

Fishers of Men: Lessons on Discipleship
Lesson 3 “How To Build Healthy Relationships”

I. Review and Introduction

A. Introduction - Jesus was the ultimate fisher of men. His goal was to replicate Himself in disciples and by extension each of us so He could fill the earth with His glory.

1. Last week we looked at how the real mission of the is replication not just leading people to salvation. **Matthew 28:19** says to make disciples (devoted learners and followers).
2. Jesus began His ministry by selecting a small group of followers who He poured His life into. He wanted to replicate Himself in them (by teaching, training, opportunities for experience) so when He ascended the church would outlast His time on the planet.
3. We also studied how often Jesus pulled away from the crowd to get with His group to share His values and train them. We all need a small group. **It's not that Jesus didn't care about crowd. He just knew the best way to disciple the crowd was to start with a small group.** Ex: Law of diffusion of innovation.
4. The reason Jesus's ministry was a success is because it outlived Him. Success without successor is ultimately failure.

B. Today we want to talk about how to build healthy relationships. Why?

1. We can't learn from those we aren't in relationship with.
2. We can't train those who aren't in relationship with us.

II. How To Build Healthy Relationships

A. How did Jesus choose His 12 disciples? Some of you would say He prayed and you are right, but you are only half right as that is not all of the answer.

1. **Matthew 4:17-22** - Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom and many heard. A few took a deeper interest so He called them to Himself. Kingdom relationships don't have to be forced.) **Principle - take a chance on people. Proverbs 18:24.**
2. **John 1:29-39** Some of John's shares precede events Matthew shares.
 - a. **John 1:29-34** Jesus is baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit. John and all His disciples then hear a voice out of heaven that said, *“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”* - **Luke 3:22.**
 - b. **John 1:35-37** Two of John's disciples (Andrew and John) stood by when John declared Jesus as the Messiah and then chose to begin to follow Jesus. **Principle - relationships can be seasonal.**

c. **John 1:38** Jesus asked a question to determine their motives and to see if their values/priorities aligned with His. **Principle - We have to balance the necessity of being open to build relationships with the necessity of discerning people's motives.**

i. New church/life group example.

d. **John 1:39** Jesus invited them to come to His house. Before Jesus invited them to go change the world, He got to know them and they got to know Him. We don't know if they talked family, football, current events, or whether Jesus prepared a meal, but the point is Jesus took time to get to know them as people and gave them an opportunity to get to know Him. **Principle - we need to take time to get to know people especially when making major decisions like marriage, employment, ministries to get involved in, etc. Leaders/disciplers also need to take time to get to know their followers and reveal themselves to them. Invite them to your house, go to coffee - spend some time with them.**

e. **John 1:41** Andrew told Peter about Jesus and he began to follow.

3. **Luke 5:1-11** Luke records a second calling of certain disciples. While the disciples were in Jesus's presence and following to some extent (**Luke 4:38-42, Mark 1:16-17, Mark 1:29-31**) Luke records that Jesus performed a miracle of causing fish to jump into their nets before they forsook all and followed Him. **Principle: Trust but verify (God is a God of patience and doesn't rush relationships). Disciple - you need to prove yourself to those you are inviting to follow you. Disciple - You need to see the power of God working in someone's life to some extent before you trust them to mentor you.**

B. **Luke 6:12-16** This is the calling of the apostles. These 12 had followed for some time (maybe as much as a year) before Jesus prayed and God showed Him who is 12 were that He would spend the rest of His life pouring into.

1. Jesus took time to get to know these men before He called them to be Apostles. **Principle - Learn the power of the time test.** ex: If something is the right today, it will be right tomorrow. Let time be your friend.
2. These men were faithful in little things (Showing up, paying attention, observing before they were called and commissioned) - **Luke 16:10 principle - Be faithful in a little to be ruler over much.**
3. After proving a year of faithfulness, Jesus sent them out in **Matthew 10** to preach the gospel, heal the sick, cast out demons, etc. He got them more involved and gave them opportunities after they proved themselves in a little. The next step in discipling someone is giving them the opportunity to do what you have taught and modeled for them.

III. Conclusion - Building healthy relationships takes time. This isn't something we can rush and we need to follow the kingdom protocol of making sure there is proper alignment and having

each party prove their faithfulness, integrity, and commitment before we give complete trust in any relationship including the disciple/mentor relationship.

A. Pray Closing Prayer

B. Call Up Prayer Team