

FROM THE SERIES: BUILDING LEADERS FOR JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

BOOK THREE

ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR LEADING STUDENTS



Equipping Adults to Lead Students
To Spiritual Maturity

Barry St.Clair

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To the men and women who have shaped my leadership by their investment in my life:

Howard and Kitty St. Clair, my mom and dad, who challenged me to move beyond the limits of the possible, and supported me every time I tried it.

Buddy and Bev Price, my in-laws, who have continually modeled unconditional love and a servant attitude.

Mal and Wanda McSwain, my Young Life leaders and friends, who taught me the basics of following Christ and the essentials of youth work.

Mac Crenshaw, my spiritual leader with Campus Crusade for Christ, who demonstrated how to witness in the love and power of the Holy Spirit.

Findley Edge, my professor, who allowed me to think radically about the church.

Ken Chafin, my leader at the North American Mission Board, who encouraged my imagination and vision.

Chuck Miller, my older peer in youth ministry, who taught me the principles of youth ministry.

Jack Taylor and Peter Lord, my "shepherds," who called me to deeper intimacy with Jesus Christ.

Carol, my wife of twenty-eight years, who in life and death kept her focus on Jesus.

Essential Tools for Leading Students

ISBN: 9781610472517

Published by NOVO Ink – www.novoink.com

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First and Second Editions published by Reach Out Youth Solutions, 1991 and 2001

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C O N T E N T S

Essential Tools For Leading Students

Introduction	→	iii
SESSION 1	→	1
Discovering Your Purpose		
SESSION 2	→	6
Defining Your Personal Goals		
SESSION 3	→	11
Refining Your Relationships		
SESSION 4	→	15
Designing Your Ministry		
SESSION 5	→	21
Using Time Wisely		
SESSION 6	→	27
Getting on Schedule (Group Project)		
SESSION 7	→	28
Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts		
SESSION 8	→	33
Leading a Student to Christ		
SESSION 9	→	40
Growing a New Believer		
SESSION 10	→	48
Challenging for Discipleship		
SESSION 11	→	52
Counseling Students		
SESSION 12	→	59
Leading a Small Group		
Discussion Guides	→	65

INTRODUCTION

This series of books is designed to help us grow as leaders in three areas:

- (1) our personal relationship with Jesus Christ in *A Personal Walk With Jesus Christ*,
- (2) our vision for life and ministry in *A Vision For Life And Ministry*,
- (3) our skills in working with students in *Essential Tools For Leading Students*.

These three books easily adapt to your church's calendar. Each book is designed for use over a twelve-week period of time that includes eleven sessions for discussions and one group experience.

A Personal Walk With Jesus Christ has a focus on growing spiritually. We discover how to gain confidence in our relationship with Jesus Christ, grow in character as a spiritual leader, walk daily in the Spirit, and spend time alone with God in Bible study, prayer and Scripture memory.

A Vision For Life And Ministry sets the foundation for ministering to students. We learn to develop a Jesus-focused strategy of ministry that builds a Leadership Team, moves students toward maturity through discipleship, penetrates the student culture, and equips students to become spiritual influencers with their friends.

Essential Tools For Leading Students provides practical skills training. We develop skills for youth ministry such as envisioning for our lives and ministries, managing our time, understanding and using our spiritual gifts, leading students to Christ and helping them grow in their faith, leading a discipleship group, counseling students and communicating with parents and church leaders.

As we go through these books we will discover that they include both individual study and group discussion. Individually, we will spend time working through each session and making personal application of that session to specific areas of our lives and ministries. Then the group meets once a week with other youth leaders (called a Leadership Team) to encourage each other,

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The purpose of the Leadership Team:

To train adult leaders of young people to become more

- (1) committed to Christ,
 - (2) committed to one another, and
 - (3) committed to ministry to students through the power of the Holy Spirit and for the glory of God (See John 17:20-26).
-

to discuss the lesson and then to pray together and to practice what we learn. Wow! That will stretch us!

How can we get the most from our study of this book?

- Be sure that we have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord from the beginning. (If there is any question about this, talk to the youth leader before beginning.)
- Commit ourselves wholeheartedly to this Leadership Team experience. Expect God to do great things as a result of the time we spend working through this book.
- Ask God to give us a clear call and a strong desire to work effectively with students, both believers and unbelievers.

Our faithfulness to study these books will result in radical life change within ourselves, vision for our ministry with students and the tools needed to lead students to follow Christ and to grow toward maturity in Christ.

**SESSION 1****Discovering Your Purpose**

NOTE: In the previous sessions we have discovered what it takes to be a spiritual leader. We have committed ourselves to a lifestyle that will continue to strengthen our relationship with the Lord. As well, we have developed a strategy of ministry that will help us make an impact on the lives of students, parents, and volunteers.

In these next twelve sessions, the focus shifts to finding the tools and developing the skills necessary to lead students. During these sessions let's challenge ourselves to pull everything together – lifestyle, strategy of ministry, and skills. As we do, we will discover that we are becoming "power tools" in God's hands to lead students.

I met Tim (not his real name) in school. The stereotype of "tall, dark, and handsome", he exuded intelligence and charisma – a natural leader. If that wasn't enough, he dated a beauty queen. People would see them together and say, "He's so sharp and she's so beautiful; the Lord will really use them."

Ten years later, Tim's life had become a total washout. He had married the beauty queen. He had gone into the ministry. But somewhere along the way, his relationship with his wife deteriorated and he became involved with another woman. After that, the events in his life started toppling like dominoes – his marriage fell apart, he left the ministry, and moved away.

People often wonder how things like that happen. The answer lies deep below the surface. Tim's problems grew out of his whole life deep centered on his own needs.

Another friend went through a similar crisis. Craig (also not his real name) had a bout with polio when he was young. He became physically crippled from the waist down and came out of his crisis filled with insecurity and fear. He wondered what others would think of his physical disability, so he set out to excel in every other area of his life. He built his upper body until it was in great form. He became a "super" Christian. But as a result of his determination to become somebody special, Craig developed a harsh and critical attitude toward others who didn't measure up to his standards of Christian living.

Then Craig reached a point where he let God search his heart and do some inner healing. After that, he wanted to start meeting with students on campus, but

the thought of going to a high school scared him. What would students think of a cripple like him?

At this point of inner conflict Craig turned to God and began to ask seriously, “Lord, what is Your purpose for my life?” As God began to reveal His very special purpose, Craig’s life began to change. He developed a sense of urgency for reaching students with the Gospel that overcame his self-centered fears of what they would think of him. And God began to transform his harsh criticism of others into love and compassion. The depth of Craig’s relationship with God became very evident to those around him. His ministry became recognized by its effective outreach to students – so effective, in fact, that more than 150 students from the campus came to Christ in one month.

Tim and Craig: two men so consumed with their own needs that they couldn’t (or didn’t want to) see God’s purpose for their lives. The result for one was deep personal tragedy. The other sought God’s purpose for his life at all costs, and the result has been a ministry characterized by fulfillment and fruit.

SEEKING GOD’S PURPOSE

Jesus spoke very pointedly to this issue when He said: “Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes. Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?...So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:25-26, 31-33).

God has a special and unique purpose in mind for each of us, but we can miss it when we become consumed with our own interests. We can have all the potential in the world. We can achieve great success with money, power, popularity, family, etc. But potential and personal achievement are not the same as being a success in God’s eyes.

It is senseless for us not to get in on God’s purpose for our lives. It’s like buying an expensive pen, discovering it doesn’t write and saying, “Hey, that’s OK. It doesn’t really have to write. I just bought it for looks anyway.”

Whether it costs us 10 cents or 50 dollars, a pen that doesn’t write is useless, because the purpose of a pen is to write.

Only after we become aware of God's purpose for us can we begin to see how we can put that purpose into action. Like Craig, our lives can become characterized by fulfillment and fruit after we discover and yield to God's plan for us.

FINDING GOD'S PURPOSE

In Genesis we read that God created with amazing variety – animals, sea, trees, sun, etc. But God created only man in His own image. Man has a special purpose. The prophet Isaiah expressed man's purpose this way:

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of His splendor” (Isaiah 61:1-3).

God has redeemed us so we may “display His splendor.” Jesus acknowledged God's purpose for man when He prayed: “I in them and You in Me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent Me” (John 17:23).

Paul sheds some more light on God's purpose for man when he says, “We, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory. . .” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

In Revelation, John describes how we will glorify God for all eternity:

“Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: ‘To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!’” (Revelation 5:11-13).

ENTERING INTO GOD'S PURPOSE

Our purpose as Christians is to glorify God – to reflect His image to the world. That's why He created us; that's why He has redeemed us. But how do we go about

“reflecting the Lord’s glory?” Paul goes on to tell us that we “are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18). He also said: “For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son” (Romans 8:29).

Paul summarizes our purpose in very practical terms when he says, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). Every day we have the opportunity to grow to be more like Jesus. And as the Holy Spirit works in us to do that, we will reflect His glory through our lives!

During the next few sessions, we will focus on our purpose in life and see how it affects our relationship with God and our relationships with others.



ACTION POINT > SESSION 1

1. Write out God’s purpose for your life. Express it in brief enough terms that it will fit on a t-shirt.

2. After reading Ephesians 1:3-14 write a paragraph expressing who you are because of your relationship to Christ.

3. After reading Philippians 1:6 describe two specific illustrations from your life that reveal how God has already begun to accomplish His purpose by doing “a good work in you.”

4. In Jeremiah 29:11-13 God tells you specifically that He has a great future in store for you. If you could cast aside all restraints what would be your biggest dream? How might God glorify Himself through you in that dream?

5. Reflect on that dream during the next four sessions, thinking about ways for that dream to become a reality.

6. Memorize 1 Corinthians 10:31 and continue your daily times alone with God.

**SESSION 2**

Defining Personal Goals

About a year and a half after I became a Christian, I was sitting in my room at Davidson College. The thought came to me, “Barry, maybe you shouldn’t be playing basketball.” My next thought went something like, “St. Clair, that’s about the dumbest idea you’ve ever had.”

I had been playing basketball from the time I was in first grade. Since fourth grade I had played on organized teams. In the winter I would sweep the snow off the outside court and play basketball with my gloves on. During the summer before my senior year in high school, I practiced eight hours every day so I could play up to my maximum potential the next season.

Everything in my life revolved around “the game.” I wanted nothing more than to play college basketball and, perhaps, to make the all-conference team. Quitting was out of the question, so I pushed the thought out of my mind.

But the thought kept coming back, “Maybe you shouldn’t be playing basketball.” One day I was reading the Bible and my eyes froze on Matthew 6:33: “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

“Seek first what God wants,” the verse seemed to say to me. And I had to admit to myself, “Barry, you’ve been a Christian for a year and a half, but you’ve never given basketball to the Lord. Basketball is your goal, not God’s.”

God seemed to ask, “Are you more serious about pursuing My goals or yours?” Giving up basketball while I was in college was my first difficult step toward pursuing God’s goals instead of mine. And as I began to grow in my understanding of God’s goals for me, I connected that to a great theme in the New Testament. When Jesus was asked to state the greatest commandment, He answered: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind.’ And: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Luke 10:27).

I saw that God’s purpose of glorying Himself through me would be accomplished when I made it my goal to fulfill this Great Commandment by loving Him. Jesus tells us clearly how that happens. He says to love Him:

- With all our hearts (spiritually)
- With all our souls (socially)
- With all our minds (mentally)
- With all our strength (physically)

These four areas encompass God's objectives for each of us in our personal lives. They move us toward God's purpose for us.

LOVING GOD SPIRITUALLY

Learning to love God wholeheartedly takes discipline. That's because love for God expresses itself in obedience. If we love God we want to do what He says. Obedience is hard, but so is anything of value. As the sign in the locker room reads, "No pain, no gain." Spiritual disciplines are not legalistic rules to keep, but doorways to freedom. They open the door into the presence of God. They put us in the place where God can change us to become the people He purposed us to be.

The story is told of a great sculptor who said to one of his apprentices, "You see that block of marble over there? That block of marble is really a horse. My job is to chip away everything that doesn't look like a horse." As we know and love God more and more, our obedience allows Him to chip away everything that keeps us from looking more like Him.

LOVING GOD SOCIALLY

As a member of a fraternity in college, I had to face some tough decisions in my social life. Many of the guys in the fraternity were into drinking and partying. The decision boiled down to whether or not my fraternity brothers' friendships were important enough to make me compromise what I knew God wanted me to do. I decided against the compromise. As a result, God showed me that He would be my Friend and bring other friends into my life who would support and encourage me as a Christian. After making that decision, I began to look to God to show me how to love Him in every aspect of my social life.

Out of my fraternity experience came my objective to cultivate the ability to be a true friend and to build true friendships – not on the basis of what people could do to help me, but what I could do to care for them. God will move us toward our pur-

pose through developing friendships, especially when our objective is to love Him with all of our soul.

LOVING GOD MENTALLY

Soon after I got to college, I discovered that I was no longer the terrific success I had been in high school. I had set some academic goals – deciding that I was going to be at least a B student. My first test was in history, my intended major. I studied like crazy. But when the test results came back, I found out I had a 74 – a D. I had never made a D in my life!

So, I decided I would just have to study harder for the next test. I spent as much time as possible preparing for it. I didn't get a 74 on that one; I got a 47! My academic goals were slipping down the tube fast. It was as if all the props I had depended on were being knocked out from under me. It didn't help that one of my roommates was a Fulbright Scholar and one of my fraternity brothers was a Rhodes Scholar.

My shaky start in college made me feel very inferior mentally. But some time later, God began to make real to me the truth of Romans 12:2: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." I discovered that when I came to know Jesus Christ, I was given the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5). And I began to see that God had created my mind the way He wanted it to be in order to use me according to my uniqueness.

My personal objective for "loving God with all my mind" is to learn to think God's thoughts, which are so much higher than my thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9). Loving God mentally involves consistently studying and applying God's Word and passing on to others what He has taught me.

LOVING GOD PHYSICALLY

Because I've always been into sports, I've never really had any problems keeping myself in shape. But after I graduated from college, I began to realize that I had always taken good care of myself for the wrong reason – to be at my best for athletics. God began to show me that His purpose for me keeping physically fit was totally different. God wants me to care for my body because it is His temple (1 Corinthians 6:19).

Physical discipline is important. Through exercise, diet, and rest, we can keep

3. On the chart that follows, consider the spiritual, social, mental, and physical areas of your life, and write down at least one goal for each area. Take time to pray and reflect as you go. Make certain that what you write is really what you want to do.

PERSONAL GOALS	
1. Spiritual	
2. Social	
3. Mental	
4. Physical	

4. Memorize Matthew 22:36-38. Continue your daily Bible study from the book of Mark.

**SESSION 3****Refining Your Relationships**

I had a lot of “friends” in high school, but often I was selfish and used them to accomplish my goals. I didn’t really love them. After I met Jesus Christ, I understood His love for me and, through the Holy Spirit, began to apply His Great Commandment (to love God with my heart, soul, strength, and mind) that’s when my attitudes toward others began to change. Slowly I saw the second aspect of Jesus’ Great Commandment take root in my life. I began to love my neighbor as myself (Matthew 22:39). This was most apparent where my parents, my sister, and the opposite sex were concerned.

The second half of the Great Commandment is as important in glorifying God as the first half. Jesus said that our love for each other gives evidence to the fact that we belong to Him “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). The love He describes in these verses is God-centered love.

Paul explained how we put God’s love into action toward each other: “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should not look only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others” (Philippians 2:3-4).

Before going on, let’s ask God to give us the humility to consider other people and their interests as more important than our own. God is the only One who can provide that kind of love toward others!

LOVING MY NEIGHBOR: FAMILY

Loving others begins at home. How can we express God’s love to people outside of our families if we haven’t learned to express it inside of our families? Yet, often, that is the hardest place of all to love others. So how do we express God’s love to them? Husbands have the privilege of loving their wives like Christ loved the church – sacrificially (Ephesians 5:24). Wives demonstrate their love for their husbands by respecting and honoring them (Ephesians 5:23-24). Parents express their love to their children by bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). Sons or daughters show their love for their parents by obeying them (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Single people focus their family love on parents, brothers, and sisters. Orphans (those who don't have a family or whose family is not around) need someone in the church to adopt them.

Let's concentrate on being specific and practical as we begin to show love within our family roles. For example, since I am a husband and a father, the Bible tells us that I am a "priest" to my family. As a priest, I pray for my family. So one of my goals is, "Actively pray for each member of my family every day." Setting specific goals like that helps me focus on exactly what to do to express my love.

LOVING MY NEIGHBOR: FRIENDS

Now let's examine our relationships outside of our families. These "significant others" are included as well in Jesus' Great Commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We find one great example of true friendship in the story of David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1-4). From their friendship, we can discover four levels of deepening relationships:

- (1) Attraction – the initial stage of getting to know each other (v. 1).
- (2) Affection – sharing common experiences built around common goals (v. 1).
- (3) Accountability – a depth of intimacy that encourages, confronts, and connects others more tightly with God (v.3).
- (4) Agape – a willingness to die for the other person (v. 4).

Meaningful friendships can be developed at any of these four levels. As two people focus on expressing God's love toward one another, their relationship will move from one level of friendship to the next.

We need to have at least two friends with whom we can share the deep issues of our lives. As we consider our current friendships, let's ask ourselves these questions:

- (1) Who are my friends? Do I need more friends? Where is the best place to meet them?
- (2) Am I willing to give of myself to deepen my friendships?
- (3) Do I share "common experiences built around common goals" with my current friends?

(4) Am I committed to any of my friends enough to give my life for them?

Don't underestimate the value and importance of friendship. Realize that each person we meet is a divine appointment that has friendship potential. As we pursue the goals we set centered around our family and friends, we will enjoy a sense of fulfillment that can only be superseded by the love we experience with God Himself.



ACTION POINT > SESSION 3

1. Galatians 5:13-14 will help clarify how loving your family and friends glorifies God to the maximum. Record your thoughts about how loving your family and friends ties into your life goals.

2. Write your lifetime goals that will express your love for your family.

FAMILY GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

3. Write your lifetime goals for your friendships.

FRIENDSHIP GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

4. Memorize John 15:13 and keep having your times alone with God every day.

**SESSION 4****Designing Your Ministry**

Lee is a businessman. His wife, Sue, is a homemaker and mother. Both enjoy what they do and feel that God has led them to their respective responsibilities. And both of them love students. Lee gets off from work every afternoon and heads over to the high school to watch sports and encourage the players. Sue leads the youth ministry for their church. Together they lead a Leadership Team and work with students in discipleship groups.

Work and ministry often seem miles apart because of time limitations. But Lee and Sue have brought them together in a harmonious balance. How have they done it? And, how can we do it?

Lee and Sue are normal people. But they have determined to do whatever it takes to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission with students right where they are. Jesus' last command to us was: "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 will be with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). With the Great Commandment as our first major goal, the Great Commission is the second huge goal that God has for our lives.

Each of the four Gospels and the book of Acts records the Great Commission. It must be really important! In Acts Jesus expressed it this way: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). For us "Jerusalem" is the place closest to home. It is where we spend most of our time. Like most believers, our two major time commitments outside of home are jobs and church. In these two arenas we need to put the Great Commission into action first.

We can fulfill God's Great Commission in two ways. First, we can demonstrate excellence in our jobs and church ministries. The Bible challenges us to excellence: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving" (Colossians 3:23-24). The second way to put the Great Commission into action is to use our jobs and church ministries as opportunities to influence others for Jesus Christ. That means we become God's representa-

tives wherever we are. The apostle Paul explained how we do that with these words: “We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20). Let’s consider the following suggestions for using our jobs and church ministries to live out the Great Commission.

JOB/CAREER GOALS

1. **Pray.** By praying about our jobs we will release God’s power to perform our jobs with excellence, minister to the people with whom we work, and positively influence the events, activities, and projects in the office.

2. **Study.** By setting aside time to plan our goals for our work, we will enjoy more of a focused, sensitive, thoughtful approach to what we do every day.

3. **Lead.** As we work with people, we can encourage them in ways that will make them successful. Our leadership on the job is not a cold, heartless dedication to duty, but rather a compassionate concern for the people around us.

4. **Minister.** Whether we work with believers or non-believers, we can show concern for others. Whether we take the initiative to share the Gospel with non-believers or challenge believers to grow in Christ, we need to see ourselves as ministers. This ministry can express itself as simply as offering a word of encouragement, or as involved as starting an evangelistic Bible study.

An eight-hour work day becomes exciting when we see our job as a ministry.

MINISTRY GOALS

1. **Pray.** We need to pray by name for the young people under our care. Also we need to pray for our fellow youth leaders and youth events. Consider writing specific requests in your Time Alone with God notebook and then pray for certain ones on different days of the week.

2. **Study.** To prepare for our specific responsibilities we need to set aside time to think them through, plan them out, and set goals that will enable us to accomplish our commitments with excellence.

3. **Lead.** We can set goals for our leadership responsibilities, whether we supervise the cooking at a retreat or lead a discipleship group.

4. **Minister.** Whether speaking to a large group, leading students in a disciple-

ship group, or meeting with people one-to-one, we always need to ask ourselves, “Where are these people spiritually?” “How can I help these people take the next step?” As we minister to others, we will reach our maximum potential in Christ as we help others reach their maximum potential in Christ.

Let’s ask God for the reality of Jesus’ Great Commission to capture us. Join that with the Great Commandment and we will have a balanced approach to our job and ministry that will give glory to God and bless the people around us.



ACTION POINT > SESSION 4

1. Colossians 3:23 will clarify how your job and church ministry fit into your dream of glorifying God to the maximum. From that passage express your thoughts concerning how the two fit together.

2. Focus on your lifetime goals for your job/career.

JOB/CAREER GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

3. Now give the same focus to your lifetime ministry goals.

MINISTRY GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

4. Review your Lifetime Goals in the Action Points for Sessions 2, 3, and 4. Transfer your goals to the My Lifetime Goals sheet on the next page. Then, photocopy the sheet and keep the copy in a place where you can review your goals often.
5. Memorize Acts 1:8. Remember to review previous memory verses on a regular basis and continue your daily time with God in prayer and Bible study.

MY LIFETIME GOALS

Purpose: To glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Goal # 1: Fulfill the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-38)

PERSONAL GOALS

1. Spiritual -

2. Social -

3. Mental -

4. Physical -

FAMILY GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

FRIENDSHIP GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

Goal #2: Fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)

JOB GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

MINISTRY GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.

**SESSION 5****Using Time Wisely**

Like a frustrated juggler, we try to balance personal life, family, friends, job and church. Staying balanced is a constant battle, but not impossible. Jesus lived a balanced life. He grew “in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).

God’s desire for us is balanced living. A balanced life begins with knowing where God wants us to go, what His plan is to get there, and how to carry out His plan. Even now, as we look at all the goals we have written, we may wonder how we will handle it all.

Achieving a balanced lifestyle parallels focusing a single lens reflex camera. When we look into the viewfinder, if the picture is out of focus, we will see two distinct and separate images. In order to focus the picture, we keep turning the lens until the two images become one sharp image. During the last four sessions we have focused the lens of life on our dream of glorifying God to the maximum. In this session we will discuss how to bring our purpose and goals into the practical reality of everyday life – how we use our time.

USING TIME WISELY

Paul tells us: “Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15-16). When he says, “Be very careful,” he means to measure exactly and accurately the way we conduct ourselves. We can do this by “making the most of every opportunity.” So we need to make wise use of a sacred commodity - our time.

Our use of time is far more important than our use of money. We can save money and invest it, gain interest and reinvest it. But time can never be saved. It can only be spent.

God has called each of us to be good stewards of our time. Spending our time wisely creates several positive advantages:

- (1) Our work gets done more quickly, thus we have time for other things.
- (2) We have a sense of accomplishment, rather than feeling guilty or perplexed about where our time went.

- (3) We are relieved of the frustration of “What do I do next?”
- (4) More decisions get made in reflective moments, instead of in crisis situations.
- (5) We dictate the use of our time, rather than others planning our time for us.
- (6) We operate on a plan that keeps us on track.
- (7) We see more clearly the options we have.
- (8) We are protected from burnout.

Using our time wisely is a developed skill. We will not instantly “know” how to manage our time, but as we focus on using time more wisely, we will get a better feel for what it takes to do that. As we discover the tools at our disposal, we will discover more and more freedom in our time usage. The major tools that will help us use time wisely are our one-year goals and our schedule.

One-year Goals – In the last session, we completed “My Lifetime Goals.” Now we can take those lifetime goals and break them into one-year goals. As we look at each lifetime goal, ask the simple question: “What does God want me to do this year?” As we record each goal, make it measurable and set a deadline date for when you want it completed.

Schedule – Most people do not like to follow a schedule, especially those who need it the most! But a schedule forces us to use our time more wisely. It serves as a map that shows us how to get to our destination – glorifying God. These hints will help us use our time most effectively.

- (1) Write out your *actual* schedule (not how you want it to be) in 30-minute segments for a week. (See the “Daily Time Log and Ideal Weekly Schedule” on page 26)
- (2) Highlight the regular and recurring commitments that occur every week.
- (3) Ask: “Does each goal have an amount of time allotted to it?”
- (4) Revise the weekly schedule according to your goals. Try it out for a week. Rearrange it where necessary. Then plan every week around this “Ideal Weekly Schedule.”
- (5) Keep a daily schedule and calendar. (Daytimers, Inc., Allentown, PA 18001 has excellent resources or purchase a computerized planner.) A daily schedule helps you meet your objectives on a short-term basis.
- (6) Communicate with your family about your schedule. Adapt the schedule to meet their needs.

- (7) Make a “To Do” list writing the five most significant items to do that day in order of priority.
- (8) Use waiting time wisely. Always keep one or two short projects with you. You can do things like jot a note, make a quick call, review memory verses, read a few pages of a book, etc.
- (9) Watch out for these time wasters:
- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Disorganization | Television |
| Not delegating properly | Unnecessary interruptions |
| Attending unnecessary meetings | Procrastination |
| Tiredness | Reading junk mail |
| Lack of promptness | |

REMEMBER: Time is life! We spend time whether we are doing anything worthwhile or not. God wants us to use our time to accomplish His plans for our lives.



ACTION POINT > SESSION 5

NOTE: Make three or four copies of the “Daily Time Log and Ideal Weekly Schedule” on page 26. That way you can carry it with you during the week. Use that sheet for both your Daily Time Log and your Ideal Weekly Schedule.

1. What does God’s Word challenge us to do about the use of our time?

Psalm 90:1-2, 12

Ephesians 5:15-16

Colossians 4:5-6

2. Review your Lifetime Goals from last session, then fill out the One-Year Goals sheet. Adapt each of your lifetime goals into a measurable, one-year goal. Set a deadline for each one. (Example: If a lifetime Ministry Goal is "To make evangelism a priority," then the one-year goal might be "To share Christ with at least one person each week" [two hours].) Writing these one-year goals will take time and thought, but when you complete it you will be so much more productive.
3. Keep a Daily Time Log this week. It will help you see how you are actually spending your time. Put a check (✓) beside the activities that are part of your one-year goals.
4. Memorize Ephesians 5:15-16. Continue your daily times alone with God.

MY ONE-YEAR GOALS

Purpose: To glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Goal #1: Fulfill the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-38)

PERSONAL GOALS	Due Date	Time Estimate
1. Spiritual -		
2. Social -		
3. Mental -		
4. Physical -		
FAMILY GOALS		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

FRIENDSHIP GOALS

Due Date	Time Estimate

1.

2.

3.

4.

Goal #2: Fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)

JOB/CAREER GOALS

Due Date	Time Estimate

1.

2.

3.

4.

MINISTRY GOALS

1.

2.

3.

4.



SESSION 6

Getting on Schedule (Group Project)

The purpose of this session is to build on last session's Action Points and enhance them. Complete your personal schedule on your own and then work with the group to design the youth ministry schedule.

DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL SCHEDULE

Step #1 – Take about 15 minutes to review your One-Year Goals from last session's Action Point and compare them with the Daily Time Log you kept during the past week. Spend a few minutes in prayer asking God for wisdom in the use of your time as you begin to work through your schedule.

Step #2 – Evaluate your schedule to make sure you have given enough time to youth ministry responsibilities.

REMEMBER:

- It often takes more time to do things than we think it will.
- Plan for interruptions by building flexibility into the schedule.
- Making wise use of time is an ongoing task, so keep refining your goals and schedule.
- Carry your goals with you in your schedule book.

DEVELOPING A YOUTH MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Step #1 – For the purpose of honing your goals and scheduling skills, as a group, evaluate your group leader's goals and schedule.

Step #2 – Your youth leader should provide the goals for the youth ministry. Work on those until they are practical and measurable. They should reflect your vision and strategy.

Step #3 – Your group leader will provide two tentative printed youth ministry schedules – one for the year and one for each week. Evaluate and revise that schedule to make certain it reflects the goals of the youth ministry.

Step #4 – Determine how your goals fit into the youth ministry goals and how your schedule overlaps with the youth ministry schedule. Discuss your findings with the group.



SESSION 7

Discovering Spiritual Gifts

What is your spiritual gift? That question can create a variety of reactions. What is your reaction?

- (1) "I'm not going to answer this. Discussions of spiritual gifts can lead to bizarre topics like handling snakes."
- (2) "I like to play the piano on Sunday mornings."
- (3) "I don't have the foggiest idea."
- (4) "I speak in tongues. That's the most important spiritual gift."

Perhaps one of the most serious deficiencies in the church today is the lack of knowledge or the wrong understanding concerning spiritual gifts. If you are unaware of your specific spiritual gift(s), you are not alone. If you overemphasize the role of spiritual gifts, you are not alone either. It is vitally important to discover a balanced, biblical view of spiritual gift(s) in order to be able to minister to students at the point of your greatest spiritual strength.

You may feel uncomfortable discussing spiritual gifts because of your background or you may think you know all there is to know about them. Either way, spiritual gifts are the muscle of ministry for the church. So try to set aside any prejudices or preconceived ideas and be willing to learn what the Bible says about this powerful ministry tool.

WHY HAVE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Spiritual gifts are part of God's resources to accomplish His ministry here on earth. They are not to be confused with human abilities or talents. Some people have great talents and abilities which tend to focus on the individual who possesses such talents. But spiritual gifts are given to all Christians when they make their life commitments to Christ. (See Romans 12:5-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:7.) Spiritual gifts are not designed to draw attention to one's self, but rather are used in service to others. They are a supernatural endowment by God to a believer for accomplishing God's work.

WHAT ARE THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Paul helps us distinguish between three categories of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6: "There are *different kinds of gifts*, but the same Spirit. There are

different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are *different kinds of working*, but the same God works all of them in all men” (author emphasis).

Paul mentions three groupings of gifts, each of which serves a different purpose.

(1) In the phrase “different kinds of gifts” the word for gifts is *charis* or grace. Grace gifts give us motivation for ministry. They serve as the basic inner drive which God places in each Christian through the Holy Spirit to build His church. A list of grace gifts is found in Romans 12:4-8.

(2) The phrase “different kinds of service” introduces the concept of service gifts. We use these gifts to empower our ministry to others within the church. Lists of these gifts can be found in Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:27-31.

(3) The phrase “different kinds of working” expresses the idea of practical working gifts. These are supernatural manifestations as a result of the Holy Spirit working through our lives. A list of working gifts are found in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

In sum, our motivation gift (grace gift) motivates us to minister to others and results in great joy when we use it. Scripture supports the view that each Christian receives only one motivation (grace) gift (1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Timothy 4:14-15; 2 Timothy 1:6, 1 Peter 4:10). If some people received two or more gifts from God while others received only one, the tendency of the first group would be to become spiritually proud. But if everyone receives only one basic gift, all people are equally blessed and equally needed in the body of Christ for ministry in His church. When no one is more important than another, then we depend on each other. From each person’s grace gift can come a variety of service or ministry gifts. When a person exercises a service gift, then any number of working gifts may manifest themselves in a ministry opportunity. Let’s take a closer look at these grace gifts that motivate us in our ministries.

WHAT ARE THE GRACE GIFTS?

At least seven gifts fall into the category of grace gifts according to Romans 12:4-8:

- (1) *Prophecy* declares truth, reveals ungodly motives and attitudes and foretells future events by presenting God’s truth. (See 1 Corinthians 14:6-12.)
- (2) *Serving* demonstrates love by meeting practical needs. (See Galatians 5:13.)
- (3) *Teaching* clarifies truth or validates truth that has been presented. (See Colossians 3:16.)

(4) *Encouraging* stimulates the faith of others. (See Hebrews 3:13.)

(5) *Giving* entrusts resources to others for the furtherance of ministry. (See 2 Corinthians 9:6-8.)

(6) *Leadership* directs the activities of others for the achievement of common goals. (See Hebrews 13:17.)

(7) *Mercy* identifies with and comforts those who are in distress. (See Luke 6:36.)

God wants us to discover our motivation gift and express it! But how can we know which gift God has given us?

HOW CAN YOU DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Five factors play a vital role in discovering our spiritual gift(s):

(1) *Faith*. We must believe by faith that God has gifted us based on what He has said. (See John 15:16.) Once we are fairly certain what our gift is, we can act on our faith by taking advantage of opportunities to exercise that gift.

(2) *Prayer*. Let's ask God for understanding and awareness of our gifts, particularly by studying and praying about spiritual gifts. (See James 4:2.)

(3) *Responsibility*. With spiritual gifts comes responsibility. So before we set out to discover our gifts, we need to be willing to carry out the specific responsibilities that go with those gifts. (See Acts 6:2-8; 8:6, 12-13; 21:8.)

(4) *Openness*. We need to open our hearts and minds to what the Lord has for us. Fear that leads to rejecting our gifts out of our past experiences or ignorance will deny us of the satisfaction they bring. We may need to pray this prayer of David: "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things out of Your law" (Psalm 119:18).

(5) *Confirmation*. Our desires, experience, and the counsel of others all fit into the discovery process. We can use these sources to confirm what God shows us regarding our spiritual gift(s).

The Greek work for spiritual gifts, *charisma*, means that God gives us the desire and power to do His will. And the Greek derivative, *charis*, means joy. As we minister to students, we will experience minimum weariness and frustration and maximum effectiveness and fulfillment when we discover and begin to exercise our spiritual gift.

Even though this session is only an introduction to this vital subject, hopefully

we have been enlightened enough to begin to identify, exercise, and study our gift(s) further.

[Many of the concepts in this session were taken from an unpublished paper by Don Crossland entitled, "A Study of Spiritual Gifts."]



ACTION POINT > SESSION 7

1. Study the following passages thoroughly, using the Bible study methods learned in Session 10 of *A Personal Walk With Jesus Christ*.

Romans 12:3-9

Ephesians 4:11

1 Corinthians 12:27-31

1 Corinthians 12:7-11

List the gifts in the appropriate column on page 32.

2. Of the grace (motivation) gifts, which one do you think you have? Why?

3. List some ways you might exercise your motivation gift in your ministry to young people. Be specific.

4. Memorize 1 Corinthians 12:11. Continue your daily readings from Mark.

GRACE GIFTS (Motivation)	SERVICE GIFTS (Ministry)	WORKING GIFTS (Manifestation)
Romans 12:6-8	Ephesians 4:11 1 Corinthians 12:28	1 Corinthians 12:7-11

**SESSION 8****Leading A Student to Christ**

I predict that almost everyone working through this session would say that he or she believes in evangelism and in the Great Commission. But in reality, many people don't practice what they believe. Too few people are talking to lost students. Why? Seven barriers surface again and again:

BARRIER	EXPRESSION	SOLUTION
GUILT	"I've got too many things wrong in my life. I don't want to be a hypocrite."	Confession (Romans 8:1; 1 John 1:9)
DOUBT	"I'm not sure about my own relationship with Christ. How can I tell others?"	Assurance (John 5:24; 1 John 5: 11-13)
FAILURE	"I'm afraid I will fail."	Power of Holy Spirit (John 20:21-22)
APATHY	"I'm afraid to get too committed or overly involved."	Right motives (Mark 4:19)
OFFENSIVENESS	"I might invade someone else's privacy."	Concern (1 Thessalonians 2:8)
LACK OF KNOWLEDGE	"I don't know what to say. What if someone asks me a question I can't answer?"	Discipleship (1 Peter 3:15-16)
REJECTION	"I'm afraid of what others will say about me."	Confidence in Christ (Colossians 1:27-29)

These barriers can be overcome. Yet even if we do, we still need to know the Gospel and how to present it before we can effectively communicate Jesus Christ to students. What tools for sharing Christ do we need for our tool box?

THE TOOLS NEEDED

(1) *Communication* – One of the big questions in witnessing is, “How do I begin a conversation with a student?” The most important thing is to be a friend. Conversation will flow easily if we have a genuine interest in a student’s life. To get started, this acrostic will provide us of some basic discussion topics when we spend time with students:

Family
Recreation
Interests
Education
Needs
Destiny

Another common question is, “How do I make a transition from talking about student interests to talking about Jesus Christ?” At an appropriate point in our conversation, we can say something like, “Have you ever thought much about Jesus Christ?” or “Sometime, could I tell you how Jesus Christ has changed my life?” Those are simple questions. Ask God for the boldness to use them. Definitely memorize the chart at the end of this session on “How to Build a Friendship Bridge.” Using it, our conversations will flow naturally toward asking the right questions and making the right responses.

(2) *Testimony* – Our testimony is our story. No one can refute it. Let’s review what we wrote in the Action Point of Session 4 and then use these guidelines. They will help us tell our story more effectively.

- Our personal experience should catch and hold the listener’s attention.
- Keep it short and to the point.
- Talk about yourself and your relationship to God.
- Give details, be specific.
- Believe it as you tell it.
- Be positive.
- Be prepared.
- Have your testimony clearly in your mind.

(3) *Gospel* – After sharing our testimony, we can ask, “Have you ever considered asking Jesus Christ into your life?” If the person answers yes, ask him, “May I take a

few minutes to explain how that can happen to you?” If he agrees, explain the Gospel to him in simple terms. One of the most effective ways to communicate the Gospel is to go through a short written explanation of the Gospel and let the person ask any questions. An excellent booklet entitled “Jesus: No Equal” has been designed especially to communicate the Gospel to students. Get the simple outline of the Gospel clearly in mind from this booklet. (Order copies from Reach Out Youth Solutions.)

(4) *Invitation* – After explaining the Gospel or reading the booklet, ask: “Is there any reason why you would not want to receive Jesus Christ right now?” Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and realize that a spiritual battle is going on inside that person. We need to pray for that student as we talk. Give that person the opportunity to receive Christ.

Avoid getting hung up on whether or not the person receives Christ at that very moment. Remember that receiving Christ involves more than hearing the Gospel and saying a prayer. The person must be prepared to make a significant decision, and the preparation and timing are up to the Holy Spirit.

(5) *Follow-up* – When a student decides to follow Jesus, then immediate follow-up is essential to a new believer’s success in walking with Christ. Like a new baby, new believers need love, nourishment, protection, and training. If possible, set an appointment for later in the same day or the very next day, even if it’s only on the phone.

In the conversation the next day, talk about:

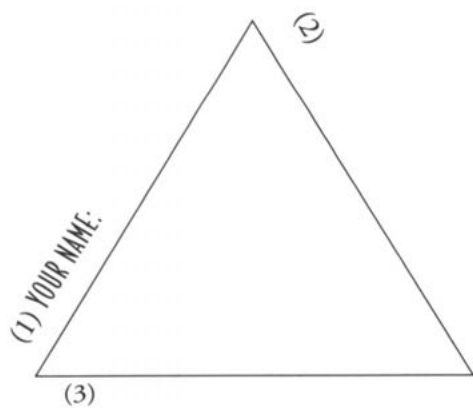
- The Gospel. Review the Gospel presentation and answer any questions.
- The decision. Go over the prayer again and make sure that he/she understands what it means to begin a relationship with Jesus.
- The assurance. Read passages of Scripture together from the Bible such as John 1:12, John 10:27-28 and 1 John 5:11-13.
- The growth process. The *Jesus: No Equal* booklet offers some beginning steps. After that introduce your friend to *Getting Started*. (Both of these resources are available through Reach Out Youth Solutions.)
- The church. Invite him/her to a meeting he/she would consider relevant.

A PERSONAL STRATEGY

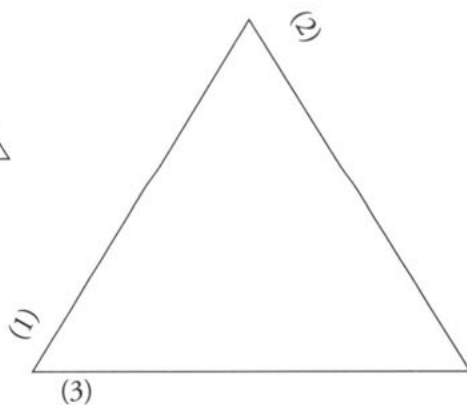
Before training our students to witness, sharing our faith must become a reality in our own lives. These steps of action will help you do that:

- Form a Prayer Power Team. Get with two other leaders to pray consistently (hopefully three times a week) for three non-believing students.

Who are the believing friends you will pray with?



Who are the non-believing friends you will pray for?



NON-BELIEVING FRIENDS WHO NEED CHRIST

Name	Spiritual Condition	Action I Can Take	Prayer Request	Response
(1)				
(2)				
(3)				

THE FRIENDSHIP BRIDGE

How to Build a Friendship with a Student



BREAK DOWN BARRIERS

- “What’s your opinion on...?”
- “Do you agree with...?”
- “What do you think about...?”
- “How do you feel about...?”

AROUSE SPIRITUAL INTEREST

- “Tell me about your background.”
- “Did you grow up in the church?”
- “Do you ever think about spiritual things?”
- “Rate your spiritual interest on a scale of 1 to 10.”

TURN THE CONVERSATION

- “Do you mind if I share with you the most important thing that has ever happened to me?” (Share your testimony.)
- “Do you know for certain that you are a follower of Jesus Christ or are you still on the way?” (Share the Gospel.)

This bridge may be crossed in one meeting or it could require a period of time.

**SESSION 9****Growing A New Believer**

Having babies changes a person's life! It involves so much more than the nine months it takes to bring that child into the world. It includes the lifelong commitment to nurture the baby to adulthood – and to pay the bills as well!

Spiritual “babies” require the same long-term commitment. The Bible tells us that new believers, like “newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk” (1 Peter 2:2). New believers have certain needs that they can't meet for themselves. Like babies, they need “parents” who will meet their needs for love, nourishment, protection, and training.

Love. New converts need to know the security that results from being accepted and cared for. Communicating love is more than talk; it includes action. Christ gave us the key to this when He said: “Love each other as I have loved you” (John 15:12). Jesus' love for His disciples was characterized by His willingness to give. If we are going to communicate His kind of love to new believers, we also must be willing to give – of our time, our resources, and ourselves. For a new believer, this kind of love begins with the friendship of someone like us.

Nourishment. New believers, like newborn babies, totally depend on someone else to feed them. It is as absurd to expect a new believer to feed himself as it is to expect a newborn baby to go into the kitchen and rustle up his own breakfast. Someone else must keep them fed and healthy. That happens when they are “brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching” (1 Timothy 4:6).

Protection. Young Christians, babies, and sheep have a lot in common. When it comes to defending themselves, all are pretty helpless. New believers need to be protected because “the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Young Christians don't know how to handle Satan's attacks. They need help until they learn how to live in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Training. Just as parents train their children for the challenges of life, spiritual parents must train their “children” to be “rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith” (Colossians 2:7). Young Christians need training in the basics: assurance that Christ lives in them, intimacy with God by spending time with God in prayer and Bible study, how to experience God's love and forgiveness, enjoying relationships

and accountability with other believers, how to share their faith, and living in obedience to Jesus Christ. When someone nurtures a new believer in this way, the road to maturity in Christ will be much easier.

THE AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY

Nurturing young Christians takes commitment, time, and preparation. So why would we agree to take on such an awesome responsibility? Think about these four good reasons.

1) We are a part of their spiritual birth. Our job isn't finished when we help someone become a believer. That person needs your help to get established in the faith. A good example of how that works is found in Acts 14:21-22. After preaching to the people, Paul took the time and responsibility to strengthen the new converts and exhort them to continue in the faith.

2) We have a responsibility as a member of the body of Christ. If we see a new believer who is not being cared for, our responsibility is to help him grow. Paul explains that the responsibility of every Christian is to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry until we all attain mature manhood. We should no longer be children. Rather, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head." (See Ephesians 4:11-16.)

3) We love Jesus. Our care for those who belong to Christ proves our love for Him. In John 21:15-17 Jesus told Peter to demonstrate his love for Him by feeding His sheep (caring for fellow Christians).

4) Jesus commanded it. Jesus instructs us to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:18-20). Notice His choice of words. He doesn't say we're to make "converts." We are to make "disciples" – people who are consistent followers of Jesus.

What a tremendous privilege to take care of God's children. We can be a part of achieving His goal to "present everyone perfect [mature] in Christ" (Colossians 1:28).

WHAT TO DO

Leading a person to Christ is important, but it's only the first step. The bigger challenge is helping him grow to maturity. Until new believers learn to walk by themselves, they need our help.

Follow these guidelines when working with a new Christian:

(1) Meet with him immediately after he receives Christ. Studies show that a person who is contacted within 48 hours after becoming a Christian has a much easier time growing in his/her relationship with Christ.

(2) Meet with him at least four times after he becomes a Christian. (Use the material at the end of this week's session for each meeting. Another option: use the six-session *Getting Started* booklet, which you can order from Reach Out Youth Solutions.)

(3) If he asks a question you can't answer, be honest. Say, "I don't know." Don't try to make up an answer. Tell him you will try to find the answer before you meet again.

(4) Don't get discouraged if the person does not respond as you had expected. The growth process takes time. If you keep on loving, nourishing, protecting, and training the other person, growth will take place.

Jesus said in the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13) that some people would not grow after they received the Word, but that many others would grow by leaps and bounds. Your task is to follow up with people in the power of the Holy Spirit and then let God take care of their response. Remember this: "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor" (1 Corinthians 3:7-8).

Remember, helping new Christians grow is one of the great adventures of following Jesus!



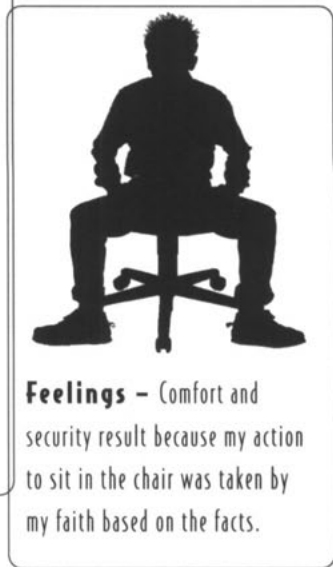
ACTION POINT > SESSION 9

1. Study John 21:15-17 carefully and write down what you think your role is in feeding Jesus' "sheep."

FOLLOW UP FOR NEW BELIEVERS

GETTING STARTED (Session #1)

1. Begin with some friendly conversation. Use the FRIEND acrostic.
2. Go through the “Jesus: No Equal” booklet.
3. Help this student understand that Christ is in his life. Read and explain: (1) 2 Corinthians 5:17. (A new Christian begins a relationship with Jesus that’s so completely different that the New Testament calls it “new birth;”) (2) 1 John 5:11-13 (We can know that we have life); and (3) Romans 8:38-39 (Nothing can separate us from God’s love.)
4. Ask: “What about feelings? What if you wake up one morning and don’t feel like Jesus is in your life? Does that mean He has left you?” Explain that Christians do not need to depend on feelings. The following diagram illustrates the relationship of fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust), and feeling (the result of trust). As Christians, faith controls



5. Focus on some practical ways to grow in Christ. Go over the last section of the “Jesus: No Equal” booklet.

6. Encourage questions. If you don't know the answer, say so, and try to get the answer before you meet again.
7. Ask him to read Mark 1-4 and memorize 1 John 5:11-12 before you meet again.
8. After setting up a time to meet again, close in prayer.

CONFESSING SIN (Session # 2)

1. After some conversation, ask how things have been going since he received Christ. Try to discover any needs he has.
2. Ask: "Are you confident that your past, present, and future sins are forgiven?"
3. Explain that even though Jesus will never leave us, we Christians can easily take control of our own lives and not let Christ control us. That leads us into sin.
4. Explain that Jesus died to take away the penalty and power of sin, but the presence of sin still remains. Christians experience forgiveness when we honestly confess our sins to God.
5. Read 1 John 1:8-10 and explain that confession is agreeing with God concerning our sins. Point out that sin can be an attitude of indifference or rebellion toward God as well as an action. We agree that our sin is wrong and that Christ has forgiven us through His death. Confession does not make us any more forgiven, but it acknowledges our sin to God and expresses our gratitude for His forgiveness. Confession keeps us in close fellowship with Christ.
6. Assign Mark 5-8 to read for the next appointment.
7. Set a time to meet again, then pray together.

FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Session # 3)

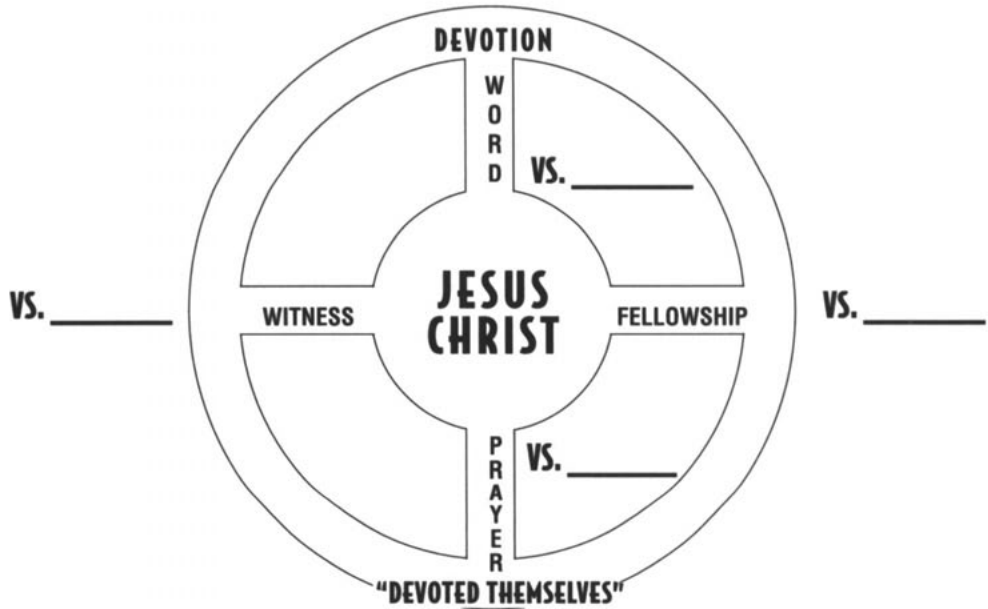
1. After casual conversation, ask, "How have you experienced God's forgiveness this week?"
2. Explain that God wants us to have an exciting life. In order to have that, we must live by the power of the Holy Spirit. Read the following verses to support the explanation: John 10:10; Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:22-23; and Ephesians 5:18.
3. Read Romans 8:9-11 and explain that the Holy Spirit lives in everyone who has received Christ. However, even though the Holy Spirit lives in every believer, He does not control every believer.

4. Explain that we are commanded to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.
Read John 20:22.
5. Read 1 John 5:14-15. Explain that we can be filled with the Holy Spirit by asking God to fill us. Ask your friend to pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit.
6. Explain that a Christian may need to confess his sins and to ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit many times in one day. By these two steps, confession and filling, a Christian can live life at its best. Illustrate by using the following comparison. Say something like: "Physical breathing requires a simple two-step process. Exhaling removes impurities from our lungs. Inhaling brings in clean, pure oxygen. Spiritual breathing is similar. We exhale by confessing our sins (1 John 1:9). Then we inhale by asking God to fill us with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)." Explain how important it is to do this every day. Challenge him/her to use spiritual breathing every day this week.
7. Assign Mark 9-12 and memorize Ephesians 5:18 together.
8. Set up a time to meet together again, then pray together.

GETTING TO KNOW GOD (Session # 4)

1. After some casual conversation, ask, "How has the practice of spiritual breathing helped you this week?"
2. Show him the "wheel illustration" based on Acts 2:42. Look up these verses as you explain each segment.

Christ the Center	(2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20)
Obedience to Christ	(John 14:21; Romans 12:1)
The Word	(Joshua 1:8; 2 Timothy 3:16)
Prayer	(John 15:7; Philippians 4:6-7)
Fellowship	(Matthew 18:20; Hebrews 10:24-25)
Witnessing	(Matthew 4:19; Romans 1:16)



3. Talk about beginning a daily time alone with God. Look at Philippians 3:10 to discuss the purpose of spending time alone with God. Look at Mark 1:35 to see who set the example. Have time alone with God together using a Bible Response Sheet (like the one in Session 10), and a Prayer Action Sheet (like the one in Session 12). Focus on Galatians 2:20. Work on making the application personal, practical, and measurable.
4. Challenge him to have a time alone with God for 10 straight days. Have him use one verse each day from the list in question #2.
5. Ask him to finish reading Mark (chapters 13-16).
6. Talk to him about being baptized. If you have not done so, invite him to the youth group.
7. Challenge him to get into a discipleship group using *Following Jesus* by Barry St. Clair. Give him this book as a gift.
8. Pray together.



SESSION 10

CHALLENGE FOR DISCIPLESHIP

After the youth group, a student tells you, “I really want to be what God wants me to be, but I don’t know what that is.” How would you answer her? Before answering, dream a little. Imagine this student as an eighth grader. What qualities does she need to develop between now and her senior year to become mature in her walk with Christ? Think about what she would be like if she developed those qualities. Imagine what you, as her leader, would do to help her become that kind of person.

THE DISCIPLED STUDENT

Youth activities, mission trips, special events, camps, and retreats are often planned with the hope that the students who participate will “grow spiritually.” But rarely does that happen. Why not? Because growing is a process and the list above are events. Just like a young man cannot grow taller by going to basketball camp, our students will not grow deeper through events. The events will enhance the process, but discipleship *IS* the process!

Furthermore, if we don’t have a clear picture of what a disciplined student looks like, then we won’t even know if he/she becomes one or not. So what does a disciplined student look like?

The Apostle Paul gets us started with a definition of a disciplined student:

“Him we preach warning and admonishing everyone and instructing everyone in all wisdom, that we may present every person mature — full-grown, fully initiated, complete, and perfect — in Christ, the Anointed One. For this I labor, striving with all the superhuman energy which He so mightily enkindles and works within me” (Colossians 1:28-29, AMP).

As youth leaders our greatest privilege is to teach and admonish students to become “mature in Christ.” So what does a mature student look like?

Maturity: Being able to receive enough from Jesus to meet our own needs and having enough left over to meet the needs of others.

GETTING STARTED

Let's keep the following thoughts in mind as we think about helping students grow to that level of maturity.

- Allow students to mature naturally. You can encourage them to grow, but you can't force them.
- Build the foundation for a student to continue to grow to maturity throughout his life. Don't expect to see the final product upon graduation from high school. Do expect to see rapid growth toward becoming the type of person God wants him/her to become.
- Students grow to maturity in three environments: large groups, small groups, and one-to-one. Each environment has its place in a student's development.
- Realize that you are not the only resource to help students grow — parents, teachers, other church members, family, and friends are all influential. Consider how everyone can work together in this process.

DEFINING AND REFINING

To further develop your thoughts on defining a mature student, spend some time reflecting: study God's Word, listen to Him, and pray about the type of student you want to see your youth ministry produce. Record your thoughts on the "Profile of a Disciple" sheet at the end of this session. As your Profile develops, use these steps to refine it.

- Make it realistic. Consider time limitations as well as maturity limitations. You will need to raise some standards and lower others. Always believe that God changes lives, but don't let your Profile exceed the limits of reality.
- Define clichés and vague words. The description of each quality needs to be understood by you and those who work with you.
- Make each quality practical and measurable. Offer a plan for a student to achieve each characteristic in the power of God's Spirit.
- Keep the profile before you. It will help determine actions to take and gauge progress. Keeping the profile with you will help communicate your vision for students to others.

Gaining a clear focus on what a disciplined student looks like will give you a clear vision of what God desires for every student in your youth ministry.

PROFILE OF A DISCIPLE*

Profile for _____ Date _____

Study 1 Timothy 3:2-7; 1 Peter 5:1-7; Acts 6:3-5; and Titus 1:7-9. Using these passages of Scripture and 1 Thessalonians 1-2, address the following areas. Use at least one verse of Scripture with each of your answers.

- What are God's life-goals for this disciple?

- What personal characteristics does God desire for his/her life (spiritually, mentally, physically, and socially)?

- What kind of relationship does God want him/her to have with his/her family (parents, brothers, sisters)?

- What kind of relationship does God have in mind for him/her with his/her friends?

- What kind of relationship with the opposite sex does God have in mind?

- What are God's hopes and dreams for this disciple?

*Adapted by permission from Dennis Miller the original creator and author of the Profile.



SESSION II

COUNSELING STUDENTS

One of the students in your youth group calls late at night. She is obviously upset as she tells you about a fight she had with her dad. During the fight she got angry, stomped out of the house and drove down to the local hangout to get a beer. She got drunk, tried to drive home, and skidded into a tree. She called her dad to come and get her. Scared and confused, this girl has called you for help. How would you handle that situation?

Let's look at some basic principles and practical suggestions on counseling students that will prepare us to help students who are going through crises like this one and a myriad of others. Obviously, we can't learn all we need to know about counseling students in one session, but we can build a foundation for counseling.

THE PURPOSE OF COUNSELING

Jesus promised that following Him would give us the fullest, most rewarding life possible (John 10:10). But He never promised that the Christian life would be easy. All of us experience difficulty, crisis, pain, and heartache. Some situations seem impossible. For a teenager struggling through adolescence those situations seem to come often.

What most students look for when they come for counseling is *happiness*. ("Get me out of this mess so I can be happy.") Yet God's higher goal is for us to be *holy*. The apostle Paul tells us that God desires for us to be "conformed to the likeness of His Son" (Romans 8:29). Our goal as counselors is to help students grow into being like Christ so that they will be holy. Then, hopefully, happiness will follow.

THE BASIC NEEDS OF STUDENTS

Trying to counsel without understanding the basic needs of students will result in putting a Band-Aid on a leg that needs amputating.

The basic needs of all students are *security* and *significance*.

In order to understand these needs, let's go back to the beginning: Adam and Eve. In the garden, Adam and Eve had personal worth. God provided for them in such a way that they were significant and secure. These two qualities were basic to their sense of personal worth. After the Fall, the security and the significance they experienced disappeared. They became afraid of God and blamed each other (insecurity). Then,

when they were thrown out of the garden, they lost their sense of dignity (insignificance.)

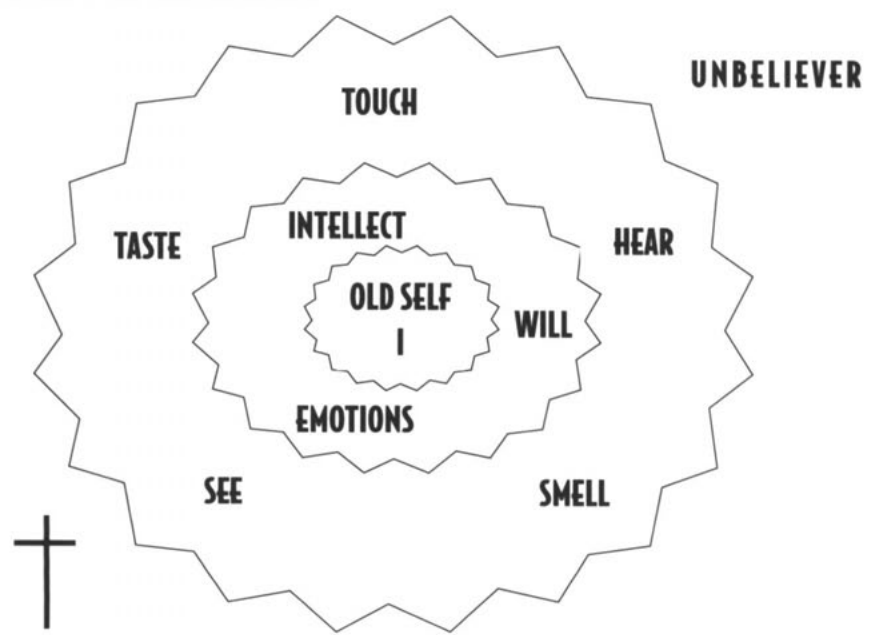
Problems develop when basic needs for security and significance are threatened. People try to fulfill those needs in different ways. Look at the following responses and the results of each one.

RESPONSE	RESULT
Basic human needs met <i>with</i> Christ.	Significance; security
Basic human needs met <i>without</i> Christ.	Pride; pleasure
Basic human needs not met at all.	Violence; immorality

Through counseling, then, our desire is to meet students' needs for significance and security by establishing their personal worth in Jesus Christ.

HELPING STUDENTS SOLVE PROBLEMS

The Bible describes both the problems with which students need help and the solutions to the problems . Every student who comes for counseling ultimately has the same problem — selfishness. Paul calls this basic problem “the old self” (Ephesians 4:22). When a student is lost, that “old self” is in control. This diagram describes what that looks like.

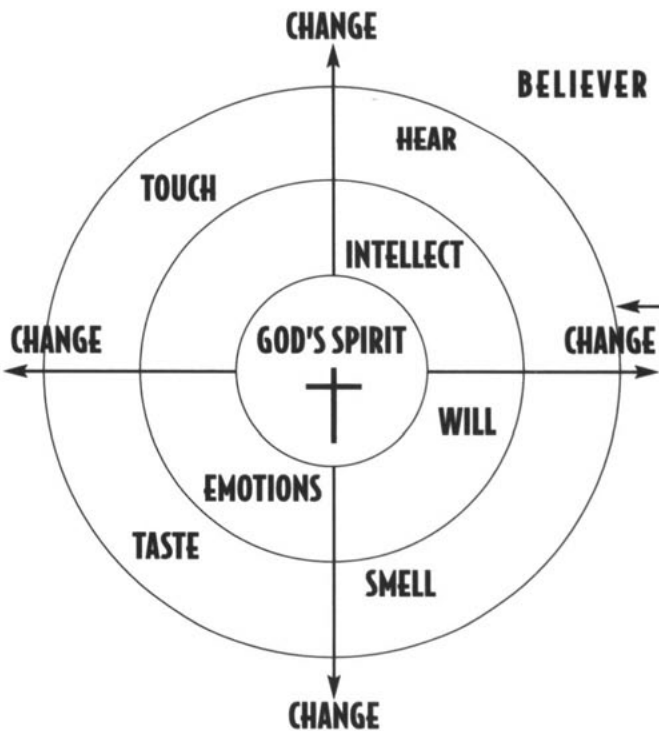


Because the old self is “corrupt,” a person can never change until “the old self” is taken care of. So when we counsel students, the first step is always to help them determine if they know Jesus Christ. That leads them into a relationship that replaces their dependence on the old self (selfishness) with a dependence on Christ (significance and security).

Once the old self is removed from the center of power and the Holy Spirit comes and lives within (Romans 8:9), a person has hope that he/she can change. This diagram describes what that looks like.

So when a student comes for counseling, we can communicate that Jesus can reign in his/her life, making it possible for that student to change. If we don't get to the root problem (the old self), we are only going “skin deep” with our students' problems.

Does this mean that Christians should not have problems? No! Even though the old self is defeated, it still leaves a residue that continues to cause problems. We must help Christian students deal with those problems.

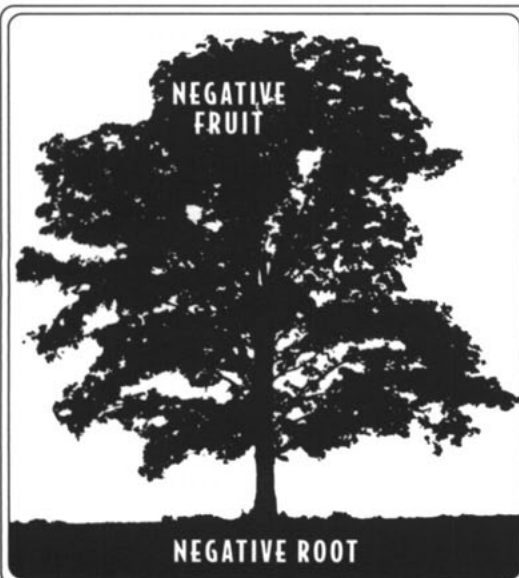


THE ROOT AND THE FRUIT

When students describe their problems, they almost always talk about the “fruit” of the problem — what is on the surface. If we deal with the fruit only, we will not help them. We must get to the “root.” Getting to the root of the problem is the hardest part of counseling. The root always comes out of the “old self.” Whenever a student feeds the old self, it results in harmful effects on his life.

The student who says, “I got drunk and wrecked my dad’s car” is only focusing on the fruit. The real solution is to look beyond the surface problem. Perhaps his dad puts him down, doesn’t listen, and doesn’t spend time with him. About 90 percent of the time, rejection is the root problem of today’s young people. Work backward from the student’s behavior (fruit) until you discover the heart issue (root).

Here’s an example.



OLD SELF (Ephesians 4:22)

- *Problem behavior:* “I got drunk and wrecked the car.” (Wrong behavior)
- *Problem feelings:* “I can’t do anything right when and where my dad’s concerned.” (Feelings of insignificance)
- *Problem thoughts:* “My dad doesn’t like me. If he did, he wouldn’t yell at me and put me down. He would take time to get to know me.” (Rejection)
- *Root problem:* “I’m a worthless jerk.” (Loss of personal worth)

UPROOTING THE PROBLEMS

Now that we see how to identify the problems, let’s go back to Ephesians 4:22-24 to discover how to uproot the problems from students’ lives.

Begin with “putting on the new self” (verse 24). Once we receive Christ that is an action we take every day, just like putting on our clothes.

Continue by helping students understand how to “be made new in the attitudes of your mind” (verse 23). We can offer practical ways to help students renew their minds.

- *Recognize sinful thoughts.* Challenge them to be honest and admit when wrong thoughts creep into their minds.
- *Refuse wrong thoughts.* Suggest that when a wrong thought comes into their minds they can quickly bring it before the Lord and confess it honestly.

Encourage them to confess their sins specifically. Honesty before God strikes a blow at the root. Also, help them see that when they confess their sins to others, healing

takes place (James 5:16). To avoid creating more problems, men should confess to men and women confess to women. Applying 1 John 1:9, show students that when they confess, they are forgiven because Jesus has already covered their sins by shedding His blood on the cross.

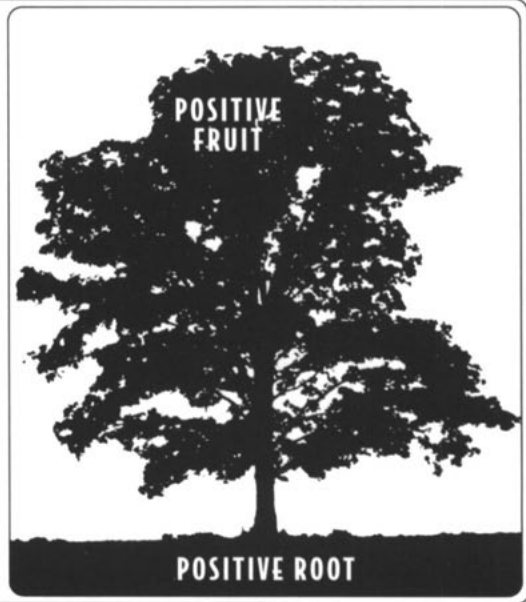
- *Replace wrong thoughts with right thoughts.* Show them God's point of view on their problem from Scripture. If they memorize a verse, then they have a basis for their new way of thinking about the problem. For example, if a student is having problems with feeling rejected by his parent(s), you might show him John 15:16 and explain that God will never reject him. Then turn to Colossians 3:20 to discover how God wants him to respond to his dad. Have him memorize one of those verses. Take him to the Bible. If you don't know the solution from Scripture, go to another leader and ask for help. Then get back to the student as soon as possible.
- *Reflect on right thoughts.* Encourage your student to meditate on Scripture until it becomes like a surgeon's scalpel, cutting everything out of his mind that doesn't belong there. Challenge him to turn his mind to positive thoughts every time a negative thought begins to emerge. Teach him to concentrate on "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable...excellent or praiseworthy" (Philippians 4:8).

The result: positive feelings will result as they change their thinking. They will have a sense of *significance* and *security*. With a "new self" in Christ, a new way of thinking, and a new set of feelings, they will find that "putting off" old behavior and "putting on" new behavior will become so much easier. *God will do it!*

In summary, when we counsel students we begin with problem behavior (fruit) and work backward to discover the root problem (root thoughts influenced by the old self). When the root is replaced with the new self, then, in time, the change results in positive thoughts, that lead to positive feelings, that eventually lead to positive behavior.

NEW SELF (Ephesians 4:24)

- *Root solution:* "Put on the new self, (Christ)"
– Ephesians 4:24
(Personal worth)
- *Positive thoughts:* "be made new in the attitude of your minds" – Ephesians 4:23
(Renewing the mind)
- *Positive feelings:* "...created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." – Ephesians 4:24 (Feelings of significance and security)
- *Positive behavior:* "You must put off..."
– Ephesians 4:25 (Right behavior)



Counseling students is not easy! It takes time and effort. But when we get to the root of a problem and then uproot that problem with a biblical solution, deep change takes place in the lives of our students.

**ACTION POINT > SESSION 11**

1. Who is one person in your church you trust to counsel you? Go to that person and ask him/her to counsel you.
2. Write the name of one student who has an obvious problem.
3. Call the student you named to meet with him/her this week. If the situation allows for it, gently approach the person's problem and talk through the "fruit" and the "root." If the student is open, work through the steps of solving the problem.

4. Record the result of your meeting with that student here. What is the “fruit” that this student is dealing with? Using the tree diagram, trace the student’s problem from the fruit to the root of the issue. Again using the tree diagram, outline the solution you would give to that student to solve his/her problem.

SESSION 12

Leading A Small Group

You lead a small group. But the students you lead don't pay attention, are not motivated and, could care less about being there. How can you convert that apathetic group into a group interested in discussing significant life issues?

As Jesus unveiled His plan to change the world, He spent most of His time pouring His life into a band of twelve men. He befriended them, shared His heart and life with them, and challenged them to follow Him. He used a variety of methods and situations to slowly develop their spiritual understanding.

Spending time with these men was a priority in Jesus' ministry. Yes, He did evangelize the multitudes, heal the sick and cast out demons, but His primary investment was in His disciples. To this small group of individuals Jesus said: "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation." (Mark 16:15). And through those men, united by a common purpose and encouraged by a common love, God used them to change the course of human history.

The New Testament tells us that we, as followers of Jesus, get to have the same ministry Jesus had! Not only has He called us to preach the Good News, heal the sick and deliver people from demons, but more! We bear each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2); encourage each other (Hebrews 10:24-25); are concerned for each other (Philippians 2:4); and admonish each other (1 Thessalonians 5:15). The open, honest sharing needed for this kind of ministry seldom takes place in large group meetings. Jesus knew that to develop faithful, committed, spiritually mature disciples, He needed a small group setting that would encourage depth of relationships.

Small groups are no less powerful today than in Jesus' day. When life-changing small groups function correctly, students will dig down deep and mature significantly in their love for Jesus Christ and for each other.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES FOR SMALL GROUPS

These basic principles will get us going toward changing a small group that is apathetic into one that is alive.

Establish the purpose of the group. When Jesus called His disciples, He did so with two basic purposes in mind. (1) They were to follow Him. (2) They were to

become “fishers of men” (Mark 1:16-17). Any time we begin a small group or agree to lead one, we must keep these two purposes in mind.

Expect great things. Usually great things don’t happen within a group unless the leader keeps the end result constantly before the group. That keeps the group moving in the right direction. People are like sheep — without good direction, they will wander. With God’s purpose for the group clearly in mind we can direct the group toward that goal. Remember that the Holy Spirit is the true leader. Refer to Him and expect Him to give the group power and purpose.

Encourage group members. When His disciples became confused and discouraged, Jesus took them aside to explain what He was doing. When they were joyous, He rejoiced with them. When they were down, He reassured them. Small groups provide an excellent environment for encouragement. The Bible teaches, “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!” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).

PREPARING FOR THE GROUP MEETING

Small groups don’t just happen. We must prepare for their success. Consider these basic elements of preparation.

Prepare prayerfully. Before you begin the group, pray for God to give you the right people. Once the group begins, continue to pray for those in your group. Pray for them by name, remembering their individual needs. As you think about the group meeting, ask yourself, “How does this relate to Jim, Sue, and John? How can I communicate to them most effectively?”

Prepare in detail. Make sure to write out the plans for the group meeting. Plan each meeting minute by minute, in order not to waste time. Also consider the physical setting and try to create a positive environment for your group.

Prepare by personalizing. Care for your students as specific individuals, not just an undefined “group.” Your warmth and enthusiasm, communicated as they come in, creates the atmosphere. Rather than feel awkward or intimidated, your students will be glad they are there. They will know you care about them personally.

Prepare to stay within a time frame. The meeting should last at least an hour, but not more than two. Keep a close watch on time. Make the most of the time and do not go over the designated time limitations.

DURING THE GROUP MEETING

After the group meeting begins keep these goals in mind.

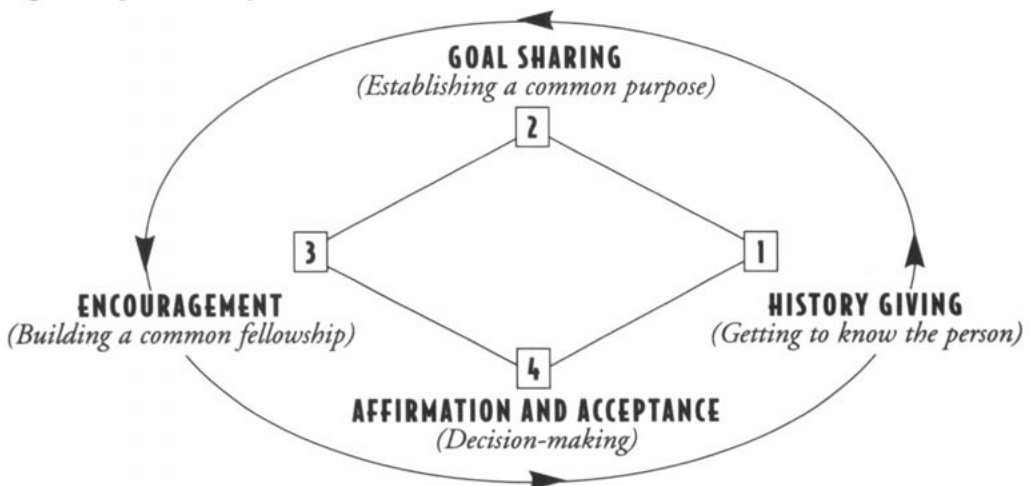
Encourage group members to be honest. Lead by example. Students will only be as honest and open as you are. Share your weaknesses, your failures, and your hurts as well as your positive anecdotes and examples.

Be aware of individual needs. Generally group members will support each other. But if someone is really hurting (and taking up a lot of the group's time), help that person be sensitive to the rest of the group. Ask that individual to meet afterwards to talk more about that issue. This way the group will not be derailed from its objectives for that week.

Give group members "practical handles." Each session provides something that will help students apply what they are learning. For example, if you are discussing spending time alone with God, give specific illustrations of how you spend time alone with God, what you do during your prayer times, or how you meditate on Scripture. Challenge them to have time alone with God every day for a week. Each week help them walk away with something they can do to follow Jesus.

THE PROCESS OF THE GROUP

In baseball, the point of the game is to get a hit and then move around the bases to score. In leading a small group, we have the same challenge. We want progress through a series of steps until the individuals and the group "score" by making significant decisions concerning their relationships with Jesus Christ. The following diagram explains that process.



BUILDING STRONG PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE GROUP

In addition to becoming spiritually mature, the group members need to become friends with each other. These ideas will help them establish strong friendships.

Establish group goals and commitments. One good definition of friendship is “sharing common experiences built around common goals.” As you begin to see goals reached and commitments kept, you will see friendships blossom also.

Spend time together socially. Do fun things together as a group. Also spend time with the individuals in your group by participating in their school and social activities. Consider taking them with you while you run errands, go on a trip, and other activities.

Be the initiator. Ask group members questions about themselves, their interests, and their activities. Share those same things about yourself. Stay current with their upcoming events and activities. Demonstrate unconditional acceptance of them — be a friend first and a group leader second.

Sit close together. Check the physical arrangement of your meeting room. The closer you can get to having your knees touching, the more closeness you will experience within the group.

Observe body language. When people fold their arms, cross their legs, slouch, yawn, turn away, or roll their eyes, they are giving nonverbal indications that they have lost interest. By the same token, when they are sitting forward in their chairs and keeping good eye contact, they are tuned in. Be aware of body language and adjust your teaching methods accordingly.

DANGERS TO AVOID

Try to avoid these dangers with the group. If one of them appears, address the issue honestly.

Don't become a clique. Small groups usually develop close friendships, but a healthy group will reach out to others. Even though the group should not be open to new members, the students can bring their friends to other activities.

Don't worry. After the initial excitement of a new group wears off, group members may go through a period of letdown. You can address this by providing a brief time of evaluation periodically. Ask the group how things are going and encourage both positive and negative feedback. See what they think can be done to improve. Implement those improvements.

Don't panic. If you come up against a problem you don't feel equipped to handle, tell your group, "I have to give some thought to that and get back with you later." Then consult your youth minister, pastor, or someone else you believe can help you handle the problem.

Leading a small group is one of the most challenging, yet rewarding experiences ever. The friendships cultivated in the group and the changes you will see take place in the lives of group members will bring you a tremendous sense of satisfaction and joy. The Apostle Paul summarized it like this: "For what is hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when He comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy" (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20).



ACTION POINT > SESSION 12

1. If you are leading a small group, pick out the five suggestions from this session that you feel will be most helpful to you. Record them here. Implement at least one of those suggestions in your small group this week. Record the results below. Add a new suggestion each week. If you are not leading a small group, prepare an outline that will help you start and lead your own small group. Then you will be ready when the opportunity comes.

Discussion Guide

SESSION 1

1. Ask the group what they believe God is saying about the vision of the church's youth ministry. Ask them what they believe God wants them to do about it.
2. Have each group member read his response to Question #2 of the Action Point. Who does God say you are?
3. Ask: *What aspects of God's purpose for you are common to all Christians?*
4. Have each person read his/her life purpose. Ask: *How is your purpose unique from every other person?*
5. Ask: *When you dream about God glorifying Himself through you, what does that look like?*
6. Say: *Give one illustration to show that God has already begun to accomplish His purpose in you.*

SESSION 2

1. Read Jeremiah 29:11-13. Ask each person to express his/her thoughts on how "loving God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" fits into God giving them "a future and a hope."
2. Ask: *Would you share an experience where you have been faced with the choice of following your own plans or God's plans for your life? How did you respond? Be personal and specific.*
3. Ask: *Why do you think Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?*
4. Ask each person to share his/her spiritual goals from the Personal Objectives Section. Do the same thing with each other area (social, mental, and physical). If the group is larger, divide into smaller groups to save time.
5. In pairs, explain the first step toward accomplishing one of their personal goals this week.
6. Pray in pairs about their overall goals.

SESSION 3

1. Ask: *Why do you think Jesus said that loving your neighbor as yourself was the second greatest commandment?*

2. Encourage each person to present his/her family objectives. Then repeat the process with the friendship objectives. Again, if this takes too long, divide into smaller groups.
3. Pair with the same partner from last week's session. Have each person express the first step he/she will take toward accomplishing one of his/her goals for family and friends.
4. In pairs, pray for one another about overall goals.

SESSION 4

1. Have each person communicate his/her job objectives. Then repeat the process with youth ministry goals.
2. Get into pairs with the same partners from the past couple of sessions. Again explain the first step toward accomplishing a job and a youth ministry goal.
3. Pray for each other about these goals.
4. Warn the group that the next sessions will take more time than normal to complete. Encourage them to get started early in the week

SESSION 5

1. Discuss: *What struggles do you face in trying to live a "Balanced Life"?*
Summarize: *It will always be a struggle to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Yet without determining our lifetime goals, our one-year goals, and then working those goals into our daily schedules, a balanced lifestyle will always be an illusive dream.*
2. Show the group how to work out their One-Year Goals. Using a chalkboard or poster board, outline the steps you went through to transfer that lifetime goal into a yearly goal.
3. Have each group member spend a few minutes reviewing the One-Year Goals he/she wrote from his/her Lifetime Goals to see if he/she would like to revise any of them.
4. Once again, pair up the people who have been partners for the past several sessions. There is not enough time to go over all the goals. Each person can read three or four. After each one ask: *Is it what God wants? Is it measurable? Can it be completed in a year?*
5. Pray for motivation and wisdom for each other in pursuing these goals.

SESSION 6 (GROUP PROJECT)

Prior to the group meeting the youth pastor or key youth leader needs to:

1. Write out the long-term goals of the youth ministry.
2. Using the list of long-term goals for the youth ministry, write the one-year goals for the youth ministry.
3. Prepare a calendar for the next year. Chart out on the calendar how you will accomplish your one-year youth ministry goals. (Remember: If they are not on the calendar, they probably won't get accomplished.)
4. Draw up a tentative weekly schedule for your youth ministry based on the calendar you planned.
5. Prepare copies of the Daily Time Log and the Ideal Weekly Schedule that the group members can use to write out their proposed schedule for the coming week.

During the group meeting:

1. Go over what you prepared (long-term goals, one-year goals and calendar) during the last week with the group.
2. Ask each person to express to the group a particular goal that motivates him/her. Write his/her name by that goal.
3. Ask each person to describe what his/her weekly youth ministry schedule will look like.
4. Ask them what they need from you to accomplish their plans.

SESSION 7

1. Describe the best part of last week's project.
2. Assign people one of the passages on spiritual gifts. Ask him/her to read the passage and give a summary of the gifts.
3. Create a time of open discussion about spiritual gifts. Most people don't understand them. Encourage questions. Stay focused on Scripture.
4. Have each person answer these questions: *What do you think your motivation (grace) gift is? How do you think your gift can operate best in youth ministry? How can you maximize the use of your gift?*
5. Have each group member pray for the person on the left. Pray that each person's spiritual gift will be used for God's glory in the youth ministry.

SESSION 8

(Note: Call two people and ask them to role play in which one person leads the other person to Christ.)

1. Have everyone share his/her greatest barrier in witnessing and explain why that is a barrier for him/her.
2. Encourage everyone to report on the conversation they had with a non-Christian student.
3. Ask the two volunteers to role play a conversation between a Christian and a non-Christian ending at the point where the non-Christian receives Christ. (Use the *Jesus: No Equal* booklet if needed.)
4. Divide into pairs and go through the same conversation step-by-step.
5. Reassign partners, this time pairing one person who is experienced at witnessing with another person who is not. Have the partners make an appointment for the upcoming week to talk to someone on their Prayer Power Team list.
6. Pray as partners for the people who need Christ in your Prayer Power Team. Concentrate on praying for the people they hope to see this week.

SESSION 9

1. Discuss: *What should be our personal role in following up on new Christians?*
2. Set up a mock follow-up session. Divide into pairs. One person can lead the first session and the other person can lead the second session. The non-leader needs to challenge the leader with questions a new Christian might ask.
3. Ask: *Do you feel comfortable using this material to follow up on a new Christian? If not, why not?*
4. Discuss whether or not the youth ministry has an effective plan to lead students to Christ and for following up new Christians. If the answer is no, consider using *Getting Started* and the “Moving Toward Maturity” series by Barry St. Clair as your plan. Consider having samples of these materials available for the group.

SESSION 10

1. Have the group think of one student (one most of them know) who went to your church during high school and has since graduated. Discuss: *Would you consider that student a “discipled” student? On what basis would you make that judgment?*

2. From the previous study of 1 Thessalonians 1, have the group come up with a list of qualities for a disciplined student.
3. From the previous study of 1 Thessalonians 2, have the group come up with a list of desired qualities for a person who disciplines students.
4. From the Profile of a Disciple, come up with a list of the top five qualities your youth ministry wants to develop in your students' lives. Why did you choose those particular qualities? Discuss this as a group.
5. Discuss: *What do we need to do as a Leadership Team and individually to develop those qualities in the students who are a part of our ministry right now?*

SESSION 11

(Note: You may wish to invite a Christian counselor whom you respect to help you lead this session.)

1. Carry out a counseling situation that your group members can relate to. It can be real or dramatized. (Example: A girl is pregnant and comes to you for counseling on whether or not to have an abortion.)
2. Ask the group to discuss how they would counsel the girl, using these questions:

What is the "fruit" of this issue?

How do we identify the "root" of her problem?

What are some solutions to the problem?

How would you help her see one solution and act on it?

What can you do to help grow out of the problem?

How will you know when the problem is resolved?

Does she need long-term help?

3. Pray Isaiah 11:1-3 for each other. Ask God to give you the same Spirit that was in Jesus to counsel students. Also pray that God will give you wisdom and insight to move beyond the "fruit" and down to the "root" to help students solve their problems.

[NOTE: In preparing for next week, look at the discussion questions now. If you decide to have everyone bring a token gift for each person, you need to announce it during this week's meeting.]

SESSION 12

1. Role play a skit where a leader is trying to teach the following characters in a small group:

Nelly Nurse (She replies, "It's OK" every time someone tries to share a problem.)

Andy Answers (He has an answer for every question.)

Silent Sam (He doesn't ever say anything.)

Danny Dominant (He talks all the time.)

After a few minutes of role play, stop and discuss how to effectively handle each character.

2. What are the "Top Three" insights you gained this week in leading a small group?

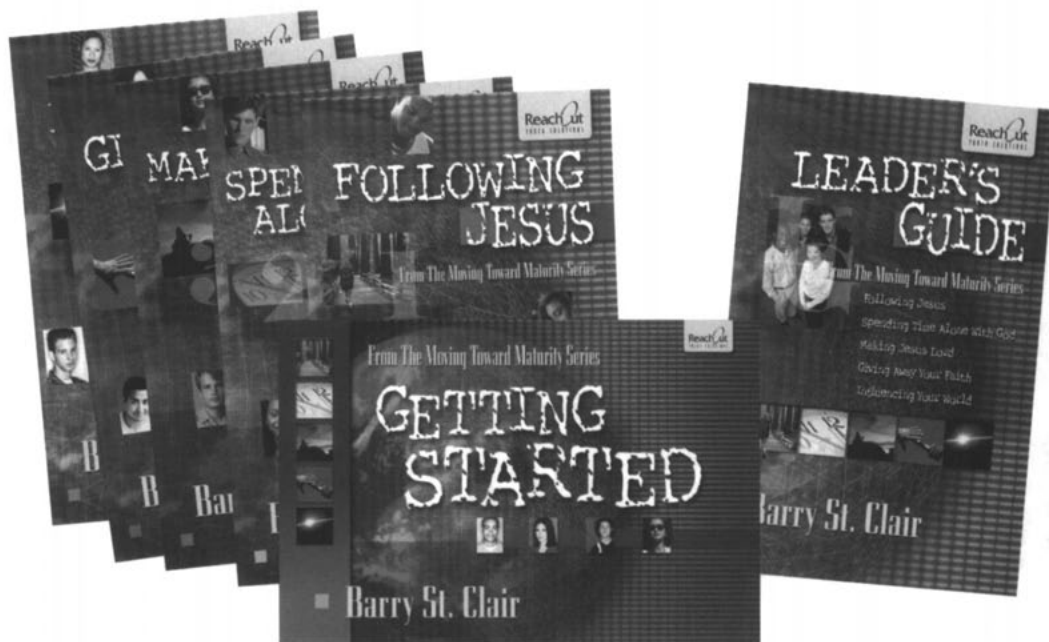
3. Ask each person to share the two greatest benefits he/she has received from being in this small group.

4. Select one person in the group and ask all of the other people to express one thing about that person that means the most to them. Then go on to the next person and do the same thing until everyone has been blessed. (You can use a ball of yarn for this. The first person tosses it to the person he/she will talk about. That person then tosses it to another person and says something about him/her, and so on.)

5. An option: Have everyone bring a small generic, symbolic gift for one other member of the group. Ask the person who brought the gift to give it to someone who encouraged him/her in the group. Caution: only one gift per group member.

6. In prayer, lay your hands on each person asking God's blessing on each one. Pray Ephesians 3:14-19 and/or Philipians 1:9-11 for them. Ask God to use what he/she has learned during this study to increase the effectiveness of his/her ministry.

7. Ask them: *Where do we want to go from here?*



Moving Toward Maturity Series – is a six book progressive discipleship series that will move students to spiritual maturity in Christ.

Getting Started – gets new believers started on their walk with Christ

Following Jesus – builds a foundation for a strong relationship with Christ

Spending Time Alone With God – helps students develop communication with Christ through a meaningful devotional life

Making Jesus Lord – challenges students to obey Jesus and give Him control in the day to day issues students face

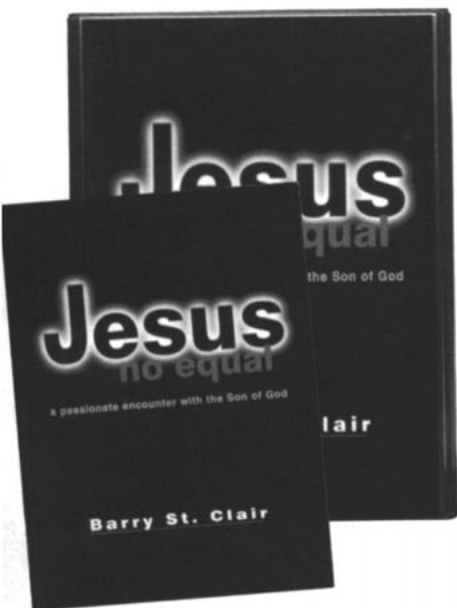
Giving Away Your Faith – creates a desire and gives students the ability to share Christ with their friends

Influencing Your World – prepares students to become servant leaders in the church and at school

Moving Toward Maturity Leader's Guide – This book provides leaders with tools and discussion material to successfully lead a discipleship group. It includes leader's material for all six books in the series.

For these and other books and resources:

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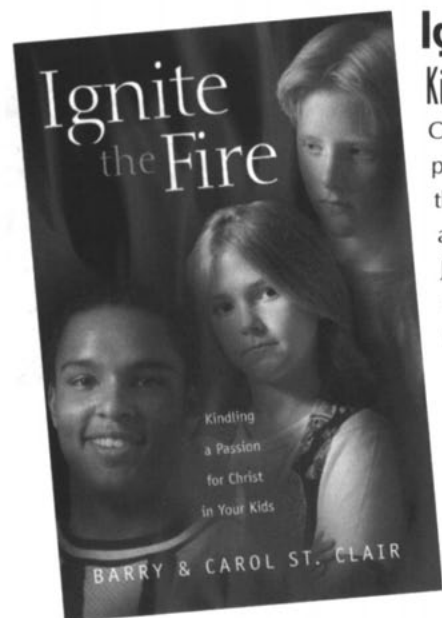
Jesus No Equal

A Passionate Encounter with the Son of God –

This student devotional creates an intense encounter with Jesus that traces Christ's coming, His birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection and second coming. The challenge of this book is for students to spend at least 20 minutes a day discovering Jesus. They will come to know Jesus for who He really is and will follow Him more passionately. That encounter will create the enthusiasm they need to take Jesus to their schools with the good news that in Jesus there is no equal. This book is much more than a resource. It is a campaign to place Jesus at center stage in the lives of the younger generation.

Jesus No Equal Leader's Guide – for use with the student devotional *Jesus No Equal*.

This six-session leader's guide is an in-depth discipling resource that will help you equip students to intimately know and confidently walk with Jesus as they discover Him. You can use it in a variety of settings.



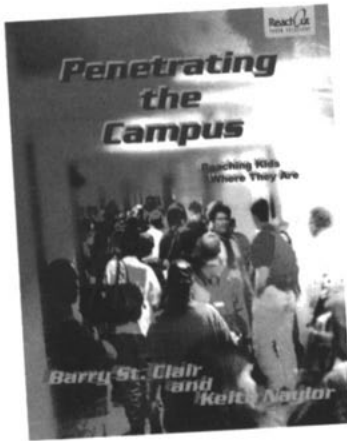
Ignite The Fire

Kindling a Passion for Christ in Your Kids –

Barry and Carol St. Clair have raised four children who are living proof of the message of this book. The circumstances that brought this book into existence are compelling – a couple who loved each other, parents who placed Jesus in the center of their home, children who responded to love and discipline, and their mother who died while the book was being written. Most parents ask the question: "What can I do to help my children turn out right?" In *Ignite the Fire*, Barry and Carol suggest a better question: "What can I do to help my children love Jesus more?" This book offers ten biblical actions that parents can take to help motivate our children to pursue Jesus.

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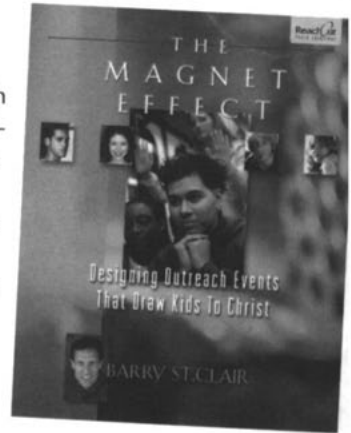


Penetrating the Campus

How To Reach Students Where They Are – Designed to teach youth leaders how to relate to young people on their turf, this book helps leaders understand non-believing students as they face the emotional, social and spiritual challenges of adolescence and of life on their middle school or high school campus. In *Penetrating the Campus*, Barry St. Clair and co-author Keith Naylor, a veteran youth leader, give youth pastors and leaders in-depth practical advice for communicating God's love to high school students. This book helps youth leaders bridge the gap between their church ministry and the public school campus — probably the most important mission field in America today.

The Magnet Effect

In *The Magnet Effect* book and video, Barry St. Clair teams with the Willow Creek Youth Ministry Team to challenge youth leaders to create events designed to draw non-believing students to Christ. *The Magnet Effect* book offers simple yet powerful strategies and tools that enable youth leaders to equip students to reach their friends. *The Magnet Effect* video illustrates an excellent outreach event. This set is an essential tool for youth ministries that want to reach students.



Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry

This Jesus-focused approach to youth ministry creates an environment of powerful prayer and then builds on 5 Core Principles within that environment. Church based and campus oriented this strategy answers these questions based on the principles that Jesus used in His ministry:

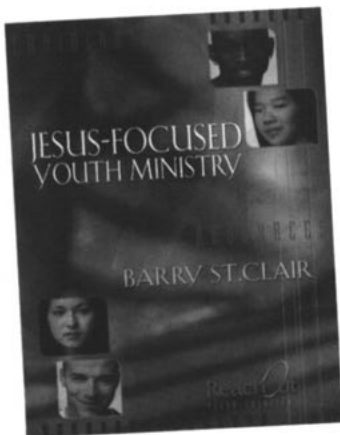
Going Deeper with Christ – How do you develop intimacy in your relationship to Jesus and reflect Him to others?

Building Leaders – How do you build quality leaders for a long-term ministry?

Discipling Students – How do you disciple students to have spiritual passion and become spiritual influencers with their friends?

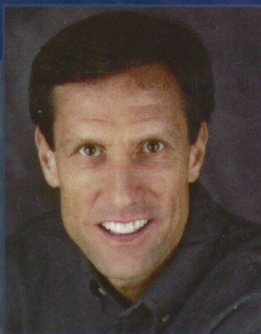
Penetrating the Culture – How do you motivate and mobilize your leaders and students to penetrate the student culture?

Creating Outreach Opportunities – How do you design outreach opportunities for students to reach their non-believing friends?



For these and other books and resources:

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Dr. Barry St. Clair's desire is to influence as many teenagers as possible to become followers of Jesus Christ. As the founder and president of Reach Out Youth Solutions, Barry lives on the leading edge of national and international youth ministry. He speaks to and trains thousands of students, parents and youth leaders each year in the United States and around the world. Barry, author of over 20 books, wrote *Ignite the Fire: Kindling a Passion for Christ in Your Kids* along with his late wife Carol. Barry has run the Boston Marathon and played on the number three basketball team in the nation. Barry and his wife Lawanna live in Atlanta and have a combined family of eight children.

Reach Out Youth Solutions was founded by Barry St. Clair in 1976 to equip leaders for Jesus-focused youth ministry through the church around the world. They provide training opportunities and cutting-edge resources for students, parents, volunteers and youth pastors. Reach Out Youth Solutions establishes youth ministry equipping centers all over the world in places like Eastern Europe, Russia, Mexico and Egypt. For information, write Reach Out Youth Solutions at: info@reach-out.org, visit our website at: www.reach-out.org or call us at: 1-800-473-9456.

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