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Youth Supports

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

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My instant
message
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on my screen
and I'm not
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I'm
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3 Steps to Choosing Best Over Good

Don't I wish! Wouldn't it be great if there was a simple 3-step process to choosing the "best" in our ministry? But, how realistic is it to assume that Jesus wants us following a "ten-steps-to-better-dating" plan with Him?

My instant message window is up on my screen, and I'm not sure I like it today. Ever since we got this dsl connection at Trinity, my computer's permanently online and students can shoot me an instant message at any moment. I don't like getting interrupted. I'm not a multi-tasker. Yeah, I know, I could click the little messenger icon and select "away from desk," but it just feels dishonest. After all, I am here at my desk, working on important stuff, right?

Here's the real title for this article: "Making choices that make Jesus Glad." In a previous article, I shared that we teach more about life in Christ as church workers by what we *do* than by what we *say* (though both are important). I further claimed that spending time with my family--caring for my family--is quite possibly the "best" thing I can do in my ministry as a "youth, family, & education" leader.

So, let's toss out "3 Steps to Choosing the Best," and let's bring in a single question. A question that opens the doorway to "making choices that make Jesus glad." Here it is: "*Jesus, what are You doing?*" Not "What would Jesus do?" Not "Choose you this day whom you would serve." Or anything else that directs your thoughts back into your own heart. "Jesus, what are You doing?" takes the focus off me, throws my flesh into a state of confusion (a great state to be in!), and can permanently alter my daily choice-making.

My computer at home is still on "dial-up." I'm constantly sitting there, waiting for the computer to log onto the internet, and then waiting for the slow-as-molasses-in-winter download. I had a friend send me pictures once, and I tried to download them at home. Stupid, stupid, stupid!

Notice the openness of the question. There's no "yes" or "no" answer to this one! It's a single openhearted step to an open-line, no firewall, direct access, cable-

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E-Newsletter
from Board of
Youth Ministry

Servant Event
Possibilities

youthEsource
resource!

streaming fully-networked connection to Him. The question provokes, invites, demands a response. It's an instant messenger window that stays open on your work computer all day long. And don't you dare click the "minimize" button!

I'm getting "I.M.ed" even now as I write. One of the guys I mentor wants to know what I'm doing. I start to write a long explanation, delete it in a sudden change of mind, and then I type these words: "I'm instant messaging God." He writes back, "Good luck! :)" And I think to myself, "Luck has nothing whatsoever to do with it." And then I think, "It's a good thing Jesus doesn't reply the way I often do to instant messages."

So, no 3 steps from me and no patronizing "do it like I do it and everything will work out." Just ask the question. Couch your choices in the heart of a conversation with Jesus, your Lord. Choose the Best.

A final thought: if you're like me, resist the urge to minimize the window!

—Dustin Kunkel, Director of Youth and Education, Trinity Lutheran Church, Oregon City, OR <dkunkel@bctonline.com>

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

http://www.nowlcms.org/educational_services/NetworkingMinistries/YouthSupports.aspx

E-Newsletter from Synod Board of Youth Ministry

The Board of Youth Ministry for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has a monthly e-bulletin with youth ministry information. To subscribe to it, go to <http://www.lcms.org/enews/> and follow the directions.

Check Out Servant Event Possibilities

The Board of Youth ministry coordinates and helps to publicize Servant Events hosted by LC—MS congregations and groups. The new list for summer 2004 events is scheduled to be posted on the web November 3rd. Find out what possibilities there are for your group at <dcs.lcms.org/youth>.

Want Some Ideas for Your Youth Program?

The Board of Youth Ministry for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with a grant from Thrivent started a new electronic youth ministry resource available for free on the internet. Check out <www.youthesource.com/>!

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