



A service of the
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Youth Supports

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

February 2010 - Volume 11, Issue 2

- Batman - a servant leader?
- Web sources of ideas for youth ministry

Batman - a servant leader?

Funny title, “Batman” and “servant leader” are in the same sentence. For that matter the words “servant” and “leader” are together. Here is why I think Batman is just one example of how “servant” and “leader” goes together.

Just recently I completed the KINDLE classic program and have experienced a revamping of my career as a DCE. Those that have been part of the KINDLE program know the motto, “fostering and multiplying servant leaders”. The idea of servant leader goes back to some of the Old Testament leaders and to Christ himself when Paul explains that Christ came to serve and serve in the lowest role as a servant (Philippians 2). So now I have rethought my role as a leader in the church to create not just leaders out of volunteers but servant leaders. In my recent KINDLE studies, I have immersed myself into continuing my growth in the servant leader realm. One great resource that has been a wonderful tool for me is the book *Good to Great* by Jim Collins. In Jim's book his research team gathers information from top companies that went from 'good' to 'great' and maintained that greatness over time. One significant and unexpected factor that kept showing up while researching about these companies was that the top leader/CEO was always a servant leader. All these companies were lead by this kind of leadership - a servant leader. But to give this type of leader the title of “servant leader” made “them sound weak or meek.” Jim Collins termed this type of leader a level 5 leader. “Level 5 leaders embody a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will. They are ambitious, to be sure, but ambitious first and foremost for the company, not themselves.” If you ever get the chance to read the book there is a chart that explains all 5 levels of leadership. Level 5 contains all of the levels.

So I'm going to switch gears. Guess what, as much as we think most people can obtain the servant leader model (Level 5), it's not for everyone and it takes time. “When servant leadership is reduced to a collection of admirable qualities and learned skills that are displayed in organizational settings, it is all too easy to forget that servant leadership is, first, about deep identity” (Don Frick in *Understanding Robert K. Greenleaf and Servant Leadership*). “Servant leadership grows out of a leader's core identity” Jane L. Fryar, *Trust and Teams*. As a Christian we know that this comes from Christ as I referenced earlier from

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Free ideas
for youth
ministry!

E-
Newsletter
for youth
workers!

Philippians 2. It does take work, but we can become more like Christ. It's more about being than doing. Jane L. Fryar in her other book *Servant Leadership, Setting Leaders Free*, gives a helpful tool that can enable leaders to lead. It's called ACE: Acknowledge, Create, Empower. Acknowledge: show appreciation for contributions and accomplishments in ways tailored to each individual. Create: supportive environments enable followers to create workable, quality solutions to challenges and problems. Empower: leaders need to equip followers with skills and knowledge, opportunities to make a difference, and individualized encouragement. This is just one small way to help foster servant leaders, there are other great resources including the next KINDLE cycle in 2011, <http://kindledce.org/>.

The latest Batman movie, *The Dark Knight*, had a very powerful ending. After capturing the Joker and saving hundreds of people, Batman was not able to rescue district attorney Harvey Dent. Harvey's mission was to clean Gotham from all the crime but eventually becomes corrupt by the Joker in the end. Batman saves police commissioner Gordon's family but in doing so ends up killing Harvey Dent. Here comes the example of servant leadership: knowing that the citizens of Gotham will lose hope and all morale if Dent's rampage becomes public news, Batman convinces Gordon to hold *him* responsible for the murders. Images are shown of Gordon delivering the eulogy at Dent's funeral and smashing the Bat-Signal. Police swarm the building, and Batman flees as Gordon and his son watch. Batman puts the city's needs before his own, a level 5 leader, a servant leader.

Reminds me of the fact that Jesus put our needs ahead of his own!

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Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

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

Want Some Ideas for Your Youth Ministry?

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.youthsource.com/> The web page is not just for adults, but for youth too with a number of links to other great web sites.

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.

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