

# DEAR PASTOR,

**You don't need to be convinced that youth ministry matters.** You see the culture the students in your church and community are growing up in, and its impact on their lives. You know the stakes. You believe the next generation matters to God, and that the church is called not only to reach them but also to disciple them (Ps. 78:4-7). And you carry this responsibility of leading a church that lives out the Great Commission from one generation to the next.

Today's middle school and high school students are not lacking information about Jesus. They have instant access to more sermons, podcasts, and Bible resources in their pocket than any generation in history. What they lack is a clear, guided discipleship path for learning to follow Jesus boldly and faithfully over time.

This reality raises an important question:

**Are the students in your church simply learning more about Jesus, or are they learning to follow Him?**

This distinction matters.

**Knowing about Jesus is not the same as following Him.**

**“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19).  
“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt. 16:24).**

Jesus's call to follow was both an imperative and an invitation. And what He offered those who answered was not merely information about Him, but transformation through following Him. This same call, this same imperative and invitation from Jesus to follow, is still going out to the students in your church today.

Your church may already have a small group curriculum in place for your youth ministry, and that's a good thing. A plan for the faithful teaching of God's Word is essential. But **not every small group curriculum is designed to make disciples.** Too often, the small group curriculum a youth pastor selects and small group leaders teach from, is program-driven rather than formational and either content-heavy or reduced to life tips with verses attached. It is formulaic, fragmented, and built on one-size-fits-all models that rarely suit the unique context of your church.

The cost is real: discipleship becomes unclear and inconsistent, youth pastors feel ineffective, small group leaders lose confidence, and students leave each week unchanged.

**We built FOLLOWER to change that.**

FOLLOWER is **an intentional and adaptable small group discipleship pathway** rooted in Jesus' call to "Follow me." It exists to help students know Jesus, grow in Christlikeness, and boldly live out their faith as lifelong followers of Him through guided discipleship and spiritual formation over time.

**Built for Small Groups. Designed for Discipleship.** FOLLOWER provides **discipleship with direction** and **framework with flexibility** to help your church's youth ministry move students beyond simply knowing about Jesus toward becoming bold and faithful lifelong followers of Him.

FOLLOWER is anchored in **Five Core Convictions** that are lived out through the **Eight Marks of a Follower** and shaped by one vision: a generation of students who **KNOW** Jesus, **GROW** in Christlikeness, and **LIVE** boldly and faithfully for Him as lifelong followers.

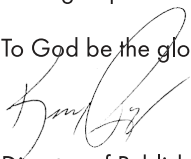
Driven by Scripture and centered on Jesus, FOLLOWER:

- **Empowers your youth pastor** with a clear, adaptable small group discipleship pathway to help students grow into lifelong followers of Jesus.
- **Equips small group leaders** to confidently teach students God's Word, lead meaningful spiritual conversations, and guide them to live boldly and faithfully for Jesus.
- **Engages students** with God's Word and helps them know Jesus, grow in Christlikeness, and boldly live out their faith as lifelong followers of Him.

Good curriculum fills a calendar. FOLLOWER fuels transformation through spiritual formation over time.

I hope you'll take time to review the accompanying materials that explain how FOLLOWER guides discipleship and spiritual formation over time: the *Philosophy*, the *Five Core Convictions*, the *Eight Marks of a Follower*, and our *Mission and Vision*. Then sit down with your youth pastor or youth leaders and explore how FOLLOWER can be the discipleship pathway and small group curriculum your youth ministry, small group leaders, and students have been missing.

To God be the glory!



Director of Publishing, YM360

# WHO IS YM360?

Since 2010, YM360 has been on a mission to help youth pastors disciple students. We live out this mission by providing churches and youth ministries with reliable, Jesus-centered resources and events that are easy to implement and designed to actively engage today's students with the unchanging truth of the Word of God. YM360 has become a trusted ministry partner for thousands of churches, helping youth pastors build effective ministries and equipping their volunteer leaders to succeed in discipling students. Our small group Bible study curriculum, Midweek curriculum, and event resources are known by youth pastors and volunteer leaders for consistently being theologically rich, simple to teach, deeply relevant, and unwavering in their focus on placing God's Word center stage. Every curriculum and resource from YM360 is created by real people (no A.I.) and field-tested by real youth pastors. Our team of experienced youth pastors and ministry leaders design every resource with students and volunteer leaders in mind. Our goal is to always create curriculum and resources that support and equip those who teach it with the tools necessary to teach God's Word confidently, foster spiritual growth, and lead students into meaningful conversations about faith. Whether through Follower Small Group Curriculum, Midweek Curriculum, a Just Like Christ Event Resource, a GENERATE Camp or Conference event, or any of our many other resources, we invite you to experience the YM360 difference for yourself. See why we're more than a resource provider; we're your ministry partner.

## YM360'S EIGHT ESSENTIAL TRUTHS THAT GUIDE EVERYTHING WE DO & TEACH

### GOD IS

*"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut. 6:4-5).*

Only one true and living God exists, perfect in all His attributes, holy in character, and righteous in all His works. He is the Creator of the universe, eternally existing in three Persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each equally deserving of humanity's worship and obedience. As the Lord of all creation, God's power, knowledge, wisdom, and presence ensure His sovereign will is exercised over all nations and kingdoms throughout all ages.

### THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

*"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).*

The Bible is God's written revelation to people, divinely given through human authors who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is entirely true. The Bible teaches how to know, love, and follow God. It is totally sufficient and completely authoritative for matters of life and faith. The goal of God's Word is the restoration of humanity into His image.

### PEOPLE ARE GOD'S TREASURE

*"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:26-27).*

God created people, male and female, in His image and for His glory. Because people are the crowning work of His creation, God made them stewards over His creation. God created people to live in relationship with Him, so He has given people the ability to communicate with God through prayer. God wants people to lovingly care for each other, and He has given families the special responsibility of teaching children about Him and His Word. God desires for all people to know Him and to be redeemed and reconciled to Himself through Jesus Christ, so that they might reflect His glory and live eternally with Him in His Kingdom.

### JESUS IS GOD & SAVIOR

*"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3).*

Jesus is both fully God and fully human. He is the Christ, the eternal Son of God, and is one in essence with the Father and the Spirit. Conceived by the Holy Spirit and Born of a virgin, He lived a sinless life and performed many miracles. He died on the Cross to provide people with forgiveness of sin and eternal salvation. Jesus rose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of the Father, intercedes for us as our Great High Priest, and will return in power and glory.

## SALVATION IS BY FAITH ALONE

*"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).*

All human beings are born with a sin nature, separated from God, and in need of a Savior. Every person willfully disobeys God—an act known as sin—thus inheriting both physical and spiritual death and the need for salvation. Salvation comes only through a faith relationship with Jesus Christ, the Savior. Salvation is instantaneous and wholly of God through grace on the basis of the perfect life and shed blood of Jesus, and not on the basis of human works. When people repent of their sins by placing their faith in Jesus, they receive forgiveness for sin, abundant life on earth, and the promise of eternal life with the Lord. All who have been redeemed are secure in Jesus Christ forever.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD & EMPOWERER

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).*

As a member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is God's presence in the world. The Holy Spirit convicts individuals of sin, baptizes believers into the Body of Christ, uses God's Word to mature believers into Christlikeness, and secures them until Jesus returns. He lives within every Christian beginning at the moment of salvation. Through His indwelling presence and by equipping believers with spiritual gifts, the Holy Spirit empowers every Christian for bold witness and effective ministry as we serve Him.

## THE CHURCH IS GOD'S PLAN

*"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common" (Acts 2:42-44).*

The Holy Spirit immediately places all people who put their faith in Jesus Christ into one united spiritual body, the Church, of which Jesus is the head. The primary expression of the Church on earth is the local gathering of believers. The purpose of the Church is to glorify God by taking the Gospel to the entire world and by building its members in Christlikeness through the instruction of God's Word, fellowship, service, worship, and prayer.

## THE FUTURE IS IN GOD'S HANDS

*"And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Heb. 9:27-28).*

God will bring the world to its appropriate end in His own time and in His own way. At that time, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth. Both the saved and the unsaved will be resurrected physically to be judged by Jesus. Those who have trusted Him will receive their reward and dwell forever in the new heavens and new earth with the Lord. Those who have refused Him will spend eternity in Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The certain return of Jesus motivates believers to be faithful in their daily lives.