"She Asked Me"

Reflection by Michaela Lawrence Jeffery, Knoxville, TN

When I think about who helped shape me, I think about one person, a woman I'm tempted to name but won't. Her identity may distract you from what I have to share. And she'll possibly be embarrassed by all the attention--she's not the showy type.

What she is, is a passion-filled mentor whose interest in my life connected me to ministry (and the doing of ministry) way back in high school. Our relationship began with music. She invited me to help lead worship, allowed me a spot alongside her. I don't remember any instruction, though I'm sure there was some. What I do remember is that she let me join her. That was huge. She was in grad school which, to my teenage mind, meant she wasn't old but was certainly older, older enough to be a big deal, call the shots, lead confidently. And she didn't just let me join her, she asked me to.

At the end of undergrad, we crossed paths again, and again she invited me to lead music with her. And again I felt significant, capable, confident. The venue was no small deal but I wasn't too fazed because I was with her.

No, we never formally established a mentoring relationship. In fact, I'm realizing more and more that those who mentor us are essentially those we allow critical access into our lives. And at a young age, it's not that we allow them, per se, but that they give us reason to want them near—that's powerful stuff. Their presence changes us, molds us. We don't
have to ask them to be present; they continually show up. And in time we can clearly see that we've become better.

A few years later, after my first grad school jaunt, we somehow got in touch again. She was doing ministry somewhere (I don't remember what or where) and she wanted me to join her. I really wanted to. I knew it would be incredible. But I couldn't go. The logistics were impossible. And yet just knowing she thought I was fit for the work made me rethink what I was capable of. I returned home that summer and sometime that fall, presented my senior pastor with a proposal to begin a young adult ministry. That ministry's growth played a critical role in where I am now. Sure, there are several other pieces to my story but I believe that the opportunities I was given at a young age helped me embrace full time ministry today.

I should really thank her. She probably doesn't realize how serious her impact on my life has been. I suppose that's true for most of those who shape us.

Recalibrate

1. How are you shaping confidence in someone else?
2. Why is healthy shaping often difficult?
3. What principles or values are necessary in order for you to shape healthy confidence in someone else?

Feel free to send any thoughts or comments to Michaela Lawrence Jeffery.
"Lord of All" Available on iTunes

Many of you have been asking about "Lord of All," the song that we learned and sang together in San Diego. We're pleased to announce that the song is now available on iTunes.

Lyrics and chords are available for download here.

Join us as we continue to sing "with our lips and with our hearts" that Jesus is Lord of all.