

## **Passing on the Legacy** **Discipleship in the Community**

I stumbled upon a documentary about the ancient art of Japanese Bow making. It is a long and painstaking process which requires great skill and perseverance. What struck me though was the fact that the art is still alive regardless of a changing modern world. The bow maker uses matured wood which his grandfather had cut for him 60 years earlier. He then uses the skills passed down for generations to create the bows. He has already cut wood for his own grandson who isn't even alive yet. And so the art stays alive as the legacy is passed from one generation to the next.

In most communities there will be some kind of transference of skill and values. It is a sad reality that some of the wood that our Christian ancestors left us wasn't beneficial and the Christian community has suffered because of it. Are we still the kind of Church Jesus intended us to be? If not, then what inheritance are we leaving the next generation of Christians? Do we actively transfer the skills, values and knowledge necessary for a fulfilled Kingdom life? Is our community trained and ready?

### **Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)**

*<sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

The next generation is not only the youth. It is every new Christian that joins the community, old and young. Jesus makes it clear that our overarching commission is to train and teach the next generation by making disciples. That means that we should be equipped ourselves and that we should equip others. Unfortunately many Christians only get equipped themselves without ever passing on the legacy. That requires an active and not a passive community and hears sermon after sermon.

What should we be teaching the next generation? One great disciple maker once told me it is teaching people to KNOW GOD, to OBEY GOD and to BECOME what God has called us to be. Let's look at those three aspects.

## 1. **KNOWLEDGE (KNOW GOD)**

Knowledge is an important ingredient in making disciples. We all need to be knowledgeable about our faith, the Bible and our Lord.

### **Romans 10:1-3 (NIV)**

*<sup>1</sup>Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. <sup>2</sup>For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. <sup>3</sup>Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.*

### **ACTS 18:24-25 (NIV)**

*<sup>24</sup>Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. <sup>25</sup>He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.*

### **ROMANS 15:14-15 (NIV)**

*<sup>14</sup>I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another. <sup>15</sup>I have written you quite boldly on some points, as if to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me*

However there is a danger in only having knowledge. Lewis in his famous work *The Abolition of Man* paints the picture that when we raise a generation of knowledge without values, we raise a generation of men without chests. Men without values and morals.

### **1 Corinthians 8:1-3 (NIV)**

*<sup>1</sup>Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup>The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. <sup>3</sup>But the man who loves God is known by God.*

## **2. BIBLICAL & GODLY VALUES (OBEY GOD)**

### **2 PETER 1:5-9 (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup>For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; <sup>6</sup>and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; <sup>7</sup>and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. <sup>8</sup>For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

Once knowledge can fall from the head to the heart the Christian life becomes fruitful. Disciples cannot remain at the knowledge stage or they will become proud, judgmental, unfulfilled and hypocritical.

## **3. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION AND IMITATION (BECOME)**

Why don't you imitate other strong Christians as they imitate God. Then allow others to imitate your Christian walk.

### **1 Corinthians 4:15-17 (NIV)**

*<sup>15</sup>Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. <sup>16</sup>Therefore I urge you to imitate me. <sup>17</sup>For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.*

### **Hebrews 6:11-13 (NIV)**

*<sup>11</sup>We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. <sup>12</sup>We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.*

### **Hebrews 13:7 (NIV)**

*<sup>7</sup>Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.*

### **1 Thessalonians 1:5-7 (NIV)**

*<sup>5</sup>because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. <sup>6</sup>You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. <sup>7</sup>And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.*

## **GROUP NOTES**

### **ICE BREAKER**

1. What object in your house is most precious to you? Why?
2. Have you ever been given a precious keepsake or family heirloom? What was the significance of it? What was it like to take ownership of this object?

### **WORD**

Hebrews 6:11-13, 1 Corinthians 4:15-17, 1 Thessalonians 1:5-7

We have all been tasked with the commission to make disciples. We have been given the greatest gift of Christ and His Kingdom and therefore we must make it our honor and duty to pass on this glorious gift.

### **2 Timothy 2**

*<sup>1</sup>You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*

1. Matthew 28:19-20 clearly states that we are to make disciples and pass on the Christian legacy. Have you been aware of this commission that we are called to?
2. How would you describe the concept of discipleship?
3. What should be passed on in discipleship according to you?
4. How many discipleship generations can you count in 2 Timothy 2?
5. Have you ever experienced someone discipling you in an area in your life?
6. Have you ever taken responsibility to disciple somebody else?