

## **The Jesus Model: How Simple Principles from the Life of Christ Can Transform Your Ministry**

Since youth culture is a constantly moving target, those who work with young people are often looking for something “new.” What are the latest trends, how do we capture young people’s attention, what will make our programs attractive and contemporary? While there is nothing wrong with being trendy, the most profound insights about youth ministry are actually very “old.” We forget that Christianity began as a youth movement. Many of Jesus’ disciples were teenagers when he called them. How did his youth group launch a movement that changed the world? If Jesus were to teach us how to lead an effective youth ministry today, what would he say?

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He never held an public office, never wrote a book, never led an army or founded an institution. His classroom was the boat and the field, his followers simple fisherman. Rejected and misunderstood by the majority, his ministry lasted only three and a half short years.

But its impact changed the world.

At the end of his service he said, "As the father has send me, I am sending you." His life serves as an example not just in the words he taught, but in the way he went about ministry. Howard Hendricks recognizes this when he asks the question, "How did Jesus Christ train His men? Whenever we study the gospels, we tend to study them exclusively for content." he says. "Why don't we study them for methodology?"

What if you took an intensive look at the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and then applied His strategy to the arena of youth ministry?

### **I. The strategic nature of youth ministry**

#### **A. Why did Jesus focus on young leaders?**

#### **B. What is the purpose of youth ministry?**

To fulfill the \_\_\_\_\_ . (Matt 28:18-20)

"Then Jesus came to them (the eleven disciples) and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age,"

## II. Understanding the great commission

The great commission only has one command, “\_\_\_\_\_”. The other three verbs are in a different form and explain the three things we need to do to fulfill this command.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Take the initiative to make contact with non-believers.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Identify people with the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  
3. Teach them \_\_\_\_\_  
Equip people to be active in their faith rather than passive, engaged in serving the Lord

Your youth ministry exists as God's chosen vehicle for assisting believers in the fulfillment of the great commission.

*“Within a few years most organizations lose sight of their mission and become focused on methods - doing things right rather than doing the right things.”*

*Peter Drucker*

What other purposes for ministry could you have?

How would it affect your ministry if you were aiming at one of these other goals?

Suppose someone from the outside were to visit your group for two months. What would they say was the purpose of the group's existence after watching the ministry during that time?

**III. How did Christ model the great commission?**

John 20:21 "As the father has sent me, I am sending you."

His life serves as the model for our ministry.

Christ modeled the process of making a disciple, as well as the process of building a disciple making ministry.

**A. The process of making a disciple**

Christ met people where they were at and challenged them to take the next step forward spiritually. In his life we see five basic types of challenges.

- Unbelief -----V ----- Maturity
1. \_\_\_\_\_ (John 1:39, 46)
  2. \_\_\_\_\_ (John 6:29, 9:35-38)
  3. \_\_\_\_\_ (John 1:43)
  4. Follow me and I will make you  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Matt 4:19)
  5. \_\_\_\_\_  
(John 20:21)

These show the five basic things we need to do as we challenge a disciple from unbelief toward maturity

- Unbelief -----V ----- Maturity
1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_

How does it impact the disciple if we try to skip a step?

What if we attempt to move through these stages in a different order?

What happens if our challenge does not match where the person is at?

Think through examples from the life of Christ. What observations can you make about how he led people through these five steps?

How does an understanding of this process affect the way we plan activities in our youth ministry?