

## what if?

**What if we reclaimed the "ministry" in "youth ministry" by...**

- Refusing to see youth ministry as a vocational option and pursuing it only as a response to a calling?
- Drawing people close rather than pushing them away with a holier-than-thou persona?
- Being more concerned about individuals than crowds?
- Being more moved by God's words than George Barna's words?
- Serving without wearing a Christian T-shirt that labeled the service as Christian?
- Treating theology as something that's as practical as God is relevant?
- Demonstrating that working solo is a poor replacement for relying on a believing community?
- Shepherding worship bands through an understanding of what it means to draw people to the glory of God?
- Describing salvation as being rescued by God, not a way to be fulfilled?
- Holding on to the truth that following Jesus is more about dying than having fun?
- Proving we're more than specialists, leaders, administrators, or activity directors—but at our core we're ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

**What if we ministered like Jesus by...**

- Making our purpose the same as Jesus' purpose—to

glorify the Father?

- Making our mission the same as Jesus' mission—to make disciples of all nations through his church?
- Following Jesus rather than trying to copy him?
- Creating environments weighted toward spiritual transformation—where we foster true adoration, genuine community, the proclaimed truth, and sacrificial service?
- Identifying students who long for something more and equipping them to experience deep relationships with each other?
- Empowering teenagers to embody the gospel as part of God's redeeming plan?
- Prioritizing our time with a few young people so we can perpetuate the movement of God in the lives of many more students?

Whether we like it or not, we're multiplying something. Our young people are being disciplined—in ways that look like us. Maybe there's a reason the Scriptures warn us about the great responsibility of ministry. Maybe that's what it means to reclaim it.

**Editor's Note:** If this column resonates with you, explore its themes more deeply at one of Sonlife's Strategy/Encounter seminars, coming soon to a city near you. For more information, call Sonlife at 800-770-4769.