

Preparing to Disciple Others

Doug Franck notes 3/13/11

Discipleship is an intentional, deep relationship in which one person helps another grow into Christian maturity through regular meetings to focus on studying the Bible, ministry coaching, personal counseling, and prayer, in the context of a close personal friendship.

The goal of discipleship is to bring to maturity a Christian to the point at which he/she will be competent to disciple and lead other people. Discipleship is a serious commitment to grow with God and to be used by him in ministry and should not be something entered into lightly. Each party needs to make certain commitments before this relationship will be effective to achieve its goals.

- I. God uses all kinds of people to disciple.
 - a. NO Two Disciples are alike...no two disciplers are alike either.
 - b. We all have different gifts, personality, experiences, and strengths... so to attempt to describe the “right way “ to make disciples are pointless. It is not getting through a curriculum...i.e. filling in all the blanks.

Instead let's look at...

- II. **What are the goals of Discipleship?** Col 1:28 -it includes radical change in:
 - a. **Character**- a good personal walk w/God...exchanging selfishness for being others-centered, growing in the fruits of the spirit, breaking free from sinful patterns.
 - b. **Understanding**: Who you are in Christ, principles of how to grow in your relationship with God.
 - c. **Knowledge of the Word** and how to use it in ministry (**wisdom**, discernment, resist false teaching).
 - d. **Ministry**- evangelism, using your spiritual gifts to serve others, personal discipleship (life on life), teaching, care giving skills.

Together, these constitute a person who is “complete (teleois), whole and mature in Christ” as Paul put it in Col1: 28.

Does this seem daunting to you? As you grow...you are able to communicate what you know of God. John 15:5 *Apart from me you can do "somethings?"... NO...NOTHING.*

- III. **Getting Started:** How do you enter into someone's life and build a discipling relationship?
- a. **Pray for your disciple**, specifically. (Each week catch up and find out how it's going in the areas you have prayed for.)
Use the prayer sheets they handed out.
 - b. **Develop a Vision** or picture of what your disciple could become-how his/her life could be enhanced by becoming all that God has in mind for them. (Picture a mature, servant of God). **WARNING:** Spiritual Growth is slow! It is a process, a marathon not a quick fix or a sprint. E.g. Jesus saw what Peter would become not what he was. **Affirm their progress!!!**

IV. **The Basic Elements of Discipleship:**

a. **Friendship-building-**

1. **Initiate Quality conversation.** 1 Jn 3:16-18, John 15:12,13- biblical love is: *A commitment to—w/ God's power—give of myself in every area for the good of another.*"

- a. **Ask Questions:** find out who they are, how they came to be involved at church, finding out personal areas or interest...music, sports, hobbies, art. About their key relationships. (Get the SPOTLIGHT onto them and off of yourself) What is their spiritual history?

2. **Listen to gain understanding.** Do we really understand where they are coming from, what stage they are in their spiritual growth (ref chart: seeker-Parent)

- a. Demonstrate Genuine Care by Actively Listening Trying to understand where they are and where they want to be. {Hand out 75% helping chart}

- b. Review the 3 vital components of LISTENING these are

- Warmth:** showing non-verbal care-what would that look like? Be happy to see them. ... (93% (55 Non-Verbal, 38 Tone, 7% Words)

Maintain good eye contact; pat them on the shoulder, not a "cold fish" in reacting to people. If you are

unemotional –push yourself-----If overly emotional (control yourself)

•**Empathy**-accurate understanding of what they are feeling and thinking.

•**Respect**: Communicating that they have worth and value.

Prov 18:2 –how does this relate to discipleship? Don't do all the talking.

Prov 18:13- impatience, jumping to causes and conclusions before you have really heard them.

James 1:19 -The priority is to be QUICK (not slow) to listen...i.e. eager to understand.

When people have interesting conversations, with active careful listening, they feel drawn to those people as friends. Listening builds trust and says you are a safe person. Raise good questions and actively listen as this helps cut through the awkwardness. Use interpersonal sharing...

- Set a regular meeting time.** Spend time outside of group. Go hang out at Rusty Bucket, go to Basketball game, BlueJackets,

- **Spend Time in the Word**-a study. Eg. True Measure of a Man, evangelism, Foundations, Ephesians, Nehemiah, Your Work Matters to God, Proverbs, Love and Respect: Marriage,

V. **Personal Counseling and helping your friend in areas of weakness.** (Attitudes, behavior patterns, character, sins your struggling with)

- a. Come alongside (paraclete) to help them evaluate (where are you now in this area and where do you want to be?) Assist in Goal setting and Accountability, Offer relevant insights from your own life and from the Bible.

VI. **Times of Prayer**

VII. **Helping them to develop a ministry:**

Assess Gifts, strengths, talents, personality, experiences, and passion

- a. Give them equipping opportunities: i.e. Search workshops, Equipping Ministries training, Xenos Summer Instit.: JP Moreland, Gene Getz, Ken Sande July 20-22,2011.
- b. Outreach-Friendship evangelism training...helping them to reach out to their friends, neighbors, and colleagues.
- c. Disciple others 2 Tim 2:2- Spiritual Multiplication

Paul modeled loving relationships with his disciples in Thes. 1 Thes 2:7-12. Image of a nursing **mother** (gentle, caring, loving, nurturing)

A **father**...truthful, guiding, encouraging, shepherding (helping them grow in Christ)

They were Paul's joy and crown. See 1 Thes 2:19-20

I Peter 1:22 *"Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, **fervently** love one another from the heart."*

If you learn to love people fervently from the heart, you will probably do well as a disciple-maker.

Next Time: The Discipleship Tool Box: Some tools that I have found helpful in discipleship.