 4:5-8 (NIV): *"The devil led him (Jesus) up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours."*

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

Teaching Point: The Devil tried to get Jesus to take a shortcut to the authority and splendor of the world. The devil tried to get Jesus to be defined by what He can control or influence. The point here is that, as Christian Leaders, we have to let God define our ministry. Since our identity is not tied to what we can control, then power is not to be taken. Power comes when God gives it and only when God gives it. Jesus shows us a great example of this in His response. Be patient and wait for God to build your ministry influence. Stay obedient to Him only.

Ministry Leadership Training

Description of a Christian Leader

Taken from "In the Name of Jesus" by Henri Nouwen

The Test Temptation – The Temptation To Be Defined By "What Others Say About Me."

Luke 4:9-12 (NIV): *The devil led him (Jesus) to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"*

Jesus answered, "It says: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Teaching Point: If Jesus would have jumped from the temple and been saved by Angels, I think people would have been interested in Jesus. In fact, people would have thought Jesus to be a very powerful, blessed, and exciting person. But we need to remember that the only approval that matters for a Christian Leader is that of God. We cannot be led by popularity in our ministries. If one reads the Bible they will see that Jesus had to make some very unpopular choices and statements because His approval came from God.

How Does a Leader Become Like Jesus in the Context of Leadership?

*Jesus' identity is set in Luke 3 where He is baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Luke 3:21-22 (NIV): *When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."*

Teaching Point: Jesus' identity was set in His baptism because He had pleased God even before He started ministry! Jesus stood up against the temptations in Luke 4 because His identity was secure in His relationship with God the Father. We please God when we accept the gift of grace from Jesus. We do not need to do anything, control anything (or anyone), or be popular to gain God's favor. We already have it through Jesus!

What Does a Disciple-Making Youth Ministry Look Like?

5 Purposes Based on Greatest Commandment & The Great Commission

Taken From "Purpose Driven Youth Ministry" by Doug Fields

The Greatest Commandment

Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV): *Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. **[Worship]** This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' **[Service]***

The Great Commission

Matthew 28: 18-20 (NIV): *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations **[Evangelism]**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit **[Fellowship]**, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you **[Discipleship]**. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Balance of Purposes = Health in Ministry

> A Ministry Needs a Balance of All Five Purposes:

Worship – It is sometimes thought that Worship is only done through music. However, Worship is what you wrap your life around. Therefore Worship can be done every minute of every day. Worship can include anything that one dedicates to the Lord.

Service – Youth Ministry exists to serve the Youth and Families of its Church, Community, and World. Are there any local needs that can be met by the Youth Ministry? This can also include issues of social justice.

Evangelism – Evangelism is not just getting people to come to attend Worship Services. Evangelism is also befriending people from the community...with no "agenda." As soon as the church sets out to "do Evangelism" we love people with an agenda. Evangelism is best done in an "organic approach."

Fellowship – Fellowship is what all ministry is built upon because Fellowship produces, develops, and fosters relationships. The more time people spend together, within the purpose of Fellowship, the stronger their relationships will be.

Discipleship – The bible is one of the ways that God speaks into the lives of His people. Youth Ministries should set up a strategy where Youth are invited to learn and live biblical truths through the intentional relationships with other believers.

How Does the Church Minister to a Youth / Adolescent?

The Church should organize itself to be relevant and impactful seeking to assist people in all five areas of development. Focusing on only one or two of these areas will stunt the growth of the church and will not allow the church to fully become what God has intended, “The Body of Christ.”

Eph. 4:11-13 (NIV, emphasis added): *“So Christ Himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and **become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**”*

Five Aspects for a Person to Consider in Ministry.

Adapted from “Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, ‘09”

- 1. Physical Development** – This area includes physical needs such as; food, medicine, hygiene training, sexual education, special needs due to handicap, etc...
- 2. Emotional Development** – This area includes healing from hurts in the past, forging an identity rooted in Jesus, and connecting to other people on a deep level.
- 3. Relational Development** – This area includes connecting the individual with the church (people) and fostering deep meaningful relationships within that context. (Mentoring, Discipleship, Adoption, etc...)
- 4. Intellectual Development** – This area includes schooling, job training, bible study, life skills, theology, decision making, etc...
- 5. Spiritual Development** – This area includes allowing every person who is willing to reach salvation through relationship with Jesus Christ and helping them grow and mature into faithful disciples.

The Church’s Mission is to minister to people. However, ministering to only specific aspects of a person is not the Holistic Approach that Jesus benefited from in **Luke 2**.

Jesus’ development as a child is the perfect model for Holistic Development.

Luke 2:52 (NIV): “And Jesus grew in wisdom [*Intellectual*] and stature [*Physical*], and in favor with God [*Spiritual*] and men [*Relational and Emotional*].”

Ministry Leaders Should Have the Heart, Perspective, and Mission of Jesus

> The Heart of Jesus:

- Jesus hopes to redeem every willing sinner through a redeeming relationship with God (including forgiveness) and by participating (being born again) in the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. **(John 3:16-17, Sermon on the Mount)**
- Jesus worked for life change (Holiness) in people through the Holy Spirit. **(Mark 1:16-18, John 14:12)**
- Jesus was a “Servant Leader.” **(Phil. 2:5-8, Matt. 20:20-28)**
- Jesus was always motivated by love. **(Mark 6:34, Matt. 9:36, Mark 8:2)**
- Jesus delighted in and was obedient to our Heavenly Father. **(John 10:22-42)**

> The Perspective of Jesus:

- Jesus focused on the eternal. **(Matt. 6:19-21)**
- Jesus was a “Shepherd-Maker.” **(Matt. 4:19)**
- Jesus believes that His disciples cannot be greater than Himself. **(Matt. 10:24-25a)** **However**, Jesus says that His disciples will do “greater things” through the Holy Spirit on Earth. **(John 14:12)**

> The Mission of Jesus:

- Jesus did not intend to be the “only Minister” but to “empower disciples to minister.” **(Matt. 14:13-21)**
- Jesus only served one “Master.” **(Matt. 6:24)**
- Jesus never did ministry by Himself. **(Mark 3:13-19)**
- Jesus said “go.” Not sit around and wait for people to come to worship services. **(Matt. 28:16-20)**
- Jesus ministered to the social outcasts of society. **(Mark 1:40-45)**