

LET THEM LEAD

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The next generation is ready to lead, so let's empower them to lead. Many of us in ministry aren't always looking ahead to see who will take the mantle when the time comes. Instead, we can be present-focused and fail to recognize gifts and callings in the young adults we lead. True, shepherd-hearted ministry is ministry centered on people—the ones we are called to steward, not merely the ministries we lead. It's easy to focus on the *now*, not the *future*.

The young adults we invest in have a calling, some even to vocational ministry. Each young adult we minister to represents multiple lives beyond the life we directly impact. There's a *ripple effect* in every single call. One *yes* to Jesus represents multiple lives changed for His kingdom because one call represents multiple lives.

What if even one young adult in your ministry is called to vocational ministry? Do you see them? Do you affirm this call? Have you given them the chance to lead?

One *yes* by a ministry leader who sees, affirms, and empowers the call in a young adult represents a multitude of lives impacted. This is how we fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ when He said, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19, NIV). It happens when each of us is willing to walk in the fullness of God's call, especially those of us who lead the next generation. We don't just say *yes* to God's call on us; we say *yes* to those we've been entrusted to lead.

We know ministry service in God's kingdom often involves obedience that isn't always glamorous. Ironically, culture today is inundated with the need for recognition, titles, followers, likes, and being praised. But you and I both know that being called by God to ministry often means being called to the greatest sacrificial life we can ever lead. It's counter to culture.

We want recognition; God wants obedience.
We want to be noticed; God wants our heart.
We want opportunity to be something; God already is everything.

We recognize that God's call isn't to positions but to himself. He calls us not to *do* something great but to *be* more like Him each day. We need to recognize that the more we are like Him, the more effective we are at this thing called ministry. Our hearts should burn for the mission of Jesus, and each of us has a part to play, including the stewardship of the call of God on those we lead.

As pastors and leaders of young adults, we aren't in the business of raising up leaders who believe that they are entitled to positions. This helps to protect them from when positions are attained and they believe they've made it. Rather, positions and opportunities are stewarded. Walking in the fullness of God-given calling means obeying His leading daily.

Can I suggest that what (and who) has been entrusted to you is bigger than what you may regularly notice? Imagine the ministry represented because of your obedience to steward well the ones you have been entrusted with. Imagine the lives represented because of the ones who are willing to say yes to God's call. Will you lead them to their yes? Just as most of us have had leaders who called us up to lead, it's now our turn.

What will happen in the next decade of the Church? Many statistics today tell us we have fewer young leaders preparing to step into the call to vocational ministry than just a few decades ago. It's time for change! We must be intentional. We have to get real regarding where we're heading, and not just focus on where we are now.

Have you considered what the next ten years might look like in the Church? Who in your circle has kingdom potential greater than what they may see in themselves? How can you call them into the fullness of that calling? Don't underestimate your influence in their lives. It's time to steward God's call on the next generation.

This is all part of the greater conversation of what it means to multiply influence. Imagine interacting intentionally with those you lead who have a call to ministry. Open your eyes to their potential. See them for their God-given destiny.

To affirm them, vocalize what you see. Encourage them out loud and do it habitually: "I see you. I know you can do it. I see more in you than you may even see in yourself. God has a plan for your life, and I'm with you. Let's get you there."

Empowering them means giving them the opportunity to step up and lead. This is where things get practical. Often, people are willing to serve but want to be asked. We shouldn't hoard ministry; we should multiply it. Multiply your influence, multiply your impact. Bring them along. Get on their level. Show them the way. Speak life over their future and their calling. Then, empower them to lead.

As the leader entrusted to steward these lives, your intentionality to see, affirm, and empower can be the difference between ministries yet to be built and ministries that would never exist. It could mean individuals hear the name of Jesus and what He offers sooner rather than later. It could be the difference between a young adult stepping into the God-given dream they were given or giving it up altogether. It could be the difference between a young adult stepping into the anointing you see in their life, instead of the life that doubt has convinced them to lead.

Your words mean more than you may realize. When it comes to the destiny set before them, it's time to let them lead. They will change the world. May it start with our yes: *Yes, I will multiply influence. Yes, I'll give it away. Yes, I'll choose to see them in their*

potential. Yes, I will affirm them in their God-given calling. Yes, I will empower them to lead.

Just as someone once saw us and gave us a shot, now it's our turn. It's time to pass the baton of the call of God to the ones ready to lead. They may not have it all figured out yet, but God does. For all we have learned thus far in ministry, it's time to multiply our influence by giving it away. Our yes represents their God-given destiny, and their God-given destiny represents eternity. Jesus, after all, preached to His *disciples* that they, too, were called to go and make *disciples*. You replicate what you are. Disciples make disciples. It's time to replicate not just what you do, but who you are. Let them lead.