

What Are You Chasing?

This month we're highlighting young ministers who are  sharing their passions for the next generation. What are you passionate about? **In the comment section below, tell us what you're pursuing.** We may feature your answers in an upcoming issue of the magazine.

A Cry for Intimacy With God

I'm part of a generation that hungers to know God. We want a real relationship with Him—the kind that's filled with the laughter, tears and honesty even when it hurts. We want a relationship with God that isn't tampered with by artificial additives that promise to make it sweeter, sourer or tastier than it really is. We want an organic relationship with organic?

Though it's a word usually associated with food grown without chemical-based fertilizers or pesticides, "organic" also describes a lifestyle: simple, healthful, close to nature. Those are things many of us desire in our relationship with God.

We hunger for simplicity. We want to approach God in childlike faith, wonder and awe. We long for more than just spiritual life but spiritual health—whereby our souls are not just renewed and restored but become a source of refreshment for others. And we want to be close to nature, not mountain ridges and shorelines, as much as God's nature worked

in and through us.

Such a God-infused lifestyle
requires us to step away from any insta-grow short cuts or
formula-based
beliefs and dig deep into the soils of spiritual formation
only found in God.
In this place, our intimacy with God springs to life.

Many of us have come to place in
our spiritual journeys where we want to know a God who in all
His fullness
allows us to know Him just as He is, stripped as much as
possible of any false
perceptions. We want to know God.

*Margaret
Feinberg is a speaker and author of The Organic God and
Scouting
the
Divine ().*

A Cry for Purity

Let's get the bad news out of the way. Practical, balanced
teaching on sexual purity and living it out with integrity has
an anemic
history in the contemporary church. By contrast, a nonstop,
toxic mix of
eroticism coupled with the flesh's rebellious nature has
commandeered our
attention with little to no intervention.

Thus, our only hope now is to cry
out and pursue purity. The yearning is deep and passionate;

however, deep and passionate yearning simply doesn't rise to the level of resolution.

Over the last 14 years that I've ministered sexual wholeness to mostly young adults, I've become familiar with that cry. It's anxious, urgent and deeply personal.

And it isn't just confined to young, single Christians. Sexual purity isn't synonymous with celibacy. If the goal is indeed sexual purity that pleases Christ, then the progressive path out of sexual impurity should be marked by:

1. Rediscovering the foundations and fundamentals of our faith and what they are intended to accomplish in your life.
2. Rebuilding the breaches in your life using spiritual and relational processes.
3. Recreating your desires through strategy. You must have more than just a desire to live sexually pure. Desire must conjugate into holy pragmatism.

The most important lesson I've learned and continue to teach is an old one: Prevention is much better than a cure. Sometimes progressive thinking should never evolve beyond proven truths.

D.L. Foster is founder of Atlanta-based Witness Freedom Ministries, which declares that freedom from the gay lifestyle is a

reality in Christ ().

A Cry for Racial Diversity

The greatest mosaic of all is the kingdom of God. Diversity and multiethnicity exist not as an attempt to incorporate politically correct ideas into the church but as a manifestation of God's love toward all His children. Pentecost was a multiethnic, multilingual experience. American Christianity is not. That's about to change.

For too long the church in America has embraced defacto segregation whereby we define the church not only by its denominational affiliation but even more so by its racial and ethnic composition. This emerging generation is privy to a powerful truth: Only a multiethnic kingdom culture can repudiate the spirits of Herod, Absalom, Jezebel, and Sodom and diversity may very well save American Christianity. Historically, white evangelical believers focused on righteousness or vertical issues such as abortion and marriage while ethnic believers channeled resources into the horizontal issues of justice, poverty and equality. Next Generation believers will converge at the nexus of the gospel message-where John 3:16 meets Matthew 25; where righteousness marries justice while moral relativism, cultural decay and spiritual apathy

simultaneously acquiesce before a robe of many colors.

In other words, American evangelicalism will be less segregated, more integrated and more committed to authentic community outreach.

Be advised, our young people have no interest in sitting in the pews of a church that is entirely white, black or Hispanic. They desire diversity, not in the context of political correctness, but in the Spirit of Pentecost.

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