

10. Developing Team Objectives

In an earlier topic, we talked about helping a team leader learn how to develop unity of purpose among the team members. That purpose, and the objectives we develop to carry out that purpose, helps every team member to understand what the Lord has called us to accomplish as a team. Usually, a purpose will have three to five objectives that tell how the team is going to carry out that purpose. A clear purpose, and clear objectives, will help the team be effective for the Lord, not just busy. A lack of a clear purpose and objectives will usually produce busyness rather than effectiveness.

We saw that Christians are to glorify God in all that they do. We also saw that our Great Commission is to Make Disciples. To understand how we develop objectives, let's use the following purpose statement. Our purpose is to glorify God by making healthy reproducing disciples. In order to carry out this purpose we have the following four objectives:

- ◆ Reach – reach people for Christ by bringing them to true repentance and faith
- ◆ Teach – teach people the Word of God so that they know what they believe
- ◆ Train – train people to serve the Lord by taking them with us and showing them how to serve the Lord effectively
- ◆ Send – send people out to reproduce themselves by having the same purpose and objectives

We saw that the purpose was based on the Great Commission that was given by Christ. Now, we want to help a developing team leader determine if these are Biblical objectives that will help us carry out our team purpose. Once we have determined that the objectives are Biblical, we want the developing team leader learn how to help the team focus on their progress in fulfilling these objectives to carry out the purpose.

Our first objective is to reach people for Christ by bringing them to true repentance and faith. The first question to ask is whether this objective is Biblical. In Luke 24:46-47, Christ said, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” Peter made it very clear that his message was to repent. Acts 3:19 says, “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

In Acts 20:20-21, Paul told the elders at Ephesus, “How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then, in Acts 26:18-20, Paul told Agrippa that Christ had sent him: ““To open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.”

Today, many presentations of the Gospel ignore the topic of repentance and focus only on faith. The passages quoted above, and many more, show that our message must include repentance if we are going to equip the team to carry out the first objective, which is to reach people for Christ by bringing them to true repentance and faith. In addition, if our team is to carry out the purpose, then every team member needs to be shown how to share the message of repentance and faith, not just be told to share that message.

Our second objective, once a person has been reached for Christ, is to teach them the Word of God, so they know what they believe. Again, we need to ask ourselves the question, is this a Biblical part of making disciples. The Bible also gives us the answer to this question. In Acts 20:27, Paul said, “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.” Then, Paul said, in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, “All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

If we are going to help team members mature and thoroughly equip them for every good work, we must help them become familiar with the entire Word of God. That means that a part of the ministry of any spiritual team leader is to help the team members continue to grow in their knowledge and obedience to the Word of God. Notice that two things are mentioned: knowledge and obedience. Some teams have gained Bible knowledge, but have not been shown how to obey what they have learned. James 1:22 says, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” An effective team leader helps team members learn how to obey the Word of God.

Our third objective is to train people to serve the Lord by taking them with us and showing them how to serve the Lord effectively. Acts 20:20 tells how Paul had trained the men who became the leadership team at Ephesus. That verse says, “How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house.” Here, we see that Paul showed the team how to minister publicly. He also took them with him and showed them how to minister in homes.

There is a great difference between telling people to do something and showing them how to do it. Christ did not give the disciples a sermon on how to become fishers of men. Instead, in Matthew 4:19, we read, “Then He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’” Then, Matthew 4:23 says, “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” The disciples followed Christ all over Galilee, and Christ showed them how to share the gospel of the kingdom in every town and village. We want to show a developing team leader how we minister, so he can show the members of the team how to minister.

Our fourth objective is to send people out to reproduce themselves by having the same purpose and objectives. After spending three years with the disciples, Christ said, in John 20:21, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” One key to the effectiveness of a team leader is the number of new team leaders he develops and sends out.

Today, the world measures success by profit and market share. The church has often imitated the world by measuring success by nickels (the amount of the offerings) and noses (the number of people who attend on Sunday morning). In contrast, Christ focuses on effectiveness instead of success. Christ demonstrated effectiveness by sending out the disciples just as the Father had sent Him. Here, we see that Christ measured effectiveness, not by the number brought in but rather by the fact that those reached, taught, and equipped, could then be sent out to reproduce the same process in others.

Christ was not the only one who measured effectiveness this way. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul told Timothy, ““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.”” Paul showed, by the way he trained Timothy and then sent him out to develop a third generation that would produce a fourth generation, that an effective team leader has a concern for a third and a fourth generation. Our ministry, as a team leader, is to make disciples of the team and then through the team, as they then make disciples. May the Lord richly bless you as you help developing team leaders see that they have a God given purpose, as a team leader, to carry on to a third and fourth generation.