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“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18, 9

As Jesus read in the synagogue, His passage of choice was Isaiah 61. The prophetic words jumped off the page as the starting gun to the ministry of Jesus sounded. Game on.

Even Jesus found the empowerment for His ministry rooted in the power of God’s Spirit and the anointing of God’s blessing. This propelled Him. It gave Him courage to stand against the schemes of the evil one and it declared the intention of His calling.


For the most broken and disconnected. To the least. For the lost. To the self-reliant and the self-destructive.

I believe that the words of Luke 4 and Isaiah 61 are an invitation for us to join Jesus in the call. We extend His reach, we tighten His grip, we honor His anointing when we live in obedience.

We do this in humility. We do this by mobilizing. We don’t do this alone.

Thanks for answering this call. Thanks for saying “yes” when “no” is so much easier and with so much less risk.

God has anointed you. Savor His blessing.

Game on.

Dan Wolgemuth
Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?” I said, “Here I am. Send me” (Isaiah 6:8).

It was the summer before my senior year in high school. Our Campus Life club went to an event in Jekyll Island, GA. God used the speaker one night to call me into youth ministry, especially to the unchurched teen. I thought God must have been confused to call me to youth ministry. I was shy and quiet- I got sick just thinking of speaking to more than 3 people at a time. Today, 34 years later, I am still reaching unchurched teens because of God’s work in me (“… It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the LORD…” Zechariah 4:6).

**CALLING**

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**DEFINING YOUR CALL**

“The call of God is threefold. First there is the call to belong to God. Thus persons without identities or ‘names’, who are homeless waifs in the universe, become children of God and members of the family of God. ‘Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God’ (1 Pet. 2:10). This is the call to discipleship. Second, there is the call to be God’s people in life, a holy people that exists for the praise of his glory in all aspects of life in the church and world. This is expressed in sanctification; it is the call to holiness. Third, there is the call to do God’s work, to enter into God’s service to fulfill his purposes in both the church and the world. This involves gifts, talents, ministries, occupations, roles, work and mission - the call to service.” (R. Paul Stevens, The Other Six Days, Grand Rapids. Eerdmans, 1999. 88. Print.)

1. **Salvation (Belonging)**
   This call is for all people to become children of God. “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). (See also 1 John 3:1; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:6, 8; Romans 8:15-16; Romans 10:9; Ephesians 1:4-5; 2 Peter 3:9.)

2. **Sanctification (Being)**
   This call is for Christians to live holy and righteous lives. (“For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:9). As we seek God daily (sanctification) it will become clearer what his call (service) is for us. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take” (Proverbs 3:5-6). (See also 1 Peter 1:15, 2 Timothy 1:9, Colossians 2:6-7, John 15:1-11, Romans 12:2, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4.)

3. **Service (Doing)**
   This call is for disciples to discover what God created them to do. “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago” (Ephesians 2:10). For some it is clear what God wants them to do from the start, for others it becomes evident as they mature in their walk with Christ. The Bible shows us God isn’t looking for the person with the most abilities but God is looking for those who will answer as Isaiah did, “Here am I. Send me.” (See also Philippians 1:6, 2:12-13, Hebrews 11.)
PROTECTING THE CALL

Discovering your call is a lifelong journey. Scripture compares this journey to a race. “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (Hebrews 12:2). Paul challenges us to seriously train for this race (1 Corinthians 9:24-27) and celebrates his own successful completion (2 Timothy 4:7). Being faithful in the moment, however, is not always that easy.

“The lesson in it all is that what’s important in life is to realize that life is made up of moments, not careers. I want to be faithful in the moment to hear God’s voice and follow him, whether doing so seems to add up to career success or not.” Louie Giglio

Many challenges in life may “slow us down” or “trip us up” and cause us to question our call. We need to honestly look at the health of our spiritual life, how we are balancing life and ministry, how we are managing our finances and how we are utilizing coaching. CL 301 addresses these issues and will hopefully assist you on your journey.

“But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don’t be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you” (2 Timothy 4:5).
Christian leaders can excel at serving others and doing great outreach while yet become distracted and stunted in their own spiritual growth. John 15:1-5 reminds us that outside of an abiding relationship with the Vine we can do nothing!

“I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”

We must be as intentional in our spiritual development as we are in the pursuit of our ministry goals. We must not neglect the very disciplines we expect our staff and Core teams to be committed to:

**DAILY TIME WITH GOD**

There is no substitute for personally knowing God’s word and applying it to our daily lives and the lives of the staff and students we minister to.

“Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

Our regular references to God’s Word reflect our belief that it really is “useful” and really does “equip” us.

“All Scripture is God inspired and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

**CHURCH**

“And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near” (Hebrews 10:25).

Christians find many reasons to “neglect” regular church attendance, but it is neglect nonetheless. We continually pour into the lives of others. We must connect to a community, which can pour back into us through worship, fellowship and an opportunity to serve. There is something deeply powerful in local church community (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35), and there is a local church which needs you to be a part of their body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).
God also built a Sabbath into our weekly routine (Exodus 20:8-11). In addition to our regular church involvement, we need to find a consistent time away from our ministry responsibilities every week. A day long retreat (quarterly, bi-monthly, monthly) to rest, reflect, and refocus would be a great discipline to work into your life as well. It is difficult to hear from God if you don’t take the time to listen (Psalm 46:10).

An extended Sabbatical pushes pause from the busy, demanding life you lead. It is an opportunity to disengage from ministry for a period of time to:

- **Rest** - Doing something you really want to do that brings you life.
- **Reflect** - Lord, is there anything you want to say to me?
- **Refocus** - Lord, am I doing what I should be doing?
- **Realign** - Lord, what changes in life and ministry should I make?

**OTHER SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**

There are many resources available to help implement these and other spiritual disciplines:

- Journaling
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Scripture study & memorization
- Stewardship
- Solitude and Silence

When was the last time you were silent? Really silent. Not because you didn't have anything to say but so that you could hear the still, small voice of God. Can you put aside your scheming, fixing and complaining and just be silent? Try it for five minutes right now. Stop reading this and be silent. Don't pray, journal or plan, just be silent.

I started this exercise for five minutes a day four years ago. I think I made it about 62 seconds the first day before the to-do list in my head started adding more tasks. The next day was about the same before I started noticing how dusty the table next to me was- which led to guilt over not cleaning enough and before I knew it I had rearranged my furniture in my head. I may not have been talking but my brain was not in silent mode.

I did start to get a bit better at the silence. The discipline to sit and wait and listen paid off. Five minutes became fifteen and then became thirty and then became sixty. After about a year, I managed a whole day per quarter. As I sat with the Lord, he reminded me that he loves me, he forgives me, he hears me, and he knows me.

What could taking time for silence look like in your life? Start small. Think about moments of silence in each day. Maybe you are already doing that and a half day of unplugging is next. Or maybe even a whole day of retreat. Plan it in advance, put it on your calendar, and designate the place it will happen and then do all you can to protect that time.

There are some great resources to encourage you in this spiritual discipline. Check out *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, *Leading on Empty* by Wayne Cordero and *Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton.
I learned the hard way that I was teaching and talking about the “balanced life” philosophy that YFC proudly taught but I was not practicing it. Balance: physically, mentally, spiritually and socially. That was it, right?! Well, it wasn’t working because there is no way you can “balance” those.

Balance means equally weighing different areas so they don’t all come crashing down. There is a better word that fits the world of youth ministry: RHYTHM. Being aware of rhythms keeps you healthy.

If you aren’t careful you can burn yourself out doing Campus Life and have nothing left for the other areas of your life. Maybe you are single and trying to be proactive to live at a healthy pace. Or maybe you find yourself with a great spouse and several kids… which makes you think “this is not as easy as it used to be.” God called you to this ministry and He can help you fulfill it and meet your other responsibilities as well.

When we think of being a healthy Campus Life director we often refer to the Balanced Life which challenges us to be healthy mentally, physically, spiritually and socially (Luke 2:52). Although abiding with the Father is central, it is important to pay attention to the other areas too. But you can’t always do it all. When someone compounds unhealthy living week in and week out it often leads to burnout.

Having a rhythm to life is important when thinking about a pace that honors the Father. Some days, weeks or even seasons will require more time and effort than others. When we think about Jesus’ life we can think of days and weeks marked by intensity and others marked by rest. He had a rhythm that allowed him to keep a pace that was right for the season at hand.

The advancement of technology has affected our pace. We find ourselves constantly connected to others and to our world. This amplifies the amount of communication, the volume of multitasking and the expectation to be available. This feeds our quicker and quicker pace. This must be an area we take seriously if we want to live healthy lives that allow us to be present with those in our midst.

Below are a few key areas that will help you create a healthier rhythm:

**PACE AND SPACE**

- **Divide your day into 3 parts.** Consider the morning one part (7am-12noon), the afternoon one part (12noon-5pm), and the evening one part (5pm-10pm)... try to only work 2 parts most days. Campus Life allows you to be flexible and really needs you to be flexible to do the job well.

- **Focus makes a big difference!** The longer you do Campus Life the more opportunities you will get in your community and beyond. You can’t do it all.
  - **Do the right things.** Focus helps you do the right things and have time to do them well.
  - **Learn to say “No.”** Focus helps you know when to say no (and yes).
  - **Move from urgent to important.** If you keep the most important things front and center it will keep the urgent from taking up so much of your time.

- **Be present in each place and in each role you play.** Whether you are at home with your family, at an appointment with a teen or sitting with your ministry team you must strive to be present. This may mean ignoring the phone, looking people in the eyes, and making the most of every opportunity.
• **Schedule margin into your personal life and into your work life.** Instead of filling your schedule to the brim, allow for some free hours scattered throughout your week. When our schedules are overfull we don’t have time to process, plan, respond to emergencies or notice new things God is up to.

• **Control your technology (or your technology will control you!)** Don’t let your phone, computer, TV, and game system dominate your life. This will create more healthy space then just about anything else.

**LIFE GIVING ACTIONS**

• **Make time for hobbies and personal interests.** Hobbies allow us to play and create which often reduces stress.

• **Have friends that are your age.** It makes a world of difference to have peers that you can enjoy time with and share life with.

• **Exercise and Eat Healthy.** Regular exercise and a healthier diet will make you feel better about yourself and will also give you more energy to invest in what matters most.

• **Get enough sleep!** Study after study shows that a good night’s sleep cannot be replaced. Find a way to get close to 8 hours of sleep most of the time and you will notice a difference.

• **Laugh more.** Laughter is great for the soul. Laugh with your friends, laugh with your family, laugh with your ministry team – it connects people and it releases stress.

• **Be content where you are.** We add stress to our lives by focusing on what could be next. The new leadership role, a bigger paycheck, the larger house you are thinking about can rob you from the joy of today.

**MINISTRY MINDED LIFESTYLE**

• **Include your family.** Involve your kids and spouse in your ministry when it makes sense. Don’t let this become a distraction to your ministry but wisely chose opportunities for your students to see a healthy family interact and for your family to see you in action.

• **Empower Empower Empower!** You need to invest in growing and empowering a ministry team. Seek training and counsel on how best to achieve empowerment breakthrough. Share the ministry load by doing ministry together. You will see life transformation multiply while you also keep your sanity (check out CL 201).

• **Make short bursts of investments.** Instead of going to the baseball game for 2 hours stop in for 30 minutes and make yourself known. Don’t just “put your time in,” intentionally schedule the right RMA’s.

• **Evaluate how you spend your time.** Just because you have always done something doesn’t mean you always should do it. Set up a quarterly reviews either personally or with a supervisor to talk through things you should stop doing, do less of or start doing.

• **Hold some planning hours each week.** Set aside 2 hours to pray and plan your week. This allows you to consider where to empower volunteers, what events are key for your team, what kids are ripe for an investment and so much more.

The goal is to live and minister in such a way that you are offering people in your life the best version of yourself. This will require you to be faithful in taking care of yourself and finding a healthy rhythm to life that allows you to be faithful for the long-haul.
Books for further depth:

- *The Rhythm of Life* by Mathew Kelly
- *Crazy Busy* by Kevin DeYoung
- *Margin* by Richard Swenson
- *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* by Peter Scazzero
- *First Things First* by Stephen Covey
- *The Rest Of God* by Mark Buchanan
One of the stresses that can often impact someone in ministry is poor financial health. Most ministers of the gospel are not “in it for the money,” however we are responsible for stewarding well what we have. God is the provider of all we have, and out of gratitude, we are called to be responsible with what we are given.

In a study conducted by The Glass Door, 83% of Human Resource Managers reported that personal financial problems had a large impact or some impact on employee performance. So, while your finances may seem like a personal issue they can affect your productivity and your availability at work. When we live under the stress of financial anxiety and/or debt, our ministry will suffer and we can be easily lured out of ministry simply for a bigger paycheck and relief from financial stress. Financial health frees you to focus on the ministry to which you are called.

**MANAGING MONEY**

Understanding the following three Biblical Truths provides an appropriate framework as you consider your finances:

- **Biblical Truth #1: God Owns Everything**
  “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. For he laid the earth’s foundation on the seas and built it on the ocean depths” (Psalm 24:1-2).
  “…for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him” (Colossians 1:16).

- **Biblical Truth #2: Accept What You Have**
  “After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can’t take anything with us when we leave it. So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content” (1 Timothy 6:7-8).
  “Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, “I will never fail you. I will never abandon you” (Hebrews 13:5).

- **Biblical Truth #3: Seek First His Kingdom**
  “Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need” (Matthew 6:33).
  “You can make many plans, but the LORD’s purpose will prevail” (Proverbs 19:21).

Knowing these truths gives us the appropriate posture to plan our finances which is the most critical step in experiencing financial health. Utilize the following tips in that planning process:

- **Get an accurate picture of your finances.** What is your current family income? What are your current expenses? How much debt do you currently have? How much are you currently giving?
- **Create a budget.** Budgeting seems simple—make sure your income is greater than your expenses, right? But apparently it is not that simple. One of the best financial resources is Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University.

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He suggests, “baby steps” to achieving financial health that are Biblically based and attainable.

- **Establish an emergency fund.** Set aside a minimum of $1000 to cover unexpected expenses. Instead of stressing or charging you simply pay the bill.

- **Give generously.** The best reminder that everything belongs to the Lord is to give regularly. - “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you do” (Proverbs 3:9), and generously - “You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. ‘For God loves a person who gives cheerfully’“ (2 Corinthians 9:7).

- **Eliminate debt.** Romans 13:8 says, “Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God’s law.” In our materialistic culture eliminating debt is very, very tough, but it is also very, very critical if you are to experience financial freedom. Take a baby step… just take a step.

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**FINDING CONTENTMENT**

In his book, *How to Be Rich*, Andy Stanley states, “In reality, there’s no amount of money that can protect us from everything.” The challenge and the goal, therefore, is not to feel complete financial protection at all times, but the goal is contentment. In 1 Timothy 6:6 Paul says, “Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth.” We experience “great” wealth when we are content with what we have, when we give generously, and when we show a spirit of gratitude for what we have.

It is tempting to talk about the sacrifices we make as a result of choosing ministry as a career (*We had to cancel our cable! We can only afford a used car! We don’t eat out except on special occasions!*). In Proverbs 14:30 we are warned, “A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.” Living in discontentment will not provide you with the heart to follow Jesus well, let alone minister to lost teens.

Contentment allows us to focus on blessings and gifts we receive as a result of being in ministry (I get to be with kids as they trust their lives to Jesus! I have a community behind me that believes in this ministry! I work for an organization that cares as much for my relationship with Jesus as I do! I actually get paid for this!). Hebrews 13:5 says, “Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, ‘I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.’” That is a promise that gives more than any earthly thing we could purchase.

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**GAINING PERSPECTIVE**

If your picture of wealth comes purely from the world around you, your perspective is skewed. Challenge yourself to serve those that have less than you in your community. Take the opportunity to serve on a mission trip (check out YFC’s Project Serve and World Outreach for some amazing opportunities). Removing the focus from our “needs” frees us to recognize and meet the needs in the teens we serve and minister to.

Andy Stanley sums it up well: “Honor God. Serve that single objective and everything else automatically falls into place.”
When I started working for YFC, I was so excited about reaching lost kids. I had left a position as Youth Pastor, went to Summer Institute, got married, and moved to begin my new job as Campus Life director.

“I am giving you the biggest school in our area...we have not been able to make it work...your job is to make it happen!” the director told me. (It had six kids coming to club all from one church.)

“Also, you need to run two other rural schools and three Sundays a month you need to “preach” at the juvenile home for boys. We also have a singing group that I need you to go with every other Sunday night as they perform in churches and you need to speak then too!”

I went at it full steam: three clubs, juvenile home, music group, run-throughs, building times, appointments with kids, administrators, teachers, pastors, donors, volunteers, Friday night games, practice, band camp, drama plays. I found myself gone at least 5 nights a week but loved what I was doing. The challenge of ministry energized me.

What words described me then? Energized, excited, motivated. Everything was new and fresh. But, ministry is not easy – it’s messy. I started to get very tired. I wanted to be with my wife and our new son more. The schedule started to wear me out.

Soon enough what words started to creep in on me? Complacency, apathy, cynicism, routine. I wanted out, I knew I couldn’t go on this way. I needed someone to talk to. I needed a coach.

So now you understand your call, your spiritual life is flourishing, you’ve successfully balanced your personal and ministry life and you are teaching Financial Peace at your church. There will still be times that you will need some coaching to continue growing in these areas. You will also increasingly have opportunities to coach others who are facing their own challenges. Let’s take a look at the basics of coaching.

Ministry can be defined as meeting people where they are and taking them to where God wants them to be. In their book Coaching Based Ministry, McGervey and Cosby write:

That definition tells us three very important truths about ministry:

- Ministry begins where people are, not where we think they should be,
- Ministry is focused on where God wants them to be, not on where we think they should be.
- The key phrase is “taking them.” That begs the question: What is the most effective approach for “taking them from where they are to where God wants them to be?”

Coaching empowers people to change without telling them what to do. To be empowered means to take ownership of and responsibility for shaping your own future.

Coaching is not training, mentoring, counseling or supervising. They all have their place, but coaching does not rely on the coach to solve a problem. Rather, the coach listens and asks questions well to help the person choose their own solution.
Coaching Questions

In addition to Coaching Based Ministry, another good overview of coaching is in Coaching 101, by Logan and Carlton. They summarize coaching with three questions:

1) Where am I?
2) Where do I want to go?
3) How will I get there?

Consider how helpful it would be for someone to ask you some of the following questions to help you on that journey:

- What can we celebrate? What is going well?
- What would you like to talk about today? What is currently challenging?
- What aspect of that situation are you most eager to change?
- What obstacles stand in the way?
- What options do you see for making the change that you want?
- What would a five (on a scale of 1 to 10) look like in this area? A ten?
- What specifically would you like to accomplish?
- Which option do you believe will best achieve the objectives you have set?
- What is your timetable to achieve this goal?

Coaching Practice

- **Coach** another staff person by the questions above and then have them try coaching you.
- **Read** one of the books mentioned above and consciously try to bring a coaching mindset to your interactions with staff and students.
- **Attend** a workshop, seminar or training event to gain broader coaching skills.

Being Coached

A personal coach can be a valuable asset for those times when you know something needs to change. The right solution is worth the cost.

- **Agree** on a beginning and ending point.
- **Clarify** expectations by using a coaching agreement.
- **Select** a coach from outside your local ministry to remove the hesitancy to be honest.
- **Celebrate** the past victories before diving into new challenges.
COACHING OTHERS

A coaching mindset fits nicely within the YFC 3Story framework. My first responsibility is to abide in Christ. Then, with my story connected to God’s story, I love someone just as they are and listen to their story. As I discover their story I also learn their questions about faith and their barriers to faith. As they choose to take steps to answer those questions and break down those barriers they are connecting their story to God’s Story. This mindset impacts all of our relationships:

- **With students** we avoid trying to solve all their problems and coach them to choose the best course of action for them.
- **With those we supervise** we are less likely to force a square peg into a round hole and instead coach them to best utilize their gifts within a staff team.
- **With others** God brings across our path there may be a time we enter into a more formal coaching relationship as we gain more experience and confidence.

Coaching challenges us to see people as God sees them and gives us the privilege to help them discover God’s plan for their life. “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

CONCLUSION

There is not shortcut to great ministry over time. Celebrate your call and savor every successful ministry moment. Keep your spiritual health as priority one and work hard at keeping balance in your life. Especially do not let money issues sidetrack you and keep you from completing the ministry God has given you.

“But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don’t be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you” (2 Timothy 4:5).