

9. Creativity, Chaplains, and Coaches – Part 3

In our last two topics, we looked at the fact that Christ promised to become a coach to the disciples by helping them learn how to become fishers of men. Many people responded and learned how to become fishers of men. Today, we are going to see that Christ chose a leadership team to lead all of those who would become fishers of men. In Mark 3:13-15, we read, “And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons.” Here, we see that the first reason Christ chose these twelve men was to be with Him. Second, He chose them so He could send them out to preach and minister to others.

Luke 6:12-13 gives us a little more detail about the selection of these twelve men. Those verses say, “Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles.” Here, we learn an important lesson about how Christ chose those who would be on the leadership team. We see that He spent an entire night in prayer. Then, He called all of the disciples that were learning how to become fishers of men. From that larger group (possibly the seventy of Luke 10:1 or even the one hundred twenty of Acts 1:15), Christ chose twelve whom He also called apostles.

Several things were true about the team of twelve that Christ chose to begin training to become the leadership team. At least most of them had already gained experience, as a part of some team, before Christ chose them to be a part of the twelve. Mark 1:16-20 shows us that Peter, Andrew, James, and John were all part of the same fishing team. Mark 2:15 shows us that Matthew was part of a team of tax collectors. John 1:43-46 shows that Philip and Nathanael were already friends.

These same passages show that these men responded to the opportunity to learn how to lead others to Christ. Unless a team leader is leading people to Christ, he will never be effective in showing his team how to lead others to Christ. Christ had seen these men introduce Him to their families, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and other acquaintances. He knew that it was their desire to learn how to become more effective as fishers of men.

These same passages, in Mark, also show us a third thing about these men. When Christ invited them to follow Him, all of them were working. Christ had already shown that leadership is hard work. In Mark 1:35, He got up a great while before day and went out and prayed. In Luke 6:12, He spent the entire night in prayer before choosing the twelve. The first thing a person with many problems will begin to neglect is prayer. The first thing a lazy person will begin to neglect is prayer. As a result, Christ chose men who were working to begin training for His leadership team rather than just choosing anyone who volunteered.

In Mark 5:1-20, Christ cast the legion of demons out of a man. Here, we see that Christ was a chaplain to a man in crisis. Verse 18 says that the man begged Christ to let him follow Christ. He had not been a part of a team. He had not yet brought any others to Christ. He was not working

when Christ met him. At that point, he was not ready to become a part of a team of leaders being developed. As a result, Christ said to him, in Mark 5:19, “ ‘Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.’ ” He needed to begin telling people about Christ before he could be given the opportunity to begin receiving training for the leadership team. In his case, he did become a great witness.

Even within the leadership team of twelve Christ was training, there were three smaller teams. By studying every list of the twelve in the New Testament, you will notice one other very interesting thing. The disciples listed first, fifth, and ninth are always the same: Peter, Philip, and James, the son of Alphaeus. The three names that follow Peter are always Andrew, James, and John, although they are not always in the same order within that smaller team. The three names that follow Philip are always Bartholomew, Matthew, and Thomas, although they are not always in the same order. The three names that follow James the son of Alphaeus are Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot.

Mark 13:3 shows us one of these smaller teams discussing their questions with Christ. Mark 13:3-4 says, “Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?’ ” This was the smaller team Christ spent more time with than the other two teams. This passage may give us a hint as to why that was true. This smaller team asked more questions than any of the men on the other teams. This is an indication that they may have had more of a learner’s attitude than the other teams. In the book of Acts, we see that they exercised more leadership than the other two teams.

We also see more creativity develop in the team of Peter, Andrew, James, and John than in the other smaller teams. In John 6:5, we read, “Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, ‘Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?’ ” Philip gave a financial report and said they could not afford to do anything. Andrew heard the same question and focused on what they had. They had a boy with a lunch of five rolls and two fish, and they had Christ. Although he did not know how Christ would work, he knew that Christ could take what they had and provide a creative solution.

In John 12, some Greeks came to Philip and wanted to see Christ. John 12:20-22 says, “Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.” Philip did not come with a creative solution to get these men to Christ. As a result, it was Andrew who brought them to Christ. Christ had coached him and shown him how to become a fisher of men and he had learned how to bring people to Christ. As we go to the book of Acts, we continually see Peter and John doing creative things to bring glory to Christ.

Christ spent time with the multitudes. He spent more time with believing followers. He spent even more time with the seventy. However, Christ spent much of the last year-and-a-half concentrating on the twelve, especially the one smaller team of Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

The results show us the greatest difference between a person that is only a chaplain and a person that is both a chaplain and a coach. A chaplain can have a very effective and creative ministry as he ministers to people in crisis. However, when he comes to the end of his life, he has trained no one to carry on the ministry.

A spiritual leader, that is both a chaplain and a coach, will help people during their times of crisis. However, he will usually have part of the team he is training with him, so he can help them learn to minister to others in times of crisis in the future. The primary focus of one that is both a chaplain and a coach will be to help a team of people focus on the vision God has for each one individually, as well as the vision God has for the team as a whole. He will spend much time training the team, and he will take the team with him as he ministers. He will then discuss, with the team, what they are learning from what they see happen as they minister together. As a result, they will be continuing to improve in the effectiveness of their ministries.

Because a person, that is a godly coach, encourages the team to ask as many questions as possible, and teaches them how to apply Biblical principles in a variety of situations, the team will also grow in their creativity. This in turn will help them begin to do the same with the team they begin to train. 2 Timothy 2:2 says, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

Here, we see that true creativity will help a developing leader begin to think of four spiritual generations: Paul, Timothy, faithful men, and others also. Leaders train leaders by stretching their vision to that fourth spiritual generation (direct leadership). Effective leaders train leaders to train faithful men (indirect leadership leading to leadership multiplication). Very effective leaders train their Timothys to train faithful men to train others also (leadership multiplication that produces a multiplying ministry). May the Lord richly bless you as you help developing leaders learn to minister to people in crisis (chaplains), especially as you train them to train faithful men to teach others also (become effective coaches of others).