

Disciple Making...Not Gerbil Training

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It appears to me that Church leaders have a basic misconception of discipleship. They think discipleship is where you have an “endless” number of courses that you encourage people to take within the Church. I say “endless” because there is no graduation, but more and more people enroll in what basically is nothing more than academic learning. In the corporate world, there is a well-known rule that corporate trainers promote—“tellin’ ain’t trainin’”. As you read the Gospels, you see that Jesus would agree with the simple truth.

Corporations understand what the Bible proclaims; people don’t learn by expounding and teaching alone. You have to help people make the leap into the reality of applying what they are learning by doing something.

When you have an endless academic track where no one ultimately graduates, you have what we call at JRP -- **gerbil training**. I think you get the point. At JRP, we aren’t into gerbil training. ***We are very into disciple making.***

Let me take this a step further. Well meaning pastors think that the way to cultivate servant leadership is to have people sign up for service work within the church, which in and of itself isn’t a bad thing. Jesus proclaimed that the greatest of those among you shall be servants of all. (Mark 10:43, Luke 22:26) But when the motive of enlisting people service work is centered around making certain that the “gears” of the church run efficiently under the guise of “making disciples”, leaders have stepped into “controlling” followers, not making disciples.

I recently heard a pastor declare on a Sunday morning that he appreciated his start in the ministry. He recounted the story of the pastor he started working with who took him into the remote parts of the church, leading him to a back room. His pastor then pointed to the toilet and asked his new intern what he thought it was. He told him that it was in fact a toilet. His mentor then said, “if you can’t be humble enough to clean that toilet, you’ll never be humble enough to stand in the pulpit.” I’ve heard similar stories from other pastors and I’ve come to the conclusion that it’s time to intentionally shatter this paradigm in order to intentionally secure revival in our time.

From what I read in the Bible, I don’t see any toilets going to Heaven...nor buildings, or pulpits or clean windows. What I see is that the main purpose of the our mission on earth is to disciple people that are not only willing but are also highly skilled in following the Holy Spirit to ***pull people out of their toilets***...the toilet of sin and the consequences of living in a fallen world. This type of person knows how to partner with the Holy Spirit and does what He says to do, when He says to do it, in the way He says to do it. The person that is willing to partner with the Holy Spirit and will yield to His promptings and leadings is a person that is truly humble. He is a true disciple and servant of Jesus Christ.

The person stuck in the rut of cleaning a church toilet under the “mentorship” of someone that is either unwilling or unskilled in making disciples, is in bondage...on the endless, circular track that goes nowhere. In many cases, these “servants” are looking for the approval of man rather

than the approval of God. **The Holy Spirit creates “tracks” that have a destination that are designed to help them fulfill their destiny! They are not man-made. They are created by God!**

The Holy Spirit has always been and will always be The One who makes true disciples of Jesus Christ. If we are to partner with the Holy Spirit who makes true disciples, then we must move in revelation to understand what the Holy Spirit is saying to the one He has brought to us to learn more about both the King and His Kingdom. Our goal is to connect disciples with the Spirit of God and to learn to follow Him so that they might learn to love and serve Him, and to allow Him to flow through them in what they say and do. This is our mission.

If we are going to be disciples of Jesus Christ, the time has come to be intentional to secure the promise of revival for ourselves, our families and our churches. We must follow the leadings and promptings of the Holy Spirit and be humble enough to both seek and step out in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We must humble ourselves and align with how Jesus sees us according to Revelation 3:17 and allow the Word to do a deep cleaning in our hearts by aligning with His assessment of our spiritual condition. We are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Until we as disciples, who are sent forth to make disciples, get that basic truth straight, we will have a lot of clean toilets, carpets, floors and windows, but we will never see all of the facets of revival that flowed through Jesus and His disciples by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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