5 steps in Preparing for Ministry

1. **Understand your calling.**
   This is God pressing His will upon your heart. It is the foundation on which you will build your ministry. The Call is what sustains you. Ministry will not always be fun and games, and spiritual success may not always be evident. There will be times when you will be challenged, frustrated and question what it is you are truly doing. Focusing on God’s calling helps you see beyond the here and now and trust that his ultimate plan is at work. It causes you to rise above the circumstances with a sense of divine purpose ready to serve and sacrifice for the sake of the kingdom. *Read Isaiah 55:9.*

2. **Understand your gifts and abilities.**
   God has called you, so he will equip you. The first step is understanding what you can and cannot do... and being ok with that. There is no special formula to being a youth pastor; you don’t have to play guitar, grow a goatee, and wear skinny jeans. You don’t have to be an outstanding communicator or some high energy up front type of person who can hype any crowd any time. All you have to be is willing. You must be willing to develop your God given gifts and abilities. God can take you as you are and develop you to be the leader you need to be in reaching students according to his calling on your life. If you haven’t done so, take a spiritual gifts test and discover how you are gifted. The Wesleyan Youth movement has one in its “Kaleo” series. You can download it [here](#). *Read 1 Corinthians 1:5-8.*

3. **Understand where your strength comes from.**
   “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” Philippians 4:13. When Christ is your strength, you no longer have to depend on your own abilities to get things done. When you depend on your own abilities, you become subject to two things; first, your ministry revolves around you and what you are able to accomplish. Second, your ministry is limited by your shortcomings and inabilities. Both of these are dangerous ground to build a ministry on. Understanding that Christ is your strength keeps the focus on him as well as stretches you to do things beyond your comfort zone in reaching lost students.

4. **Understand how to measure success.**
   This is a much-needed corrective within youth ministry. Attendance, activities and participation are important staples in youth ministry, but how can we share God’s love if we don’t take regular time to let God love and empower us? How can young people trust our words about God if they’re not given the time and space to encounter God? All of our programming, spiritual exercises and experiences can be distracting and deceptive if they are not grounded in the holiness of Jesus. Youth ministry is about
engagement rather than escape, and hopefully we can have confidence that the ordinary tasks within our ministries will be enough to convey the Gospel. So how do we measure a healthy youth ministry? By helping students follow in the way of Jesus. The hope isn't that young people will become more religious or even spiritual—it's that young people will become more open and available to the presence of Jesus and his ways of compassion and that would influence every part of their life. Read Matthew 16:24.

5. **Understand what’s at risk.**

Life and death is in the balance. When you understand that the trajectory of student’s lives can be formed within your ministry context then you begin to take how you plan and program your ministry a little more serious. In the end it's the power of Christ that transform lives, may our youth ministries be faithful in creating space for God to move and students the chance to respond. Read Ephesians 3:19-20.