

Basic Elements of Christian Discipleship Training

Teacher Notes extra teacher notes are in boxes

By Dave Batty

A. Difference between birth and living

Physically – not too hard to bring a new child into the world

- at least – man’s part

- a lot more pain for the woman but still – 9 months and it’s done

But raising a child to become a mature adult – more than 9 months.

Story of 2 year old child falling out of bed – “I stayed too close to where I got in.”

Spiritually – not too hard to bring someone to the point of salvation

- Evangelism – a separate workshop on this topic

But raising that new Christian to the point of spiritual maturity!

- that is quite a process

- not identical for all new Christians

- depends on special needs

Physically not enough to bring baby home and give them a sheet of instructions

- food

- clean clothes

- bathroom

- have a great day

- we are quite busy with our own lives and work

- have a great life!

Police would soon arrest us for negligence.

Spiritually

-Do we give the new Christian a Bible and say “God bless you? We are glad to have you in the family of God.”

-But we are busy with other things, so have a great week, we will see you next Sunday. Then we wonder why they don’t stay faithful to Christ and go back to their life of sin after a few days, weeks, or months.

Question: Would God arrest us for negligence on behalf of the new Christians in our church?

B. Life Training

-Put off “old man”
-Put on “new man”
-Becoming like Christ

TC ministry – getting them to stop using drugs is not too hard. But to put on a whole new way of thinking – that’s quite a challenge.

Colossians 3:1-17

Ephesians 4:17-5:21

Philippians 2:5 – put on the attitude of Jesus

My part versus God’s part

Matthew 11:28-30 – come to Him

Romans 12 – whole chapter

(Danger here: Where do new Christians look to see how to put off the old man and put on the new man? They look to older Christians as examples – you and me.)

A challenge for those who have been a Christian over 1 year, especially if in leadership. They think they are not allowed to have problems. – They have a revised version of James 5:16. Instead of confessing their faults one to another, they feel they must never admit that they have any problems.

-New Christians don’t know any better

-They are honest and say – I’m really struggling with this problem

-We react – Really !?!! – Maybe you aren’t a Christian after all!!

C. 3 Basic Areas of Discipleship Training

Need for balanced growth in all 3 areas.

1. Christ-like life style

-love, kindness, patience, qualities that describe Christian life. 2 Peter 1:5-8

2. Ministry of Christian service

Ephesians 4:11-16 – especially vs. 12 & 16

-Appropriate ministry for new Christians

-Evangelism – have friendships

-Introduce concept of body ministry

-everyone is gifted

Romans 12

1 Corinthians 12 – especially vs. 18 – God has arranged the parts, just as he wanted them to be

Ephesians 4:

3. Personal problem solving

-Illus. of headache – take an aspirin

The solution needs to fit the problem. If a person has been under stress and not had much sleep, then taking an aspirin and getting a good night's sleep is probably a good solution.

However, if the headache is caused by a brain tumor, then an aspirin and a good night's sleep will do nothing to solve the problem.

We sometimes fail to understand the complication of past sins

– misuse of 2 Corinthians 5:17

-balance needed here

-No need to dig up every detail of past sin.

-sometimes damage still present

-TC students sexually abused

-Use of drugs a symptom, not real problem

-Son of alcoholic

-TC student – drug addict

- Pastor – protect family – knife

-Rich young ruler – doubts

-came to Jesus – His first solution – obey God's laws

-I've been doing that!!

- What Jesus did NOT tell him to do
 - Pray more
 - go to church more regularly
 - have Christian friends
 - pay his tithes
 - stop sinning
 - witness more
 - be more sincere
 - read His Bible more
 - cast out demon of doubt
 - Jesus did not pray for him either
- Holy Spirit gave him insight to problem – just as Jesus had to depend on Holy Spirit – so do we. His money mastered him.
- Jesus solution – looked at him and loved him & said....
- He left the choice up to the man

-don't slap a "super-spiritual" bandage on problems that need real solutions.

D. People are in search of meaningful relationships.

- culture today so busy
- time saving devices
- jobs – money for the good life – materialism
- lonely people
- even in church

- discipleship is a call to personal relationship
- not done with books and video tapes alone
- we often describe being a Christian as having a personal relationship with Jesus

E. Focus is on application

- catechism of Roman Catholic church and other mainline denominations
- Full of Biblical truth
- For some – get information only

-The critical focus of discipleship training is personal application

-conclusion of sermon on the mount – Matthew 7:24-27

Wise man and the foolish man – in common – both heard the truth

-difference between them – one applied it – the other did not.

Difference between **Education** and **Discipleship**

Education

Discipleship

Head

vs

heart

Knowledge

vs

Application

Understanding

vs

Commitment

Letter of the law

vs

Spirit of the law

Legalism

vs

Life & Light

Philippians 3:14 Paul - I press toward the mark of the high calling of God

Hebrews 12:1-2 Lay aside every weight and sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us – let us FIX our eyes of Jesus.