

PREPARING TO TEACH DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS

Don Krow

In the second part of our training session we're going to talk about preparing to teach the discipleship lessons. Turn to Ephesians 4:11-12. This was after Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection: "And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry." I think one of the things we've failed to understand is that the real purpose of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher is to perfect the saints so that they do the work of the ministry. The New International Version says, "to prepare God's people for works and service."

I asked once, "What do you think the purpose of an evangelist is?" Some said, "An evangelist goes out and wins souls for Christ, etc., etc." According to the Ephesians passage, the real purpose of the evangelist is to prepare God's people for works of service, to prepare them to win the lost. The same is true for the pastor, apostle, and prophet, to prepare people so people can do the work of the ministry. That is what we are trying to do in these discipleship lessons, to prepare you to actually do the work of the ministry—not to take in knowledge or another teaching but to prepare you to teach and reach out to other people.

Paul says a very interesting thing in 2 Timothy 2:2, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." He says, the things you've heard me minister, the things you've heard me share, commit to faithful men. I pray that through these discipleship lessons we are reaching faithful men who will be able to teach, and in turn those they teach will teach others.

The basis for teaching these discipleship lessons is in Mark 16:15-16: "And he [Jesus] said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Notice how they responded to the commission of Jesus Christ to go into the world and preach the Gospel in verse 20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." The word *them* is in italics in the Bible, which means it's not in the original koine Greek. What this verse actually says is that they went forth and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed the Word with accompanying signs. God works with the Word. He didn't just work with them; He worked with the Word, and confirmed the Word with accompanying signs.

The whole thrust of our discipleship lessons is to bring a person to the Word and help them understand it for themselves. We have supplied an outline, "Preparing to Teach Discipleship Lessons." Here are the seven points I want to bring out in this training session.

Point 1: We have an outline of the material on the video or cassette tape that you will give to each person you do the discipleship lesson with so they can follow along, hear what's being said, and look up the verses in their Bible. For you as the teacher we have a Teacher's Guide—questions we've put together from the Scriptures you can ask at the end of the video or audio cassette that will stimulate an answer directly from the Bible.

Another thing we're putting together is Additional Information. The best way to prepare people to teach, is to familiarize them with the material. For example, if you're teaching on repentance, not only do you need questions to ask but also the additional teaching we're supplying in written form, so you can study the subject in more detail and understand it thoroughly. Then when someone asks you a question, you will be prepared to answer. It's very important not only to use the Teacher's Guide, but to study the additional material so you will be very familiar with the information.

Point 2: When we minister, we are trying to bring people to the Scriptures, and we want them to read them aloud. You might say, "John, would you turn to Romans 5:17?" We might have to help him find Romans—he may not know where it is. "John, would you read Romans 5:17 out loud, please?" "They which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." "Great, John! According to that verse, what kind of righteousness is God offering you and me? Now, John, I'm not trying to trick you. The answer is right in that verse. Do you know?" He might say it's by grace or by Christ. "John, read the verse out loud again, and when it comes to the part I want to emphasize, I'll stop you right there." John reads, "They which receive abundance of grace and of the . . ." "Stop right there, John! And the what? The gift! The gift of what, John? The gift of righteousness! God offers people righteousness, right standing with Him! As a gift!" You can do that with any Scripture.

What you want to do is get them to see that the Bible says the gift of righteousness, not you telling them what it says. You're trying to get them to see for themselves what the Bible is saying. Then when they say, "What it's saying here is that God offers us the gift of righteousness." "That's right, John, that's exactly right!" Always compliment, edify, and build them up, and when they see something from the Bible themselves, their whole expression changes because you haven't told them what the Bible says—it's been revealed to them by God, by His Spirit. You just helped by asking questions. There is often controversy between translations, but we use a lot of translations. If we have two or three people in a lesson, I'll say, "Now, John, would you please read it in King James?" He reads it aloud. "Okay, Sally, I notice you have the New International Version. Would you please read it from your Bible?" As each one reads it from the version they have, they hear it two or three times, and it comes across clearer each time emphasizing a point. Have them read aloud and question them until they are giving the correct answer from the Scripture.

Point 3: Question that individual. Don't give them the right answers from the Scriptures. Don't tell them the answers, but help them to see from the Scriptures.

Point 4: If possible, illustrate your point with examples such as, "John, that's right! It is a gift of righteousness, a gift of right-standing, as it says in Romans 5:17. If I bought my children bicycles for Christmas and asked them to start making payments in January, was that really a gift?" "Well, of course not!" "John, that's it. You get the point; you see what a gift implies, don't you?" It may be a gift, but if you can get them to understand what a gift means, it brings the point across to them. So try to use examples when you're drawing understanding from the Scriptures for them.

Point 5: Illustrate your point with a story, a story from Jesus, a story from the book of Acts, or maybe a story from the Old Testament. This is where I've seen most revelation come—through a story. I could say, "John, will you please read Titus 3:5?" "Not by works of righteousness which we have done." I could point him to that and ask, "What does that say?" He could say, "It says it's not by the works of our righteousness." "But, John, have you heard? There was a thief who was nailed to a cross

beside Jesus. He turned to the other thief, and said, 'You are reviling Him, but we are wicked and deserve this condemnation. He's an innocent man; He hasn't done anything.' Then he turned to the Lord and said, 'Lord remember me, when you come into Your Kingdom.' Jesus said, 'Today you will be with Me in Paradise.' John, do you see it? It's not by works of righteousness we have done. The thief didn't offer any works, any goodness, anything that He had done for the Lord. He just asked Jesus for mercy, and Jesus said, 'Today you will be with Me in Paradise.'" Always use stories to try to make the point being made in the Scripture even stronger.

Point 6: Put feeling into what you say when doing these discipleship lessons. Don't just say, "In Luke 18 the guy said, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." Say, "GOD! Be merciful to ME, I'M A SINNER!!" Put yourself in the place of the tax collector, become the tax collector.

Point 7: Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you. We're giving you all the material we can to help you teach a lesson in the minimal amount of time—a Teacher's Guide and Additional Information—but don't fall into the error of trusting a teacher's guide, a method, or a formula. Trust God's Spirit. Everybody's different, and if you try to make a formula out of these discipleship lessons, you will bring the deadness of the letter of the law that will kill. It's only the Spirit that can give life.

Take your outline on Preparing to Teach Discipleship Lessons and go over the seven points with your trainer. If you're just listening to this on video or cassette tape, then take these seven points and go over the material until you understand what we're trying to bring out to actually teaching a discipleship lesson.

God bless you. We'll be looking forward to the next session.

PREPARING TO TEACH DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS (Trainer Video Lesson)

1. In teaching discipleship lessons, ALWAYS TAKE THE PEOPLE YOU ARE MINISTERING TO, TO THE SCRIPTURES (Mark 16:15,20). HAVE THEM READ IT OUT LOUD (Acts 8:30).
If available, you may want to use different translations to help bring out the meaning of a passage.
IF THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND A POINT, HAVE THEM READ IT OUT LOUD AGAIN FROM THE SCRIPTURES UNTIL THEY ARE SEEING THE TRUE MEANING.
2. QUESTION THE PEOPLE UNTIL THEY ARE GIVING YOU THE RIGHT ANSWERS FROM THE SCRIPTURES. Try not to tell them the answers, try to help them see it for themselves.
3. Illustrate the point of the scriptures with examples if possible.
4. ILLUSTRATE THE POINT OF THE SCRIPTURES WITH A STORY FROM JESUS' TEACHINGS: The Book of Acts, the Old Testament, etc., if possible. THIS IS WHERE MOST REVELATION COMES TO THE INDIVIDUAL!
5. Put feeling into what you are saying. Interject yourself into the story you are telling.
6. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you, give you direction and wisdom (James 1:5). Don't depend upon a tape or teacher's guide to do the work.

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