

PROJECT

Leaders Guide

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An open Letter to Youth Leaders

Few would argue that a Youth Pastor's primary job is to disciple his or her students. And that leads to a very important question... ***Can a youth pastor disciple a student who is living a sexually active lifestyle?*** Most youth leaders say No! But maybe you never thought about the uniqueness of sexual sin. Maybe you've never thought about sexual sin as the "deal breaker." Paul did when he wrote a very clear message to the church in Corinth... He wrote, "***Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.***" (1 Corinthians 6:18). The word "body" refers not to the flesh, but to the whole being and personality. This sin can have disastrous effects. No other sin has the same effect on the memory, personality or soul of a vulnerable teenager as sexual sin. Paul doesn't say walk, but **run away from sexual sin**. With this in mind, every Christian youth leader needs to establish a long-term workable abstinence and purity plan for the students under their care. Otherwise, a youth leaders "Primary Mission and Calling" will be nearly impossible to accomplish.

Helping students' pledge and maintain an abstinence commitment until marriage (possibly a 5-15 year period) is "the" burden God placed on my heart back in 1995. Through the ministry of the Silver Ring Thing, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with youth leaders to regain the moral ground lost by our past generations. The students that we work with today are different than any group we have seen in a long time. They embrace purity, they pledge abstinence and they need our help to set up the structure where they can be successful in their decision to "wait" over the long haul.

At SRT, we value the voice of youth leaders in developing the materials and programs we offer. Recently, over 400 youth pastors participated in a 6 month Beta Test of our new DVD and Bible Study materials designed for students and their parents. Three detailed online surveys were used to collect key insights, ideas, and innovations from youth leaders around the country. The invaluable comments from these surveys were directly imputed in SRT's new resources.

As a result of this unique partnership, SRT is now excited to present to Youth Leaders and Churches across the world what we believe to be the best abstinence and purity resources available today for churches, youth groups, small groups, and schools. These resources are called **Project 434 (P434)**.

It is my prayer that together with God's help we can disciple this generation of students and lead them to a lifestyle of purity that will carry them to the day they say, "I Do."

May God truly bless you in your calling to reach and disciple this great generation.

Denny

Denny Pattyn
Founder and President
Silver Ring Thing

Step-by-step process to facilitate P434 at your church, youth group or school

1. Review **P434** online; Contact SRT with any questions
 - a. Watch the Promo Videos
 - b. Review the student and parent follow up curriculum
 - c. View pictures of SRT's Sterling Silver Rings
 - d. Read Youth Leaders reviews
2. After examining P434 online, **order P434 Leader's Materials**
3. Set a date to show the Student and Parent films
4. Begin to collect Student and Parent ring sizes
5. Two weeks before your film date, **order** Student and Parent *NEXT* Books and Rings
6. Show the 48-minute Student and Parent films
7. Lead the Students through the abstinence vow and put on the rings
8. Order additional rings and curriculum if needed
9. Execute the 4-week Student Follow up Series - *NEXT*
10. Hand out Parents *NEXT* Books (This material can also be taught as a 4-week session)
11. Enroll students in the "Until Marriage" electronic follow up plan (under construction)

The P434 Strategy

1. **PLAN** | *ACCESS THE LEADERS TOOLKIT*

Use to Promote & Register for your program

- ✓ Online at: www.project434.com
- ✓ Includes: Leader's guide, posters, flyers, registration forms, bulletin inserts, etc... everything you would need to facilitate the program.

2. **PREPARE** | *ORDER YOUR STUDENT AND PARENT RESOURCES*

Purchase materials 2 weeks out from your program date

- ✓ Cost:
 1. **\$6** *NEXT* Student Books – *Living Out Your Commitment To Wait*
 2. **\$6** *NEXT* Parent Books – *Equipping Parents to Lead... Inspiring a Generation to Wait*
 3. **\$20** For the Sterling Silver Ring

****Group Discounts Available****

3. **PRESENT** | *SHOW THE FILMS AND PUT ON THE RINGS.*

Host the "Films Night" and set up the 4-week follow up program

1. Students and Parents watch the 48min films in different rooms
2. After watching the films, **student's put on a ring** as a sign of their commitment to *wait* and **parents wear a ring** as their reminder to *pray* for their child every day.
3. Hand out the *NEXT* Student Books to allow students to prepare for first session
4. Hand out the *NEXT* Parent Books; These books can be used personally or taught as a 4-week series.

4. **PERSEVERE** | *LEAD THE 4-WEEK FOLLOWUP*

Lead the P434 4-Week Teaching Series using the *NEXT* Books or give them away to your students and parents as personal 4-week Bible Studies. These studies are the real substance and Scriptural understanding for maintaining and supporting a commitment to purity.

Why the Ring?

At Silver Ring Thing, we don't believe that wearing a silver ring makes you pure anymore than wearing a wedding ring makes you married. But we do believe a decision for purity made as a family, *with rings worn as a reminder*, is a powerful combination in this fight for purity.

Students and Parents

The students wear the ring as a commitment to *wait* for God's purpose in their life, and the ring acts as a constant reminder of that commitment. We ask parents to also wear a silver ring as a commitment to *pray* for the purity of their son or daughter every day... the ring being the constant reminder of their commitment.

It's a lot like *Totafot*

A lot like what? Totafot is a Hebrew word meaning "to bind". God told Israel to use Totafot as a constant reminder of His covenant with them. He desired Israel to continually keep His words in front of them, so he instructs them in Deuteronomy to bind His words on their foreheads and the back of their hands as a reminder of the covenant between God and man. Here is what it says...
18 "So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders (totafot). 19 Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. 20 Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 so that as long as the sky remains above the earth, you and your children may flourish in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors." - Deuteronomy 11:18-20

Think about it... If you want to remember to take an item with you when you leave the house, where do you leave it? By the front door right? The item you place by the door is a trigger to remember to bring the item with you. *Totafot* was a constant reminder of God's Law, and the Silver Ring is a constant reminder of a commitment to purity. This is why we believe the Silver Ring is a powerful tool in the fight for purity because it serves as a trigger, a reminder, of the commitment made by students and by their parents.

Branding purity

We also believe the Silver Ring is an awesome way for you to "brand" purity into the life of your group. The "brand" of the ring identifies your students as people who are "set apart" according to God's plan - refusing to see sex and sexuality as simply physical. But understanding they are made with purpose and design, all according to God's will.

The Verse on the Ring

By now you have probably noticed there is a verse engraved into the SRT sterling silver ring. Just as a reminder, here is what the verse says...

***"GOD wants you to be holy [set apart], so you should keep clear of all sexual sin.
THEN each of you will learn to control your body and live in holiness and honor"***
(1 Thessalonians 4:3-4)

We designed the ring with this verse because we believe the Silver Ring is a signpost pointing to the God who calls us to purity. We cannot forget purity comes from God alone. He is the one who teaches us to be pure, and He is the one who restores us to purity when we fail. Living in holiness and honor will **set us apart** as the people of God in this world. We will look different as we act different. As people wonder and question us about why we would choose to abstain from sex outside of marriage, we can point to a God who is longing for His world to know what true purity really looks like.

Why Parents?

Parents are the #1 spiritual influence in a student's life (outside of God of course). **Project 434** is designed with this simple conviction in mind. This is why the resource we have produced contains a Student Film *and a Parent Film*. Both films are designed to challenge and inspire families to commit to this fight for purity.

The #1 Influence

Students who show up to youth group meetings over a one year period, receive about 40 hours of a youth leaders time. Parents, on the other hand, have 1,300 discretionary hours to spend with their kids each year. At the end of the day it is not the youth leader who will walk a girl down the aisle on her wedding day – it is Dad. And imagine what it would be like for Dad to walk his daughter down the aisle to give her away knowing he has been fully invested in her purity. Imagine what it will be like as parents to see your son on his wedding day take off his silver ring and give it to his wife saying, "This is for you... I've waited just for you."

The Uninvolved

What if some of your students have parent's who aren't around or are not involved? **P434** is a great outreach program that will bring unchurched parents into your church. For students whose parents are not involved, this is a chance for some of your leaders to take a deeper role in their lives. Each kid needs someone who will hold them accountable and check in with them from time to time, even if it's just to let them know somebody cares.

Getting Parents Involved

Below are some ways you can increase parent involvement for **P434**:

1) Leverage the Lead Pastor's Influence

As the primary leader, your Lead Pastor is the biggest influence on the parents in your church. His or her involvement in promoting **P434** is critical in achieving maximum parent involvement. Give your Lead Pastor the *Parent Film* to review and schedule a meeting where you can walk through the best ways to work together on **P434**.

2) Use the "All Audience" P434 Promo Video

This video is an excellent way to promote your event to parents and students during a church service or parent's small groups. It will generate excitement and anticipation for your Project 434 program. This promo video is found on the Student Film in your **P434** Leader's Package and is also available for viewing online.

3) Give Church Service Announcements

Along with the videos, announce the date when the films will be shown and how students and parents can get sized for their rings so they will be available on the night of the films.

4) Use the P434 Bulletin Inserts

These inserts (available online) are a great way to get info into the hands of mom and dad, or even grandma and grandpa.

5) Setup a P434 Sign-up Table in the Lobby

The Sign-up Table in the lobby will be an excellent place for students and parents to grab information, ask questions, and **size fingers** for rings to be ordered prior to the film date.

LEADER Teaching Briefs

SESSION 1: Dealing With Temptation

Overview

We all face temptation, even Jesus faced it. Temptation is not a sin, falling into it is. Therefore, students need a plan to deal with temptation. This session asks students to commitment to a plan where they **recognize avoid, minimize** temptation in their lives.

1. **Facing Temptation:** Discuss the time Jesus spent being tempted by Satan in the desert (Matt. 4:1-11). Help students understand how they will be in for the battle of their lives sexually as the world, the media, popular opinion, and Satan chase them down. Discuss how Jesus overcame temptation.
2. **Good News:** Share these Scriptures with your students:
 - *"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33)
 - *"Therefore, anyone who refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human teaching but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you."* (1 Thessalonians 4:8)
3. **Discuss:** "Commit to the Discipline." At the end of the day, students will either want it (purity) or they won't. They will sooner or later be in a compromising place with a "bf" or "gf," in front of a computer, or simply hanging out in a seemingly innocent situation and "Boom" sexual temptation will be right in their face. Like anything that is valuable and has future value (losing some weight, playing a sport, getting good grades) it takes discipline to stay the course. So when tempted, students will ultimately need to be disciplined and focus on:
 - The truth that is found in scripture
 - A commitment to a plan (recognize, avoid, minimize)
 - Surrounding themselves with "right" thinking people
 - **Daily** wearing their Silver Ring as their constant reminder
 - Trusting in God's strength and not their own
4. **Summary:**
 - a. **Basic Plan to Deal With Temptation (pgs 7-8)** - Temptation itself is not a sin, but falling into it is. After all, Jesus himself was tempted, yet he never sinned. So, if you don't want to fall into temptation, you will need to learn how to:
 - **Recognize** when you are being tempted and
 - **Avoid** situations that will lead you down the wrong road. When you do find yourself in a tempting situation, you will need to learn to
 - **Minimize** its effects by depending upon God's power and not your own strength. In doing so, you will not allow temptation to establish foothold in your life.
 - b. **Recognize** – Ask students to list common temptations they expect to face (pg 8)
 - c. **Avoid** – Ask students to describe how they plan to avoid Pitfalls (3) that they may run into in the future (pgs 10-11)
 - d. **Minimize** – Review strategies to help students minimize the effects of temptation (pg 12)
 - e. **Final Thoughts:**
 - Students need to depend upon God's power and not their own strength. In doing so, they will not allow the temptation to establish a firm foothold in their lives.
 - **Consider this:** Two thoughts can not occupy the mind at the same time. Change the thought that is tempting you, even if it means doing something silly like singing, *"Row, Row, Row Your Boat..."* to replace the thought. Try it, it actually works!
 - Review **Don't (s)** (pg 12)
 - **Commit to the Plan:** (pg 13)

SESSION 2: How Far is Too Far?

Overview

“How Far is too Far” is the number one question students ask when it comes to dating, relationships and personal choices. But it rarely gets a succinct answer from parents, youth leaders, adults or even well wishing friends. In Session 2, students will learn “how far is too far” in **God’s** eyes. They will also learn of the fierce battle being waged by the media to destroy their hearts, souls, and minds. They will come to understand how the “sense of touch” can set off their deepest emotions. **The goal** of Session 2 is for **the Youth Leader** to help teens work through these issues and to develop **Non-Negotiable Boundaries**.

- 1. Unfortunately**, most students make decisions on “how far is too far” by:
 - following what their friends do or
 - putting into practice what they've read in popular magazines and through pornography or
 - acting out behaviors learned from watching reality TV and other enticing media or
 - Internet searches that lead them to sexually explicit material and values
- 2. Warm up:** Read out loud these emails received from teens and ask “What’s Good/What’s Bad:
 - “I was in a situation a few weeks ago I shouldn’t have been in,” says **Rachael**, 17. “I was alone in the house with this boy I was dating. We were close to having sex when **I looked at my ring** and thought, “I can do better than this.” I said, “**Timeout** (using my hands to signal timeout), this is not how I want to spend time with you.”
 - “A friend and I hold each other **accountable** for how we act and we give permission to ask any and all questions. Knowing I might be asked these questions helps keep me from doing something I'll be ashamed of.” **Heather**
 - “My girlfriend & I have **set limits**; we will only hold hands & hug briefly. That’s about all I can handle... I don’t know about everyone else.” **Nathan**
- 3. So How Far is Too Far?**

In going through the exercise where students try to determine what is and what is not “too far” (pg 17) they will understand why it is so difficult to arrive at a consistent answer to this critical question. This is exactly why this question is most often answered in vague ways or not at all. But, make no mistake about it, this question **needs to be answered** and **clear boundaries** need to be established. This will be the most lively and difficult discussion you will have with the students during the entire 4-week series.

 - Here’s a simple starting place to answer the question “how far is too far.” It’s also something they can easily remember: **Basic Rule:** “Don’t touch what the bathing suit covers”...This will keep you out of a lot of trouble. (pg 18)
- 4. Review** - “The sense of touch” and how it sets off deep emotions. (pgs 19-20)
- 5. Summary:**
 - a. Boundaries** – (Don’t forget to discuss inappropriate “private sexual behavior”) It is critical for students to establish and discuss boundaries before entering into a dating relationship. It’s naive to think that most teenagers and young adults will not engage in some level of physical contact over the years. So, if purity and abstinence are the goal, and we assume that teenagers will eventually date, then it becomes absolutely essential for you as the **youth leader** to discuss why written boundaries are so important.
 - b. Developing Non-Negotiable Boundaries**
 - **Exercise:** Take 10 minutes and consider the concept of “waiting.” Discuss how being “sexually-active” is a condition that starts in the mind, moves on to the sense of touch, works it’s way down to the heart and soul (feelings) and leads many teenagers into acting out sexually. (pg 21)
 - **Help Students** to describe how they plan to protect the emotional and spiritual aspects of their sexual purity in one or two sentences. (pg 22)
 - **Ask Students** to list 5 non-negotiable “boundaries” that they will put in place to keep them from “**going too far.**” (pg 22)

SESSION 3: What Happens if I Mess Up?

Overview

Many teenagers understand that there are real blessings that come from waiting until marriage to have sex, even when they are living in a media-driven, sex-obsessed youth culture. An overwhelming majority of teens (90%) continue to believe that providing young people with a strong abstinence message is important. However, many of these same teens “risk” potential life altering consequences because young people often make decisions based on their **emotions** and not a **logical** well thought out plan for their lives. Unfortunately, many times these **emotions** lead teens to become sexually active in spite of the blessings God has waiting for them in the future. Session 3 helps teens understand the **blessings** that come with waiting and the **consequences** they face when they don't. **The Youth Leader** will help students understand the blessings that come with waiting, review consequences that come with teen sexual activity, deal with past sins, seek repentance, and receive God's forgiveness.

1. **Ask Students** to make a list of the Blessings that come with “waiting” (pg 23)
2. **Review** the Consequences that await those who choose to become sexually active. Discuss what Jesus had to say about our need to deal with the outward and inward sins. (pgs 24-25)
3. **True Repentance** - True repentance is a result of God's conviction and is more than just being “sorry.” It's seeing that what you did was wrong, not just risky! It's turning around in God's strength and moving in a new direction...God's direction. It's the Holy Spirit getting your attention from within to convict you to stop what you've been doing wrong and to do a 180! Help students to understand:
 - The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin (pg27)
 - There is no sin like sexual sin (pg 28)
 - *No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.* (1 Corinthians 6:18). The word “body” refers not to the flesh, but to the whole being and personality. This sin can have disastrous effects. No other sin has the same effect on the memory, personality or soul of a vulnerable teenager as sexual sin. Paul doesn't say **walk**, but **run** away from sexual sin
 - God will forgive and forget our sin if we ask and truly repent (pgs 27-29)

4. **Summary:**

When we sin sexually, it creates a memory that is not easily erased. And one of Satan's greatest weapons is to constantly remind of us of our failures by bringing these memories to mind.

- a. How does a student **move on from past sins**? Remember to...**T.R.U.S.T. God** (pg 29)
 - **T**ell God specifically what you have done; Ask Him to forgive you.
 - **R**emove yourself from tempting situations that will cause you to slide
 - **U**sually teenagers are unaware that they have been infected with an STD. Plan to get tested if you have been sexually active,
 - **S**exual sin can be very painful... Emotionally and spiritually. Forgiveness is the key to healing.
 - **T**alk to someone you trust like a parent, youth leader or accountability partner. Don't let your fear or guilt from past mistakes keep you seeking help. Get everything out in the open and do it right away.

SESSION 4: How to Give God Control

Overview

Many young people who choose abstinence have the impression that the key to their success is based on a great deal of effort and self-control on their part. While they may say that the reason they chose abstinence and purity is based on their relationship with God, most students simply try to depend on their own strength - incorrectly assuming that it is their own efforts that keeps them on track. Ultimately, relying on your own efforts to follow the teachings of Jesus will often prove **futile**.

The awesome truth about Christianity is that God has more than enough “**strength**” to see us through our commitment to purity all the way to marriage. God’s strength is made available to us through the power of His Holy Spirit, which God willingly gives to anyone who asks. Our lives will never be fully transformed, if we try to rely on our own abilities and ignore the perfect gift of God’s Holy Spirit. This is the primary reason some teenagers who make a commitment to abstinence don’t finish their walk and give into temptation.

In Session 4 **the Youth Leader** will help students understand that they need “supernatural strength” to accomplish the “supernatural feat” of remaining pure until marriage. Giving God **complete** control and listening to the inner voice of the Holy Spirit is the key.

1. **Complete the exercise** on (pgs 31-32) and discuss how a student might live out their abstinence commitment in an appropriate way
2. **Walk through** the scripture where Jesus says, “I am the vine; you are the branches...” with the students. Discuss how Jesus teaches us about giving God complete control. (pg 33)
3. **Supernatural Help** - There is supernatural help available to teenager’s to overcome natural instincts (hormones). God created us to be sexual beings, and he designed sex to be the thing that bonds married people together. If a student has **any** hope of surviving the years of sexual temptation, he or she will need **supernatural strength** to do it. This power must come from inside, from the Holy Spirit operating within us... a “**voice**” that speaks to us at the moment of our greatest need.
 - **Teach how Supernatural strength works?** (pg35)
 - **It Interrupts** – God **can** get our attention
 - **It stops** – us from making bad decisions
 - **It convicts** – us to change
 - **It wins** – because you are **not left alone**
4. **Summary:**
 - a. **Discuss** - Know Why You are waiting (pg 35)
 - b. **Discuss** - Understanding the struggle (pg35)
 - c. **Discuss** – How to “win” (pg 35)
 - d. **Comment On** – “Righteous living is a matter of the will **not of will power**. The issue is will we surrender to the spirits leadership in our lives?” (*Choosing to Wait*: Laura B. Gallier)
 - e. **Prayer** – Lead students in prayer to ask God for forgiveness of past mistakes and to invite Jesus through His Holy Spirit to come into their lives to take **complete control**. (pg 37)
 - f. **Next steps - Make sure Students Put on the Silver Ring**; Ask them to recite and sign the abstinence covenant agreement in the front of this book. Help them to find an accountability partner and to get enrolled in the SRT follow up program. Ask them to begin reading the devotionals in the back of their NEXT Book starting on page 40.