

# Seminar 4: Leadership

*The Youth Leader as Spiritual Leader, Mentor and Friend*



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# 1-INTRODUCTION

- This is the key point to note: as a Christian who influences other Christians, the Youth Ministry Leader will lead not just through speech, **but essentially through the whole life**. In following the example of Jesus, he or she becomes an example to young followers.



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# 1-INTRODUCTION

- The Youth Ministry Leader **needs to be a human language translation of what Jesus is.**



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## 2-SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

This seminar of study will look at the youth leader, first as a student and follower of Christ—the foundation of all Christian life and especially of leadership, then as a spiritual leader, mentor, and friend to the youth under the leader’s guidance. We will consider some parameters necessary to maintain both respect and compassionate friendship.



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# 3-THE YOUTH LEADER AS SPIRITUAL LEADER

The first commitment of a youth leader, therefore, must be to Christ. **Before we lead, we must follow.** Every leader is a sheep of the supreme Pastor, following the guidance of the Great Shepherd.



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# The leader must be a follower of Christ first.

Fundamental commitment to Christianity must guide the life of the youth leader. Only then will we be able to develop leadership in the right context. **A true Christian leader will naturally develop a Christ-like leadership style.**



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# Spirituality drives the rhythm and quality of our social interactions

- We are human beings, and the Bible understands the human being as a total, complete being. **A biblical approach to anthropology considers the human being holistically; physical, mental, and spiritual. All these layers of our being are interdependent. They do not function properly if they are not well equalized, supplied, and interconnected.**



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# Spirituality drives the rhythm and quality of our social interactions

- All of them are important, but there is an order of factors that changes the final product: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33). **When Jesus spoke these words, He was establishing the supremacy of spirituality as fuel for all areas of our lives.** The success of our spirituality is the **ballast to the success of everything else.**



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# 4-THE YOUTH LEADER AS MENTOR

It is the privilege of the youth leader to be a guide for this phase of life. **But this privilege brings with it a responsibility:** to have a contextualized awareness of the needs of the young, providing them the opportunity to experience a real Christianity relevant to the time and context in which they live.



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# The youth of today are constantly searching for models.

The basic fact is that young people are pragmatic, that is, they tend to **believe not in what someone *says* to be true, not in what someone *says* works.** They tend to credit and value what they *see* as **working**.



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# The youth of today are constantly searching for models.

In fact, Adventist Christianity is **very beautiful in theory, but only works in practice**. The youth's experience with the church must be permeated with something real, practical, and effective. Otherwise, **mere theory (however beautiful, interesting, and logical) produces no change in life**.



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# The youth of today are constantly searching for models.

We need to materialize our concepts. Make your whole theory of leadership a practice that nurtures your followers. The young need to feel the **real benefits** of what the leader is proposing. **If they realize that it works in the leader's life, they will believe that it can work in their lives.**



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# They are also willing to follow leaders who are real.

Now it is understood: **For Christianity to be seen to function well in the life of the leader does not presuppose the perfection of the leader.** One need not be perfect to be followed; Young people are far less likely to follow someone who is supposedly perfect. They know very well that nobody is. **Idealizing perfect leaders is idealizing the humanly impossible.**



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# They are also willing to follow leaders who are real.

A leader who inspires a young person is not one absolutely immune to errors, failures, and misunderstandings. **What inspires a young person is, rather, one who has the wisdom, resilience, and perseverance to learn from one's own mistakes, and find biblical solutions to practical issues.**



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# They are also willing to follow leaders who are real.

- When the young can identify with the story of a leader, with the failures of a leader, with the struggles of a leader, with the dilemmas of a leader, **they will identify with the solutions found by the leader.**



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# They are also willing to follow leaders who are real.

- "Be my imitators as I am the imitator of Christ," said the apostle Paul, a royal leader of the early Church who **never concealed the reality of his struggles, nor did he hide the way to his victory.**



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# They are also willing to follow leaders who are real.

- Paul was a real leader. And real leaders inspire their followers. **Young people will follow real leaders.**



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# 5-THE YOUTH LEADER AS FRIEND

- It is true of all leaders that those whose followers see them as friends, also, will follow more willingly, but nowhere is this truer than among young people. **A leader who is their friend will have far more influence over them.**



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# 5-THE YOUTH LEADER AS FRIEND

- **The young already know what constitutes a true friend.** They know a friend who really cares. A true friend will not cover up or lie for a friend and will tell the truth in love in a way that superficial friends never can. **They are not seeking those who are in authority over them to be their “buddies.” But they are seeking loving friendship.**



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# 6-CONCLUSION

- To summarize, a youth leader who has a strong commitment to Christ, who embraces and embodies biblical and spiritual disciplines, and who leads by clear and honest example will be a model that will inspire young followers to commit to Christ as well. **This is the most effective form of leadership.**



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# 6-CONCLUSION

- This was what Paul sought to convey as a principle of leadership to the young Timothy when he wrote:  
"Recommend and teach these things. Do not let anyone despise you for being young. **But for those who believe, be an example in the manner of speech, in behavior, in love, in faith, and in purity.**



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# 7-ACTIVITY

- **Individual:** Write down and keep the three things from this lesson that you find most helpful in your own situation.



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# 7-ACTIVITY

- **Group:** Gather with three or four others and brainstorm ways to improve your local youth ministry using the principles outlined in this lesson.



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# 8-RESOURCES

- Visit our website: [youth.adventist.org](https://youth.adventist.org) for mentoring, devotional, and other resources.



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