

The Disciple-Making Church

Dennis McCallum, Wednesday, 8:30 – 9:30 p.m. July 17, 2003

The Discipling Church

We are a house church multiplication movement.

The whole basis is discipleship.

The Master Plan of Evangelism, by Coleman, p.28

Men were his method.

The list of disciples that Paul mentions is over 30 men and women., p.34

Personal discipleship is the

Barna *Growing True Disciples:*

p.41 Only half of the believes we interview ...

Barna – a must read!

Even the teaching presented in most small groups has little long term affect.!

Few churches are raising up mentors. P.46

No churches have a specific program to program one to one discipleship.

1 in 35 are being disciplined.

Churches talk about discipleship but very few actually practice it!

Confirms Coleman's point. If this is true, and it is, why do we feel that our approach in the modern church is so much better than the early church?

Scripture is unambiguous.

Ephesians 4

Doesn't use the word "discipleship" but it does use "teachers"

Ephesians 4:11-16 "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

Unity = a relational unity so that we are involved in each other's lives.

The knowledge of the son of God. Knowledge matters.

Knowledge of Christ

Learning scriptures

All of our superficial definitions of disciples is shattered here. "mature man, to the measure of the fullness of Christ"

Col 1:28

Colossians 1:28 “We preach Christ, warning people not to add to the Message. We teach in a spirit of profound common sense so that we can bring each person to maturity. To be mature is to be basic. Christ! No more, no less.

Gal 4:19 “Do you know how I feel right now, and will feel until Christ’s life becomes visible in your lives? Like a mother in the pain of childbirth.

If we want to do church God’s way we must be convinced that Christ wants us to build deeply into people’s lives.

“speaking the truth in love” in the context of love relationships.

“grow up in all aspects” Grown in all these areas except!

What we find in a community where discipleship is taken seriously people get into each other’s lives!

You have a serious problem here...how are we going to get at that?

Not the leadership that has the responsibility for this. Each individual part!

Here’s the Biblical picture! Not just attending some services. How to go deeper.

Question: What do we teach home group leaders?

But, so often having a home group doesn’t mean that discipleship is taking place. Home groups can be social groups, dependency clusters,

What can we do as the top leadership in the church? To foster a movement toward personal discipleship?

What is the top job?

Is it evangelism? If we don’t have it the small group will go inward!

VIP. But is that job one?

Is it training leaders how to lead small groups? – to run their group meetings.

This is important. But

Or is it personal discipleship? Yes! Job one is reproducing disciples

Results when this is the case:

~ Evangelism

Discipleship in the biblical sense involves reaching out in love to others.

~ Good quality pastoral care.

To have someone who can bring the wisdom of God’s Word into the group and relationship. The best kind of pastoral care we can have A 1000 times better counseling

Establish the ethos of this is about personal discipleship.

We are weekly, daily praying and studying how we can enhance spiritual growth in each other.

~ Personal spiritual growth

~ Group multiplication

We have no way of knowing what kind of a group will be formed if we aren't discipling leaders. Then, we know what kind of person we are aiming at.

Expectations of Leaders:

1. To develop relatively mature Christian character

We aren't looking for perfection here. But we are looking for some degree of character.

The Measure of a Man

~ Most of the requirements for deacons and elders are character qualities

~ Requires disciplers to look beyond external performance.

~ Combats superficially

Not just the function of the Ctn.

But the character of a Ctn.

Main issues:

~ Self-control issues

~ Relational issues

Yes, they can preach. But when they go home they are hell on wheels.

Do they have the ability to form deep relationships!

Not that easy – takes years of struggle to make progress!

To deal with our self focused anger.

Not superficial issue here. Hard to get at.

People need a lot of help to get at this.

Idea = once a month have the “pastors in” to our home to talk!

~ Value systems!

What matters to them.

How much they can give their lives over to others.

A task that is truly immense. Takes God!

To get away from the fundamentalist, phony lifestyle!

Working on integrity.

2. Ministry Competence

It isn't enough to be a holy Christian.

~ The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.

How do we know we can trust a person to delegate leadership to?

Established lifestyle of character and biblical lifestyle.

A history of service of others. = selfishness is less likely.

~ History of service means selfishness means selfishness is less likely.

~ Ministry roadblocks often expose character needs

Is my Christian life for me, or for others?

Often is all about me! According to how people feel and our devotional literature.

This is a very deep question!

What will smoke it out is when we go out and try to give our life away for others!

When people mistreat you and you feel like you've had more fun at the mogue.

Am I able to work in harmony on a team?

We lose house churches to this. We lose leaders to this.

Really learning to forged to a ministry team is a test of maturity.

When I get wronged, am I able to forgive and go on?

No, I don't know how to forgive.

We need to grow up spiritually.

You see bitterness come up and lack of forgiveness.

Now we see what we need to develop.

Ministry Competence – range of ability to victoriously serve others.

Main signs:

~ **Evangelism – reaching out to those in need.**

Some of us are so self-centered that we don't want the vulnerability of reaching to others.

We want to send them out.

Really? What have they don't in evangelism.

We want to see them really swing the ax in reaching people.

~ **Follow-up** That they take a hand in the work.

~ **Long-term discipleship themselves!**

They've won someone. They are discipling and we see our disciple has a disciple.

2 Tim 2:2

Who are they discipling?

2 months are not long enough. We want to see a deeper type of relationship!

We want to see this in leaders to whom we entrust the flock of God.

~ **Able to guide others into real spiritual growth.**

Ministry competence is secondary. Character qualities come first.

But they must have

Implied skills:

~ **Scripture knowledge.**

We don't want dependancy clusters.

We want leaders to be able to convince people of the benefits of righteousness.

A convinced Ctn.

~ **Prayer life**

You have to have a prayer life if you are going to advance in ministry.

You must be protected in spiritual warfare.

You have not because you ask not.
Prayer matters.

~ **Able to love from the heart.**

People get into ministry to use people or fix people.
What a transition it is to give my heart over to others.
Older we get the more impatient we get.
Struggle to give ourselves over again...especially since we've experienced betrayal.
When someone can love that way, that's advanced stuff.

~ **Consistency**

Don't have tantrums. Become stable, consistent.

~ **Dedication** When I put myself at stake for people.

When you see these qualities you know you can trust them.
These people are dedicated to God. This is not a fancy gimmick

How Do We Foster Discipleship in our Church?

~ **Teach it.**

~ **Model it.**

Who is the senior leader discipling?
Someone younger.
If you want discipling convictions it has to start at the top.
Those at the top must show the way!
If it is good for others, then it's good for me.

~ **Coach it**

This is not that easy!
We can't just give them curriculum.
There are so many set backs.
There are so many disappointments.
That is not an unusual thing.
Most people are a piece of work!

We have to keep going back and back.

~ **We have to measure discipleship!**

Most churches don't measure it because they don't care about it.
We count money. Why don't we count discipleship.

We have a list of all the house church leaders.
And, we have a list of those they are discipling – our second line of offense.

We bring them in and we celebrate.
We bring those in that are discipling them and we celebrate.

~ No early rescue!

You have to let people struggle!

We can't always go over and rescue them. That's how they learn.

~ Recognition

We have a discipleship festival.

All of this could result in decreased church growth! (esp. short term)

The real reason why churches are not willing to consider this.

We'll do anything for numbers.

We want results now!

The deeper road takes longer.

But we will get the growth long term. This will test our value system.

Coleman, p.38

This separates people who take God's word seriously and those who are pragmatists.

Takes 3-5 years. That's the typical investment we have to make to bring people to completeness in Christ.

Q & A; Comments;

Q: Your first thing you said about a disciple:

What is your relative Ctn maturity? - relative to the group you are working with.

Paul sometimes appointed elders after 1-3 months. Relative to the group they were in.

As Paul when on he got away from that. Esp in the pastoral epistles.

Q: A lot of people would look at this discipleship stuff and say, "You're too involved in lives"

There is a real cause for this.

The "shepherding" movement where people controlled people.

Discipleship is about facilitating others.

Cults do use sociological manipulation.

People will say it because suspicion is around. But we have to stand under fire.

We have to train our people to be helpers, not controllers.

Especially when we get into non-character issues.

Q: What is the distinction between one and one with people, but through a disciple of a leader in the group, ...

The distinction bet/ ministry and leadership. The qualifications have to do with leadership, not ministry. Within days Paul was preaching. Who lowered Paul over the walls? His disciples and this was Paul's first year of ministry.

Now, whether we are going to place them in leadership, that's another question.

Q: As we pursue out personal spiritual growth we will uncover some of our own problems. We should be free to be where we are at.

It isn't that we reach this plateau and then we are able to disciple others.

Ministry is actually one of the means of growth.

It is one of the most powerful motivations to deal with my own issues.

Maybe I'm a step or two ahead of you.

Prayer.