TRAINING Disciples to Train

Session 24: Discipleship is Relational (10d)

Offered by Ron Lively, M.Div., M.A. – BiblicalMentoring.org (Studies)

Step 1: Opening prayer

Step 2: Each person quotes the memory verse: VERSE: **Acts 20:24**
24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself,
if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus,
to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Step 3: *Read and discuss all or part of the Bible Chapter* - **Acts 20**
Link: https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2020&version=ESV

Step 4*:* Questions for Personal Applications and/or Group Discussions:

1. This discussion on "motivation" is divided into four ways to motivate your disciple.
2. **Direction**: You own determination to pursue direction in your life will motivate others.
3. **Vision**: Having your own clear vision for advancing God's Kingdom via discipleship training is essential. But then share that vision so that your trainee develops their vision.
4. **Confidence**: Help your disciple find his or her own true confidence in Christ Jesus.
5. **Urgency**: Phillips writes that "compassion for others and the knowledge of Christ's imminent return demand urgency". We don't know when Christ will return.

Step 5*: Read and discuss the Content from the book:*
Chapter 10d per the author – Keith Phillips:

Motivation

Motivation is that impelling desire which moves us toward our purpose. Motivation spurs your disciple on to be God's person and to minister effectively and joyfully.

When I was asked to lead a session on discipleship at a recent staff retreat, I hesitated for fear of boring my coworkers. I live, breathe and eat discipleship and assumed that all of our staff was equally self-motivated.

But when I challenged them, I was astounded by the response. Person after person told me how he had needed that fresh motivation. Some had been so buried in teaching Bible classes, responding to emergencies and conducting a myriad of other ministry activities that they had lost sight of their goal. They needed help in picturing how their seemingly mundane responsibilities were crucial to discipleship. Even full-time missionaries can have their vision blurred by the tyranny of the routine. We all need frequent motivation to press on toward the mark.

Let me suggest four ways to motivate your disciple.

1. Direction.

You must have direction in your life in order to lead your disciple. Paul declared, "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me..." (Acts 20:24 NIV). Christ's disciples watched Him set out for Jerusalem with determination to die for the sins of man (Luke 9:51). If you are growing in your knowledge of the Word and consistently applying it in daily decision making, your disciple will be motivated to do the same.

2. Vision.

Regularly bolster your disciple's vision for discipleship. Christ was a discipler. And people were His program. Your disciple must be convinced that "the one who says he abides in [Christ] ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked" (1 John 2:6). Show your disciple that Paul's training of the Thessalonians resulted in their effective ministry not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place that they went (1 Thessalonians 1:7,8). Remind your disciple that his costly investment of time and energy in others will also produce abundant and lasting fruit.

No wise man ignores the explosive potential of one person. Through Adam we all were born in sin, but through Christ we have the potential for new life (1 Corinthians 15:22). Help your disciple keep his eye on the target of making disciples. "Where there is no vision, the people perish..." (Proverbs 29:18 KJV).

3. Confidence.

A confident person is stable, unwavering under pressure, because he rests in an unchanging and consistent God. Help your disciple find his confidence in Christ. When the apostles were unable to heal the epileptic boy, their confidence in the flesh was shattered and they turned to Christ (Mark 9). Do not protect your disciple from circumstances in which he can see his inadequacy. Give him responsibilities that will force him to trust God. His confidence will grow as he watches God honor his faith. If your disciple is aware of the presence and work of the living Christ in his life, Christian maturity and ministry are unavoidable.

The same Jesus who healed the sick, walked on water, raised the dead and then conquered death promised that those who believe in Him shall do even greater works (John 14:12). No person can be more confident than one who walks with Jesus.

4. Urgency.

A disciple's ministry of reconciliation gains urgency when he recognizes that rejection of God's gift results in eternal damnation. Jesus warns, "We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Compassion for others and the knowledge of Christ's imminent return demand urgency.

Yet, if the sense of urgency is too great, your disciple will become discouraged, feeling that there is so much to be done so quickly that his contribution would be insignificant. People function poorly under a constant siege of pressure.

Jesus preserved a delicate balance by imploring His disciples to act as if He would return at any moment—while directing them to plan to build His Church for generations. The urgency produced by His impending return prevented laziness and procrastination among His followers, who then proceeded to build His Church through discipleship. You too must instill a well-balanced sense of urgency that motivates your disciple to act without frustrating him to inaction.

A strong relationship is inseparable from successful discipling. It supplies you with the necessary understanding of your disciple's spiritual health and provides a forum from which you can direct him to reproduction. It gives him the security to accept and the motivation to act upon your input. And it is practical training for his eventual leading of others. Christian discipleship is relational.

Discipler's Checklist – Discipleship is Relational
My relationship with my disciple is characterized by:
___Warmth – an attitude of love and gentleness.
___Loyalty – a consistent commitment.
___Fairness – being unbiased.
___Maturity – steady, faithful walk with God.
___Availability – maximum access.
___Patience – faith in action.
___Honesty – open communication.
___Motivation – an impelling desire that moves us toward our purpose.

pp. 113-116

Step 6: *Share personal prayer requests then each person prays for the other's requests.*

Source: The Making of a Disciple by Dr. Keith Philips. Pub. by Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981. ISBN 0-8007-1181-5. Introduction by Robert E. Coleman. Content (except study questions) is taken from the book without revisions.

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