

LEADING IS HARD

LEADING YOUNG ADULTS AS A YOUNG ADULT

Mandy DeHart



LOCAL
CHURCH
LEADERS

Being a leader is hard. Being a leader in ministry is even harder. Leading people your age and older than you is even harder than that. Culture teaches us that leadership is equal to power and control. The assumption is made that if someone is in a prominent role of leadership they are entitled to special privileges and all subordinates willingly submit to their authority.

In the kingdom of God, the exact opposite is true. Matthew 23:11 says, “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

The higher the position of leadership, the more responsibilities and less rights you have. Yes, less rights; the higher up you move in ministry, the more rights you give up. A loose translation could be, **the higher the position of ministry, the more of yourself you give serving others.**

Jesus’ ministry was centered on servanthood. He walked the earth as King of the universe, **yet He chose to lead by serving.** Mark 10:45 (ESV) states, “For even the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Leading young adults is particularly tricky when you, the leader, are also a young adult. Young adults are intelligent, independent, and driven. They are self-sufficient and excited to begin their first season of adulthood. Many, may I add, are particularly excited to finally be on their own without parents and rules. These factors make young adult ministries exciting, vibrant, and thriving. However, they can also make leading young adults difficult. They may not willingly offer respect or appreciation. And when you, the leader, are also a young adult, you are navigating the adjustments that adulthood can bring in your own life. Maybe you are a newlywed, a new parent, or transitioning in your career. These life transitions can be **hard.**

If that last paragraph depressed you, you’re not alone. It depressed me too. But I have good news for you. Although leading young adults as a young adult is hard, it is also a grand opportunity. It is an opportunity to lead by example. **It is a chance for you to let your lifestyle lead the people you are serving.** Instead of expecting respect, freely give to those you are serving. Love them, pray for them, be kind to them, be present in their lives, and let your example lead them closer to Christ. The Bible tells us, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith” (Hebrews 13:7 ESV).

The recipe for being a great leader is relatively simple. Keep your personal relationship with God your top priority. Stay submitted to your pastor. Humbly admit your faults and learn from your mistakes. And most of all, have an attitude of servanthood. By doing this, you will give the young adults you are serving a strong example to follow—a path that will lead them closer to Christ.