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The Life of a Leader

I'm Overwhelmed

by Naomi Andrews

I'm overwhelmed with gratitude to the Lord for His direction in my life. In a few months I'll pack up my car, wave goodbye to Minnesota and head out to the sunshine state of California. About a year and a half ago God began growing this longing in my heart to move home to be nearer to my family. It's a decision I honestly agonized over for months. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." Many times the Lord has confirmed His will for my life and directed my path. I agonized because for a long time the decision didn't seem clear cut to me.

I'm overwhelmed because God is answering the longings of my heart. On a walk earlier this spring I shared my on going struggle with my friend Allison. "I just want to follow my heart," I confessed guiltily. I wasn't expecting her answer, "That's okay. That's fine. Follow your heart." Follow my heart? That's the world's message. The rest of her answer made all the difference, "God puts those longings in our heart." After months of thinking, wrestling, praying, talking, wondering, it's all led up to one answer: yes. Yes, move to California.

I'm overwhelmed right now with everything that is going on in my life. Trying to spend the precious

remaining time with friends and extended family members before I go. All the things to finish up at work. And of course packing, packing and packing. I'm overwhelmed with not knowing where I will work, go to school, what church I will attend or what friends I will make in California.

Amidst the feeling of being overwhelmed I'm thankful for how the Lord is using this time in my life to teach me. I am not leaving because I am called specifically to a new ministry, but something God is showing me is that it isn't always specifically where you are, but what you do where you are. We are in ministry because we are believers. Each of us is called to be a minister for Christ. When we follow God's will for our lives it's a call to obey Him. So while I don't go to a ministry I know that there is always opportunity to minister.

Psalm 9:10 says, "Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you." I don't know how to end this article, but I will tell you this, more than anything else I'm overwhelmed by a God who loves me and will never forsake me.

Andrews is the AFLC Youth Ministries Associate. She will be moving to California the end of July and will continue in partnership with AFLC Youth Ministries as their Young Adults Coordinator.



JULY 5-9, 2010



“Have you looked for that one opportunity to push your maturing teens toward leadership? FLY Boot Camp is your event! Packed with training in personal evangelism, with instruction in Biblical worldview, and with activities to accentuate team building, it is a transforming week for youth and for you.” ~ Pastor Jason Holt



My Disci

My Discipleship Journey

I first learned what it means to be a disciple of Jesus from my middle school youth leader, Monica. I distinctly remember the love she had for each student in our youth group. We knew she cared about us. She enjoyed being with us. She was always excited to see us. I watched her talk with parents after youth group and pray with kids to receive Jesus. We sat with her at basketball games – she was our number one fan! She took small groups of students to concerts and fast food restaurants. It didn't take much to figure out what motivated her to do everything she did. It was Jesus. She wanted us to experience what it means to follow Christ. As Jesus filled her life, Jesus overflowed from her life into ours. Monica helped me follow Jesus.

Now, whenever I see Monica, we reminisce about our “youth group days.” We recall all the funny things that happened, the all-nighters, Bible camps, and the sweet fellowship and spiritual growth we all experienced. Monica always encourages me in my youth ministry efforts. I tell her that so much of what I do in ministry points back to the impact she had on my life as a youth leader. I often emulate her approach to youth work.

I'm learning that being a disciplemaker is not just about leading. In Jesus' day, a disciple was understood to be a student apprentice who was devoted to following the teaching and lifestyle of a spiritual teacher. Mark 3:13-15 tells us, “Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve – designating them apostles – that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach...” Disciplemaking is about being a disciple, who makes disciples, who make disciples. If we want to be leaders of great spiritual influence,

fleship Journey

by Chad Friestad

we must be the disciples Jesus wants us to be. Since our students learn more from our life and example than they do from our teaching, shouldn't we make sure we are modeling for them what a true disciple of Jesus really is? Students watch us closely. They see what our devotional life is like, they know what music we listen to, they notice what kind of friends we have (or if we have any). The best thing I can do as a youth leader is to be an authentic Christ follower. This means learning from him and spending time with him, being in mutual community with other authentic followers of Jesus, and learning from the teaching and lifestyle of a spiritual mentor. Jesus himself often went off by himself to solitary places to spend time alone to connect with his heavenly father. It was his devotion to his father and his desire to fulfill God's will that made his ministry so effective.

God has been teaching me that in order for Jesus to flow out of me, I constantly need Jesus flowing in. I came to a point in my ministry, about nine months ago, where I realized I needed more of Jesus in my own life. I had been pouring myself into students and giving my time and energy to the church, but was pouring out more than I was allowing in. I started to make conscious choices to let Jesus in. Jesus has come to me in the form of godly friends, daily Bible reading, and learning from my spiritual mentor.

I now have two friends I meet with on a weekly basis for accountability. God has also provided me with a group of godly guy friends my age that I meet with for dinner on Monday nights. We talk and share our

hearts. Sometimes we have deep spiritual discussions, sometimes we just shoot the breeze. They're friends I can learn from and share my life with. After I started using a Bible that has daily scripture readings all laid out for me, my devotional life has been drastically different. With an Old Testament reading, a New Testament reading, a Psalm, and a Proverb for each day, I can't wait to pick up where I left off the day before. I highly recommend both *The One-Year Bible* and *The Daily Bible*, arranged in chronological order. I am extremely blessed to have a pastor who is investing in me. Pastor Jim has been an amazing mentor to me. I love working alongside a seasoned pastor and I have savored every opportunity I have had to learn from him. I never pass up an invitation from Pastor Jim to go out for coffee, accompany him on a pastoral visit, have dinner with his family, or go to the hot tub at the end of an exhausting day of ministry. He is an example of Jesus in my life. Just like Paul said, "And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

How is the Holy Spirit prompting you to spend more time with Jesus and those following him? Whom is the Holy Spirit using to show you what it means to follow Jesus closely? Let's make true disciples by being true disciples!

Friestad, a graduate of AFLBS and Moody Bible Institute, is Director of Youth and Outreach at Good Shepherd Church in Camarillo, CA

FLY Boot Camp – Counselor/Trail Guide

Registration this year is FREE out of appreciation for your ministry. Applications are necessary, so check it out.

<http://youth.aflc.org/images/stories/pdfs/TrailGuideApplication.pdf>

E-Toolbox – 1 GB Flash Drive Free from AFLC Youth Ministries

Loaded with our Top 23 tools to be delivered at Annual Conference.

If you don't get to Conference, talk to your pastor to grab one.

http://www.aflc.org/annual/html/2010_aflc_conference.html

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Free Leader's Guide on this page as well.

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The Contact is published twice a year to encourage and engage youth workers of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The AFLC is a growing fellowship of 270 churches whose members believe that the Bible is true and that everyone needs Jesus.

AFLC Youth Ministries exists for three goals: to win; to build, and to equip youth for Jesus Christ. We are here to assist in making disciples!

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The Life of a Leader

by Pastor Jason Holt

Are “personal life” and “ministry life” two separated categories? Here is why I ask.

This summer will be the three-year mark for me in this role. I have asked dozens of youth leaders – volunteers, paid-staff, lay workers, and pastors – how can I pray for them? I am thankful for the openness with which many of you have answered this question. The two areas in my question consistently pop up in the answers – “my personal life” and “my ministry life”.

“My personal life” commonly hits interaction with people including family and neighbors. It regularly carries the joys of new accomplishments – new home, new degree, or new child. This area also has the ground on which personal struggles fester including words like loss, bills, hardship, misunderstanding, and sin.

“My ministry life” often is approached as its own category. This slot identifies the fruit by the Lord’s Word and Spirit as well as the burden over further progress. It holds tension from our shortcomings as individuals and as a Body. The prayer requests are directed toward more of God’s grace and more of His wisdom.

The life of a leader is full of both personal and ministry. I am grateful for the distinction to keep in mind praying for these two, but I am wondering if the watershed mark between them is not so clear. Specifically, are we in danger if we have set ourselves up to be OK in one area, but not in the other? I Timothy 3:5 reminds us that personal life is a profound foundation to ministry life. More than two separate areas, personal life and ministry life are flowing into one another like streams of water.

A friend and I were reading through John 15:1-17. In this rich passage Jesus draws His followers to a stance of

abiding – abiding in Him (the true vine), abiding in His Word, and abiding in His love. Then verse 16 grabbed my attention.

“You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.” (NASB)

At our 2010 Youth Workers Retreat, we heard from Dave & Rennie Garda that the three connected layers of making disciples can be summed up:

D1 – Follow Jesus

– Inflow from God’s Word & God’s Spirit
 (“I chose you”)

D2 – Follow & Fish

– Overflow to believers and unbelievers
 (“appointed / go & bear fruit”)

D3 – Multiply Influence

– Support other believers in D1 & D2
 (“fruit would remain”)

What is one way in which this verse impacts your thinking of personal and ministry life?

What action do you pray will result of seeing this verse?

Who can hold to this pursuit in order to grow in your life as a leader?

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urgent care

the contact

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Upcoming Events

July 5-9, 2010
FLY Boot Camp
\$0 for Trail Guide
Trail of Truth

July/August 2010
Student Missions
Pray for teams in
Ukraine & India

September 2010
Young Adults
Blog
[grounded317.
blogspot.com](http://grounded317.blogspot.com)

2011
January 21-23
Youth Worker's
Retreat
Encourage Hearts
& Equip Hands

July 4-9, 2011
FLY Convention
\$250 for
Counselors
It Is Written

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