



Name: _____

Encounter Date: _____

Small Group: _____

Reflection # 4

Real Friends

Reflection with: Parents — Mentor — Other: _____

Materials Used: YDisciple Follow Me: Real Friends

Discuss and Respond:

What do you think Steve meant when he said, "Friends tell us who we are now and shape us into who we are going to be"?

This is a story about two teenagers who experience the same situation. We will call them Teen 1 and Teen 2. While sitting at a coffee shop, the teenager notices that a customer has left his iPad on his chair. Five minutes pass and the person has not returned. Teen 1 is tempted to steal the iPad. Teen 1 had stolen things in the past but has been trying to change. Finally, after several minutes of struggling with the temptation, Teen 1 gets up and walks out of the store. Thanks be to God, Teen 1 was strong enough to resist the temptation. Teen 2, in the same situation, doesn't even consider stealing the iPad. Stealing is not a temptation for Teen 2. In fact, Teen 2 tells one of the employees that the iPad was left and gives a description of the person who left it. Which teen was more virtuous in this situation?

Virtue is doing what is right with ease. In fact, the lack of struggle in doing what is right brings joy. A virtue must be cultivated for it to become a habit in your life. Teen 1 is growing in virtue and that is good, but the temptation was difficult. Teen 2 was stronger in the virtues of justice and honesty, which made doing the right thing easy. In short, virtue is strength in your will. St. Paul states, "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Ask the following questions:

- » How does this verse speak to you?
- » If we pursue friendships of virtue in our small group, what do you think that looks like?

Steve shared St. Augustine's three requirements of true friendship. The first is having the desire and virtue to lead friends closer to God. What would be some reasons you would want to lead your friends closer to God? » St. Augustine's second requirement for true friendship is "frankness of speech." This is about being honest and real with each other and holding each other accountable. What would you say to a friend who comes to you and admits they have started experimenting with a sin in his or her life (like drinking or drugs)? What would you do to help this friend overcome this temptation? » The third requirement is "unity of heart and mind." This means our desire to know and love God comes before all else, and we begin to see God's love for us in the love of another person. When have you felt God's presence in the love someone else has shown you?

What are some ways you think we can each give over control and allow Jesus to take the handlebars?

Parent Signature _____