

## 3Story Teams

**A 3Story Team is a group of YFC leaders who intentionally and regularly abide in Christ together and engage others in Authentic Christ-sharing Relationships. In short, they abide with Jesus while loving like Jesus. They organize around the explicit identification of their “Third Circle”; those who receive their coordinated, loving investment.**

*Here's more on that:*

It is in our relational nature as YFC leaders to enjoy one another's company as we gather for staff meetings or facilitate events. We like each other and we are drawn together because we share a common desire to connect lost kids with our Father through relational ministry. However, sometimes we miss out on the practice of dwelling together with God. This is a different kind of work and one that doesn't always come naturally. In 3Story training we talk about God's story moving into my story through abiding; and like a branch connected to a vine, I bear fruit as Jesus transforms my inner life. I start to think more like Him, I act more like Him. Now, imagine a small team committed to abiding in Christ together. They gather up to dwell with Jesus. They notice the Holy Spirit at work in each other's lives. They listen on a deeper level and encourage one another through their loyal connection. Sure, they're thinking about and reaching out to lost kids, but they also have a deep desire to see Jesus at work in each other. God's love is unleashed through relationships, not programs.

3Story weaves Christ's unique transformational power into relationship dynamics so as to bear discipleship fruit. This advances our YFC mission, since ours is a subset of God's charge to the Church overall. In his letter to Galatians, the apostle Paul retells how after he was called by God to carry the good news about Jesus Christ to Gentiles, he took care to ensure his mission and message received an alignment blessing by Church leaders. As Christ's distinct assignments unfolded, Paul was particularly sensitive to his ministry. That is why Paul corrected Peter for misrepresenting the “truth of the gospel message” (Gal. 2:1-14) Peter's error would have been disastrous for the mission among the Gentiles. Paul's reproof was necessary. We may find ourselves in similar position on behalf of young people who cannot grasp the truth about Jesus because they simply do not know any authentic carriers of Christ's love. 3Story is the corrective contribution YFC can humbly offer a church who has strayed too far from abiding with Jesus while loving like Jesus.

Embedded in local communities, *3Story Teams* of Christ-centered leaders will lead the way as they model Authentic Christ Sharing Relationships.

### ***3Story Teams are Different***

It is worth noting how *3Story Teams* differ from what you might be use to in staff meetings, ministry planning, or event organizing. To be sure, those purposes could still be accomplished through *3Story Teams*, but they do not automatically seek their outcomes through insistently abiding together with Jesus.

You know you are in a *3Story Team* when you are experiencing unhurried space for prayer.

You know you are in a *3Story Teams* when you are learning to love instead of judge.

You know you are in a *3Story Teams* when you feel safe enough to be challenged by others.

You know you are in a *3Story Teams* when other people care more about what *Christ is doing in you* than *what you are doing for Him*.

### ***3Story Teams in the YFC Organization***

In Phase One of *3Story Team* development, our goal is to communicate the purpose of *3Story Teams* and provide first steps.

In order for *3Story Teams* to help YFC leaders abide with Jesus, love like Jesus, and engage young people in Authentic Christ-sharing Relationships, they begin by forming communities of no more than 10 and no less than 4 so a few things can happen:

- a) they help each other become more Christ-centered*
- b) they coordinate* their efforts to reach a missionally aligned "third circle" audience
- c) they organize responsibilities to do the work set before them*

Consider these practical examples. \*

A chapter staff of 27 full time and part time employees divide into *3Story teams* of 6-8 members. To their already existing calendars, they add a weekly 45-60 minute meeting or Zoom call with the purpose of creating their *3Story Team*. Their meet up includes:

- 20 minutes of dwelling with God together (includes silence, prayer, Scripture)
- 20 minutes of sharing or responding to reflective questions.
- 10-20 minutes of response ("Because of what we are noticing today, I think Jesus is inviting me to...")

An NSC Department of 8 that usually gathers to organize or plan dedicates intentional time in order to do the above.

A JJM team of volunteers rarely sees each other due to geography and serving in different facilities, but they gather on Zoom to do the above.

A Chapter Board of 10 gathers monthly and is asked to divide into two groups for an additional 60-minute zoom call to do the above.

A Ministry Site that has 15 or 20 leaders and they gather together, break into two 3Story teams to connect and then come back together for ministry specific training and planning.

\*See *Outline for 3Story Team Meet Up*

### **Prayer Focus**

In Phase One of development, *3Story Teams* focus on Prayer\*. Using YFC's Prayer Initiative, teams will begin with a short survey and then, based on survey results, enter a deeper conversation and practice that builds prayer muscles in silence and solitude, discernment, dwelling together, celebrating, and intercession. Moving through this content will provide a setting in which we build deeper intimacy with Jesus and each other over the first 4 months of our *3Story team*.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AROUND *3STORY TEAMS*

### 1. What does the elevation of *3Story teams* mean for other treasured ministry emphases, like the 5 Essentials.

3Story has ascended as YFC's unified ministry strategy. Having agreed on its value, we now have the need to declutter the landscape. What should become of the many useful ways we once thought about ministry practice in YFC?

- FIVE ESSENTIALS: Our language shifts entirely to the 3Story paradigm. All the Essentials are lived-out when *3Story teams* are healthy and functioning.
- RMAS: Relational Ministry actions are part of the collective work of *3Story teams* at a site. They simply are not the sole purpose of the team and the actions flow from the team that is abiding together.
- MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES: To be archived and replaced by *3Story Teams*.
- MINISTRY SITES: The home domain for most of YFC's *3Story Teams*.
- CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES: These are character (being) outcomes to be expected from a robust 3Story ministry. Christ-centered leaders are formed and supported in *3Story Teams*.
- FIND, WIN, KEEP, LIFT: Useful terms and actions when thinking about the growth of volunteer engagement and giving partners within *3Story Teams*.
- AUTHENTIC CHRIST SHARING RELATIONSHIPS: These are outcomes to be expected from a robust 3Story ministry, largely because they are being practiced internally within the *3Story Team* that is engaging in outreach.
- MINISTRY MODELS These are found in third circle thinking. The focus of a particular category of lost young people that the *3Story Team* is called to reach. For example, young people who live in an inner city neighborhood would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> circle and the City Life ministry model would be implemented.

### 2. What would a 3Story Team look like?

The practical pathway is clear. Find, Win, Keep, Lift each member; equip and unleash them to abide with Jesus while loving like Jesus.

*3Story Teams* exist primarily in support of a "becoming" agenda. (Becoming more Christ-centered, another way to say this is "transforming"). The team is a home base for mutual influence and encouragement. It taps into the motivation of those called to reach young people who want to become thoroughly Christ-centered. Formation (becoming) can take place while on mission (doing) but it can go unnoticed when not in community. Shared experiences on mission are fantastic opportunities to provoke learning and growth, provided there is adequate time to engage God and one another together in such discovery. Let's admit we often rush this. Or perhaps, while we would like to slow down and be intentional, but family, work, and ministry life get so demanding that our desire to slow down gets

squelched. Different seasons of life create different paces and the encouragement and camaraderie found in community can be exactly what is needed for weary souls and minds.

*3Story Teams* will help us take the necessary, intentional pause to listen to the Father.

*3Story Teams* will take advantage of every available asset to do together what God has called them to do. They must follow Jesus interdependently. Each member contributes and benefits. Jesus, who called them, can be trusted to lead them into optimal execution of the mission HE assigned.

From start to finish, *3Story Teams* seek to follow Jesus as a highly coordinated unit on a mission. They know and prioritize the importance of abiding constantly with Jesus in order to follow well. This common desire makes them a formidable force in each other's lives, first of all, and then among others.

### **3. What qualifications/competencies does a leader of a *3Story Team* need?**

The chief qualification of a *3Story Team* leader is to model abiding with Jesus while loving like Jesus. The team needs an example to follow.

Not surprisingly, this personal integrity will serve leaders well for the next crucial qualification; the ability to steer the *3Story Team's* focus. The team's clarity of focus must constantly inform the intentionality of activity.

*3Story Team* leaders need to be skilled at creating and holding space for corporate abiding practice. In other words, leaders create and protect space for dwelling with God together so that life beyond the meetings can thrive. Their planning and prep must help them host gatherings for empowerment. Good leaders will use team meetings for prime sharing that can spill over into the next week. They will facilitate conversations among *3Story Team* members that naturally include elements of God's story. Unhurried prayer together will also spur this integration of life with Jesus.

Finally, *3Story Team* leaders invite team members to notice "God at work in me and others" (specifically others in their identified third circles) and share those stories.

### **4. How long will it take to create a *3Story Team*?**

As long as it takes four or more people to agree on an adopted Third Circle mission focus and commit to grow as Christ-centered leaders who abide with Jesus while loving like Jesus. Of course, the more time together, the more community, trust, and authenticity will develop.

### **5. What do you mean by Third Circle?**

The third circle has generally meant someone who does not yet know Jesus, classically this has been labeled the "Their Story" circle.

But the 3Story relationship equation brings the same God's Story-My Story connectivity to everything we do and everyone we encounter! Rather than leave it entirely up to an individual's private judgement to name those in the "Their Story" circle, a *3Story Team* comes together to collaborate with a particular group of people in mind. Third circle thinking results in knowing who the team will reach. They will coordinate those efforts toward that group. The third circle may represent someone (or a group of people) who do not yet know Jesus OR someone (or a group of people) who long to discover a deeper abiding relationship with Jesus.

For example:

A ministry site would see lost kids from a particular location as their third circle.

A local YFC board would see the chapter as their third circle.

A team in the NSC would see the field as their third circle.

A chapter would have multiple 3Story teams (depending on their size) and their third circle would be each other.

A development team would see giving partners as their third circle.

## **6. How will we assess *3Story Teams*?**

Teams will either be attached to a specific, already named ministry site or be designated as an administrative or chapter leadership *3Story Team*. The presence of *3Story Teams* should be reflected in each chapter's strategic plan. Primary Stewards will be ultimately responsible to see that they are assessed and that what is learned contributes to their continuous improvement. The chapters will account for the number of *3Story Teams*, the number of people on each team, and the role of each team. In terms of assessing the being focus of each team, measures for cultural attributes will be useful in this purpose. (coming soon)