



Jesus - focused
youth ministry

barry st. clair

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry

Copyright © 2010 by Reach Out Ministries, Inc. and Barry St. Clair

Produced by Reach Out Youth Solutions, www.reach-out.org

All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form without written permission from Reach Out Ministries, Inc.

First printing, 2002

Cover design and graphics: Mike Davis

Print production: Riverstone Group, LLC

Editor: Barbara L. Townsend

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from *The Holy Bible, New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked THE MESSAGE are taken from *THE MESSAGE*. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

Scripture quotations marked RSV are taken from *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version*. Copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Contents

Introduction	5
Session 1: See the Big Picture	9
Session 2: Go Deeper with Christ	19
Session 3: Pray with Passion	31
Session 4: Build Leaders	41
Session 5: Disciple Students	55
Session 6: Penetrate the Culture	67
Session 7: Create Outreach Opportunities	77
Putting It All Together	89
Most Asked Questions	101

Reach Out Youth Solutions

Reach Out Youth Solutions provides the equipping and cutting edge resources needed to create a Jesus-focused youth ministry for each younger generation audience in the church:

- Pastor • Youth pastor • Parents • Children's minister • Volunteers • Students

Our Vision

Jesus for the next generation!

Our Mission

To equip and multiply leaders globally who influence the younger generation to follow Jesus

Our Strategy

Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry offers a paradigm shift in ministry to the younger generation that leads you to . . .

- Go deeper in intimacy with Christ
- Pray with passion for God's presence and power
- Build leaders for in-depth and long-term ministry
- Disciple students to move toward maturity in Christ
- Penetrate the culture through relationships
- Design outreach opportunities to reach students for Christ

Our Scope

Globally Reach Out equips younger generation leaders in over thirty countries.

Nationally Reach Out provides training and resources to urban, suburban, and rural younger generation leaders in one church or with a network of churches.

For more about Reach Out Youth Solutions, go to www.reach-out.org.



Introduction

God has the younger generation on His heart!

And He has put them on your heart, too!

We know that reaching, equipping, and mobilizing the younger generation for Jesus Christ ranks as a very high priority for the church.

But how do we pursue that in a way that reflects Jesus' ministry as the model?

Through Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry!

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:11

The people brought children to Jesus, hoping he might touch them. The disciples shooed them off. But Jesus was irate and let them know it: "Don't push these children away. Don't ever get between them and me. These children are at the very center of life in the kingdom. Mark this: Unless you accept God's kingdom in the simplicity of a child, you'll never get in." Then, gathering the children up in his arms, he laid his hands of blessing on them.

Mark 10:13-16 (The Message)

How To Max Out

When you complete *Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry*, the hope is that your ministry will be totally unique. Our desire is not that all ministries with a Jesus-focused youth ministry look the same. In fact, our dream is quite the opposite. We hope your ministry has the unique touch of God on it so that it becomes like no other ministry anywhere. Why? Because it is God's unique expression through you and your church.

Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry gives you a "big picture" view of how Jesus did ministry and how you can apply what He did in your ministry. In essence, it is the skeleton to which you will add muscles. It is the house that you will decorate. Here you have the pegs on which you can hang your entire ministry.

If you have never used our resources or you are not familiar with this approach, consider this an introduction. You will find all you need to get started.

If you have used our materials or participated in any of our training opportunities, use this notebook for implementation. It will help you realign your priorities, affirm your work, and fine-tune your ministry.

If you take seriously the challenge to equip other youth leaders, consider this your transferable training tool.

How To Go Through This Training Personally

1. With your schedule planner, block out eight time slots of one hour each. You can schedule these once a week, once a day; or if you are into marathons, you might want to try to do this over the course of two or three days. Faithfully keep these appointments with yourself.
2. Engage with each session. During your scheduled time, turn off your phone. Eliminate distractions. Then prayerfully read each session from the Goal to the Plan of Action. Listen to what God is saying to you. Take notes. Journal your thoughts and prayers. Don't rush this process.
3. Download the free CDs at www.reach-out.org. Listen to them several times.

INTRODUCTION

4. Take the appropriate action steps using the Plan of Action. This material is not designed as a head exercise. Rather, it provides vision and tangible, measurable steps to pursue your vision.
5. Act immediately on the one or two priorities that you believe are most important.

How To Take Other Leaders Through This Training

As you interact with *Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry*, you will discover quickly that the essential foundation for your ministry will be the development of a Leadership Team. You can adapt this training easily to create vision and direction for your volunteers.

You can use this training on a retreat or in several stand-alone sessions to express your vision and to encourage your leaders to discover their own vision of ministry with the younger generation. To present this to your volunteers, parents, and student leaders, consider the following points.

1. Become very familiar with this material. Make notes and supplement this teaching with your own stories and illustrations.
2. Decide on the venue for training. If possible, plan to hold the meetings in your home or the home of one of the group members. Meeting in the informal atmosphere of a living room or around a dining room table creates a relaxed environment.
3. Set a time limit for each meeting. Plan for 1 to 1-1/2 hours each session: 15 minutes for praying, reviewing and/or sharing, 45 minutes for the presentation and discussion, then 15 minutes to pray for students.
4. Provide materials. Purchase copies of *Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry* for your team. Order copies of this notebook and other resources at www.reach-out.org.
5. Prepare thoroughly. Begin your preparation for leading the sessions well in advance.

JESUS FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

6. Start on time. Honor the commitment your leaders have made.
7. Keep discussions on track. State questions clearly and concisely. Respect each person's comments. Stay close to the Scriptures. Challenge trite or superficial answers. Ask questions. Make sure everyone participates.
8. Emphasize application. At the end of each session, leave plenty of time for your group to reflect on and write in the Plan of Action. Then give them the opportunity to discuss what they have written. Ask them to select one action they will take during the week. Assign them accountability partners to encourage each other between sessions.

To take the next steps to invest in your Leadership Team, order the Building Leaders Series 3-book set: *A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ*, *A Vision for Life and Ministry*, and *Essential Tools for Leading Students*. Go to www.reach-out.org.

My Prayer For You

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:17-19a



See the Big Picture

The Goal

to catch the vision for
Jesus-focused youth ministry

Session 1



See the Big Picture

Session 1

JESUS FOCUS

Looking through the Gospels, we can see that Jesus followed a dynamic pattern of ministry. He explained it after the Pharisees accused Him of healing on the Sabbath and after He made matters worse by making Himself equal with God.

I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

John 5:19

In intimate communion with His Father, Jesus got His instructions from His Father and followed them. That made what He did every day not only dynamic but also unique. One thing we can say for sure about our ministries: God wants them dynamic and unique, based on an intimate relationship with Him. The result of going through the Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry equipping process is not to create a ministry that looks the same as everyone else's ministry, but to build something unique and dynamic, driven by a passionate pursuit of Jesus. That comes from a heart that desires to see what the Father is doing and then doing it.

Jesus looked to the Father. And we look to Jesus. When we look, what do we see? We see a pattern that occurs over and over in what Jesus did. We discover principles by which Jesus operated that give us direction for how we are to operate our ministries. Never rigid or rote, never putting His Father in a box, Jesus, nonetheless, had a strategy. What did it look like?

Jesus obeyed His Father. The experience of Jesus agonizing in the garden of Gethsemane typifies His obedience to His Father. Jesus' experience challenges us to obey.

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

Jesus invested in His disciples. With only casual observation, we can see the investment Jesus made in the twelve disciples. Over three years, He took them through the most intensive leadership training ever devised. He led them to empty themselves of self and to be filled with His Spirit. He took them with Him to experience ministry and then supported them as they tried their hand at it. In doing so, He led them to preach the good news, heal the brokenhearted, and set the captives free. Ultimately, He empowered them to carry out the ministry they had seen in Him in their own unique way. As a result, He built a team of leaders who turned the world upside down.

Jesus' disciples, in turn, invested their lives in others. The dynamic multiplication effect of investing in the lives of others through discipleship was the heart of the ministry of Jesus and, thus, of the early church. People invested in people for the Kingdom of God. That propelled the church forward as a powerful force that changed the people around them and eventually changed the world. Investing in a small group of "Jesus followers" to disciple them to become "Jesus ministers" is still the best of all possible ministries. And, if done like Jesus did it, discipling others will not only change the people involved but, in time, will also change our world.

Changing their world with the good news of the Gospel became a life-dominating priority for the disciples in the early church because they saw how important it was to Jesus. He ripped down all the fences and created a level playing field by hanging out with the prostitutes, the lepers, the poor, lame, and blind. For us, like Jesus, discipling others always moves people toward maturity and from maturity into ministry outside the walls of the church.

For Jesus, that ministry drew a crowd. Teaching, healing, preaching, casting out demons, feeding five thousand with five loaves of bread and two fish—it really didn't matter what He did; Jesus was the focus of attention! It was not about the disciples or the method of making disciples. It was not about the amazing miracles, the profound teaching, or anything else. It was about Jesus! Who He was and what He came to do were the core. That is what we need in the church today—Jesus-focused youth ministry. Any other kind of ministry will leave us empty and unfulfilled—if, like Jesus, we desire to make a mark for eternity that will never be erased, then we will make Jesus the focus.

HARD QUESTIONS

To take an honest look at where we are does not come easy for most of us. But knowing where we are is the only way to get where we want to be. So ask yourself these hard questions to discover how Jesus-focused you are. Answer these on a scale of 1 to 10: 1 is the lowest, 10 is the highest.

1. How do you rate the amount of time and focused attention you give to pursue intimacy with Jesus?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. To what degree do you, your volunteers, parents, and students carve out a consistent time and place to pray with and for each other and for students who need Jesus?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. How committed are your adult volunteers to Jesus, to each other, and to a relational ministry to students?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. What percentage of the believers in your ministry are involved in an intensive, dedicated, ongoing discipleship group?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What percentage of your volunteers and students see themselves as an active influence for Jesus on the campus?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. What percentage of the total number of students at your last outreach opportunity were non-believers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Answering these questions honestly will cause you to take a serious look at your youth ministry. Hopefully, the result will be that these questions will make you hungry for change. In each session to follow, you will have the opportunity to reflect on more questions that relate to that particular session.

YOUTH MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

How do we catch the vision for Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry?

Discover the Vision

Look at Matthew 9:35-38. In this passage, we find clues that lead us to discover the vision for Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry.

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Matthew 9:35-38

What clues do you see about how Jesus dealt with people in verses 35-36?

What clues did Jesus give to His disciples about His vision when He instructed them in verses 37-38?

A quick study or in-depth research of the four Gospels leads to simple essentials that we see lived out in the life of Christ. Read Mark 1-4, or read the four Gospels. All roads lead to the same, simple approach on which Jesus operated His life and ministry. And every page has a Jesus focus!

Describe the Younger Generation

How did Jesus describe the “crowd” around Him in Matthew 9:37?

How would you define these words in light of today’s youth culture?

Harassed

Helpless

Sheep without a shepherd

Research shows that Jesus accurately portrayed the younger generation today with His description.

EVERY 24 HOURS . . .

17,297 students get suspended from school

367 students are arrested for drug abuse

7,883 students are reported abused or neglected

180 students are arrested for violent crimes

4,248 students get arrested

9 students are victims of homicide

2,861 students drop out of school

5 students commit suicide

1,329 babies are born to teen moms

1 student dies of HIV infection

*Based on calculations per school day (180 days of seven hours each) © Children’s Defense Fund

Put a Name with the Numbers

Find the word Jesus used in Matthew 9:36 to describe how He felt about the people around Him.

Write the name of one young person you know who fits Jesus' description.

Describe that person by lifestyle, attitudes, habits, choices, and activities.

Do you feel toward that student like Jesus felt toward the people around Him?

Write your prayer for that teenager.

Apply each of the elements you learn in *Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry* to reaching that teenager—and others like him or her—for Christ.

See How You Make a Difference

Take a closer look at Matthew 9:38. Speaking to His disciples, Jesus clearly sets forth the strategy to make a difference in the lives of people who are “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Note the simplicity of His approach.

Jesus: “Ask the Lord of the harvest . . . to send out workers . . . into his harvest field.”

ACTION:	PRAY to pursue Jesus	EQUIP to multiply leaders	EVANGELIZE to reach people
STRATEGY:	Go Deeper with Christ Pray with Passion	Build Leaders Disciple Students	Penetrate the Culture Create Outreach Opportunities

Visualize the Big Picture



Once we see the big picture, we can realistically visualize not only how to build a church ministry but also how it is possible to pursue the goal of reaching every student in every school with a life-changing relationship with Jesus.

Reflect on the Big Picture

This Jesus-focused strategy from Matthew 9:35-38 builds on six essential elements that Jesus demonstrates consistently throughout the four Gospels. Reflect on how these elements can become more deeply ingrained into your life and ministry.

Go Deeper with Christ

How do you deepen your relationship to Jesus? *Pursue an intimate and a passionate relationship with Jesus, and then live out that relationship by obeying Christ, thus reflecting His character to those around you (Mark 1:7-8).*

Pray with Passion

How do you pray God's presence and power into your ministry? *Create a specific prayer strategy that involves you, your volunteers, parents, and students (Matthew 18:18-20).*

Build Leaders

How do you build quality leaders for an in-depth and long-term ministry? *Equip adults who have the heart and skills to reach and disciple students (Mark 1:16-20).*

Disciple Students

How do you disciple students to develop spiritual passion and become spiritual influencers with their friends? *Challenge students to move toward maturity in their relationship to Jesus through small group discipling relationships (Mark 3:13-15).*

Penetrate the Culture

How do you motivate and mobilize your leaders, parents, and students to penetrate the student culture? *Go where students are by spending time in their world and equip them to reach their friends in their culture (Mark 1:40-42).*

Create Outreach Opportunities

How do you design outreach opportunities for students to reach their friends? *Create culturally-relevant experiences for students to bring their non-believing friends to discover Jesus (Mark 4:1-2).*

PRACTICAL STEPS

Seeing the big picture of a Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry means you have grasped the overall concept.

Take these practical steps to capture the big picture for your own vision.

- Memorize Matthew 9:35-38. Say it over and over until you have it etched into your mind and heart.
- Place a picture of the student whose name you wrote as “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” in this notebook to remind you of your target audience.
- Fill in the chart on the following page to assess which current activities in your ministry contribute to the Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry elements and which ones do not. Begin by making a list of your activities down the page. Then put a check mark in the corresponding element column or “DOES NOT FIT” column.

Sessions 2-7 will consider each Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry element in greater depth and will guide you to see Jesus’ vision for your ministry more clearly.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES ASSESSMENT

Current Activities or Ministries	PRAY		EQUIP		EVANGELIZE		DOES NOT FIT	
	Go Deeper with Christ	Pray with Passion	Build Leaders	Disciple Students	Penetrate the Culture	Create Outreach Opportunities		



Go Deeper with Christ

The Goal

to pursue an intimate
relationship with Jesus

Session 2

Go Deeper with Christ

Session 2

JESUS FOCUS

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit call us to go deeper!

God the Father. “In the beginning, God...,” the Bible begins. Before time, **God was!** When time began, He created everything—“the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Since creation, **God is,** now, in the present, the Ruler over His creation. The Psalmist expressed it this way: “The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all” (Psalm 103:19). That theme is repeated throughout the Bible. For example, Paul writes in Ephesians 4:6 that He is “one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Furthermore, the Bible indicates that **God will be.** In the future, He will continue to reign. The apostle John wrote about Him, “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 5:13). God rules and reigns over His creation and His creatures.

God the Son. God the Father placed all of His authority in Jesus. “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me,” Jesus stated (Matthew 28:18). The apostle Paul repeatedly expressed Jesus’ ultimate authority. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul describes that authoritative power.

That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church. . . .

Ephesians 1:19-22

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

Explaining who Jesus is, the writer of Hebrews describes the Son in Hebrews 1:3 as:

- Heir—His Father appointed Jesus “heir over all things.”
- Creator—Jesus, with God and the Holy Spirit, “made the universe.”
- Reflector—Jesus expresses to us “the radiance of God’s glory.” Jesus is the mirror image of God: “the exact representation of his being.”
- Sustainer—Every second, every system of the universe Jesus holds together “by his powerful word.”
- Purifier—By submitting Himself to death on the cross, Jesus provided “purification for sins.”
- Ruler—After the Resurrection, Jesus “sat down at the right hand of Majesty in heaven” where He rules and reigns.

Without a doubt, Jesus is Lord! And one day “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10-11).

God the Holy Spirit. The Son, then, ushered in the Holy Spirit to live in us, so that we might understand who God is, what Jesus has done for us, and how to live in the power of the Spirit. The apostle Paul tells us: “Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba [Daddy] Father’” (Galatians 4:6). And because we are sons, we are no longer slaves to sin. Instead “God has made you also an heir” (Galatians 4:7).

Because the Holy Spirit lives in us, He abundantly provides the **passion** to pursue Jesus, the **power** to live the way He wants us to live, and the **promise** of all He has for us in eternity. Since that is true, the apostle Paul challenges us, “So I say, live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. . . . Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, 25).

We can conclude that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit reign over the entire universe; and that includes reigning over us. Because we are sons and daughters of God, having entered into an intimate relationship with Him, we choose to live under God’s rule and reign—the lordship of Christ. In our everyday decisions, we acknowledge “You are God and I am not!” We desire to submit our thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and actions to Christ.

SESSION 2 - GO DEEPER WITH CHRIST

By God's Grace. Jesus' lordship in our lives means that He is pursuing an intimate, personal relationship with us. To find our proper place in that relationship and to live intimately with Christ, we must choose to do what He wants us to do. When we give our hopes, dreams, desires, and decisions over to Him on a daily basis, then we can live in His presence moment by moment, enjoying Him!

The apostle Paul offers a crystal-clear picture of what living under Jesus' lordship is like. Paul had a "thorn in the flesh." We all have those. Perhaps this refers to things like physical weakness, a disappointing relationship, the loss of a loved one, or a sinful habit. We can fill in the blank. God used Paul's "thorn" to create continual brokenness in him. And God wants us to experience brokenness too. Only in our brokenness, will we submit to Jesus' lordship. Paul pleaded with the Lord to take the thorn away. But He did not! Instead God said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

We do not live the Christian life in our own strength. Rather we live it by God's grace—His supernatural ability in us through His Cross and Resurrection. In our brokenness, we learn to live by God's grace. In that grace, He releases His power in us. Then, like Paul, we can say,

Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

In our brokenness, we experience the presence and power of Christ.

O God, I have tasted Your goodness and it has both satisfied me and made me thirsty for more. I am painfully conscious of my need of further grace. I am ashamed of my lack of desire. O God, the Triune God, I want to want You; I long to be filled with longing; I thirst to be made more thirsty still.

A.W. Tozer

Invitation to Intimacy. God, who rules and reigns over the universe, deeply loves us and joyfully delights in us. Even now, He is passionately pursuing us. In Christ, He has paved the way for us to pursue Him. He has provided everything we need to know Him and to love Him. He calls each of us to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). Daily, He invites us to enter into that intimate relationship with Him and, under Jesus’ lordship, to passionately pursue Him. As we go through each day with the desire to go deeper with Him, then we will personally know Jesus as Lord!

Prayer of Abandonment

*Father, I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.*

Whatever you may do, I thank you.

I am ready for all,

I accept all.

*Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands,
without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.
Amen!*

Charles de Foucauld

HARD QUESTIONS

Answer these questions, rating yourself on a scale of 1-10. As a result of your answers, write a brief paragraph describing the honest, specific decisions you need to make about your intimacy with Jesus.

1. How would you rate your passion for God?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How would you rate God's passion for you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. To what degree do you honestly think God loves you—even with all He knows about you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. How pure are your mind, heart, life, and relationships?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. How holy are you from God's viewpoint?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. At what level would you rate the intimacy you and God have together?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My honest, specific decisions about Jesus' lordship in my life:

YOUTH MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

How do we pursue an intimate relationship with Jesus that leads to deeper love for Him?

The Goal: Love

Read 1 Timothy 1:5 three times. Take notes and define the words below. Add an insight from the verse each time you read it. This verse contains the deeply personal elements we need to create a path of intimacy to Jesus.

The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

1 Timothy 1:5

Love comes from . . .

- A pure heart

- A good conscience

- A sincere faith

Toward Intimacy with Jesus

Challenge yourself with these questions and reflect on the Scriptures to clear the path to intimacy with Jesus.

Pure Heart

1. Do I have impure thoughts toward the opposite sex? (2 Timothy 2:22)
2. Do I gripe, complain, or have a critical attitude? (Philippians 2:14-15)

Good Conscience

3. Do I respect and honor my parents and family? (Ephesians 6:1-4)
4. Is bitterness or resentment keeping me from forgiving another person? (Matthew 6:14-15)
5. Have I treated another person wrongly? (Matthew 5:23-24)

Sincere Faith

6. Do I lie, steal, or cheat? (Colossians 3:9)
7. Is there any area of my life where Jesus is not first? (Matthew 6:33)

PRACTICAL STEPS

- Today, take fifteen minutes to reflect on and write down all the ways God delights in you.
- From the previous page, take the issue you struggle with the most and write out your steps of obedience. Obedience in that issue will take you deeper in your relationship with Christ.
- Once you act on one issue, then go to another, asking God what steps of obedience He wants you to take. Repeat this process until you have taken each step of obedience on each issue.
- In the “Most Asked Questions” section, read the five questions and answers on “Go Deeper with Christ.” You will discover how to receive and give forgiveness, how to change wrong behavior, how to deal with life’s dominating problems, and how to get to know Jesus better.
- Continue to spend time alone with God daily. Over time, that habit will deepen your intimacy with Jesus.

The golden rule for spiritual understanding is not intellect but obedience. Behind the deed of obedience is the reality of the Almighty God.

Oswald Chambers

GO DEEPER WITH CHRIST TOOLS

Jesus No Equal



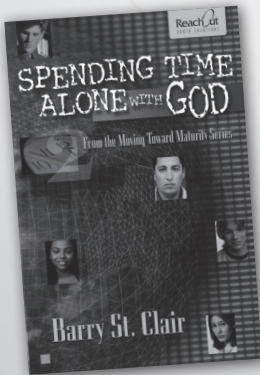
Barry St. Clair takes you into a passionate encounter with the Son of God. You will get to know Jesus for who He really is.

In *Jesus No Equal*, you will take the ultimate “road trip.” You will enjoy becoming a better friend with Jesus.

In the *Jesus No Equal Journal*, the road trip continues for 40 days as you travel through Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming.

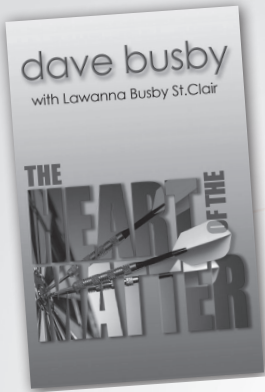
What you think of Jesus will be challenged, and who you are will be changed!

Spending Time Alone With God



How can you deepen your relationship with Jesus? Time! Just like all other relationships, you get to know Jesus intimately when you spend time with Him. Jesus wants to draw near to you as you draw near to Him! This book will help you spend time alone with God every day as you:

- Study the Bible
- Memorize Scripture
- Enjoy prayer
- Celebrate praise
- Give thanks
- Confess your sins
- Pray for yourself
- Pray for other people



The Heart of the Matter

Dave Busby's lifelong quest to follow God jumps off each page of this book. Written by Dave four years before his death, this book sold over 50,000 copies. Now updated by his wife Lawanna, each chapter is preceded by excerpts from Dave's never-before-published personal journals. Questions and discussion ideas for further study follow each chapter, making it ideal for Bible studies with all ages.

Dave Busby was a mystery. In the midst of physical weakness from cystic fibrosis, polio, diabetes, heart disease, and liver disease came a spiritual strength that was living proof of 2 Corinthians 12:10: "For when I am weak, then I am strong." To say that Jesus was Dave's only hope was not a cliché but a daily, present reality. Don't be surprised if you are deeply affected by the presence of God through him as you explore the very heart of the matter.

Order these resources at www.reach-out.org.

Other Recommended Reading:

- *Abba's Child* by Brennan Manning
- *Truefaced* by Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and John Lynch
- *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* by Peter Scazzero
- *The Sacred Romance* by Brent Curtis and John Eldredge

PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to go deeper with Christ?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you to go deeper with Christ?

What goals will you set to go deeper with Christ?

Who will hold you accountable for going deeper with Christ?

Where will you meet with Christ to go deeper with Him?

When will you carve out time to go deeper with Christ?



Pray with Passion

The Goal

to create an environment of
passionate praying

Session 3



Pray with Passion

Session 3

JESUS FOCUS

My son had a t-shirt with this statement written on it: “In Jesus I’m Satan’s Personal Nightmare.” Praying with passion means coming near to Jesus and then watching Him push back Satan’s kingdom of darkness and replacing it with Jesus’ Kingdom of Light. When we do not pursue prayer passionately, Satan is our personal nightmare. The kingdom of darkness has too many kids in its grip. And passionate prayer is the only weapon to release the power of God to pull people out of the pit and put their feet on the Rock, to bring them out of the kingdom of darkness and into the Kingdom of Light. Then they become Satan’s personal nightmare!

The writer of Hebrews created a picture that shows us why passionate prayer must become our first line of defense for our personal lives, for our students, and for thousands of teenagers around us who need Jesus.

Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 7:25 (RSV)

Jesus is able! Not grasping that fact is the essence of our lack of passionate prayer. The writer of Hebrews had already grasped it. Returning to Hebrews 1:2-3, we discover that Jesus is able because:

- He is the “heir over all things.” From His Father, He inherited enough to possess more than Bill Gates—with plenty left over!
- He is the one “through whom He (God) made the universe.” Since it takes 100,000 light years to travel from one side of the Milky Way to the other and one light year is 5.88 trillion miles and the Milky Way is only one galaxy among many, Jesus is quite a capable Creator.
- He “reflects the glory of God.” Looking at Jesus is like looking at a snapshot of God. All of who God is, Jesus is.

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

- He “upholds all things by His word of power.” With only a word, millions of living organisms—from viruses to elephants—and the trillions of systems—from galaxies to ecosystems—are sustained.
- He made “purification for sins.” Through the shedding of His blood, He opened the path for our purity—a relationship with Him and forgiveness for our sins.
- He reigns as He “sits at the right hand of Majesty on high.” After the Cross and Resurrection, Jesus now sits enthroned at God’s right hand ruling over the entire universe.

Jesus’ ability is astounding. No question: He can “save completely”! He puts that ability into action on behalf of those “who draw near to God through him” (Hebrews 7:25).

Prayer is the communication tool God has provided for us to “draw near” to Him.

We can draw near. Because “we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God...who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin,” then we can enter into God’s presence freely. We can draw near to God confidently and passionately (Hebrews 4:14-16).

And as we draw near to God, praying with passion, we know that “he always lives to make intercession for us” (Hebrews 7:25). As we communicate with Jesus, He communicates with us from His position at the right hand of the Father. The apostle John described an amazing picture of what our prayers look like to God.

The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel’s hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

Revelation 8:4-5

Instead of just saying the blessing before meals, asking God to bless our meeting after we have presented Him with our plans, or saying a traditional opening or closing prayer, God invites us to “draw near to Him.” When we draw near to Him, we discover—at His throne of grace—direction, insight, perspective, power, encouragement, and confidence or whatever else we need. It all comes from praying with passion!

HARD QUESTIONS

Answer these questions, rating yourself on a scale of 1 to 10. As a result of your answers, write a brief paragraph describing honest, specific decisions you need to make about praying with passion.

1. How much do you love to pray?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. To what degree do you discipline yourself to spend time alone with God daily?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. How often do you meet with other youth leaders to pray for your students?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. How often do you meet with other youth leaders to pray at/for the local school campus?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What percentage of your students spend time alone with God daily?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. What percentage of your students participate in small group prayer weekly?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My honest, specific decisions about praying with passion:

YOUTH MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

How do we increase our passion for prayer
and create an environment for others
to pray with passion?

Do You Love to Pray?

Do you love to pray? Or is it just a function, an obligation, a way to get what you want from God?

Love to pray. Feel often during the day the need for prayer, and take trouble to pray. Prayer enlarges the heart until it is capable of containing God's gift of himself. Ask and seek, and your heart will grow big enough to receive him and keep him as your own.

Mother Teresa

Jesus loved to pray!

If we see Jesus' life as a play, He is the star, all others are the supporting cast, and prayer is the backdrop. Reflectively read all of the verses below to see how the "prayer drama" unfolds.

He began in prayer. (Luke 3:21-22)

He continued in prayer. (John 5:19)

- He prayed daily. (Mark 1:35)
- He prayed before big decisions and events.

Luke 6:12-13 . . . Calling His disciples Matt. 14:22-23 . . . Walking on the water

Luke 9:16 . . . Feeding 5,000 John 11:41-42 . . . Raising Lazarus

Matt. 15:36 . . . Feeding 4,000 Matt. 26:26-29 . . . The Last Supper

SESSION 3 - PRAY WITH PASSION

- He operated His entire life and ministry in prayer. (Luke 5:16)

He ended in prayer. (Luke 22:39-44, Luke 23:46)

He keeps on praying. (Hebrews 7:25)

The Lord Jesus is still praying. 30 years of living, 30 years of serving, one tremendous act of dying. 2,000 years of prayer. What an emphasis on prayer.

S.D. Gordon

Jesus had a passion to communicate with His Father. He wants us to have that same love for communication with our Heavenly Father.

Do You Experience God's Power?

No power in our best effort

Consider your desire to achieve, perform, and "make it happen" in light of the following words:

"Prayer is not only our highest privilege and our most cherished joy...but it is also our most effective weapon whereby we may achieve. All else leaves us floundering in the muck and the chaos of self-effort, which has never been anything but a blind alley. All else leaves us as frail bark on life's stormy seas without a helm, without a compass, without a pilot. If we build without direction from the Most High, who orders all according to an eternal plan, our labors, however brilliant, must finally come to naught." (F. J. Huegel, "Prayer: Our Highest Privilege," *Decision*, June, 1996.)

Plenty of power in God's smallest effort

The "power/effort ratio" is not hard to grasp. God says through Jeremiah:

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.

Jeremiah 33:3

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

When we **pray** (“Call to me”), God gives us a **promise** (“I will answer you”) that He will release His **power** on our behalf (“and tell [show] you great and unsearchable things you do not know”).

Charles Spurgeon, well-known 19th-century pastor, often gave a tour of his church prior to their services. He liked to take people down to the basement. “Here, I want you to see the power plant of the church,” he said. When Spurgeon flung open the door, a roomful of men and women on their knees were praying passionately.

Can you imagine your youth ministry team as that room full of people?

How Do You Pursue Praying with Passion?

Through daily time alone with God

Spending time alone with God daily deepens our love for God and our intimacy with God. From Abraham to Moses to the apostle Paul . . . to each of us, time alone with God is the most important single discipline of the Christian life. God wants us to get in on it!

No Bible. No breakfast.

Through praying with others

All of God’s resources in heaven are freely offered by Him to us here on earth. Our prayers determine whether they get released or not. That is power!

I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Matthew 18:18-20

SESSION 3 - PRAY WITH PASSION

Power is released as we pray with “two or three.”

How can we engage in prayer with two or three others as Jesus encourages us to do?

Try to figure out the “sentence” below and the practical dynamics of Jesus’ words: “For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.”

*meet **3** Christians
times a week to pray for
non-Christian friends*

We can engage with two or three others—like Jesus encourages us to do—in a Prayer Triplet. In the Practical Steps, you will set up your Prayer Triplet strategy.

*Prayer releases Jesus’ power
through you to change people!*

PRACTICAL STEPS

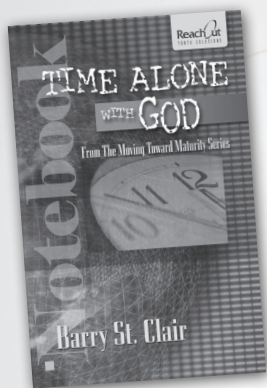
- Memorize John 5:19.
- Commit yourself to spend at least twenty minutes alone with God each day until it becomes a habit. Use the *Time Alone with God Notebook* from the Moving Toward Maturity Series as a guide.
- Invite two other youth leaders—even from other churches and denominations—to pray in a Prayer Triplet with you. Using the following chart, choose 3 names, including yours; 3 meeting times; and 3 non-believing students for whom you will pray.

Prayer Triplet	3	<i>Christians</i>				
		1 _____	2 _____	3 _____		
		<i>times a week to pray for</i>				
		S	M	T	W	T
		<i>non-Christian friends</i>				
		1 _____	2 _____	3 _____		

- Mobilize your students to pray passionately by teaching them to spend time alone with God. Use *Spending Time Alone with God* and the *Time Alone with God Notebook* from the Moving Toward Maturity Series as a guide.
- Mobilize your students to pray passionately by equipping them to pray in Prayer Triplets. Use the prayer triplet strategy outlined here and detailed in *An Awesome Way to Pray*.

PRAY WITH PASSION TOOLS

Time Alone With God Notebook



What do you do when you spend time alone with God? Talk and listen! You talk to God and let Him talk to you. If you struggle with waking up, being bored, or knowing what to do, this notebook is for you. It will:

- motivate you to get up in the morning and meet with God.
- give you practical tools to guide you in your time with God.
- make the Bible come alive through your own insights into it.
- get you in touch with God through a simple prayer plan.

An Awesome Way to Pray

Students will be energized to live the life, love their friends, and tell their story—through prayer. This eight-week emphasis will change their lives, change their campuses, and change your student ministry—through prayer. The 80-page *Student Journal* is free and downloadable. The *Leaders Guide* offers eight complete group sessions with reproducible handouts, suggestions, and activities.



Order these resources at www.reach-out.org.

PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to pray with passion?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you and others in your ministry to pray with passion?

What goals will you set for yourself and others in your ministry to pray with passion?

Who will join you in your Prayer Triplet, and who in your ministry will begin other Prayer Triplets?

Where will your Prayer Triplet meet to pray?

When will your Prayer Triplet meet?



Build Leaders

The Goal

to build quality leaders for
in-depth and long-term ministry

The logo features the text "Build Leaders" in a large, bold, red sans-serif font, with "Session 4" in a smaller, red sans-serif font centered below it. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of several concentric, overlapping red lines of varying thickness and length, creating a sense of motion or a stylized globe.

Build Leaders

Session 4

JESUS FOCUS

The easy route in leadership is to use whoever stumbles across the path. Take anyone who looks like he or she might have leadership qualities and place that person in a leadership position. This approach spells disaster. How different from Jesus' leadership style!

When we look at the people Jesus selected as His twelve disciples, on the surface it looks like a bizarre and ragtag bunch without much possibility of success. Jesus must have seen something that the average person did not observe. Otherwise, who would have selected a tax collector who worked for Rome (Matthew) and a zealot (Simon) whose life mission was to destroy Rome? Imagine the conflict created by those two relationships! Then what about Thomas—the doubter? Or the big-mouthed, impetuous Peter? Then there was the betrayer, Judas. Historical evidence indicates that most of them were teenagers. What church today would allow them into the inner circle of leadership? What was Jesus thinking?

We can't say for sure. But one thing is clear. When He had completed His three years of leadership training with this less-than-the-best bunch, they "turned the world upside down." What can we learn from Jesus that will encourage us to build leaders who will do the same?

Broken pieces. When Jesus looked into the hearts of these twelve people He was about to call, He saw pride, arrogance, and personal strength. Yet, at the end of three years, they were broken men, looking at the shattered dreams of their lives and wondering, "Now that this is over, what's next?" They hid in the Upper Room for fear of their lives—totally aware of their own inability to do anything to change their circumstances. Jesus took them to the end of themselves in order for them to see that leadership is "...not by might nor by

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty" (Zechariah 4:6). Only then did Jesus say, "...you will receive power..." (Acts 1:8). Leadership will develop in us as we embrace the Cross, letting Jesus break us and then shape us into people who reflect Him. Our leaders will grow as they, too, embrace the Cross; experience brokenness; and allow God to shape them. In a Leadership Team, permission is given for that breaking and shaping to take place.

Spending the night. Jesus did not take the decision of picking His twelve disciples lightly. Luke tells us, "...Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God" (Luke 6:12). That was just before He chose the twelve the next day. Someone has said, "The best time to fire someone is before you hire him." Putting that quote into this context, "The best way to avoid the wrong leaders is to not pick them in the first place." But the only way to know whether or not they are the right leaders is to bring the decision to God; and in concentrated prayer, let Him select them. The Leadership Team will succeed in direct proportion to seeking God for the right people and then continuing to pursue Him to know what to do with them.

Casting the vision. Jesus chose the twelve. But in a sense they chose Him. He said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). Notice that He did that individually and in twos, not to the entire group at once. He challenged them face-to-face. At that point, individually, they had to make a choice about Him. His challenge to them contained His vision for them. First and foremost, He wanted His disciples to "follow Him." That summarizes the heart of spiritual leadership. It is not getting people to fill positions, so we can use them in the youth ministry. Rather, it is about encouraging, building, and nurturing people in their relationship with Christ. That will give them what it takes to properly lead students. Secondly, Jesus promised His disciples that they would become "fishers of men." He did not call them to be "keepers of the aquarium." Jesus' face-to-face leadership challenge to His disciples was not to build the organization or to increase the numbers but to change the world! The vision was simple and clear. We can challenge our Leadership Team to the same vision.

Relationships rule. Jesus knew the value of relationships. After all, He had spent eternity with His Father and with the Spirit in perfect relationship. (That's the perfect small group!) So He called these twelve men to experience with Him what He had experienced with the Father and the Spirit. Over the next three years, His primary focus was on these people. Did He have other relationships? Sure. Did He speak to large groups? We know He did. But at the end of every day, His pri-

SESSION 4 - BUILD LEADERS

mary concern, after His relationship with the Father, was with the Twelve. Youth leaders love kids. And our ability to relate to them is one of the primary reasons we work with them. But how many quality relationships can we have? Certainly no more than twelve. If we look at Jesus' ministry and want to model ours after His and if we believe that young people are changed through relationships, then we must raise up a team of leaders like Jesus did. From there, we will multiply our ministry through the adult leaders we equip and empower.

Balancing act. Jesus chose the people He did, not because they were the same, but because they were different. Their differences in personality caused sparks to fly. But Jesus liked it that way. He chose them, too, for their different spiritual gifts. Jesus allowed their personalities and gifts to create a healthy tension in the group. He also knew that these people had the right mix of spiritual gifts to give balance to the new, young church that would burst on the scene after His ascension. For example, Peter was an apostle ("on this rock I will build my church"); and Philip was an evangelist. No youth leader has all the gifts. Many leaders are needed to give balance to the youth ministry. Only when those gifts emerge will our leadership find balance. With that balance will come the spiritual power to do the ministry of Jesus.

Investing the time. Once Jesus chose His disciples, He began to spend more and more time with them. If we chart a three-year line graph of the time Jesus spent with His disciples versus the amount of time He spent with the masses, the disciples' line goes up and the masses' line goes down. He began by spending most of His time with the masses. But as time went on, He spent more time with His disciples. By the end of His earthly ministry, He spent almost all of His time with His disciples. Large-group events and activities drive most youth ministries. To develop leaders like Jesus developed them, that must change. We must invest more and more time in building leaders who will invest in students. That is the only way the ministry will develop in depth and in growth.

Multiplying growth. When Jesus invested in His disciples, He had the Great Commission in mind.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 28:18-20

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

That is Matthew's version. All four Gospels record it—as well as the Book of Acts. You can find it in the other Gospels—in Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:47-49, John 20:21-22, and in Acts 1:8. Under the authority of Jesus, as they went, Jesus' disciples were to make disciples. Those disciples were to make other disciples. And on it goes until the church has made "disciples of all nations."

With all of the money, technology, literature, and TV preachers available, we should have finished that task by now. But, clearly, we have not. Why not? Because we have lost sight of Jesus' command to build leaders by making disciples. We have been adding church members instead of multiplying disciples. The chart helps us see the dramatic difference between these two approaches.

YEAR	MEMBERS Members add	DISCIPLES Disciples multiply
1st	1	1
2nd	2	2
3rd	4	6
4th	8	18
5th	16	54
6th	32	162
7th	64	1,458
21st	1,048,576	7,016,615,523

In the "Members" column, note that if one member adds one person per year, then there would be 1,048,576 new members in 21 years.

On the other hand, the "Disciples" column shows us what would happen if one person discipled one other person for a year; then those two would disciple two others the next year; then those six would each disciple two others the following year; and so on. By the process of multiplication, the number of disciples could reach over 7 billion people in 21 years—more than the entire world's population of 6.8 billion. All initiated by one Jesus follower!

What would happen if *you* multiplied four to twelve disciples like that through *your* Leadership Team?

Jesus knew that the very best way to fulfill the Great Commandment ("love God") and the Great Commission ("make disciples of all nations") was to build leaders. And, amazingly, He gives us the privilege to do the same.

HARD QUESTIONS

Answer these questions, rating yourself on a scale of 1-10. As a result of your answers, write a brief paragraph describing your personal and ministry leadership needs.

1. What level of influence do you have with your volunteers, parents, and students?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. To what level are your volunteers willing to be trained?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. To what level are you willing to train your volunteers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Overall, what measure of spiritual intensity do your volunteers possess?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What depth of relationships do your volunteers have with each other?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. What level of involvement in relationships with kids do your volunteers enjoy?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My personal and ministry leadership needs:

YOUTH MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

How do you build quality leaders for an in-depth and long-term ministry?

The Purpose of the Leadership Team

In John 17:20-26, Jesus prays these requests to His Father for His disciples. Match the phrases Jesus uses in those verses to the three phrases below.

- Commitment to Christ
- Commitment to one another
- Commitment to minister to the world

From what Jesus said above, how would you state the purpose of your Leadership Team?

Leadership is influence!

A leader:

- *knows where to go*
 - *has people who follow*
-

The Progression of the Leadership Team

Looking at the entire three-year span of Jesus' ministry, we find that Jesus progressively developed His disciples by taking them through four stages, often interweaving and overlapping the stages. Yet all of the stages had one amazing element in common. Explore each of the verses in this section and the next one to see if you can discover it.

Jesus' four stages of leadership development:

1. I do it. (Luke 4:31-37 and 38-44)

2. I do it and they are with me. (Luke 5:1-11)

3. They do it and I am with them. (Luke 10:1-17)

4. They do it and I am in the background to encourage. (Luke 24:44-49 and all of Acts)

The Power of “It”

Looking at the word “it” on the previous page, search for and identify “it” as we track the prophesied Jesus, the flesh-and-blood Jesus, Jesus the discipler, and Jesus the Spirit-giver in the following passages.

What is “it”? Circle what you think “it” is when you find “it.”

The Messiah would come to do “it” (Isaiah 61:1-3)

*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 from darkness 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.*

Jesus came as the Messiah and did “it” (Luke 4:18-19)

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.*

The disciples did “it” (Mark 6:12-13)

They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

Now we get to do “it” (John 14:12)

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

What is “it”?

Jesus said we “will do what I have been doing.” What had Jesus been doing?

“It” is the ministry of Jesus that:

- preaches the good news
- heals the sick and broken-hearted
- releases those oppressed by the devil

After knowing Jesus, the greatest privilege youth leaders have is bringing the ministry of Jesus to hungry, hurting, and desperate kids.

PRACTICAL STEPS

Imagine a Leadership Team growing in intimacy with Jesus, praying together, and investing their lives in students. Go one step beyond that. Imagine that Leadership Team equipped to do “it.” They can proclaim the Good News, bind up broken hearts, and set the captives free. Wow! That vision can become a reality as you implement these practical steps to make it so.

1. Pray

Spend concentrated time praying about who God is calling to participate in your Leadership Team.

2. Lead

Many tasks can be delegated, but leading the Leadership Team is not one of them. At the beginning, the primary youth leader **must** lead the Leadership Team. Once leaders are equipped, then not only can they equip and multiply other Leadership Teams but also equip and multiply student disciples for leadership.

3. Select

You can select your Leadership Team from a wide range of people: present youth workers, parents of teenagers, college students, and others who love students and sense God’s call to work with them. Give each one a personal challenge to the Leadership Team.

4. Commit

When you give the personal challenge, express your compelling vision for the youth ministry in writing. Define and explain the commitment to the Leadership Team. They need to know what to expect from the beginning. (See page 4 of *A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ*.)

5. Prepare

Take your Leadership Team through the Building Leaders’ Series, beginning with *A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ*. Order a copy for each person. Go through each session yourself before each meeting. Then prayerfully prepare your meeting by reading the “Discussion Guide” section found in each of the books in the Building Leaders Series. Your personal preparation will make all the difference!

6. Meet

Find a time to meet that is most beneficial for the majority of people. If possible, meet at someone's home. Meet consistently for 1 to 1-1/2 hours. Spend 15 minutes in prayer, 45 minutes in discussion, and 15 minutes talking about youth ministry matters.

7. Invest

Investing yourself in the lives of these people week after week will allow them to discover Jesus, the gifts He has given them, and how to invest those gifts in the lives of students.

8. Evaluate

After each group meeting, evaluate what you did and how you can improve. Solve problems and make adjustments.

BUILD LEADERS TOOLS—FOR VOLUNTEERS

Building Leaders Series

The **Building Leaders Series** offers a biblical, practical plan to equip volunteer leaders. They will find the motivation, vision, and skills to build relationships with and disciple believing students—as well as communicate Christ to non-believing students. This easy-to-use, interactive, 3-book set includes 12 sessions per book and easily adapts to your church's calendar.

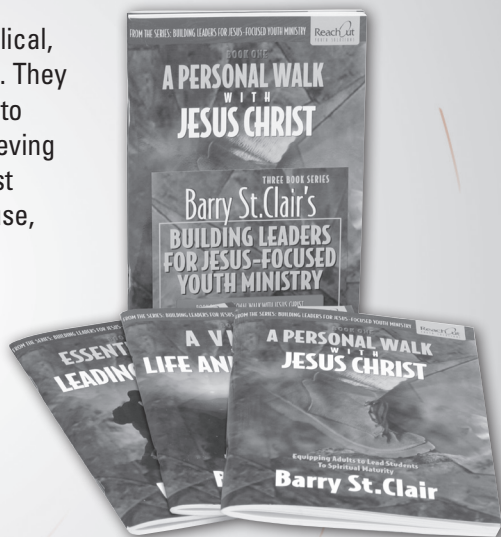
A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ (Book 1) guides leaders to grow in intimacy with Jesus.

A Vision for Life and Ministry (Book 2) expands your leaders' vision for their life and ministry.

Essential Tools for Leading Students (Book 3) provides your leaders with the needed skills to effectively influence students.

Building Leaders Series (3-Book Set) includes *A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ* (Book 1), *A Vision for Life and Ministry* (Book 2), and *Essential Tools for Leading Students* (Book 3).

Audio set contains 6 free downloadable messages by Barry St. Clair, Dave Busby, and Louie Giglio.



Order these resources at www.reach-out.org.

BUILD LEADERS TOOLS—FOR PARENTS



Parent Fuel

This book equips the #1 youth leaders in the world—parents! Parents find out how to connect with their kids—heart-to-heart. As they go through the book, they discover more about loving God with all of their hearts and leading their kids to do the same. Parents realize how to invest spiritually by discipling their kids and their kids' friends.

Parent Fuel Kit

The *Parent Fuel Kit* offers churches a simple, practical, and biblical tool to equip parents. This complete set of resources makes it easy to lead groups of parents through *Parent Fuel*. This excellent curriculum includes:

- a **book** that offers a fresh perspective and guides parents in connecting their kids to God
- a **journal** that helps parents implement what they discover in the book
- **audio CDs** from a motivating, live presentation
- **DVDs**, including 6 highly interactive, 55-minute sessions with a variety of parents expressing their struggles and successes
- a **leader's guide** for beginning and leading a small group



Parent Pack

The *Parent Fuel Parent Pack* provides the 3 resources parents need in order to maximize the impact of *Parent Fuel* on a family—the book, CDs, and journal.

Order these resources at www.reach-out.org.

PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to build leaders?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important to build leaders?

What goals will you set to build leaders?

Who are the leaders you will build?

Where will you meet with your Leadership Team?

When will you begin and continue to meet with your Leadership Team?



Disciple Students

The Goal

to disciple students
who experience life-change
and become life-changers

Disciple Students

Session 5

JESUS FOCUS

Throughout history, God has done His most important work through a minority rather than a majority. Jesus' investment in a small group of disciples in a few short years "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). A focused look at Jesus' involvement in the lives of His disciples gives us clear direction on how we must go about the most essential task of discipling students.

Select. The process of discipling began by Jesus **selecting** His disciples. In Luke 6:12-19, we find that Jesus "spent the night praying to God" (6:12). The next day, Jesus "called his disciples to him" (6:13). He gave them the challenge and opportunity to be close to Him, to follow Him, to become His closest companions. He called them "apostles" (6:13). Up front, He made it clear that they would become His messengers. He selected only twelve, and what a unique and diverse bunch they were. Jesus placed the entire future of His ministry in the hands of twelve very ordinary individuals with the belief that following Him would prepare them to change the world. Taking a group of students—immature and untrained as they are—and selecting them to be with you will not only change them; but in time, they will do their part to change the world.

Associate. Jesus continued to disciple His chosen disciples by **associating** with them. Training came not by attending conferences or enrolling in classes. Rather, Jesus trained His disciples by being with them (Mark 3:14). The curriculum consisted of time in Jesus' presence, being intimately and constantly associated with Him. Jesus told His disciples "come to me" and "learn from me" (Matthew 11:28-30). And they did. What they saw amazed them—water turned to wine; 5,000 people fed; the raging storm calmed. Rubbing shoulders with Jesus, they saw faith in action. By associating with Him, they learned to trust God. By associating with you, a select group of students will learn to trust God as they see your faith in action.

Consecrate. Many people followed Jesus. Luke says they were "traveling with Jesus" (Luke 14:25). They loved seeing the miracles, watching Jesus' popularity rise and enjoying His success. But Jesus thinned the ranks quickly by **consecrating**

His disciples. In Luke 14:25-34, we see Jesus separating the casual spectator from the trusting disciple. Jesus challenged His disciples to put Him above all other relationships (14:26), value Him above selfish desires (14:27), and enter into the suffering and personal sacrifice of following Him (14:27). Then He told a story that gave them the opportunity to reflect on counting the cost. He concluded: "...any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple" (14:33). Many left. The Twelve stayed. This characteristic of consecration caused Jesus' disciples to become "salt" (14:34) with a distinct taste in a bland world. Discipling students means guiding them to put Jesus above relationships, school activities, desires, and even life itself. Then our students will set themselves apart in the way they live and talk. Other students will want to taste the salt.

Impart. In Jesus' interaction with His disciples, He was **impacting** life to them. He did that in every arena of living. Jesus gave no abstract teaching or class work by announcing, "Today we are studying prayer." Instead the disciples were so inspired by watching Jesus pray that they eagerly asked Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1-4). Jesus' disciples continually received from Him. They picked up attitudes, insights, understanding, perspective, and truth, not to mention Life—Life they found in Him (John 1:4, 6:35). Discipling students will take on the aroma of reality when they see us living life—the good, the bad, and the ugly. They will see Jesus expressing Himself through us.

Love. Erase **loving** from Jesus' relationship with His disciples, and the most significant part is missing. Jesus loved His disciples. Not only did He talk about it, but also He demonstrated it in some most unusual ways. When John recalled the biggest crisis in his life with Jesus, what did he remember? How Jesus "showed them the full extent of his love" (John 13:1). The identifying mark of a disciple of Jesus is love—love for Jesus and love for one another. And how did Jesus express His love? In John 13, He served the disciples by taking on the lowly task of washing their feet. It was an act of serving love. How will the students you disciple know Jesus? By the love you show them. How will they know that love is real? By the way you serve them.

Delegate. Jesus certainly had what it took to do all of the work Himself. But we find Him **delegating** that work to His disciples (Matthew 10). By delegating, Jesus was equipping His disciples to carry on after His death. He was leaving. They were staying. He taught them the things they needed to know. He demonstrated those things in front of them. Then He delegated His ministry and authority to them but only after they had seen Him in action (10:1). He gave them specific instructions (10:5ff). He prepared them for intense hostility and persecution (10:17ff). He promised them that they would have what they needed (10:19-20).

SESSION 5 - DISCIPLE STUDENTS

He told them not to be afraid (10:26). He gave them the perspective that heaven was their goal (10:32-39). And Jesus said that some people would respond (10:40-42). At a point in the process of discipling students, we will sense that it is time to delegate. At that point, we can wisely follow Jesus' advice to His disciples in Matthew 10.

Intercede. Jesus is often found **interceding** for His disciples. But at no time was He more passionate or specific than in John 17. With the Cross looming and His disciples floundering, Jesus' prayers for His disciples provided the support system that held them in God's care during this critical time. But also in His prayer, Jesus prayed for their long-term welfare. He asked His Father to "protect them" (17:11-12), to give them "joy," (17:13), and to "sanctify them" (17:17-19). Protection, joy, and a holy setting apart. What a great prayer for us to pray for the students we are discipling. Pray for them specifically and pray often.

Evaluate. One of Jesus' major roles with His disciples was **evaluating** them. The evaluations Jesus gave were timely and honest appraisals given to guide His disciples. He helped them identify "blind spots" such as unwise statements (Luke 10:17-20), untrue opinions (John 13:36-38), and misguided goals (Mark 10:35-45). He rebuked them (Luke 9:51-56, Mark 8:31-33). He answered questions (Matthew 18:21-35, Matthew 19:23-26, and many other examples). When discipling students, one of the primary benefits to them is the loving and honest evaluation that you and others in the group give them. All of us get out of balance and off base. Our "blind spots" cause us to blunder without even realizing it. Evaluating your students will cause them to grow into Christlikeness.

Reproduce. Jesus knew that discipling was never an end in itself. It was the means to the end of **reproducing**. Early in Jesus' ministry, He encouraged His disciples to become "fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). Later, He instructed them to "make disciples" (Matthew 28:18-20). What Jesus did with His disciples became the way the early church functioned. Their "spiritual reproduction" is what turned the world upside down. Discipling students the way Jesus did leads quickly to older students discipling younger students. Then, in unlimited dimensions, your ministry will multiply to its maximum potential.*

What Jesus did with His disciples was practical and real. When we disciple our students the way Jesus did, then we will take them from superficial and immature churchgoers to students who experience life-change and are equipped to become life-changers. Then they will radically impact their world for Jesus.

*The outline for these ideas came from the classic book on discipleship, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Robert Coleman. Other ideas came from an outline by "Insight for Living" that summarized Coleman's concepts.

HARD QUESTIONS

Answer these questions, rating yourself on a scale of 1-10. As a result of your answers, write a brief paragraph describing the need to disciple students in your situation and the value of it. Research each question for an accurate percentage.

1. What percentage of your total number of students regularly attends the weekly meetings?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. What percentage of your students drops out of the youth ministry from 9th to 12th grade?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. What percentage of your total number of students passionately pursues a relationship with Christ?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. What percentage of your students is involved in an intensive, committed discipleship group?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What percentage of your students is involved in discipling younger students?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. What percentage of your graduating seniors goes on to wholeheartedly pursue Jesus and live for Him? (List all seniors and check off the wholehearted ones.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The need for me to disciple students in my situation and the value of it:

YOUTH MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

How do you disciple students who experience life-change and become life-changers?

When students leave your ministry, how will their lives be different than when they came in? What comes out at the other end of the tube?

Discipling Principles

Read 2 Timothy 2:1-2 six times. Take notes each time you read it. Try to find one principle for discipling students with each reading.

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

2 Timothy 2:1-2

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

Describe in one sentence what you think each principle means to you and your ministry.

1. Receiving

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2. Relationships

... you ... me ... (Paul and Timothy)

3. Reflection

... entrust

4. Reality

... in the presence of many witnesses ...

5. Recruiting

... reliable men ...

6. Reproduction

... you ... me ... reliable men ... others.

Discipling Defined

Offering students a small group, relational experience with discipline, accountability, and encouragement, resulting in motivation, growth, action, and ministry

PRACTICAL STEPS

Picture a group of three to twelve kids who want to move toward maturity in their relationship with Christ. What steps do you take with that group?

1. Pray

Ask the Lord to show you whom to disciple and how to disciple them. Pray for other qualified discipleship group leaders. Pray that students will respond. Ask God for motivation, growth, action, and ministry in students' lives.

2. Dream

Imagine what will happen if your disciplined students experience life-change and become life-changers? How will your church and their campuses be affected?

3. Select

Meet individually with those students whom the Lord has impressed upon you to disciple. Cast the vision. Give them a face-to-face challenge. Set the bar high for them when you go over the "Personal Commitment" on page 11 in *Following Jesus*.

4. Commit

At a special meeting for the students who respond, explain the "Personal Commitment" (page 11 in *Following Jesus*). Challenge them with the cost of their time and the need to shift their priorities. Then encourage them by explaining how much this experience will benefit them in their walk with Christ, personal growth, leadership skills, and influence at school.

5. Prepare

Complete each weekly session yourself in your own book. The *Leader's Guide* in the *Moving Toward Maturity Series* will answer your questions about how to lead your group. Look through the *Leader's Guide* and find the key questions to ask your students in order to have a lively, thorough discussion of the topic. Write down the questions on a 3 x 5 card for the group meeting. Don't take your *Leader's Guide* to the group. Go prepared!

6. Lead

You are the leader. Set the pace for the rest of the group! Ask the Lord to make you a leader who reflects Christ to these students. If they flounder, then help, encourage, call, meet with, and above all, pray for them. Your leadership will radically influence them for the rest of their lives.

7. Invest

Discipling these students is more than a group meeting. It is a relational investment. Through leading this group, you become a friend and a counselor. Give yourself away to your students outside the group meeting.

8. Evaluate

Each week after your group meeting, evaluate what you did and how you can improve. Solve problems and make adjustments. Use the tools in the *Leader's Guide* to help you evaluate.

To multiply these discipleship groups, lead your own group, then divide your Leadership Team into groups of two, and challenge each group to follow this same process to begin their own group. Over time, every student will have the opportunity to be discipled.

The greatest way to fulfill the Great Commission is not through an event but through a process—the discipling process.

DISCIPLE STUDENTS TOOLS

Moving Toward Maturity Series



With over 1 million copies sold, this 8-book discipleship series will move students toward maturity in Christ.

Getting Started helps new believers successfully begin their walk with Christ.

Following Jesus builds a solid foundation for a life-changing relationship with Christ and for becoming a disciple of Christ.

Spending Time Alone With God deepens students' relationship with Jesus by learning how to spend time with Him.

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

Giving Away Your Faith guides students on the wild adventure of overcoming their fears and taking the risk to boldly communicate Christ.

Influencing Your World shows students that they can become influential leaders through serving the needs of the people around them.

Time Alone With God Notebook gives students practical tools that guide them in spending time alone with God.

Leader's Guide gives the group leader all the resources needed to lead a lively and life-changing discipleship group. This book contains the leader's material for all of the books of the Moving Toward Maturity Series.

Moving Toward Maturity Series (8-Book Set) is a complete, step-by-step discipleship series that moves students progressively from conversion toward maturity and ministry.

Audio set contains 6 free downloadable audio messages by Barry St. Clair, Dave Busby, and Jim Burns—each designed to inspire you as a discipler of students.

Order these resources at www.reach-out.org.

Jesus No Equal

Barry St. Clair takes you into a passionate encounter with the Son of God. You will get to know Jesus for who He really is.

In *Jesus No Equal*, you will take the ultimate “road trip.” You will enjoy becoming a better friend with Jesus.

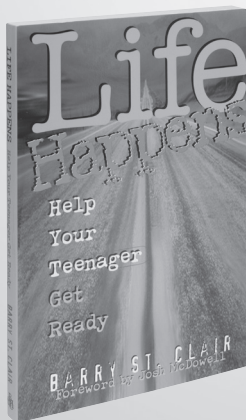
In the *Jesus No Equal Journal*, the road trip continues for 40 days as you travel through Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming.

What you think of Jesus will be challenged and who you are will be changed!

Life Happens

Help Your Teenager Get Ready

College. Career. Lifelong Friends. Marriage Partner. In the next five years, your teenager may make the most critical decisions of his or her life. In *Life Happens*, Barry St. Clair offers you a roadmap to guide you in helping your kids make those choices. They will discover their identity and destiny—their own road to travel for the rest of their lives. The roadmap includes directions for finding your teenager’s personality traits, spiritual gifts, abilities and experiences, motivations, life purpose, values, goals, time use, and decisions. This book gives you as a leader what you need and the free “destiny-deciders” downloads give your kids what they need to go down this road.



Order these resources at www.reach-out.org

PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to disciple students?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you, your volunteers, and parents to disciple students?

What goals will you set to disciple students?

Who are the students you will disciple and who are the leaders who will disciple other students?

Where will you meet with your discipleship group?

When will you begin and continue to meet with your discipleship group?



Penetrate the Culture

The Goal

to equip and mobilize
leaders, parents, and students
to bring Jesus into the student culture

Penetrate the Culture

Session 6

JESUS FOCUS

Jesus always set the pace for His disciples. Nowhere do we see Him more proactive and intentional than when pursuing relationships with “sinners.” Jesus said about Himself, “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10).

To see how we, as leaders, set the pace for our students in pursuing relationships with non-believers, visualize a spear. With His disciples Jesus was the tip of the spear and His disciples were the shaft. The shaft follows the tip. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). In our ministries, God is calling us to follow Jesus, fish for non-believing teenagers, and equip our students to do the same. They will follow our example—as the shaft follows the tip of the spear.

In Mark 1-10, we find seventeen examples of how Jesus set the pace in penetrating the non-believing culture.

- 1:14 *Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.*
- 1:21 *Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach.*
- 1:38 *Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also.”*
- 2:1-2 *... and he preached the word to them.*
- 2:13 *Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them.*
- 3:1 *Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there.*
- 4:35 *That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.”*

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

- 6:6b *Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.*
- 6:56 *And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. . . . and all who touched him were healed.*
- 7:24 *Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre.*
- 7:31 *Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon . . .*
- 8:22a *They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him.*
- 8:27 *Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi.*
- 10:1a *Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan.*
- 10:17 *As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him.*
- 10:32a *They went on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way . . .*
- 10:46a *Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus . . . was sitting by the roadside begging.*

Jesus' ministry gives us powerful and practical insight into what He did to penetrate the culture but also into what He desires for us to do. He stated His desire for us clearly and repeatedly by expressing the Great Commission in each of the four Gospels and in Acts (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46-47, John 20:21, Acts 1:8). In Matthew 28:19, He gave us our marching orders. For youth leaders, He is saying, "Since you are going, go where students are. . . ." For students, He is saying, "Since you are going to school anyway, go reach your peers."

*The message of Jesus is unmistakably clear:
"Go with the Good News!"*

HARD QUESTIONS

Answer these questions, rating yourself on a scale of 1-10. As a result of your answers, write a brief paragraph with your honest assessment of your need to penetrate the youth culture where you live.

1. If you walked on a campus today, how comfortable would you feel there?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How would you rate the amount of time you spend on the campus?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Of the students you know by name at school, what percentage of them are non-believers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. What percentage of your volunteers go to the campus?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. How would you rate the training you give your students to prepare them to live like Jesus and to speak His name at school?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. What percentage of your students see themselves as active spiritual influencers on their campuses?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My honest assessment of my need to penetrate the youth culture where I live:

YOUTH MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

How do we equip and mobilize
volunteers, parents, and students
to bring Jesus into the student culture?

It only makes sense to go where students are. Eighty-eight percent of all students in America do not know Jesus, but few people in the church do anything about it. The only motivating factor that will get us “out of the seat and onto the street” is when Jesus transforms us from the inside out into compassionate lovers of God and other people.

What do we see in Jesus that compels us to go?

God’s Love Motivates Us (Mark 6:34)

Jesus had compassion for people. In Mark 6:34, we see that Jesus “had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.” Jesus’ “compassion” drew Him to us. In the same way, God wants to increase our “compassion quotient” in order to draw us to students who need Jesus. He calls us to care in a world that does not care.

Jesus Calls Us Out of Our Comfort Zone (John 20:21)

Jesus stepped outside of His comfort zone. Imagine Him sitting at the right hand of His Father and making the choice to come into a womb, experience human birth, lay in the straw, become imprisoned in a human body, get blisters from sandals, and eat bad food. He left the comfort of his Father’s side for that! He made the hard choice and He calls us to do the same.

*Compassion communicates that we care
in a world that does not care.*

We Must Go Where Kids Are (John 1:14)

Jesus “pitched his tent” (dwelt) among us. He came to hang out with us, so we can hang out with Him. And now because we know Him, we go where kids hang out; so they can know Him too.

Teenagers Have Incredible Pain (Luke 5:12-16)

Jesus saw pain for what it was. He saw pain in the leper. And He did not shy away from it. Instead, He touched it. This generation has more pain than any other generation in history. They are like the leper—in desperate need of a healing touch. They need the Wounded Healer (Isaiah 53:4-6). He is their only hope. We, like Jesus, can offer students the healing touch for their pain.

Kids Need to Know That Someone Cares (Luke 15:1-2)

Jesus made a conscious choice to become friends with sinners. He knew that choice would alienate the religious establishment. But that didn’t seem to phase Him. Why? He had His priorities in order. He wanted sinners to know that He cared for them more than He wanted the church people to like Him. Kids want to know if anyone cares. When we care for students, religious types get angry. They don’t want “people like that” in the church. To be like Jesus will cost us dearly, especially with religious people. It cost Jesus His life!

Students Need Jesus (John 17:3)

Students want Life. But they don’t know where to find it. We do know where to find it. It’s found in Jesus and nowhere else. Jesus said, “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3). More open than ever, students can find Life in Him—through us.

Students can find life in Jesus—through you!

Jesus Is Already There (Matthew 28:7,10)

Jesus rose from the dead; and as the angel said, “[He] is going ahead of you into Galilee” (Matthew 28: 7). The resurrected Christ does not send us into the student culture alone. He has already “gone ahead” and is meeting us there. Jesus is already working in kids’ lives. He is waiting on us to join Him there!

The New Testament refers to two kinds of time—*chronos* and *kairos*. *Chronos* is the daily passing of time. That happens for all people every day. But *kairos* is an historical moment of special significance. Jesus lived in a *kairos* moment during His three years in human form: “But when the time (*kairos*) had fully come...” (Galatians 4:4). Now through His Spirit living in us, we, too, live in a *kairos* moment. There are students within our reach who desperately need Jesus and who will never find Him unless they know us. In this *kairos* moment, God is leading us to move past all of the barriers to reach those students in their culture in Jesus’ name. The time is now!*

Probably the greatest challenge to the church today is to reach beyond its four walls to call the younger generation to follow Jesus.

* The original ideas for this paragraph came from hearing an inspiring devotional talk given by my friend, Richard Ross, on why God wants us to reach this generation of students. Richard teaches youth ministry at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas.

PRACTICAL STEPS

Go to the sidewalk outside a middle school or high school campus near you. Arrive when students are either coming to school or leaving school. Watch them and take notes. Then ask yourself this question: How many of these people know Jesus Christ personally? This eye-opening exercise will give you a greater burden for students without Christ. Now, with an increased burden for students, consider taking these steps at your local campus.

1. Pray for Favor (Acts 2:47)

Continue to follow through on your Prayer Triplet strategy from the Pray with Passion session. In addition to your Prayer Triplet, involve your volunteers, parents, and students in the Prayer Triplet strategy. Use *An Awesome Way To Pray* as a tool to guide you.

2. Build the Bridge—Know the School (Acts 17:16)

To know the school, follow at least one of these practical suggestions:

- Get the school newspaper/annual and study it.
- Interview your own kids, asking them questions about their school.
- Go to student events, hang out, and take notes.
- Go through the “School Survey” in *Penetrating the Campus*.

3. Cross the Bridge—Talk to the Principal (Ephesians 6:7)

Before crossing the bridge to the principal, you must make a fundamental decision. Will you stand for your legal rights on the campus, or will you submit yourself to the school and serve? The only way to have a long-term relationship with the administration at the school is to serve. Once the decision to serve like Jesus has been made, then the path becomes clear to build a relationship with the principal.

Follow these steps to build that relationship:

- Meet informally. Get some of your students’ parents to introduce you at a social function.
- After you meet, write the principal a “Thank You” note.
- Make an appointment to meet the principal formally at his or her office.
- Again, write a note to thank the principal.
- Build the relationship by speaking with the principal regularly.

4. Keep the Bridge Open—Serve the School (Colossians 3:23-24)

To find the place at the school where God wants you to serve:

- Find your area of interest or identify an area of need.
- Ask teachers or students where they see a need.
- If you are not sure, spend time helping out, trying a variety of school activities.

5. Build Relationships with Students (John 4:1-42)

Study Jesus' model conversation in John 4 to discover how Jesus built a friendship with someone He did not know and who did not know Him.

- Ask questions and listen. You can talk to anyone for at least 15 minutes asking these questions: who, what, where, when, why and how?
- Pick up on needs; then from those needs, offer encouragement and help.

6. Mobilize Volunteers and Parents (Colossians 4:7-15)

Just like Jesus, Paul invested in his disciples. In Colossians 4:7-15, he mentions some of them by name and the different roles they played. As you invest in equipping your volunteers and parents, you can help them find a ministry and their unique role at school. Their ministry will depend on factors like their schedules, their gifts and calling, and their skills.

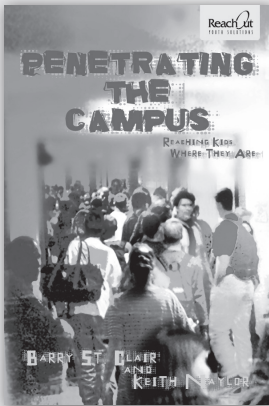
- Involve your Leadership Team, using their limited time, by taking them with you to talk to kids.
- Find ways to match up the specific skills of people on your Leadership Team with needs at school.
- Focus your leaders on one group of students for a few hours each week.
- Help parents build relationships with their kids' friends by inviting them to their homes and feeding them.
- Recruit college students/singles who have more time to give.
- Form prayer teams with your volunteer leaders for each campus.
- Network with other Christian ministries on the campus.

7. Mobilize Students (Acts 5:41-42)

Again, see yourself as the tip of the spear and your students as the shaft. Your role is to go ahead of your leaders and students and then equip them and challenge them to take Christ to their friends.

PENETRATE THE CULTURE TOOLS

Penetrating the Campus

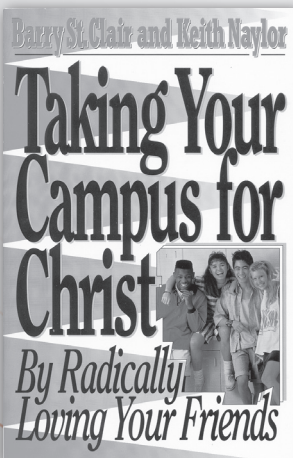


Students today desperately need to be reached where they are—at school!

As students face the emotional, social, and spiritual challenges of adolescence and of life on their middle school or high school campuses, youth leaders can “be there” to influence their lives. *Penetrating the Campus* offers youth leaders, parents, and volunteers an in-depth perspective and practical plans to help you carry out your desire to reach students on the campus. It gives in-depth and practical advice for relating to teenagers on their turf and communicating God’s love to them.

This book helps bridge the gap between the church and the public school campus—probably the most important mission field in America today.

Taking Your Campus for Christ



Now that’s a radical idea! It can happen. But it will take some radical people with radical love. Radical love. That’s what non-believing students need. In this book, your students will find out how to have it and how to give it away. God wants to tap them on the shoulder, get them to look Him in the face, and take the challenge to radically love their friends through the power of Jesus. Students can make the difference at their schools!

Taking Your Campus for Christ gives you a practical strategy to equip and mobilize your students at school.

PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to penetrate the culture?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you and your leaders to penetrate the culture?

What goals will you set to penetrate the culture?

Who is your specific target audience?

Where will you penetrate the culture?

When will you penetrate the culture?



Create Outreach Opportunities

The Goal

to present Jesus
through culturally-relevant outreach opportunities
to which students bring their non-believing friends

Create Outreach Opportunities

Session 7

JESUS FOCUS

Jesus knew how to present Himself. John writes,

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

John 7:37-38

The Master Teacher shows us how . . .
to present Jesus

through culturally-relevant outreach opportunities
to which people bring their non-believing friends.

Let's take a closer look at how Jesus did that.

To present Jesus. The Feast of Booths was a ceremonial reminder that the children of Israel had been wanderers in the desert where water was precious and difficult to find. During the ceremony, a priest took a golden pitcher, walked down to the Pool of Siloam, and filled it with water. He carried the water back through a special gate used just for this ceremony—the Water Gate—while the people recited Isaiah 12:3, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." He carried the water to the temple and poured it on the altar as an offering to God.

Possibly at that very moment, Jesus' words rang out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." No one missed the message. Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Living Water symbolized in the ceremony. On this hot and dusty day, Jesus invited them to come and have their needs met—have a drink of Him. Then He made the promise that whoever believed in Him would have rivers of Living Water flowing into, through, and out of them.

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

The challenge for youth leaders is to present Jesus the way He presented Himself—in such a bold and compelling way that students understand who Jesus is and then want to take a drink of Him! Creative outreach opportunities present Jesus in a way that makes students thirsty for the Living Water.

Through culturally-relevant outreach opportunities. Levi knew how to present Jesus with relevance. He had just met Jesus (Luke 5:27-28). That's a clue! The best path back to the world of lost students is through another student who has recently come from that world. When, like Levi, a student has "left everything and followed him," he or she will have a strong desire for their friends to do the same.

Levi wanted his friends to know Jesus. Luke explains, "Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others [sinners] were eating with them" (Luke 5:29). Levi had a party! He created the party to share the new life he had found in Jesus.

Notice that Levi created an environment in which he felt comfortable having Jesus around his friends and his friends felt comfortable around Jesus. One of the biggest struggles most youth ministries experience is creating that kind of positive environment. Christian students need to feel comfortable bringing their non-believing friends to experience Jesus. And non-believing students need to feel comfortable around Jesus.

To which people bring their non-believing friends. The well-meaning disciples had lost sight of how to bring non-believers to Jesus. In Mark 10:13, they wanted to protect Jesus from the wild and rowdy kids. People were bringing their children to Jesus to have Him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. Often church people serve as "rebukers." They create barriers that turn off non-believers. Attitudes that look down on lost kids lead to actions that cause them to feel unwelcome.

Look at what Jesus did to turn that situation around.

When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these..." And he took the little children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Mark 10:14-16

SESSION 7 - CREATE OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Like the disciples, it is easy for us to categorize groups of students by culture, ethnicity, age, music, attitudes, dress, and habits. If we create an outreach opportunity with those prejudices, whether conscious or unconscious, we exclude people from the Gospel. Then we wonder why non-believers don't come or do come and do not respond. As representatives of Jesus, with His Spirit living in us, we must clear away the barriers and create a path through which students can bring their non-believing friends to Jesus at our outreach opportunities.

I've noticed something about unchurched kids in our culture—many pursue risk-taking lifestyles with religious fervor. Meanwhile, our youth group kids stay locked in the safety zone. . .

Today's young people need to be called to a life of danger for the sake of following Christ. Many of them are just waiting for the church to give them something big, something significant, something risky to do.

Paul Borthwick

HARD QUESTIONS

Answer these questions, rating yourself on a scale of 1-10. As a result of your answers, write a brief paragraph describing the need in your situation to create culturally-relevant outreach opportunities.

1. How would you rate your burden to reach every student on every campus in your community?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How would you rate your effectiveness in personally communicating Christ to students?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. What percentage of your students have an outreach mentality?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. How "pagan-friendly" are your outreach opportunities?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What percentage of the total number of students who attend your outreach opportunities are non-believers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. What percentage of your current, active students have come to know Jesus in the last year?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The need to create culturally-relevant outreach opportunities in my situation:

YOUTH MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

How do we present Jesus through culturally-relevant outreach opportunities to which people bring their non-believing friends?

If we want to invite kids to begin a life-changing relationship with Jesus, then we need to recognize that often we do not present Jesus clearly, the gathering is not culturally-relevant and our kids have no motivation to bring their non-believing friends. We must answer the question above in a way that alters our current approach. To do that, let's take a "4-2-5" approach.

4 Characteristics

When we look at the Gospels to see how Jesus created outreach opportunities, four characteristics stand out.

1. Jesus was the focus of attention (Mark 1:40-45)

Though the leper was healed and a miracle occurred, Jesus was the hero—so much so that people came from everywhere to see Him.

2. The crowds were filled with enthusiasm (Mark 4:1)

So enthused were the crowds that they jostled Jesus to the edge of the water so that He had to jump into a boat.

3. Believers brought their friends to meet Jesus (Luke 5:27-29)

Levi, a despised tax collector, encountered Jesus. Unable to contain his excitement about his friends meeting Jesus, Levi invited them all to a party.

4. Lives were changed forever (Matthew 20:29-34)

When two blind men cried out for mercy, Jesus compassionately touched their eyes. They were healed and then followed Jesus—forever changed.

2 Perspectives

For the maximum impact of an outreach in the lives of students, take the longer view. To gain perspective, imagine looking through a pair of binocular lenses. They bring what is at a distance up close. When working on an outreach, we can easily lose perspective by getting caught up in the “here and now” flurry of activity. Instead, we must keep a binocular view of what is ultimately important by looking through these two lenses:

Lens 1: Focus on Jesus

Help students experience Jesus by continually focusing the outreach on Him. Perspective gets lost when we think that it’s the size of the event that counts. Success is not measured by numbers but by helping students encounter, give their hearts to, and follow Christ.

Lens 2: Know the purpose

Keep the general purpose of the outreach clearly in sight—to *present Jesus through culturally-relevant outreach opportunities to which people bring their non-believing friends*. And then decide on the specific purpose for each outreach to avoid the “what-do-I-come-up-with-to-entertain-them-now” syndrome.

5 Options

Preparing for, conducting, and cleaning up after an outreach can use up huge chunks of your relationship time. To prevent the time consumption of an outreach, research all of your options well in advance and then select the one that is most time efficient and relationally effective.

Whatever options you choose, make sure that you involve your discipleship groups. Either you can charge each of your discipleship groups with the responsibility of creating their own outreach, or you can give each discipleship group one area of responsibility for a larger outreach. Either way, students take ownership of the outreach and they develop their leadership skills in the process. They take responsibility for preparing, bringing their own friends, carrying out the program, and cleaning up afterwards.

1. Borrow it.

The principle here is that “there is nothing new under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Borrow some or all of another outreach you have seen.

2. Create it.

Another principle emerges here: “People tend to support what they create.” Sure, it may be harder and more time-consuming. But consider the relationship-building rewards that come from gathering a group of volunteers, parents, and students to brainstorm an outreach, plan it, and then carry it out together.

3. Buy it.

Ready-made programs exist that you can bring to your church—musicians, speakers, drama groups, comedians, and others. Look around. Count the cost. And preview the program before you sign a contract.

4. Rent it.

Many times, it’s much more feasible to rent rather than buy. Amusement parks, miniature golf courses, ball games, swimming pools, gymnasiums, ice rinks, and theaters provide ready-made outreach opportunities.

5. Join it.

Watch for local opportunities that you can attend to accomplish your outreach purpose—concerts, films, conferences, evangelism events. This approach avoids all of the logistical hassles that go with planning an outreach. Even better, it allows you time to invest in relationships and to focus on the follow-up that can directly benefit your ministry.

When “**4-2-5**” (4 characteristics, 2 perspectives, 5 options) have been prayed through and well-planned, then you have a solid foundation to present Jesus through a culturally-relevant outreach opportunity to which teenagers can then take the challenge to bring their non-believing friends.

Never bore kids with the Gospel!
Jim Rayburn

PRACTICAL STEPS

Get Your Ducks in a Row

To accomplish your outreach purpose, gather an Outreach Planning Team made up of a combination of people from your Leadership Team, key parents, and disciplined students. Brainstorm ideas.

To bring practical creativity to the outreach planning process, use a helpful approach called “storyboarding.” As you plan each of the significant elements that follow, give each person a stack of 4x6 Post-It Notes® for writing down their ideas. Then stick them on a board under the corresponding elements.

Give your Leadership Team, key parents, and student leaders ownership of this process.

1. **Purpose:** What is the specific purpose for this outreach?
2. **Target:** Who is the specific audience?
3. **Theme:** What is the specific theme?
4. **Goal:** What are the specific goals?
5. **Ideas:** What specific creative program ideas will you use?

After brainstorming ideas, prioritize the five best ones. Agree on the one you will pursue. Then storyboard again about how you will communicate that idea to the target audience.

6. **Resources:** What specific people and material resources are needed?
7. **Production:** What will the specific program look like? Who will be responsible for what? By when?

Lead Your Ducks in the Same Direction

Depending on the complexity of the outreach, your planning may take one or several gatherings to complete. To keep your team moving in the same direction, communicate your progress with summary notes. Either hand them out or write them on a whiteboard. Keep your plans visible during the entire process, so everyone involved keeps going in the same direction.

Prayerfully follow your outreach plan with your Outreach Planning Team until it is successfully completed. Invite your team to pray this prayer with you throughout the process:

*Lord, we desire
to present Jesus
in a culturally-relevant way
that draws our non-believing friends to know You.
Amen.*

Jesus can easily be discovered in an outreach like that!

Remember God's goal: to reach every student in every school with a life-changing relationship to Jesus!

CREATE OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES TOOLS

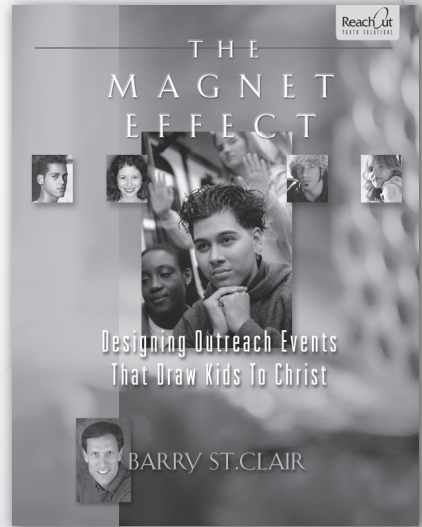
The Magnet Effect

Designing Outreach Events That Draw Kids To Christ

You can attract non-believing students to hear the Gospel. *The Magnet Effect* will show you how!

In *The Magnet Effect*, Barry St. Clair offers simple yet powerful strategies and tools for outreach. Youth leaders will discover how to equip their students for involvement in outreach opportunities that will help them reach their friends for Christ.

The Magnet Effect gives step-by-step plans for selecting and preparing adult volunteers and student teams, developing a publicity plan, preparing a realistic budget, hosting the outreach, and doing effective follow-up. Included also is an Outreach Event Planner that walks the leaders through the entire process.



Order this resource at www.reach-out.org.

PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to create outreach opportunities?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you and your leaders to create outreach opportunities?

What goals will you set to create outreach opportunities?

Who are some specific non-believers your students can invite to your next outreach?

Where will you hold your next outreach opportunity?

When will you conduct your next outreach opportunity?



Putting It All Together

The Goal

to discover God's unique plan of action
for your Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry



Putting It All Together

How do you put your total Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry plan together?

As you reflect on what you have discovered in *Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry*, what about your life and ministry needs to conform to Jesus' life and ministry? What actions do you need to take to move from introduction (exposure to these ministry elements) to implementation (acting on these ministry elements)?

Set aside a significant block of time to review this notebook and to focus particularly on the Plan of Action pages. Think of this as a "Personal Vision Retreat." Get away from distractions and spend time alone with God. Put your total action plan together on the following pages, including all of the strategic elements of your ministry.

The Plan of Action Summary pages and the Plan of Action pages from each session are included for you to use in the way that helps you the most.

Plan of Action Summary

Use the Plan of Action Summary on the next page to condense all your Plan of Action pages into one document. As you review each session, identify one key insight and three action steps you will pursue. Circle one action as your starting point. Keep this summary handy to guide you toward your unique vision. Specifically . . .

- Make your Plan of Action Summary part of your daily prayers for your ministry.
- Use your Plan of Action Summary to write and then present your ministry vision to your pastor and leaders.

Two copies of the Plan of Action Summary are included.

Plan of Action Pages

Utilize the Plan of Action pages as worksheets to further revise and shape your Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry plans—now and over time. These pages will be of particular value when you re-evaluate your ministry goals for the new year.

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY
PLAN OF ACTION SUMMARY

Go Deeper with Christ

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Pray with Passion

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Build Leaders

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Disciple Students

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Penetrate the Culture

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Create Outreach Opportunities

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY
PLAN OF ACTION SUMMARY

Go Deeper with Christ

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Pray with Passion

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Build Leaders

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Disciple Students

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Penetrate the Culture

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

Create Outreach Opportunities

Key Insight	Action Steps: 1. 2. 3.
-------------	---------------------------------

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

GO DEEPER WITH CHRIST PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to go deeper with Christ?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you to go deeper with Christ?

What goals will you set to go deeper with Christ?

Who will hold you accountable for going deeper with Christ?

Where will you meet with Christ to go deeper with Him?

When will you carve out time to go deeper with Christ?

PRAY WITH PASSION PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to pray with passion?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you and others in your ministry to pray with passion?

What goals will you set for yourself and others in your ministry to pray with passion?

Who will join you in your Prayer Triplet, and who in your ministry will begin other Prayer Triplets?

Where will your Prayer Triplet meet to pray?

When will your Prayer Triplet meet?

BUILD LEADERS PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to build leaders?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important to build leaders?

What goals will you set to build leaders?

Who are the leaders you will build?

Where will you meet with your Leadership Team?

When will you begin and continue to meet with your Leadership Team?

DISCIPLE STUDENTS PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to disciple students?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you, your volunteers, and parents to disciple students?

What goals will you set to disciple students?

Who are the students you will disciple and who are the leaders who will disciple other students?

Where will you meet with your discipleship group?

When will you begin and continue to meet with your discipleship group?

PENETRATE THE CULTURE PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to penetrate the culture?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you and your leaders to penetrate the culture?

What goals will you set to penetrate the culture?

Who is your specific target audience?

Where will you penetrate the culture?

When will you penetrate the culture?

CREATE OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES PLAN OF ACTION

Currently . . . what are you doing to create outreach opportunities?

Going forward . . . take your discoveries from this session and design your unique Plan of Action.

Why is it important for you and your leaders to create outreach opportunities?

What goals will you set to create outreach opportunities?

Who are some specific non-believers your students can invite to your next outreach?

Where will you hold your next outreach opportunity?

When will you conduct your next outreach opportunity?



Most Asked Questions



Most Asked Questions

The Most Asked Questions About Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry

All of the questions in this section address immediate and important issues you face in your life and ministry. In-depth answers and details can be found in the resources recommended in each session under “Tools.” Order and make use of those resources, to discover more.

To order resources go to www.reach-out.org.

GO DEEPER WITH CHRIST / PRAY WITH PASSION

1. How do I know if I’m forgiven?

Lack of forgiveness blocks the flow of God’s love and life in us. Often it is hard to receive forgiveness. But God offers it freely. Jesus boldly told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven. To prove He had authority to forgive sins, Jesus healed him (Mark 2:1-13). God made this promise: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). So, if we need to be forgiven, we confess our sins, and God blots them out by what Jesus did when He paid for our sins on the cross.

Often the problem is that we struggle to forgive ourselves. We confess the sin but hold on to the guilt. When Christ died, He died not only for the sin but also for the guilt. We need to let go of our sin and guilt so that “as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12).

2. How do I ask someone to forgive me, and how do I forgive someone?

Asking forgiveness. The Bible says as much about forgiving others as it says about God's forgiveness of us. Without giving and receiving forgiveness, we not only stifle our relationship with God but also our relationships with other people. To ask forgiveness from another person, follow Jesus' instructions in Matthew 5:23-24.

- Remember. Does your brother have something against you? Ask the Lord and He will show you anyone with whom you have a broken relationship.
- Reconcile. In an attitude of humility and repentance, go to the other person and ask forgiveness. I have found it very important to express a request for forgiveness properly. It is not appropriate to say, "I'm sorry" or "If I was wrong..." Simply say, "I was wrong." Specifically tell what you did wrong. Then say, "Will you forgive me?" That gives the other person something concrete to which he or she can respond.

Offering forgiveness. To forgive a person who has wronged you, follow Jesus' instruction in Matthew 7:3-5 and 18:15-18. When someone has hurt you, make sure that you deal with the frustration, anger and bitterness in you first. Ask God to "take the plank out of your own eye" by offering forgiveness to the other person. To do that, put an empty chair across from your chair, and imagine that person sitting in the chair. Express all of your hurt to that person. Then offer forgiveness by saying, "I forgive you for ____." Then when you go to that person to talk about the issue, you can go with the love of Christ flowing from you because the issue is already resolved in your heart.

Giving and receiving forgiveness is no small thing. For some, it will be the hardest and most difficult action we have to take. Yet, God gave us His forgiveness in Jesus. Since He forgives us, we have the amazing opportunity not only to offer forgiveness to others but also to receive it from them.

3. How do I change wrong behavior in my life?

We don't change ourselves; only God changes us. Why is this so hard for us to learn? Galatians 2:20-21 points us in the right direction for how to view our behavior. Verse 21 shows us what we do often to change behavior. We "set aside the grace of God" because we think we can handle the situation ourselves. But when we do that, we say to God: "Christ died for nothing." The key to changing

MOST ASKED QUESTIONS

behavior is “the grace of God.” Defined, it is “God’s supernatural ability in you through the Cross and the Resurrection.” Practically, Galatians 2:20 applies here. To change our behavior, we accept two significant truths:

- When Christ died, I died. “I have been crucified with Christ.”
- When Christ rose, I rose. Through the resurrection of Christ from the dead and the release of His Spirit, now “Christ lives in me.”

We have Christ Himself by His Spirit living in us. So now, how do we live our lives? “By faith in the Son of God.” We put our trust in God’s promise: I am dead, so I can’t change anything. But Christ lives in me, so He can change everything. Jesus makes us “righteous” (rightly related to Him), so we can behave “right”!

4. What if I can’t solve a significant problem in my life?

Sometimes people have “life-dominating problems” that have come down through generations. Sins that have established such a stronghold will require someone else to help you know how to use the resources of Christ to solve the problem. To find the right person to help:

- Remember that the Holy Spirit is the Ultimate Counselor (John 14:15-18).
- Ask the Lord for just the right person to counsel you.
- Find a counselor whose approach is truly Christ-centered, not humanistic psychology.
- Ask the Lord for total restoration, healing and freedom (John 8:32, 36).

5. What practical steps can I take to get to know God better?

Intimacy with Christ is our ultimate goal. Our inner life wells up from the spring of Living Water (John 4:13). All that we do flows out of who we are. For that reason, we must focus on Jesus and who He is in us.

Practice living in God’s presence moment by moment. One way to do this is through “spiritual breathing.” Just as we stay alive physically by breathing (exhale and inhale), we continually refresh our relationship with Christ by breathing spiritually. We confess our sin (exhale), according to the promise of 1 John 1:9, and release the Holy Spirit in us (inhale), according to Ephesians 5:18. Practicing “spiritual breathing” often during the day keeps us aware that we are

in God's presence.

These disciplines and habits will help us to know Jesus and to let His life flow into, through and out of us.

- Spend time alone with God every day for at least 30 minutes.
- Continue to follow through on your Prayer Triplet strategy in the Pray with Passion session.
- Memorize Scripture. Doing this causes you to think God's thoughts. Begin by memorizing one verse a week and then increase that as you get into the habit of memorizing verses.
- Pray the verses you memorize back to God.
- Set aside a half day or full day for prayer and fasting.
- Read inspirational books that focus on your relationship to Christ, particularly devotional classics like *My Utmost for His Highest*. Carry a book with you all the time, setting a goal of reading one chapter a day.

BUILD LEADERS

1. How do I recruit quality adult leaders?

Most lay people feel very inadequate to lead, especially in youth ministry. Often they feel intimidated. When recruiting, it is important to allay people's fears. Let them know that you are not looking for people who are already trained and skilled to work with kids; rather, you are looking for people who have the potential for leadership and the desire to learn. You are looking for FAT people – Faithful, Available and Teachable. Let them know that you are going to equip them for youth ministry.

The best approach in recruiting leaders is to approach each person individually. Tell them, "I'm beginning a Leadership Team for youth ministry. We'll gather regularly to grow in our relationship to Christ and each other and to learn how to meet the needs of kids the way Jesus met needs. Would you pray about joining me?" Emphasize that this is not a meeting to talk about the youth ministry but rather a time to nurture them in their personal and ministry growth. Check back with them in a few days to find out their response.

NOTE: Parents have the greatest potential as volunteers because of their

MOST ASKED QUESTIONS

vested interest in their own kids. Focus on recruiting parents as you build your Leadership Team.

2. Do I require all of my adult leaders to participate in the Leadership Team?

Not at first. At the beginning, you are looking only for people who are motivated—those who really desire to participate. They will establish the environment for the entire ministry. If you have people who are not motivated on your Leadership Team, they will bring down the level of enthusiasm for the rest of the group. This will filter through the entire ministry. But if you have motivated people, they will set a positive pace for the kids.

Later, when you recruit more leaders later, again you will want to recruit the motivated ones. In time, all of your leaders will be motivated and trained. At that point, people will feel that participating in the Leadership Team is a privilege more than a requirement.

3. Can new people join after we start the Leadership Team?

If you make the announcement about the Leadership Team to the entire church and hold a Vision Retreat and/or a preliminary meeting, then rarely will someone want to join after the group begins. After the first or second session, close the group. After that, if people do want to join the Leadership Team because they are catching the enthusiasm of the group, ask them to wait until the end of the first 12 weeks. At that time, recruit again and take another group through *A Personal Walk with Jesus Christ*, the first book in the Building Leaders Series. You can do this repeatedly to grow the number of leaders.

To keep a sense of the larger team moving in the same direction, meet with all of the leaders in one location. Then during your session, you can place them in smaller group settings. Have everyone meet together in a large group for a few minutes each week to cover general announcements and overall direction; then break into small Leadership Team groups. Train your more mature leaders to lead a new group. Another option is for each Leadership Team to meet at different times and places during the week.

4. What do I do if someone doesn't follow through on his or her commitment to the Leadership Team?

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

The way to eliminate most of this problem is to clearly present the vision and direction up front. You can do this most effectively by recruiting people individually instead of in a group. Thoroughly describe the Personal Commitment to them (found on page 11 of each of the three books in the Building Leaders Series). By doing this each person will know exactly what is involved.

If someone in the group is struggling or if the group as a whole is struggling, be honest. Outside of the group, ask that person what the problem is. Often individuals are dealing with an issue in their personal lives that has caused them to lose enthusiasm or focus. Help them with the problem. Maybe someone has gotten in a spiritual rut. Help him determine what the issues are and how to get back on track. Maybe he got into the group and realized he doesn't like working with kids. Let him drop out. Usually when people are not doing the assignments, it has very little to do with the assignments. Often the issue is personal. As the leader, help the developing leader work through it. Your personal involvement in their lives will get them "over the hump," so they can move on.

5. What if a volunteer doesn't work well with kids?

If a person is called to youth ministry and he volunteers, then find a place for that person to minister. In the context of the Leadership Team, you will have the opportunity to observe that person, his or her calling, spiritual gifts, skills and relational abilities. Find the place that person can help the most. It may be that the person is misplaced. Maybe he is teaching when what he really likes is video production. Put him in a place where he can use his abilities the best. If the person is a "fish out of water" when it comes to kids, gently guide him to get involved in another area of the church besides youth ministry.

If the problem is attitude, that is a different matter. Sometimes people try to play a power game or manipulate you. In that case, talk to your church leadership about it and then confront it biblically.

In sum, your job is to help each person find his or her proper place in the Body of Christ.

DISCIPLE STUDENTS

1. Who should lead a discipleship group?

MOST ASKED QUESTIONS

How you answer this question will significantly affect the motivation and depth of your ministry to your students. Answer it carefully in light of the uniqueness of your situation. Let the following practical ideas guide you.

Establish in your mind that the people on your Leadership Team are the ones who need to lead the groups. That makes sense because your leaders are experiencing a “discipleship group” in the Leadership Team meeting. They are the ones who will know how to create the right environment for growth.

Don’t insist that all of the people on the Leadership Team lead a discipleship group. That may not be their calling in the youth ministry. You can encourage everyone to lead a group but then only give a group to those who are interested and qualified.

Begin small. Begin with one or two groups—maybe one group for guys and one for girls. You lead one of the groups to set the pace for the Leadership Team later. Doing this will give you some time and experience that will help you to decide how you want to structure your discipleship ministry to involve larger numbers of kids. If time allows, lead a discipleship group and a Leadership Team on a parallel time frame.

Continue to develop leaders for present and future discipleship groups. As people go through the Leadership Team process, encourage them to disciple kids. Give them a group and get them started. Using this approach, you will develop an ever-widening number of adult leaders and student leaders who are maturing in Christ and who can lead others. These disciplined adults and students will serve as your core. Later, your maturing students will disciple younger students.

NOTE: Parents are your #1 youth leaders. Build your strategy for discipling your students around your involved parents. Equip your parents to disciple their own kids and their kids’ friends. *Parent Fuel* will give you the training and resources you need to involve parents in discipleship.

2. How do I challenge students to become part of a discipleship group?

Ideal candidates for discipleship are kids hungry for Jesus. You will find that some of the most unlikely kids will respond. Often their desire to know Jesus gets

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

covered over by their demeanor or behavior. True, most will not be mature. But that is why they are in the group—to mature in Christ. Accept them right where they are and take them where they need to be. That begins with challenging each one to become a part of the discipleship group.

Consider these important points in your challenge:

- Throw the opportunity out to the whole youth group; then follow up with individual appointments. Some kids you see as having potential may not have responded to the public challenge. Go to them individually and challenge them.
- Set up a personal face-to-face meeting with each student. Lay out the cost by going over the Personal Commitment on page 11 of *Following Jesus*.
- Tell them the benefits of being discipled and give them some examples from your own life or from other kids' lives who have been discipled.
- In your first group meeting and at any other preliminary meetings, go over the page 11 commitments to reinforce the seriousness of this commitment. Ask each person individually if he or she understands what's involved.
- In your first meeting, have them sign the Personal Commitment. Then pass the books around, so they can sign each other's books. This builds in accountability. If you have a junior high group, have the parents sign the book too since, most likely, they will drive their kids to the group meeting.

3. What if students don't do the assignments?

If you follow the proper steps to challenge kids, most of this issue will be resolved before you begin. (See previous question.) But if not, you can motivate students in other ways. The effectiveness of these approaches will depend on the personal relationship you have with the kids. It's amazing how the time you spend with them outside the group will directly affect their motivation to be involved in the group and to do the assignments.

You can use these practical approaches to encourage your kids to complete their assignments.

- Call them each week two or three days before the meeting. Ask how they are doing and tell them with enthusiasm what the group will cover this week. Remind them of their assignments; then pray for them over the phone. This will build your relationship with them, and remind them of

MOST ASKED QUESTIONS

what you expect.

- Set up a buddy system of accountability. They are responsible to help each other get their work done. A more highly motivated kid can help one who is less motivated.
- If one student in particular is floundering, get with him yourself and do the assignments together.
- If the whole group is struggling, talk about it openly. Be honest about why they are struggling. Together find the solutions. Whatever you do, stick with them. Don't give them the idea that you will quit on them because they are not doing the assignments.
- Put what they are learning into practice. Kids are so under-challenged and over-educated that what they may need is a place to put what they are learning into action. Take them with you to share Christ with one of their friends or go to a juvenile home each week after the group meeting.

Whatever you do, reinforce the idea that following Jesus is not boring!

4. Can guys and girls be placed in the same group?

Not unless it is necessary. Over the years, we have found it better to keep different sexes separate. It has nothing to do with legalism. The Bible gives us direction on this when it tells us that the older men teach the younger men and the older women teach the younger women (Titus 2:1-8).

Two other sound reasons guide this decision:

- When guys and girls are together, people sign up for the discipleship group motivated by a desire to be with a boy/girlfriend instead of a desire to know Jesus better.
- Issues are brought up in discipleship groups that kids want to discuss such as sex and masturbation. In a mixed group, it is difficult to discuss these issues. Separate groups allow for deeper and more honest discussion.

5. My kids have had the basics, so can I skip some of the books in the Moving Toward Maturity Series? Do I really need to do the books in order?

Often youth leaders think their kids know much more than they do or think

they are more mature than they are. Even if your students have been over the basic material, that does not necessarily mean they are putting it into practice. Moreover, it is important not to skip any of the books because, down the road, you will challenge your older disciples to become disciplers of the younger kids. If they have not gone through the material, they won't know how to lead the group.

It is best to do the books in order because they were written progressively, moving kids through a process from salvation in *Following Jesus* to having the skills to minister to others in *Influencing Your World*. If, however, you have a particular reason to do so, you can switch them around. For example, if you have an upcoming mission trip and want to teach your kids to share their faith, then you can use *Giving Away Your Faith*—even though it may not be the next book in the series.

PENETRATE THE CULTURE

1. What do I do if the schools are closed to outsiders?

All over America, the word is out that it is impossible to get on school campuses. The truth is, that if you have the right approach, hardly any school will keep you off the campus. Often, youth leaders use this as an excuse not to go on the campus. The youth ministry vision, properly conceived, will express a desire to establish a ministry on every campus in your community.

To break down the walls at a closed campus:

- Pray and pray some more. More than any one point of action, this is most important. Over the years, many campuses which were closed have opened through prayer. Persistent prayer will make the difference. Use the Prayer Triplet strategy with your students on their campuses.
- Meet the principal and develop this critical relationship.
- Serve a need. Discover a place where the school needs help and mobilize your resources to meet that need.
- Team up with other churches and campus organizations. Many times, another youth ministry or organization is already on the campus. If not, then consider starting one. Often that will give you access to the campus when you experience difficulty getting on it by yourself.

MOST ASKED QUESTIONS

2. How do I get the Leadership Team involved on the campus?

You will have some people on your Leadership Team who will get excited about going to the campus, and others who will tremble with fear. Either way, all need to get involved with kids outside of the church in some way—even if they have only one hour a week to give.

Take the ones who have the most enthusiasm for this and plug them into the campus ministry with you in order to train them. Once they are trained, help them get set up to establish a ministry on another campus.

One of the best resources for campus ministry is college students. Utilizing their free time and age proximity to high school students, organize them into Campus Teams to build relationships with kids on every campus in your community.

An entire chapter is devoted to this question in *Penetrating the Campus*.

3. What rights do I have on the campus?

None. Nyet. Nada. Students have numerous rights and teachers have limited rights. If you are the parent of a student, then you have the same rights as other parents. But as a local church youth leader, you have no rights at all. For that reason, it is very significant to predetermine your approach to the campus by deciding to take the “service route” rather than the “rights route.”

Rather than going to the school and asking for time for Bible study, a club, or opportunities to speak in classrooms and assemblies, build a relationship with the principal and some coaches/faculty. Then decide how you can serve the needs of the school. This will give you a long-term, positive relationship with the school that will allow you to minister to the students there for years to come.

4. What if I have more than one campus in my area?

The more the better! The more campuses in your area, the more potential your ministry has for reaching numbers of students. Think of multi-campus as a positive, not a negative.

Using the positive approach, what are you going to do to reach them?

- You, as the leader, establish an effective ministry on one campus.

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

- Use that campus as a training ground to train your Leadership Team in how to relate to students on campus and reach them for Christ.
- Develop campus teams utilizing college students on your Leadership Team who see the campus as their ministry. Begin a ministry on another campus only when you have the leadership to do it effectively.
- Have each campus team mobilize your Christian students to influence their friends for Christ. The book *Taking Your Campus for Christ* will give you the resources you need to do this.
- Don't think you have to reach every campus by yourself or through your church. Network and cooperate with other campus Christian organizations and other churches, yes, even other denominations, to make sure that every kid on every campus in your community has an opportunity to know and follow Jesus Christ.

5. What if my church won't let me go on campus?

Answering this question is tricky because so many dynamics exist that could cause your pastor or leadership to discourage campus ministry. Assuming that no one is on a power trip or that no conflict exists between you and the leadership, you need to discover the reason they don't want you to go. They may know something you don't know about the situation. Maybe God is using them because the timing is not right.

However, if you discover a difference in philosophy and vision that relates to the fact that your authorities are not interested in reaching kids for Christ or in having "those kinds of kids in our church," then you have a serious problem. To solve the problem:

- Pray for God's wisdom and direction.
- Make sure your church leadership understands your vision—whether they agree with it or not. Put your vision in writing.
- Appeal to your leaders regarding this issue. Ask them to reconsider.
- Realize that unless two are agreed, they cannot walk together (Amos 3:3). You can only go on so long if they do not want you to do this. At that point, you will need to consider moving on to another ministry. Hopefully, along the way, you can communicate with them what your heart is; and the Lord will give you freedom to pursue every student in every school for Jesus Christ.

CREATE OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

1. What if we don't have the talent, money, or people to create an outreach opportunity?

Just as Jesus multiplied the five loaves and two fish, if you offer what you have to God in faith, He will multiply it and produce something far beyond what you can imagine. In order for God to multiply your resources, pursue the following steps of action:

- Pray often and hard for needed resources.
- Prepare yourself and your team for an outreach opportunity. (See next question for suggestions.)
- Recruit people in your Leadership Team to work with you. Some may want to focus specifically on outreach opportunities.
- Network with others to conduct an outreach. Many resources exist in your church or community as well as in other churches. (Review Session 7, "Create Outreach Opportunities.")
- Cost does not need to limit your outreach effectiveness. When each discipleship group owns all or part of an outreach, then kids will bring their friends and Jesus can be presented at minimum cost.

2. What will it take for me to get prepared to conduct a quality, creative outreach opportunity?

This question has such importance that answering it took the first 76 pages of *The Magnet Effect!* This book shows you how to develop your mission statement for your ministry; lay out a biblical strategy for youth ministry; break down kids' resistance to the Gospel through prayer; and get your church leadership, your Leadership Team, and your core kids behind you. Even though this process may take longer than you want, it is worth the wait to make your outreach approach effective in reaching kids. Remember that you are not going for short-term fluff but for long-term fruit.

3. How do I get non-Christian kids to come?

The church that focuses on reaching non-Christian students will win the day

JESUS-FOCUSED YOUTH MINISTRY

in this generation. The church that does not, will be left in the dust. To draw non-Christian kids into an outreach, it is very important to have a relationship with them. Therefore, penetrating the campus becomes crucial to the success of the outreach.

Kids will not be drawn by the glitz of the program, but they will come because a friend brings them. They will not come by accident. Your leadership and students must have a burning desire to bring their friends. When that happens, you will have non-Christians come.

If you expect non-believers to come more than once, then you have to create an environment that is void of “Christianeze” and relevant to the needs of secular kids. That means putting on a program with excellence. *The Magnet Effect* guides you through the process of how to do that.

4. Do I need to do an outreach that presents the Gospel every week?

Start slowly. Do a special outreach opportunity once a quarter to begin. Then as your leadership and student core grows, you can do one once a month, then once a week. Consistency is key because it helps you, your leaders, and your kids know that an outreach will take place on a regular basis. As far as presenting the Gospel every time, the answer is yes. But present the message with creativity. Design your outreach to identify with kids’ needs and then apply the message of the Gospel to those needs. To do this effectively and creatively, go to *The Magnet Effect* chapters on planning the program.

5. Is it best to do the outreach at our church or at a neutral site?

The rule of thumb is that you do everything you can to tear down as many barriers as you can that keep kids from Christ. With that in mind, you will need to look at your facility and at other facility options in your community; then decide which one will make it easier for non-Christians to come. Cost, set-up and take-down efforts, distance, and perception of the facility in the community will influence your decision. One of the best ways to determine this is to survey your kids and kids on the campus to find out what would appeal the most to them.

Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry will help you fulfill your personal and youth ministry dreams by redirecting your vision, realigning your priorities, and providing you with practical tools. Through this self-training resource, God will produce life-change and equip life-changers through you. This Jesus-focused approach gives you the pegs on which to hang your entire life and ministry. You, your pastor, volunteers, parents and students will gather around a common vision of Jesus and His ministry, enabling you to:

- Go deeper in intimacy with Christ
- Pray with passion for God's presence and power
- Build leaders for in-depth and long-term ministry
- Disciple students to move toward maturity in Christ
- Penetrate the culture through relationships
- Create outreach opportunities to reach students for Christ

Younger generation leaders...

If you are beginning your ministry, *Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry* offers you a solid foundation.

If you already equip volunteers, parents, and students, this notebook provides you with excellent training and resources.

If you invest in other youth leaders, consider this your transferable training tool.

Your unique ministry will emerge and sharpen as you implement strategies learned from *Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry*. This fresh approach can cause you and your church to become powerful agents of change with the younger generation!



Dr. Barry St. Clair desires to influence the younger generation to follow Jesus. As founder and president of Reach Out Youth Solutions, he has been on the cutting edge of youth ministry for over three decades, equipping youth leaders, parents, and students in over thirty countries. Through his leadership, thousands of churches have implemented Jesus-focused youth ministry strategies. He is the author of more than twenty-five books, including *Parent Fuel*. Barry played

basketball on the third-ranked team in the nation and has run the Boston Marathon. He and his wife, Lawanna, have five married children, ten grandchildren, and live in Atlanta, Georgia.