



Challenge Students to be Leaders at Christmas

Advent can be a great time to challenge your students' thinking in the area of leadership development. As the year draws to a close, and you focus your ministry on the birth of the Messiah – Immanuel, God with us – consider using the time to encourage your students to expand their understanding of servant leadership. Christ came to earth as a suffering servant (Isaiah 53) to solve the problem of sin – how are your students making decisions to sacrifice out of this reality?

- **Leading in the Church.** Student leaders are church leaders. In your small groups, ask your adult volunteers to challenge students to commit to serving in the church during the Christmas season in some way. Have adult leaders debrief with students after these service opportunities.
- **Leading at Home.** Ask students this question: "How are you serving at home?" and "How can you take ownership in the context of your family?"
- **Meaningful and Creative Gift-Giving.** Help students think through ways in which they can give creatively out of their unique abilities to their families, friends, and others in their spheres of influence.
- **Service Opportunities.** Challenge students to reach out to others during the Christmas Season by committing to service opportunities. Have students identify under-served, needy, and hurting people, and brainstorm ways they can give with respect, compassion, and understanding (i.e. giving gifts to refugee families, providing meals, serving at a homeless shelter, etc.). In thinking through Jesus' birth, life, and sacrificial death, have students consider Matthew 25:34-40 as they commit to service projects during the Christmas season.
- **Mentoring.** Talk with students about connecting with a mentor beginning in the New Year. Mentoring students is a powerful way to influence, disciple, and challenge students while holding them accountable to their commitments in the context of a relationship. Provide suggestions to students on an individual basis in terms of volunteers that may be willing to mentor them. Provide volunteers with resources they need to take the guesswork out of the mentoring process and use their passions and abilities to influence students' hearts.