

The Map Maker's Guide

Map 19 - Workplace Ministry Formation

Spiritual Exercise

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. 1John 5:14-15

*For since the beginning of the world
Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear,
Nor has the eye seen any God besides You,
Who acts for the one who waits for Him. Isaiah 64:4*

*Show me Your ways, O LORD;
Teach me Your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You are the God of my salvation;
On You I wait all the day. Psalm 25:4-5*

Prayer

Father God, we are waiting on You. We are waiting on you to show us Your ways and teach us Your paths; to lead us in Your truth. Father, we are waiting on You to act. And Father, we are waiting on You to reveal Your will. Even now, there are specific situations and relationships in our lives in which we are waiting to know Your will. We are waiting, ready to respond from a heart that You have made willing. We trust You, for You are steadfastly faithful. In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

Introduction

As God reveals His plan for accomplishing the purposes He has for each of us, we discover that He has His own way for getting things done. His ways are the best ways. In *Making Disciples God's Way*, we discovered that Jesus has shown us how to be a disciple maker - by being a disciple Himself. We now know that a true disciple lives for His Master's will, only doing and saying what His Master is doing and saying.

To close out this section, we will explore Jesus' expectations for us as His disciple-making disciples. Most Christians are familiar with the Great Commission. Some also know that portions of Jesus Christ's commission are recorded in Mark, Luke and John; and in the beginning of Acts. It is time all Leaders in the Workplace became faithful stewards of the mysterious depths of possibility and responsibility found there.

What we will discover is adventure beyond our imagination. We must be careful to avoid becoming overwhelmed or discouraged. We must remember that the Father is working in us for His good pleasure; that we need only do what our Master is doing and say what He is saying. The Holy Spirit has been sent to guide us. Our first responsibility is to surrender and take the first step of sacrificial obedience. To help with that, we will close this lesson with some suggestions for ministry in your spheres of influence.

Definition

Equip (*katartizō*): To render fit, sound, complete; to mend (what has been broken or rent), to repair; to complete; to fit out, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust; to fit or frame for one's self, prepare; ethically: to strengthen, perfect, complete, make one what he ought to be.

Blue Letter Bible Outline of Biblical Usage

Disciple-makers are called to equip the body of Christ, into the fullness of Christ, in the love of Christ. The Greek word translated equip was also used as a medical term for setting a bone during surgery. It is the same word used when the disciples were “mending” their nets. Therefore, equip is best understood as “making fully qualified for service”.

Searching Out the Matter

(All Scripture references, but those noted, are NKJV; Thomas Nelson, Inc.; footnotes excluded)

How It Will Look - Jesus Christ's Expectations

Jesus was sent by God to make a way for our salvation and to show us what it means to be a disciple and a disciple maker. He only did what the Father was doing; and He did it God's way. His final instructions to the first disciples reveal the immediate blessings and the Father's expectations in our being made a disciple; and in making disciples His way.

As you read each account of Jesus Christ's commission, consider the highlights recorded here. Before you begin, let me remind you that these were His final words before His ascension; the last things He wanted them to remember.

Each word, phrase and concept likely contains meaning beyond your current understanding. Search out the matter. Reckon each one to be true; to be truth that will make you a disciple, and a disciple making transformation agent; to make you free to walk fully into this great adventure.

Matthew 28:16-20

1. Christ first established that He had been given the authority to commission them.
2. He expected them to go to all the nations.
3. Baptizing was an important expectation.
4. They were to do more than “teach” Christ's commands. They were to teach others to observe the commands. From Vines Dictionary, this means to “to watch over, preserve” - a word close to “steward”.

Mark 16:14-20

1. Signs will follow those who believe.
2. These signs are supernatural and involve the spiritual realm.
3. Though it was His followers that went out and preached, it was the “Lord working” to confirm their preaching.

Luke 24:44-53

1. An understanding of the Old Testament was important - particularly as it relates to Christ.
2. Repentance and remission of sins are to be an important part of the message.
3. It was important to note that He blessed them with the “Promise of My Father” - the Holy Spirit.
4. The result was great joy, and them praising and blessing God.

John 20:19-23

1. Disciple making produces peace - the peace of God that transcends all understanding.
2. Evidence of Christ's suffering and sacrifice are a part of the disciple maker's character.

3. Jesus sends His disciple makers as the Father sent Him - to do only what He is doing. A properly made disciple has exchanged their life for Christ's.
4. The Holy Spirit is given by Christ, and must be received.
5. Incredibly, disciples are given the authority to forgive and retain sins. This speaks both to our identity as disciples of Jesus Christ and to our Heavenly Father's trust in His children.

Acts 1:4-8

1. There is not only a baptism in water, but one in the Holy Spirit. This baptism requires a "waiting".
2. This baptism "when the Holy Spirit comes upon you" precludes the disciple bearing witness to Jesus Christ, wherever they are sent.

And what was the result?

And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Acts 4:33

These passages should give great hope to every Leader in the Workplace. If we will only make disciples God's way, the glory and power of God will be manifest in our families, fellowships and communities. The Great Commission will be great in the greatest sense. Didn't Christ say we would do greater things than even He did? Perhaps a return to the way God did it, through Christ, is what we need. Perhaps it is time to lay down the lesser ways for the great way that He left to us.

Where Do We Start?

Be Doers of the Word

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. James 1:22-25

Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. Matthew 11:11-13

The challenges Leaders in the Workplace face are very real. Most Christians spend most of their waking hours in the Workplace. It should not be surprising that God has begun a movement there - strategically placing His people in positions of authority and influence. But, as Jesus warned, "the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." Satan has ruled the Workplace for far too long.

The Lord has been given the necessary authority and He has promised to be with His disciples. No challenge is too great for Him; but, He will not do it without those He is training for the battle. As Leaders in the Workplace, we must become "doers of the word".

Being "doers of the word" requires commitment and reckoning; and it assumes a beginning - taking that first obedient step. Begin here and you will avoid deceiving yourself; you will not forget what kind of man (or woman) you are; and you will be blessed in the work you do. In the process, you will become a violent one that takes the Kingdom by force.

Find Your Platoon

God's ways are above our ways, as the heavens are above the earth (Isaiah 55:9). In other words, they are infinitely better. They are also less threatening and stressful than those created by mankind. So why not begin to be the church in the Workplace in the same way God led the early church:

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Acts 2:42-43

As you can see, it was only after they continued steadfastly in the disciplines of Bible study, fellowship, communion and prayer that God showed up - and showed up BIG! The fear of the Lord came upon every soul (not just those in the church). Work only God could do was done through His Leaders in the Workplace.

So, begin with the basics; but do them all. Follow the prescription. Do them in the way God intends that they be done. Let me say that again: Do them in the way God has prescribed!!! This will take some study on the Leader's part:

- What does God want us to study?
- What does God's kind of "fellowship" look like? (Let me help you here: Be careful not to assume that it is accountability, sharing everything, etc.)
- What is the reality of communion? Is it symbol, or sacrament? What does it have to do with abiding?
- And how are we to pray?

I cannot express here how important this small beginning will be for the church in the Workplace. It may seem too simple, too easy. But this is God's grace for His children. So, find a few brothers and sisters in Christ and meet with them weekly. Commit this time to the four disciplines and to determining what the King wants you to do for the church in your spheres of influence.

Conclusion

To conclude this lesson, as well as this section on sacrificing for His plan, I would like to offer a few other "starting points" that are close to my heart. I hope and pray they will encourage you to continue sacrificing for His plan as we move on to explore Submitting for His Power.

Become an explorer for yourself and those in your spheres of influence. We have discussed a number of foundational elements of the joyful, Spirit-filled life; including finding God's desire for this season, relational prayer, abiding in Christ, surrender, and sacrifice. It is beyond this study to include them all. For example, some important elementary principles that have been left out include repentance, the pursuit of holiness, and the doctrine of baptisms. Hopefully, you have been encouraged by the Holy Spirit to continue exploring these and the other mysteries of God.

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. John 14:23

Love Jesus and keep His word. I once heard someone pray, "Father, give me the love for Your Son that You have for Him." What a great prayer!! Our love for Jesus is never as intimate as He deserves. Each new season of our lives - each new desire and assignment - is an opportunity to grow deeper in love with Him.

*Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the LORD,*

*Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring it to pass.
⁶ He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday. Psalm 37:3-6*

Trust the Lord and do good; and dwell in His promises. I encourage you to reckon the truths of Psalm 34 and 37 as your own. Allow faith to rise up as you meditate on them. Be soft - like clay in the Potter's hand. Recognize that Christ is our righteousness (1Corinthians 1:30).

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2Corinthians 4:16-18

Do not lose heart. Paul's "light affliction" - stoning, drowning, scourging, etc. - would seem quite heavy to most of us today. Nevertheless, by experience, Paul realized that it was working for him the glory Jesus had passed on from the Father (John 17:22). This too is a mystery, but one to which many of us will testify.

The days ahead will include this "light" affliction. The trials and tribulations will prove what we believe, remove what doesn't belong, and grow in us the faith and character of Christ. We will learn to love one another as Christ loves the church. The world will be drawn to us, for we are the temple of the Living God. Most importantly, they will see and glorify our Father in heaven.

Application

Becoming a disciple maker begins with two choices - choosing to be made, and choosing to be used to make others. If you are a Leader in the Workplace, I can guarantee you that the Lord has put a desire in your heart to be a disciple that makes disciples. Surrender to His work in and through you, and you will be made as He gives you the desires of your heart.

Reckoning

God has placed people in my spheres of influence for a kingdom purpose.

Assignment

1. Review your notes and the Scripture passages from this week's module. Share the ones that are most meaningful to someone you are discipling.
2. Consider Jesus Christ's expectations in our disciple making. Which are most intriguing to you? Commit to explore these further. They may lead to God's purpose for you.
3. Do any of Jesus' expectations expose a fear? Remember, behind every fear there is a lie. Deal with the lie and the fear will fly. Commit to deal with the lie.

Devotion

Prepare Early to Finish Well

From Rob Streetman, Marketplace Ministry Tip, Chapel Hill News and Views Magazine

My legacy doesn't matter. It isn't important that I be remembered. It's important that when I stand before the Lord, he says, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' I want to finish strong. James Dobson

I think it is interesting that most do not think about finishing well until they are near the finish line. How would things have gone if you had thought about the finish when you started your business or career?

Would you have done something different to prepare yourself and your company to insure you finished well?

Of course, the finishing well that I am talking about is not measured by the things of this world. It would be wise to consider how we are measuring our success. There are many that will hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Regrettably, others will be surprised:

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" Matthew 7:21-23

To finish well, we have to prepare for it. This is common business sense. A sales executive doesn't wait until October to load up his pipeline if he hopes to finish the year well. The production manager hires and trains well before the delivery schedule on that new big order.

So, have you prepared to finish well? As they say, "Better late than never."

Marketplace Ministry Tip: The first step in finishing well is to think about it - in the right way. Who are you finishing well for? What does He want to accomplish through you and your business or vocation? Turn your heart and mind to Him, and start asking the hard questions. Contact me, at rob@inlightconsulting.com, if I can help you in this regard.

Humbly yours and His forever,

Rob