



A service of the
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of the
Lutheran Church -
Missouri Synod

Youth Supports

A resource to encourage and empower youth
leaders for the expansion of the Lord's kingdom.

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- Be a Good Leader — Just Say “No!”
- Youth Ministry Helps!

Is your life
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Be a Good Leader – Just Say “No!”

What does it take to be a good leader? It doesn't mean that you do everything yourself. It is a 24 hour a day job, though, as good leadership includes leading by example. Do you really want others to do things the way you currently do them? Do you feel like you have things under control? Is your life balanced? For far too many of us, the answer to these questions is “no.” So how do we get back in control, get balanced and set a good example? We need to learn to set boundaries, and to say “no” without guilt.

What are boundaries?

Boundaries are imaginary lines that define what is our responsibility and what is NOT. Just like homeowners have physical property lines, we too need to set boundaries in our lives. Are there clear boundaries between your home life and your work? Are you overburdened at work because you've taken on so many little tasks that, really, should never have come to you in the first place? These can be weights keeping us from performing at our peak. Additionally, our lives and homes are an example to those we lead. If you spend 15 hours per day at work and miss important family events because of your job, what message do you send to those who look to you for guidance?

According to Drs. Cloud and Townsend in their book *Boundaries*, “one of the most serious problems facing Christians today is that many sincere, dedicated believers struggle with tremendous confusion about when it is biblically appropriate to set limits.” We are leading and influencing others. It's important that we are setting a good example in taking care of ourselves and our families. Setting boundaries is hugely important, especially for church leaders. Look at your life. What happened today that took you away from the important things? Where did you allow yourself to cross the “boundaries” of what was your responsibility and what was not? Setting boundaries is not just a cute phrase; it's an important part of your ministry.

How to say “no”

If you've established some boundaries in your life and you have a clear understanding of what is your responsibility and of what should be “on your plate,” then from time to time you'll need to say “no.” As Steven Covey says in many of his books, “Keep in mind that you are always saying ‘no’ to something. If it isn't to the apparent, urgent things in your life, it is probably to the more fundamental, highly important things.” You have to decide what your highest priorities are and then you have to have the courage to pleasantly, smilingly and non-apologetically say “no” to other things.

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Youth
Ministry
Help!

We frequently run into people who don't set boundaries. They go into "crisis mode" and try to dump everything in our laps. It is ok to say "no," if that's what it takes to stay true to our boundaries. Covey says that "even when the urgent is good, the good can keep you from your best. The enemy of the 'best' is often the 'good.'" If you say "yes" to the crisis, what are you saying "no" to? Your health? Your family? The real responsibilities of your job? What message is conveyed when you come to the rescue? Will this person learn to create boundaries or will they expect to be bailed out again?

Think about being the best leader you can be. What are your priorities? Have you set boundaries in your life and are you living by them? Can you say "no" without guilt? If you can say "yes" to these questions, you'll be able to lead a healthier, more balanced life and you will be a more effective leader.

- [Heather Ulrich](mailto:hulrich@epiphanyonline.org), Director of Christian Education at Epiphany Lutheran Church in Kenmore, Washington <hulrich@epiphanyonline.org>

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:
<http://www.nowlcms.org/Youth/ysupportslist.html>

Youth Ministry Consultants in Your Area

Youth Ministry consultants help you to either fine tune your youth ministry, refresh it or get you started on a complete overhaul. Contact Dick Weniger at the district office at 503/288-8383 or email him at <dickw@nowlcms.org> for more information on how a Youth Ministry Consultant can help you and your congregation!

The Department of Youth Ministry of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has several Internet resources available to you.

One of the items is a monthly E-Bulletin to "provide current information on youth events, resources, updates, plus various & sundry items of interest to youth workers (and youth) of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod." To subscribe to the Youth Ministry E-Bulletin send this message: SUBSCRIBE E-BULLETIN to MAILSERV@crf.cuis.edu.

To unsubscribe send the message: UNSUBSCRIBE to MAILSERV@crf.cuis.edu.

To find out about Bible studies, song books, and other resources available from the Department of Youth Ministry, check out the DYM Web site: <http://cs.lcms.org/youth>.

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