

A Letter to Young Adults

Join the Discipleship Adventure

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Older people in your churches probably have a fine sense of direction when it comes to charting a path of discipleship. But if younger adults sit back and let them do all the driving, the ride might seem boring. Younger adults need to get in the driver's seat and take responsibility for their own faithful discipleship.

Discipleship is an adventure! It is an adventure that involves faithful celebrations, connections, development, service and sharing. And the whole church's journey will bear more fruit if you contribute your input, energy, and enthusiasm.

Let's talk about faithful celebrations. How many young adults have sat in church feeling like what was taking place didn't have anything at all to do with their lives? The discipleship adventure calls for us to work for worship that is lively, vibrant, effective and relevant. Here are some things you can do:

- *Worship all week.* In the morning on the way to class or work, pop in a worship CD in your car or make sure your iPod has some worship music that helps you settle and focus on God's goodness.

- *Engage actively in Sunday worship.* Be patient with the process of worship transformation and renewal. If the hymns get boring, take the time to read the words and gain an understanding of their meaning. Don't just read the affirmation of faith, proclaim it with conviction and certainty. When listening to the sermon, look for ways to understand the Bible a little more, ways to live differently, and ways God is moving, speaking, acting and redoing. Think about and reflect on one thing you are grateful for, one thing you are struggling with, and one thing, big or small, God wants you to do for others.

- *Make suggestions.* Talk to your worship chair and pastor. Be kind, caring and sincere in your conversation. Volunteer to share your ideas about ways worship can be meaningful and exciting. Compliment worship participants when you have been moved by something they said or did. Let them know when things are meaningful and inspiring to you. Remember, worship may be boring on some days, but Jesus Christ is never boring. It is Christ and the Spirit that enlivens worship.

Another phase of the journey involves faithful connections. Recently, I attended my college homecoming. I couldn't wait to reconnect with my old roommates and fraternity brothers. But things were a little different since I was there last. I could no

longer pose as an undergraduate and everyone, including my professors, addressed me as "Reverend." Seemingly, I had grown up since last we met. I was able to hang with one of my two roommates, and we reminisced of days gone by. But there were big gaps in the weekend as well. Many of my classmates had been too busy to attend. There were times I felt alone and without a connection.

This experience made me realize how very important it is to be connected with others. And it is important for the world to see how connected we are as the Body of Christ. Again, you can help create faithful connections for other young people in your church. Here's how:

- *When young adults come to your church for the first time, make sure they know they are fiercely welcomed.* Show excitement and enthusiasm about their presence. Invite them back to events other than the worship service. Make them feel connected.

- *Make sure your young adult group finds ways to be radically inclusive* of those from other cultures, races, economic backgrounds, and communities. Be intentional about the desire to connect with them.

- *Don't let anyone walk around your church looking lost and disconnected.* Overlook the allegiances, the loyalties, and the histories of family camaraderie. Step out into new territory and make new and faithful connections.

- *Remember that the world will know we are Christians by our love for one another.*

I invite you to know that God is making all things new and God is doing that through you. The discipleship adventure isn't always easy. But God desires our walk on this journey. And there are others waiting on your call and invitation. I'm ready to go. Are you with me?



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