



# **STUDENT MINISTRY**

Working with Middle School  
and High School Students





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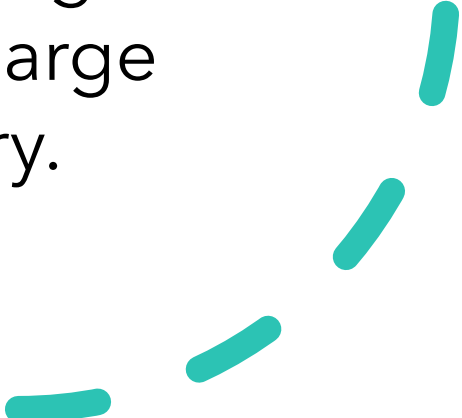
Missions/Evangelism

# Introduction

In writing this content, I am drawing on:

- 1) My own experiences as a student
- 2) My five years experience as a student pastor with MS/HS and eighteen years working with college students.
- 3) My years parenting my children as they were teenagers

Student ministry changes over the years and the culture is different in a large church vs a small church, and a large city vs a small town in the country. The gospel is the same.



# Student Ministry:

## Worship



- How can you include what students are facing when you preach - parents, friends, anger, loneliness, school, love?
- How can you ask students to help in your worship service - singing, testimonies, announcements, tech crew, greeters in the parking lot and at the door, helping at information tables?
- Personal worship - help students have a reason and a system for reading the Bible at home (a chapter a day?) and a way to talk about what they read at church or with a mentor.

# Student Ministry:

# Fellowship

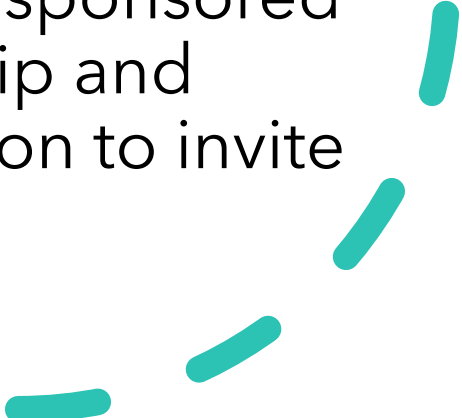


- We learn best from someone we respect.
- We learn best from someone who is loving and caring toward us.
- Discipleship happens in the context of relationships.
- Friendships are the most valuable possession in our life.
- My professor used to say: "The most important word in the English language is 'relationship'." God wants a relationship with us and we were created to need relationships with others.



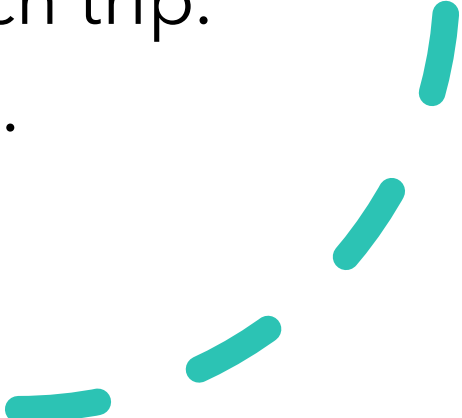
# Student Ministry:

## Fellowship

- How could you increase fellowship when you have students at your church meeting?
  - It isn't always a bad thing for students to sit together in the worship service (but maybe not on the back row). You want to encourage the culture of friendship by them being together.
  - Students see each other every day at school, but once a month is probably not too often to have a social event sponsored by the church. It builds friendship and helps your students have a reason to invite friends.
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# Student Ministry:

## Fellowship

- Encourage “guy stuff” and “girl stuff” as a way to bond
  - Sports are a great way to build friendships - basketball, volleyball, ultimate frisbee, soccer, tennis, running, softball.
  - Special Events: ski trip, canoe trip, camping, hiking, fishing, beach trip.
  - Retreats, camps, mission trips.
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# Student Ministry:

## Discipleship



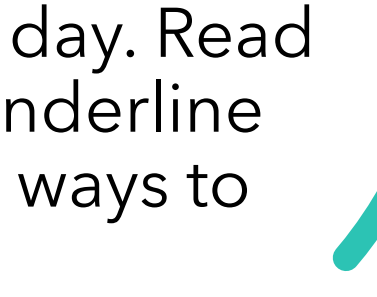
- Discipleship means a person is growing in spiritual maturity.
- Discipleship means one person helping another person grow.
- Jesus gave his entire ministry to *doing life together* with the twelve disciples. They talked, they prayed, they discussed God's Word, and they served others who needed help.





# Student Ministry:

## Discipleship

- Physical muscles grow when they are pushed to try things they haven't done before. "You can lift 10 lbs, now try 20 lbs, now try 30 lbs."
  - We grow spiritually when we are pushed out of our comfort zone. It's comfortable to sit in the bleachers and watch the game, but the growth happens when we come out of the stands and get on the field.
  - Lead your students to push themselves. Memorize 10 verses. Pray every day. Read a Bible chapter every day and underline the verse you like best. Look for ways to help someone else.
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# Student Ministry:

## Discipleship



One research study showed that the churches that grew the most were the churches that had high expectations for their members in a good way. Like “we are going to be the team that doesn’t give up, that keeps trying right to the end of the game.”

Build a culture for your student group that values high effort, high sacrifice, high standards and highly values people.

We can learn from the military motto: “No one gets left behind.”

# Student Ministry:

## Discipleship

- When it comes time to discuss and pray together, find a way to get your students into smaller groups.
- Three or four isn't too small. More than 10 is getting too big.
- Train new leaders by recruiting leaders for each small group. The more small groups you have, the more leaders you are training. College students and married couples can be great leaders for your student small groups. Parents are often highly motivated to help your student group be successful.

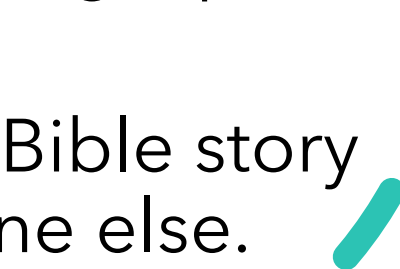
# Student Ministry:

## Discipleship

- Accountability is a good thing.
- Our schools know that accountability helps people learn. You are expected to do homework, to read, to memorize, to take a test, to answer questions in class, and to give a demonstration of what you learned.
- Look for ways to have “gentle” accountability in your student ministry. Ask students to share what they read, what they liked, what they learned. Ask students to get in groups and pray. Ask students to share a testimony in their small group. Ask students to memorize these 10 verses about salvation.

# Student Ministry:

## Discipleship

- One of the best ways to learn is to teach, to explain what you think you know to someone else.
  - Look for ways to have your students help or teach someone else. Maybe that is children, younger students or their peers. When students gain confidence, they can even teach adults.
  - Have your students explain the gospel to someone else.
  - Have your students explain a Bible story and its significance to someone else.
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# Student Ministry:

# Discipleship

- You cannot have too many leaders. Recruit as many adults as you can to help with your student ministry – teachers, music, sponsors, small group facilitators, drivers, coaches and prayer warriors.
- Constantly develop your students to become leaders to their peers. Yes, they will only have a certain level of maturity based on their age but develop them anyway.
- Give them opportunities to speak, to pray, to teach, to counsel and to share the gospel. Lead by example.

# Student Ministry:

## Discipleship

This is my discipleship story:

- Three married couples who were ten years older than I was were extremely influential when I was in high school and college. They changed the direction of my life. They were more important than all the seminary classes I later took. They disciplined me.
- My student pastor had high expectations. He required that we memorize 15 Bible verses and the plan of salvation. He had us write the verses by memory on a blank piece of paper.
- He asked us to be the “decision counselors” when another student wanted to know how to have a personal relationship with Christ.

# Student Ministry:

# Discipleship

This is my discipleship experience when I was 17-23 years old. The church understood how to make disciples. They:

- asked me to attend a class on sharing the gospel.
- asked me to go on five mission trips.
- asked me to help with VBS and Children's Camp.
- asked me to teach a college Sunday School class.
- asked me to be a deacon.
- asked me to lead a guy's Bible study.
- asked me to be a summer intern in student ministry.



# Student Ministry:

## Sunday School



Include some of these elements into your Sunday School class:

- Begin every week by going around the circle and letting everyone share two things. “What were you thankful for last week?” and “What stressed you out last week?”
- Sit in circles. If you are the teacher, don’t stand up. Sit in the circle with students.
- Have a student read the scripture out loud.

# Student Ministry:

## Sunday School

- Have a different student tell the story in their own words. Have the rest of the class add in anything that was left out.
- Do all the discussion questions at the same time.
- Your 55 minute time frame might look something like this -

10 minutes - sharing the thankful and stressful stories

15 minutes - reading and talking about the main points

20 minutes - discussion questions

10 minutes - everybody shares a prayer request and is prayed for



# Student Ministry:


## Serving Others



- Students of any age can learn to serve and help others.
- Serving others is a great way to learn. We learn by doing.
- Students can learn a lot by serving alongside older adults. They learn to appreciate the heart, the testimony and the courage of adults they didn't know before.
- Seeing the results of serving - lives are changed, people are helped, people are grateful - is a powerful motivator.

# Student Ministry:

## Serving Others

- Serving others develops our character, maturity and leadership abilities.
  - Serving others helps us look at the world like Jesus did.
  - Serving others can help develop a life-long passion.
  - Look for as many ways as you can for your students to serve - children, other students, older adults, special needs, music, hospitals, children's homes, homeless shelters, disaster relief, food ministry, construction, teaching, and many other great ways to help.
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# Student Ministry:

# Missions and Evangelism



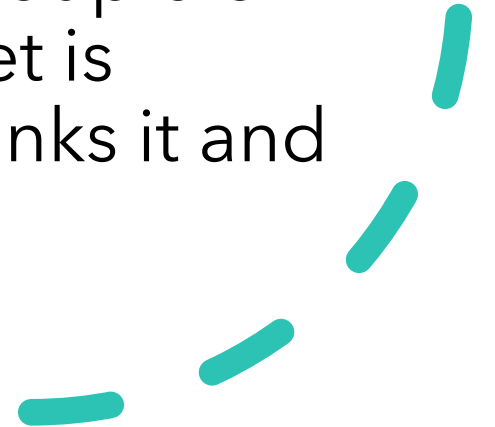
- A lot of adults are afraid to share their faith, to speak, to pray and to lead.
- Some of that can be overcome by practice. We don't get better at anything without practice. The more we practice, the more confident we become.
- Some studies have shown that students who learn to share their faith as teenagers are the most likely to become leaders in the church when they get older.



# Student Ministry:

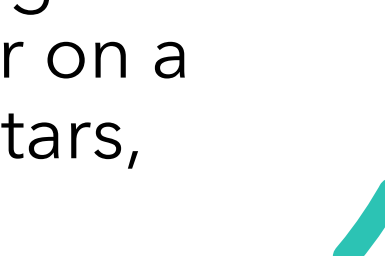
# Missions and Evangelism

- Choose a gospel outline. Help your students memorize it, and practice saying it 30 times to someone else in a year's time.
- Examples: The Four Spiritual Laws, Steps to Peace With God, The Roman Road, The Bridge, Evangelism Explosion, LIFE:3 Circles and others.
- Just hearing it or saying it a couple of times doesn't work. The secret is repetition - 30 times until it sinks it and becomes natural.



# Student Ministry:

## Missions and Evangelism

- Look for ways to help your students tell their faith story.
  - Could a student tell their faith story in Sunday School, in adult worship, in a student worship service, in VBS, at a camp, on a retreat, on a mission trip?
  - Set the example. Have some college students or adults come share their testimony in a student meeting. You can also find testimonies online or on a DVD - sports people, movie stars, singers, etc.
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# Student Ministry



- I know many adults who became awesome Christian teachers, preachers and leaders who began their journey because they were challenged to greatness when they were students.
- Develop a “culture” of grit, integrity, love, prayer, evangelism, friendship, discipleship, serving and personal Bible study in your student group.
- Yes, it takes time and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Yes, it’s worth the sacrifice.

