

THE MENTOR AND SHARED MINISTRIES

Equipping Session



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INTRODUCTION

"I thank the opportunity to share with you a biblical theology on "Mentors and Shared Ministries".

Ministry in the local church as presented in the New Testament is one of the fundamental bases in the mentor-disciple relationship. Today we will define what ministry is in light of the life of Jesus and how ministry is the backbone and marrow of mentorship and multiplying disciples. The church as the body of Christ shares the ministry, hence there is no other way to do ministry than as a shared ministry or sharing the ministry.

A New Testament book presents the ideal model of a local congregation with the following 10 characteristics:

1. You have a group of mentor-leaders who have been called by God for the ministry of leadership.
2. Each member is involved in a ministry according to his gift and personal skills.
3. The church is continually edified and renewed.
4. The members are united in their faith and see the mighty hand of God working among them and producing fruit.
5. Each member seeks and knows God thoroughly.
6. The members are so mature in everything that they only compare themselves to Jesus Christ and yearn to present Him in all their actions and attitudes.
7. People do not follow the latest teachings and practices in vogue that are contrary to the Bible.
8. Members are loving and understanding in everything, even during tense meetings, making decisions in prayer, and seeking God's direction.
9. In all decisions of the church, Christ is the head.
10. The church grows, is edified, and multiplies fulfilling the Great Commission.

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Let's examine some elements of the body of Christ.

Obviously, the main member is Christ who is the head of the body.

I will read some passages and principles that are derived from Christ as the Head of the church.

- “Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ... He is the head of the body, which is the church” (Ephesians 4:15).
- All authority in the church is derived from Jesus Christ as the head. Jesus said: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18).
- “Christ is the head of the church, which is His body, and He is its Savior... the church is subject to Christ” (Ephesians 5:23-24).
- Christ relates to His church as the head with the body. He governs and directs His church to fulfill God's purpose for the church and for all of its members.
- Let's consider that “the body belongs to Christ... by virtue of whom the whole body, nourishing itself and being united by the joints and ligaments, grows with the growth that God gives.” This statement by Paul in Colossians 2:19, guides us to present some key characteristics of the church as the body of Christ so that spontaneous growth occurs in which all members participate: ¹

SEVEN COMPONENTS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

1. The church is a body.

Let's read some passages that introduce us to this characteristic.

- “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it” (1 Corinthians 12:27).
- “So, in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others” (Romans 12: 5).

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7. The body of Christ is the visible image of God today.
 - Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:8-9)
 - “The Son is the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15).
 - “For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29).
 - “For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6).
 - “So that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then, you will shine among them like stars in the sky” (Philippians 2:15).

Later we will talk a little more about this characteristic of the body of Christ.

The characteristics of the body of Christ give us a picture, a picture of the kind of disciples a mentor should have. Obviously, by studying the disciple we will be giving the image of the mentor who forged him.

II. DISCIPLES AND DISCIPLESHIP

A. The Great Commission

“The first characteristic of a mentor is fulfilling the Great Commission order “to make disciples.” Although many use “to go” as the Great Commission imperative, in Matthew 28:19, the verb “to go” is a nominative plural conditional participle. A participle is an action that occurs continuously.²

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There are many characteristics of a disciple of Jesus. However, for reasons of this study we will briefly mention four main characteristics, however, for the topic that concerns us today of shared ministries we will concentrate more on the fourth characteristic.

1. Jesus as the teacher is the one who calls His disciples. There are several examples, both in the Gospels and in Acts, of self-appointed disciples. Such initiatives failed.⁶ A disciple is a person called to follow Jesus.
2. He is a person who had an intense and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ in his earthly ministry.⁷
3. The call of Jesus demands a complete break with the past (see Mk. 1:16-20; 2:14; Lk. 14:26; Mk. 8:34; Lk. 9:57-60; Lk. 10:41-45).⁸
4. A disciple is an expert in the kingdom of heaven. He is a person who reaches his highest potential in the service of the kingdom. Matthew 13:52-53 is essential to this concept.

The conclusion of the discourse on the parables of the kingdom in Matthew 13 accurately describes the expectation that a mentor should have for a disciple. Let's examine it briefly.

"Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied. He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old" (Matthew 13:51-52).

We are going to stop for a moment on this characteristic

The first of the parables of the kingdom is that of the types of soil. Jesus is sharing it with "many people" (v. 13:1). Later, He is alone with His disciples and answers their question (v.10), explaining to them the parable of the sower. Jesus gives them seven other parables about the kingdom. The last parable seems to be a test, an examination of His disciples: He asks them: "Have you understood all these things?" (13:51).

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1. The ministry and the rank in kingdom, according to Jesus, presents the following hierarchy:

- “Whoever wants to become great must be your servant” (diakono, v.26).
- “...and whoever wants to be first among you must be your servant [slave]” (doulos, v.27).

What kind of slave?

Jesus answers: “... Just as the Son of Man, who did not come to be served (diakoneo), but to serve (diakoneo) and to give His life as a ransom for many” (v.28).

Shared ministry, service, in the mind of Jesus is giving everything, giving His life for His disciples to save them.

So, what is ministry? As mentors, what kind of disciple-ministers should we train?

Interestingly, many have defined ministry in the sense of doing and not of being. And they have defined the ministry in three broad categories based on the well-known passage in Matthew 9:35: “Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.”

The ministry is categorized into three areas:

1. “teaching” (education)
2. “preaching” (proclamation) and
3. “healing” (compassion).

2. This is the paradigm of “doing.” I would like to present another paradigm which is the paradigm of “being a minister.”

A well-known passage on mentoring in 1 Corinthians 11:1. Paul says to the church in Corinth: “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”

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1. Indicative versus Imperative ¹⁴

As we mentioned earlier, Paul’s concept of discipleship is in the expression “in Christ.”¹⁵ Richard Howard presents the concept of indicative and imperative verbs in the Pauline Epistles.¹⁶

The indicative mood is an action or state of being that describes what a person is. It presents something that is already real in the person.¹⁷ The imperative mood is an order.¹⁸ Without the indicative it is impossible to execute orders, commands. The order of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be like Him, and it is what is manifested in making disciples. What is a disciple, is a “learned in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 13:52) who does ministry. It is impossible to be and to do if we do not have the conditions to execute the orders. He is a person who “is” (indicative), and “does” (imperative).

There are many discussions today about who the best soccer player in the contemporary world is. Some say it is Lionel Messi, others Cristiano Ronaldo. Well, we won’t get into that discussion. I was going to do a survey. But I’m afraid I would feel bad about the result.

The order that Messi and Ronaldo receive is to score goals. That is the imperative. For that they pay them millions of euros. What is the indicative? Well, they can’t execute the order if they don’t have legs. The indicative is “to have legs.”

Paul in the letter to the Ephesians from chapter 1 to chapter 3:19 presents a series of indicatives. The indicative, as I said before, presents what we are. For example: “He chose us in Him,” “He predestined us to be adopted,” “we have redemption of sins,” “he made known to us the ministry of His will,” “you were sealed with the Spirit,” “He gave life to you”, etc.

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In the middle of the epistle in Ephesians 3:14-21, Paul as a rotating hinge, on his knees and in prayer, presents the key to fulfill the imperatives: "... so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." (Eph. 3: 16-21). The indicative is "in Christ."

In Philippians 3:9 Paul puts it this way: "... I want to be found in Him."

Paul relies on maximum training to start giving imperatives. Ephesians 4:1—6:24 presents numerous imperatives. We will mention just a few: "I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received," "bearing with one another," "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit," "to equip His people for works of service," "that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do," "to be made new in the attitude of your minds," "do not give the devil a foothold," "do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God," "be filled with the Spirit", etc. There are many more imperatives in chapters 5 and 6.

2. **Shared ministry comes from the fruits of the indicative in fulfilling the imperative.**

From the fulfillment of the imperatives, based on the hinge of being filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:14-21), Paul gives the results. And the result is a church of shared ministries where (1) Christ is the Head; (2) there is definite leadership that multiplies into disciples "in Christ"; and (3) the whole body is at its best to demonstrate Christ through ministry expressed in its gifts and abilities.

SOURCE

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