

## **Creativity in Discipleship**

Howard Hendricks, Friday morning, July 18, 9 am.

The greatest challenge we are facing today is to understand the nature of creativity.  
How could we be so boring.

### **My 4 objectives in Disciple-making**

Your objectives determine your outcome.

If you don't know what you want to develop how in the world can you develop it?

#### **1. Unreserved commitment**

to God

to His Word

to the lost.

#### **2. I want to develop people who are competent.**

Develop people who know something.

You can't impart what you don't possess.

#### **Develop people who feel something.**

Does it bother you that people are so passive.

How in the world can you ever lose your enthusiasm when you are in contact with  
Jesus Christ? I regret that I only have one life to give to the Savior.

Lord teach us to number our days that we may get a skill of living our life well.

**Develop people who are doing something.** I am so weary with people who spend their  
lives learning something they do nothing about.

#### **3. I want to develop people who are communicating**

Reading, sharing

#### **4. I want to develop people who are creative!**

Somebody who is flexible and resourceful.

Who is able to think outside the box.

That kind of person makes the greatest impact in this generation.

### **Three Questions:**

#### **1. What will creativity do for your disciple?**

**You must know 4 things creativity will do for your disciple**

a. It will perpetuate the learning process.

Your disciple is a learner.

As long as you live you learn.

If you stop learning today you stop growing tomorrow.

People stop learning! What a tragedy.

Many have degrees that never lead to an education.

2 Peter 3:18 "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus  
Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

Discipleship is a process. Not a program.

Some are so filled with grace they are like a St. Bernard lavishing slobber all over you.  
Others are so filled with knowledge they know more than Paul. Just ask them.

## **2. It will meet the needs of a changing society.**

It is my judgment that we are not preparing our people for change.

The result is that many of them are floundering. This is why they become indrawn and withdrawn.

I have to be around some “hells” and “damns” to know this Book is alive.  
How in the world did you survived 53 years in the cemetery.

We are so defensive in our approach to people. So unlike the Savior.

## **2 things we confuse:**

That which is biblical and that which is cultural.

Biblical = will not change.

Cultural = flexible and must change and has to change.

We are more willing to change the doctrinal statement than the flowers in front.

This church has the finest program for 1946 that you've ever seen.

This church has a financial problem. How would you solve it. “I suggest you build a fence around this property and charge admission for what the church looked like in the last generation.” Ha

## **3. It will infect your discipleship with a characteristic freshness and variety.**

Quotation: “A religious mentality char by timidy and lack of moral courage has given us today a flabby Cntiy, ...dull and repetitious and is peddled as the faith of our fathers and we spoonfeed this to our inquiring youth....it is easier to entertain than to instruct...so too many of our evan leaders let their minds atrophy....”

A.W. Tozer in 1943

If Dr. Tozer were alive today what would he think.

This is a perfectly accurate description of many churches today.

No freshness or vitality.

What evidence would you have that this might be worthwhile.

Study done some time ago about methodology.

What the test shows is that the higher your predictability the lower your impact.

Not your morals.- ought to be as predictable as the sun rising.

Methodology – you ought to slip up on them once in a while.

I haven't been here long but I've been asked some of the most perceptive questions I've been asked in a long time.

**Story: Lose of a close friend, 90 year old, Mrs. Simpson.**

We were at a Christian Christmas party. Mrs. Simpson came over to me and said, "Hey Hendricks, what are the 5 best books you've read recently. Let's don't waste time here. Let's get into a discussion. And if we can't get in a discussion let's get into an argument."

She died...before she died she sat down and wrote out her goals for the next 10 years. Fully alive! Some are fully dead but won't be buried for 40 years.

Maybe this is one the serious problems we have in interesting young people in Christ and Christianity.

#### **4. Creativity will overhaul your life**

John 10:10 I came that you can really live.  
Is Christianity living or is it really alive?

How many man (talking about males) do you know over 55 that are still tracking for J.C. The tragedy is that we've so bought into our society that we are enamored with retirement.

"I have just 4 months until retirement"

Blow out their aorta on the way to Sarasota.

People are out of a job and out of purpose.

What are you going to do? Play golf. Is that how you are going to spend the rest of life.

I was speaking a while back speaking to the

I'm spending the rest of my life trying to get people off the gold course!

You mean you are going to spend the rest of your life walking after a little white ball.  
What a way to spoil a good walk.

#### **What do we know for sure about creativity?**

I had the privilege meeting Walt Disney.

#### **4 Things we know for sure...**

##### **1. There is no one without significant creative potential.**

Proven by research and experience.

I've taught these principles to male and female, to young and old and in over 80 countries.

There is no one, including you, you may not be acting creatively but you have creative potential.

##### **2. Conditioning is the killer of creativity.**

Your creativity is buried under layers

*Parents*...why do you ask so many dumb questions?

Did you ever get called “dummy” with an IQ of 160 and a degree from an Ivy League school? I got a 98% on a test, the highest in the class. My dad said, where’s the other two points?

If you are not on your kids team you ought to be leading the cheering section for that kid. If not, you may be the greatest killer of your kids creativity.

### ***Teachers***

Before kids go to school kids are often in the 90% percentile.  
After only one year they are in the 30<sup>th</sup>!

### ***Television***

If I could do only one thing for your children I would incapacitate the TV.  
It will ruin their ability to read.

Every year their reading level goes lower.

You don’t read unless you have pictures with it.

I grew up reading books without pictures

Will ruin their ability to think!

This is the greatest cause of our passivity in our churches.

We watch. We’ve seen war in our living room.

What do you do about it? Not a blessed thing.

We see children starving. But what are you going to do about it?

Not a blessed thing but be sad about it.

So, we come to church, write it down and leave and never do a thing about it.

It will ruin your ability to be creative.

### **3. The conditioning process can be reversed!**

It is possible to peel off the layers of conditioning. But not without effort and without cost. How badly do you want to become creative?

If that response is passive I will not help students who come to me for help.

Creativity is not available in a bargain basement sale.

It is hard work and never comes easy even to professionals.

I know Chuck Swindoll very well.

He pays a high price. Maybe only 4-5 hours sleep to have precision in speaking.

He spends hours behind the scenes coming up with the organization of his materials and illustrations. Truck driver, “Chuch Swindoll is the only guy who gets through to me.”

Creative people do what non-creative people refuse to do.

### **4. Creativity must become a lifestyle.**

It must pervade all of life. Creative in all your life or in none of it.

It is not a turn on. From writing letters to making love. From sermons to man to man.

**Question: How do we develop creativity in ourselves and in others?**

**1. Experience provides fuel for ideation.**

Live it up.

The broader, the deeper, the more cross-cultural your experience the more creative your potential. I would send every young person to the holy land. We are still going to the Holy Land.

If you go to the Holy Land then I would love to teach the gospels to you.

Hey, I see that. I remember that. We were standing there.

So, since I'm not a wealthy man, you'd better start saving.

If you want to invest your money well you need to go to the mission field.

I minister overseas, particularly in the 3<sup>rd</sup> world. I tell them you need to come to America and teach us. We have people from 34 countries at DTS.

First time in history, the largest group we graduated is from foreign countries.

Get with missionaries. They will give you the picture of what is happening.

Courtship, having a baby, etc.

**2. Tackle your problems and weaknesses.**

Having a problem is not a problem. Not tackling the problem is a problem.

What problem of yours have you solved?

If you are a problem solver, I guarantee you are creative.

Five girls.

All five in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries.

They can fix any car.

It is amazing how creative you become when you have to, to solve problems.

Are you equipping your children to handle real world problems.

This doctor when 3 x a year to the 3<sup>rd</sup> world.

**3. Expose yourself to, attend and use the arts.**

7/11 songs = 7 words used 11 times.

**4. Reading: read wisely, read widely. Read the enemy not just the party line, read in your field and out.**

Is there anybody who has read a great deal but is dissatisfied with what they can remember?

**40/20 rule.** For every hour you read, 40 min reading and 20 min reflecting on the text.

Read and process what you read. If you can read and don't read you aren't better than those who can't read.

Armand, Nicholi, Prof at Harvard Medical School, Strong Ctn.

Met him at Park Street Church in Boston.

### ***The Question of God***

You work with thinking people.

This is book you want them to read.

Contrast between C.S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud

It is an objective study. He teaches this course. He was asked by the Harvard faculty.

The most popular course at the university and medical school.

A presentation of the reality of Ctnity and the lack of it in Freud who took his life.

### **5. Writing**

“I’m not a writer.” I’m not suggesting that you write a book. Maybe you shouldn’t.

#### **I’m suggesting you keep a journal!.**

Young people, some of the most important things in your life are happening now but you are doing nothing to preserve them.

Our love letters. Journal of our seminary days.

We were down to nothing and that morning we got together and prayed for \$10. Lord, we aren’t eating unless you do something. So I went over to the PO and got a letter from a friend.

It’s great to go back and see what God has done in your life. What a miracle!

Write stuff down! Get yourself an idea track – write them down.

### **6. Asking questions**

That’s why a lot of people who ask questions are disliked.

That’s why I like Peter so well, “Peter, who having nothing to say, said”

Those are the questions I have to.

Develop an overwhelming curiosity.

### **7. Expose yourself to creative people.**

**Hang around thinking people. That’s where you learn the most.**

### **Q and A.**

**What is being done on the seminary level to encourage creativity?**

Many things. A great deal. I teach a course on creativity in ministry.

I teach a course on communicating in secular culture helping them evaluate culture.

We are in danger in evangelicalism of losing our mind.

**Comment – thank you so much for everything you’ve said. It’s been so inspiring.**

**I’m an art teacher and done lots of thinking about creativity.**

**Conditioning being the killer...**

When I was in college they taught that kids need to express themselves.

We provide the materials but don't want to hinder them.

Kids need skills in the arts...writing, etc.

Michael Angelo: "To the glory of God"

1/3 of artists at Disney are evangelicals who are fighting for their lives there.

"why do you spend so much time on something noone will see?" "God will"

**I'm struggling with something C.S. Lewis**

**Comment on difference between being creative and being original.**

There is only one creative person – God.

But we have been created in His image. God set the pattern for us. We create something out of something. Only God creates something out of nothing.