



Final Session - A Review and Consideration for 'What's Next'

Open in Prayer.

In the limited time we have today I want us to consider two points and some of the more critical components of each of those two points.

First, look back in your minds to a page that was titled 'Defining the D3 Culture'. We saw the differences between a Disciple, a Disciplemaker, and Disciplemaking. Each had its own unique features, but the common ground was scriptural based principles that are available to anyone who chooses to pursue them. The last statement regarding discipleship at the bottom of that page says this: Ultimately, it is all about relational discovery - vertical and horizontal - To know Jesus and to make Him known.

Bill Mowry and I have attempted to demonstrate that virtually any disciple of Jesus can become a disciplemaker. The goal of that disciplemaking is defined within the context of that very same relational discovery. It is a personal thing. It is meant to be filled with tiny 'aha' moments shared as one person intentionally aids one or more other persons in growing closer in their individual walk with Jesus. That collection of 'ahas' can be nurtured and affirmed by a disciplemaker so as to build up a desire in those disciples that can only be fulfilled by sharing out of love for God and others through their desire to go and make disciples.

The reality for Jesus was that He invested in a small number for several years before giving them His last instructions. It would be foolish to assume that we could better that time requirement in but a few months. Yet, God's principles have been touched upon; confirmation that a believer can come alongside someone else so that all either in a one-to-one or small group he or she can advance the Kingdom through both evangelism and disciplemaking was settled; and now we're left with asking questions whose answers might develop an added level of confidence in moving this process forward.

Some of you may have sought out added value in THE WAYS OF THE ALONGSIDER workbook. You might have recognized that a number of resources are listed to assist you in finding answers to those questions. We're going to look at those in a moment. But before doing that I want to address the second point - the issues raised in the evaluations that you delivered to me earlier.

Overall, the comments were fairly positive. Many people were uncertain as to what to expect when we began. Most decided that what expectations were held were also met. Some continued to hope for a more clearly defined process to initiate relationship building within the culture of disciplemaking that could be taught. I can only respond by saying that such a highway looks more like the picture of the winding path that makes room for the 'ahas' of

discussion and discovery over time spent together around the Scripture's impact on one another.

A remarkable array of principles was shared insofar as which ones made positive impacts of the individuals. It was rewarding to see how each one's response had a personal application to him or her alone yet most were viewed as transferable through the relational application of discipling. The specific components of the Relationship Triangle were routinely noted.

Generally speaking, the size of these groups did not restrict transparency on the part of the participants. Even so, keeping the groups to less than ten was echoed by those who saw relationships in even smaller numbers as being a better option.

Most were pleased with the materials and their presentation and review. Some were concerned that it took 15 weeks to go through them and suggested that a shorter timeline would be helpful. To that concern I would simply offer the question, "What part was so insignificant that it deserves removing?" The saying in golf is that if you want to record a lower score, you cut down on the strokes it takes to finish the round. The only way to reduce the material is if you are absolutely certain of the level of spiritual level of the other person or people in your group. That's easier to determine in groups of four or less; it is made more difficult as the numbers increase.

With but two exceptions everyone was comfortable in their levels of participation and the degree of performance required to handle the weekly assignments. And as to the amount of hours invested in our total study time, most did not identify that amount of time as a sacrifice but more of a reinforcement to draw closer to God, especially as it relates to having Quiet Times.

Along with the interest to shorten the number of weeks, one heartfelt suggestion was for us to have prayed together more. I could not agree more, but again I want to encourage you to know that as you disciple others, you do not have a set number of weeks to meet a completion date as you go through materials. This is exactly where sharing concerns together mixed with your praying together is both more available and most definitely encouraged. The same goes for going deeper into personal issues that are raised. These matters are at the core of relational discipling.

Another suggestion going forward would be to continue to keep in contact with the 'training grads' using some electronic vehicle. This could be through emails or perhaps a 'FaceBook' grouping where current activities are shared regularly.

As to a few issues of confusion that were raised, there is a shortcut to addressing most every one of them. Yet, because of the abbreviated amount of time we have today, you will have to take the time later to review to discover them. Begin with your ALONGSIDER workbook starting at pages 115 and 116, and then turn to page 121. Between 121 and 139 are some great references to key materials that you might use going forward. Again their use depends upon the spiritual levels of the people involved with you, but the references cover the gamut of those levels.

Lastly, I want to remind you to please be sure to attend at least one of the Sunday morning services on June 4th as Pastor Wes has a special announcement at each of them regarding the class you have been a part of. And in closing, I want to extend to you my sincerest thanks for allowing me to be part of this approach to discipling. I truly hope it has drawn you closer to Jesus in many new ways and recognize how much He loves you and desires your being 'AWOL' for Him.

((Close with a final Prayer.))