

Health

Most of the time, we want a quick fix for the problems that arise in our lives. But when you look into the problem it can never be fixed from the surface; it is a heart issue. So why would we ever try to disciple people with a quick fix strategy?

Often, our churches function around cookie cutter programs that are plug-and-play. "All you need to do is check the boxes on this to-do list" and the promise of success follows. These plug-and-play programs are designed to bring large groups of people to church and help individuals manage the time with activities and themes that run throughout the Sunday morning or Wednesday night program. The problem that you run into with programs is that people are not so cookie cutter perfect.

Making disciples happens through life-on-life relationships where each individual person points themselves and others to the Life of Christ. Programs often allow very little time for true discipleship. When you only spend a few hours a week together, you cannot expect your group to grow in sincere relationships.

To truly be healthy we must work and live in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The characteristics are obvious when there is a failure to work and minister in the Spirit. When people begin to work and minister in their own own power, tiredness, fatigue and burnout are soon to follow. Jesus tells His disciples in Acts 1:4, "Don't leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift My Father promised which you've heard Me speak about. John baptized with water but in a few days you'll be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Jesus knew his disciples needed the Holy Spirit to accomplish the mission so He told them to wait in Jerusalem until they had received His power.

We as believers must take part in fellowship.

When we talk about fellowship, we're not

talking about the potluck at church in the basement. Though potluck meals have their purpose, we are talking about real life relationships where you are investing yourself emotionally and physically with your time into the lives of others. One way you can find out what someone cares about is to look at where they spend their time. Acts 2:42-44 tells us that the early disciples, "Devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship and the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was in awe and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common."

We must multiply Life Groups.

There are four advantages to Life Groups. First, they are infinitely expandable. Second, they can be done anywhere geographically. Third, it is good stewardship of what God has given us. And lastly, they promote real relationships. At the end of Acts, God blessed the efforts of the church and added to their numbers daily. When we are being the church that Jesus envisioned, we will experience growth.

We must grow in the understanding of the sovereignty of God.

In Acts 4:24, the Apostles were praying and resting in the fact that God was in control. They understood (as should we) that they were on the winning side. It doesn't matter what circumstances we are living in because God has already won the war for us. So in the mess of life, we can still find peace and joy. Because of the sovereignty of God we must seek and save the lost. When we segregate ourselves from unbelievers, we allow ourselves to become numb to the fact that many are living on the edge of destruction. We have been commissioned with the duty of snatching these people out of the pit of hell. We should not be

afraid to rock the boat if Jesus is the captain. We need to believe in the sovereignty of God.

Maximize the power of prayer

Found within the Book of Acts is the mention of the Apostles praying together - 48 times! Prayer is a very important weapon. To ignore the fact that spiritual warfare is happening all around us is like ignoring the check engine light on your vehicle. Your vehicle engine could suffer catastrophic failure if not maintained and repaired. Ignoring spiritual warfare could lead an individual to an eternity of suffering. We must fight a spiritual battle with spiritual weapons. Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that, "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." We cannot ignore that it is not the physical that we are fighting, but the spiritual. We need to maximize the power of prayer!

Model Christ like generosity

Acts 4:32-37 reads: "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions were their own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need." We must model Christ's generosity. What we model is what we reproduce. Christ did not withhold himself from us but poured himself out and gave his life for us. We must live as family, caring for one another as we would care for ourselves. If your family was missing out on one of the basic needs of life and you had property that was not part of fulfilling your

family's basic needs, would you not sell it to provide for your spouse and children?

Mobilize every member for ministry

In Acts chapter 6 we see a problem that arose among the early Believers. There were needs that were not being met. So, they chose seven guys to oversee the area of ministry being neglected. These men came before the Apostles, and the Apostles laid hands on them and prayed. The Bible then says that, "the word of God spread and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly." When every person is mobilized to express their God given ability by serving someone else, the church changes from a single leader bringing more people, to the church "multiplying."

We must move out with God's mission

Christ commissioned his disciples in Matthew 28 and you see this commission spring into action in Acts 8. Persecution broke out amongst the church and the disciples spread across the regions of Samaria and Judea. However, the persecution did not stop them from speaking the Gospel to all they came in contact with. They continued to tell of the Good News and the church continued to grow. Christ did not come so we could meet in buildings and houses; He came so that we could have life. The truth about who God is and what He has done is for a limited time only. One day the door will be shut and no more will be allowed in (see Matthew 25:1-13, Genesis 6:13-16.) Until that time, we must faithfully proclaim the Kingdom of God to those around us.

Life Groups

This is the lens in which we model all of these traits of a health body. Our groups should be striving to model these traits so that God's characteristic are being modeled through his people in real life situations. This is where the rubber meets the road and we apply what God

is teaching us. When we devote ourselves to one another (Acts 2:42) and to God. The world gets to see the full body of Christ on display through his people.

