

Core Seminars – Christian Living

Discipling

Week 10 – February 9, 2003

Encouraging a Passion for Missions

Encouraging a passion for missions in those we disciple is not merely a plea for them to consider going, that would not be too much to ask, it would be far too little!

1. What does it mean to encourage a passion for missions in one we disciple?

A. Teaching that missions is not an optional add-on to the Christian life.

Say: There are a great number of things in the Christian life that one can choose to do or not to do without any blot on your Christian discipleship. But involvement in the cause of Global Evangelism is not one of those optional things. All Christians are called to serve the cause of global evangelism in one of two basic ways. Encouraging a passion for missions means deliberately working to show your friend this Biblical perspective on missions and helping them to think through the implications of this universal claim on their life.

a. Goers.

Foremost in any discussion of missions is an understanding that there are some who are called by God (whatever that means) to leave the place where they are, with the deliberate intent of sharing the Gospel message in a new place or with a new people, where the name of Christ is not well known.

This is assumed or directly taught throughout Scripture:

b. Senders.

B. The Great Commission was given to the church.

2. Why should we be concerned about inculcating a passion for missions among so many items we might discuss?

But there are so many things that we could focus on in a discipling relationship – dating, marriage, career issues, parenting, money management – why would we want to give headliner status to the topic of missions, especially since it is unlikely that every person we talk with will go on missions, but all will have to deal with most of the other topics I just listed?

Well, there are a number of good reasons why we should consider this topic to be critical to the well-being of our friend we are discipling.

- A. Because we want them to prosper spiritually.
(3 John 1-8)

It is very interesting that in this passage, John seems to base so much of his confidence in the spiritual health of his friend Gaius on that brother's willingness to care for and welcome missionaries. This demonstrated his love for the lost and for other Christians.

- B. Because we want God to get glory.
(Romans 15:8-9, 15-16)

As disciples who love Jesus we, and our friend, should desire at a deep level to see the wonderful mercy of Christ honored and loved and exalted and widely known. God says that this diffusion of his mercy gets him great glory as the Gentiles come to know and to love the mercy of his Son...to the praise of his glorious grace.

If we are genuine Christians, then this desire to see God glorified should be a very real and significant part of our love for Christ. And our joy and satisfaction as Christians should be to see the name of the one we love glorified and praised. That is what happens in missions and you do your friend a great service in helping them to cultivate a taste for the soul nourishing substance of missionary involvement.

- C. Missions seldom discussed as part of basic discipleship.

Another key reason to deliberately focus on missions as a significant part of any discipling relationship is the fact that it is so seldom discussed in a comprehensive and Biblical way. Folks may talk about

- D. Because a concern for missions is not optional and not for “super-Christians.”

3. What can we DO in discipling relationships to encourage this passion?

- A. Make the topic of missions a regular part of your relationship
 - a. Pray for missions and missionaries together.
 - b. Read a good book on missions

Let the Nations be Glad, John Piper

Operation World, Patrick Johnstone

Missionary Methods, Roland Allen

From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya, Ruth Tucker

Mack and Leeann's Guide to Short-term Missions, Mack Stiles

Various Missionary Biographies

- B. Model a concern for missions.

- C. Talk specifically about their role in world evangelism.

4. What if the person I am discipling seems like they may want to go?

- A. Talk to someone you trust if you need help or advice.
- B. Encourage them to talk to a church leader sooner rather than later.
- C. Help them realize the church sends missionaries, not they themselves.

Conclusion:

- Concern for the Global cause of Christ is a basic part of what it means to be a faithful disciple.
- Helping our friends to understand this truth will give them greater joy, and God his rightful glory.

Next Week: Discipling People who are Hurting.