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Why Not Now? Leader's Guide: You Don't Have to "Grow Up" to Follow Jesus

Mark Matlock

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Like most of the rest of us, Christian students tend to set the bar too low for themselves, especially when it comes to actively following Jesus. This 6-week Bible study curriculum and correlated-but-stand-alone daily devotional will challenge students to accept the mission to live like Jesus now, not later, by telling the stories of adolescents from the Bible and in modern life who did -- and are doing -- significant and amazing things in the world and for the God who saves. In a society where cultural adolescence is lingering into the 30s, its no wonder Christian students often fail to confront the call to act meaningfully on their faith in Christ. It’s easy to package that commitment with big ideas like picking a college, a spouse, and a career -- and then to never quite get around to it. God, however, posts no minimum age on discipleship, and his book contains several examples of younger people both willing and able -- in his power -- to do extraordinarily difficult and necessary things with their lives for him. Why Not Now? will mine stories from the young lives of Miriam, Joseph, David, Solomon, Daniel, and Mary to find why and how they said yes to God before they would have been old enough to rent a car in our modern society. All six of these people believed God could use their lives to do something that mattered. What is holding us back? To bolster the argument and generate interest in the books, Why Not Now? will also seek contributions from living examples of people who are doing or have done things we just don’t expect students to do these days. Abby Sunderland, for instance, generated worldwide controversy for attempting to sail around the world solo simply because she was 16 at the time. How dare she? How cold her parents allow that? Another 16-year-old, cheerleader Kealey Oliver, recently made news for courageously tackling a shoplifter at the local mall rather that letting him escape. She saw it as her responsibility to stand for justice. And 17-year-old Steven Ortiz made headlines by demonstrating the practical wisdom of bartering his way from an old cell phone to a convertible Porsche. Why Not Now? will use stories like theirs -- and those from Scripture -- to equip youth leaders to challenge students to use their unique gifts, skills, and opportunities right now to do bigger things with their lives for God’s glory. The curriculum will include teaching outlines, commentary, group activities, discussion questions, and engaging assignments that will help students to catch the vision for imagining how much they might be capable of. Right now. The daily devotional will offer a similar challenge directly from the pages of the Bible using brief and provocative commentary, directed prayers, questions for reflection, and brief exercises designed to help students quickly put into practice what they’re learning from Scripture.

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