



SESSION 13 CHAPTER 9

THE WAYS OF THE ALONGSIDER

Pray

This week we're closing in on the third of three aspects of what it means to be an alongsider. It's the three 'A's - Application, Accountability and Affirmation. We have already explored a number of ways where Accountability and Affirmation fit into this equation. But this word 'application' hasn't really been defined as yet.

Then, at the top of page 93 Warren Wiersbe nails it for us. Would one of you read the italicized sentence at the top of the page for us? Does this sound familiar? Do you recall anything that sounds like this, yet without specifically using the word 'application'? Think back to the VIM - Vision, Intentionality, and Means. Yes, it parallels the 'MEANS'.

I want to insert one other connection for you. Common to the language of the Navigators is the H³ application. It's the 'Head, Heart and Hands' principle describing how Scripture can impact our intellect, our emotions and our will.

It describes the flow of a Biblical principle or Scriptural truth that begins in the head as we take in the information by hearing or reading and process this information. Once processed, we can then gain insight if we ask ourselves, "How does this apply to my life?" The insight comes as God's Holy Spirit takes that information and reveals it in such a way that we apply this new truth to ourselves. It becomes our truth as He works in our hearts to show a new value in making it our own. This is the front side of the 'so that' principle.

Information leads to revelation, and suddenly, we become convicted to do something about whatever it is that God has revealed. His Spirit moves in us to the point where we feel a burden to take this to the outside world. Like a dam holding back too much water, we need to share it with others. Just as our hands open to share our gifts with others, we reach out to share this truth in ways that will honor Jesus Christ. Yeah, Warren Wiersbe nailed it.

It's also exactly what we see at the bottom of page 94. Will someone please read the last paragraph on that page? (PUT H³ ON THE WHITE BOARD NOW)

Someone else continue reading the top paragraph on page 95.

Why do you think applications need to be measurable? (They can help us define the level of our successes and enable us to celebrate them.)

Why do you think they need to be practical? (To ensure our doing them)

SPECK is another way of analyzing Scripture. Like SOAP and others the method simply gives another tool to use if you like these questions.

Let me please offer a word of caution here. Don't get caught up in the method. What is important is allowing God to transform us as we read His word. Those bits of transformation

can be tiny based upon the revelation we receive when reading one verse in Scripture, or huge when reading another one..No matter what format we use, the goal is not obtaining information in the form of answers to the questions.

The goal is what we are becoming because of our taking in and giving away the meaning of the answers we receive. Again, that same issue applies to the person you are discipling as well.

This is why Bill Mowry reminds us of the immediacy of applying what we learn from God's Holy Spirit. Our obedience to the Spirit's leading is the key. The 'AWOL' analogy fits in right here, where you recall the 'O' represents obedience. If I am Available and Willing, do I follow these up with a practical application as my response of obedience to The Holy Spirit?

After 'Application' we now consider the second 'A' word - Accountability. You wonder, what is it about that 'A' word that provokes and emotional reaction?

There is a parallel universe to that of 'accountability'. It's called 'commitment'.

Am I alone in having a concern over the lack of commitment that seems to be more and more pervasive within our culture? It seems that people are getting progressively less willing to make commitments. Have you faced this? How did it make you feel when you needed to get a commitment and could not?

Without getting too far off base may I suggest to you as a disciplemaker that the person or persons that you will disciple will be watching you to see if you are holding them to a standard of accountability. Last week one of the people quickly responded to my question, 'Does anyone have something special that arose during one of your quiet times this past week?' He said, "I knew you were going to ask us that question, so I came here prepared with one."

Please know that he didn't look for something to be able to share some response for my benefit. He did it to please God, but the words I had continued to offer each week set the tone for his seeking out a special awareness of what he would be able to share with the group. And the very real truth is that sharing these revelations can and usually does bless the one who hear them.

That is going to be a likely matter you will face. If you model the routine whereby you hold the disciple(s) to be accountable, they will be. But, again, this is not some kind of performance issue where you're the local policeman trying to enforce a rule or obtain a certain response. If that was the case, you would be dishonoring the italicized sentence at the top of page 53 that you all should recall.

So what does it really mean to be a 'partner in faithfulness' with your disciple(s)? How did the Scriptures you read answer this question?

Proverbs 27:17 "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."

Ecclesiastes 4: 9 - 12 "Two are better than one" if one falls, is cold or is overpowered, the other can step in to help

Galatians 6: 1 "If your brother falls into sin, you can step in to help him..."

Hebrews 3: 12 - 13 "...Encourage one another daily as it is called 'Today'.

Hebrews 12: 6, 10-11 "... The Lord disciplines those He loves. God disciplines us for our good" (There is that same italicized sentence on page 53 again.)

1st John 3: 16 Have someone read this verse aloud. "As Jesus laid down His life for us, we too can lay our lives down for one another." (Suggest this to be a great memory verse by connecting it with John 3: 16)

Consider this statement: Just as a yardstick measures distance, accountability can measure commitment. Do you agree or disagree with it and why?

Knowing what you now know insofar as connecting commitment, discipline and accountability, how valuable do you foresee that connection within a discipleship relationship?

Greg Wilson/Max Goins please read aloud the sentences following Question 9 at the bottom of page 97 and continuing up to Q 10 on page 98. Folks, this is where disciplemaking gets real personal. Does anyone have anything they wish to share regarding these few sentences? WAIT

What did you discover by reading through Question 10?

When we get over to page 99, we're introduced to a more complete section that focuses on the 'Power of Affirmation'. That's kind of an odd title isn't it? When you hear or read about the power of something, what comes to mind? (Words can bring about feelings on the part of the one upon whom they are received.)

Do you recall the phrase, 'Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never break me.' Wikipedia states that the phrase was supposedly reported to have appeared in The Christian Recorder of March 1862, a publication of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, where it is presented as an "old adage" in this form. Somewhere the phrase changed to 'never harm me', but when you consider issues like verbal abuse or gossip, words really can harm people. But they can just as equally help people. Affirmation is a universal need. When we are personally motivated by love, our words of affirmations are so very good.

Evidently the Bible speaks to this power more than a few times:

Proverbs 11: 25 "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."

Proverbs 12: 25 "An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up."

Proverbs 15: 23 "A man finds joy in giving an apt reply - and how good is a timely word."

Proverbs 16: 24 "Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."

Proverbs 27: 2 "Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips."

How did some of you fill in the blanks on the VIM section?

And for the "Take Action" section at the bottom of page 100, would a few of you share with us what your takeaways were for each of the three areas:

Application

Accountability

Affirmation

I trust that each of you did not forget to fill in your 'Insight' and 'Action Step' on page 119. If you did, there is still time to turn there and fill it in.

As to the "One-To-One Time" section, I owe each of you an apology. This is where dealing in a classroom setting with a group like we have here makes it difficult to have any quality 'one-to-one' time. That's why you will want to have a small number of people in your disciplemaking experience. The less the better for all of you.

The issue of this section bodes the question, "What have you been doing about discovering exactly who is the person or people that you will be discipling?" Let's each answer that question today before we close.

HAVE EACH PERSON RESPOND

Finally, I have one item that I want each of you to individually fill out, so if your spouse is in this training with you, please handle this assignment separate from your spouse's doing so.

HAND OUT EVALUATIONS

Closing Prayer