TRAINING Disciples to Train

Session 32: The Master's Model (13a)

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

Step 1: Opening prayer

Step 2: Each person quotes the memory verse: VERSE: **Mark 4:10-11**
10 And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.
11 And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God,
but for those outside everything is in parables,

Step 3: *Read and discuss all or part of the Bible Chapter* - **Mark 4**
Link: https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%204&version=ESV

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

1. Does it make a difference how you get the job done of just that you get it done?

2. Phillips affirms that "In discipleship, the method is the message". Ponder how this affects you training of disciples.

3. Jesus told his disciples – "Be like me". How is this possible considering he was Deity? Why is this important to your discipleship training? Secondly, he trained his disciples over a long period of time. We must do the same.

4. Ponder how our actions speak louder then words in our training.

5. Do you realize that Jesus was an excellent model who concentrated on molding his disciple's characters rather than simply teaching information or issuing orders that have to be obeyed. Parents do this in their teaching / training of their children in order to see true obedience. Right? Phillips warns again that "only a disciple (who is dead to himself) can make reproducing disciples (reproducing in others the Biblical character of Jesus). Are you ready for this challenge?

Step 5*: Read & discuss this content from the book-The Making of a Disciple (See Source below):*
Chapter 13a per the author – Keith Phillips:

The Master's Model

One of my initial ventures into the business world was as a paperboy. The newspaper frequently sponsored contests to increase its circulation. I distinctly remember one pep talk from my manager: "I don't care how you get new subscriptions, just get them." The world has little concern with how the job gets done, as long as it is accomplished. How different it is in God's economy!

In discipleship, the method is the message. Every week thousands of ghetto children attend our Bible clubs across America. We discovered that the children learn more by watching their Bible teacher's love and care for others than they do by listening to the Bible story.

That's why Christ's method of training people is of the utmost importance. Careful observation of His strategy reveals that training a person to become a functioning disciple demands a two-fold approach. First, Christ's method and message was "Be like Me." Then He provided practical training over a long period of time. If either of these is missing, discipleship will not occur.

"Be Like Me"

It never ceases to amaze me how my boys try to mimic everything I do. They watch me shave and they want to shave too. They watch me jog, and they want to ran up the street with me. I believe their favorite questions always begin with the same six words, "When I get bigger can I - drive your car? go to the office? use that big and noisy saw?" The intent is always the same: "When I get bigger can I - be like you?"

When Joshua and Paul were three years-old they watched a neighbor and me cut down a fifty-foot eucalyptus tree in our backyard. First, we trimmed off all of the lower branches to prevent damage to a nearby building. Then we felled the tree with a chain saw. The boys were absolutely delighted when the eucalyptus crashed to the ground.

The next morning, I left for a trip. When I returned home, I noticed our once-full umbrella tree had been stripped of all its branches on one side. The boys were in the process of systematically pulling off every limb in preparation to saw it down.

Most of who we are today is a result of watching and listening to others. We learned how to talk by imitating our parents and other children in school. We formed personal preferences about dress, recreation, music and entertainment by copying the likes and dislikes of our family and peers. Even our thinking and philosophy of life were greatly influenced by those around us.

Making a disciple is a process that begins with being a model. Character is caught, not taught. That's why Christ's disciples left their occupations to be with Him (Mark 3:14). First, they had to follow Jesus. Only then could He train them to be "fishers of men."

The disciples accompanied Christ when He turned the water into wine. They watched Him drive the money changers out of the temple. They listened to Him minister to the Samaritan woman - in violation of a racial taboo. They saw Christ heal the nobleman's son and the lame man at Bethesda. They marveled when He cast demons out of a man at Gerasa. For months they watched Him heal the blind, the lame and the deaf. They saw Him minister to children, women, men and even His enemies. They heard extraordinary discourses, remarkable parables and the most notable message ever delivered—the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus carefully explained His teachings and actions to His disciples so that they could understand the reasoning and principles that motivated Him. He spent time alone with them, revealing why He spoke in parables (Matthew 13:10-15) and disclosing the secrets of God's Kingdom (Mark 4:11). Mark 4:34 says He explained "everything privately to His own disciples." While Jesus taught His disciples principles to follow in their ministry, He concentrated on molding their characters rather than simply imparting information. No other men have sat at the feet of a more profound, yet relevant, teacher.

What the disciples saw and heard radically affected them. They never forgot His perfect integration of teaching and doing (Acts 1:1). Faithfully they characterized Jesus as One who "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed..." (Acts 10:38). They grounded their authority in and sought credence for their message in the words, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you..." (1 John 1:3 KJV). By watching and listening to Christ, these uneducated disciples were transformed into functioning ministers, men "full of God's grace and power..." (Acts 6:8 NIV). Had they copied a lesser model, their ministries would have been far less significant. Antagonists later attributed the disciples' success to the fact that "they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13 KJV).

Jesus provided His disciples with a perfect model (John 13:15). They could then make disciples, not merely because they knew Christ, but because they had become like Him. They could model what others should become.

Like Christ, your most important task is to provide an excellent model for your disciple. It is a law of nature that we reproduce after our own kind. We reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7,8). A farmer who plants potatoes does not expect to harvest cucumbers. Jesus said, "...men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush" (Luke 6:44).

This same principle is true spiritually. Only a disciple (dead to himself) can make disciples (reproduce). Note that Christ's commission to make disciples was spoken to His disciples. This is

why our character must be Christ-like before we reproduce ourselves in others. We reproduce in kind for good or evil. If a carnal Christian trains another person, carnality will be the fruit of their relationship. Luke 6:40 says, "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher."

When I started this ministry, I was very hesitant to confront unprepared volunteers about their lack of excellence. I'd always let it slip, hoping that God's Spirit would convict them. I even went out of my way to thank them for their effort in bothering to show up at all.

Before long I noticed this same reluctance in Al Ewert. The same fear that I had of offending and maybe losing a volunteer was reproduced in Al. I was convicted; I knew Al would never change unless he saw me change. As I grew in exercising honest confrontation based on God's standard of excellence, so did Al. While only God can produce the character of a true disciple, it is much easier for your disciple to become something he can see than something he merely hears or reads about.

I had a friend in college who aspired to be a receiver in professional football. One afternoon I was at the practice field watching him catch passes. Time after time he made spectacular receptions. The tragedy was that there were no pro scouts there watching. His ability had to be observed to be appreciated.
(pp. 147-150)

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.

Revised 20261123