

CONNECT LEADERSHIP MEETING

“The Law of Equipping”

February 21, 2010

1. What is the biblical job description for the Christian teacher?
2. Is the average teacher fulfilling those responsibilities or rebelling against them?

God’s Job Description for Teachers: Read Ephesians 4:11-12.

3 PRINCIPLES FOR CHRISTIAN TEACHERS

1. The primary purpose of teachers is to EQUIP.

- The Bible reveals that teachers are given by God primarily to equip and not merely to explain.
- A student can be informed, educated, and entertained and still not be equipped.
- To **equip** means to furnish with whatever is needed for any purpose or undertaking.
- In short, the primary task of the teacher is to prepare the student to do something.

2. The primary audience of teachers is Christians.

- Many teachers have decided that their primary audience is the unsaved.
- Tragically, many teachers are speaking to the wrong group week after week.
- Teachers haven’t equipped Christians to do the work of the ministry during the week and so they try to do it for them on Sunday.

3. The primary result of equipping is Christians doing the work of the ministry and edifying the body of Christ.

- How do you know if your teaching is having the correct result? See verse 16.

ISSUES COVERED IN GOD’S EVALUATION

1. The nature of the ministry that our class members are involved in (“work of ministry”).

- God’s emphasis is always on what our students do, the work of ministry our class members are engaged in.

2. The percentage of our class who are personally ministering (“every part”).

- God’s emphasis is always on the full participation of all members.
- Don’t settle for the 80/20 rule.

3. The degree to which our class members are doing the work of the ministry according to their capacity (“its share”).

- God has given each believer a unique personality and also has sovereignly given a spiritual gift for the purpose of ministry.
- The Lord is not looking for us to settle on ten-talent people doing two-talent works of service.
- He is not pleased when believers are misplaced outside the area in which He has gifted them.

4. **The quality and quantity of the work done by our class members (“effective working”).**
 - God is a God of excellence and all His works are excellent.
 - Teachers are to continually train and upgrade the performance of our class members.
 - To have effective workers, we must be effective teachers.
5. **The percentage of growth in our class (“cause growth of the body”).**
 - This growth is not merely limited to spiritual growth, but can/should include numerical growth (2 Peter 3:9).
6. **Constant, normal, and spontaneous mutual ministry between class members (“edify itself in love”).**
 - The Lord expects our equipping to be so thorough and complete that it enables our students to minister to each other as if they were the teacher or minister.
 - He desires each member of His church to become more and more self-initiating so that when they see or hear of any need, they immediately respond out of a sense of ownership and responsibility.

MEASURING UP?

1. Do my class members actually do a lot of the “work of the ministry”?
2. How close to 100% of my class members are involved in meaningful ministry on a regular basis?
3. What percentage of my class members’ capacity for ministry is being reached as they work?
4. In what specific ways has your class members’ service for the Lord become substantially more effective because of your equipping?
5. How much growth (spiritual and numerical) did your class achieve in the past year?
6. How many ministry activities that are spontaneous and unsponsored by the church normally occur between class members each week?
7. How many people did your class members lead to the Lord during the past year?

LAWS OF EQUIPPING

1. **Equipping is the responsibility of the teacher.**
 - In Ephesians 4:11-16, both the Bible and the teacher:
 - ✓ Are a gift from God
 - ✓ Are for the Christian community
 - ✓ Are for the purpose of edification and equipping
 - ✓ Are for the result of good works.
 - The tragic truth is that those who have been called to equip not only rarely equip but also frequently misuse the other equipping agent (the Bible) as a book to be studied for knowledge rather than a Book to be practiced.
2. **Equipping occurs best when the teacher assumes the biblical role.**
 - God gave the teacher to help believers do more ministry better.
 - God seeks fruit, not facts, disciples not data.
 - Teachers must become the coach. Coaches help their team play effectively. Coaches work on improving each team member.
 - God wants your whole team out on the field playing their hearts out.
 - The coach should be the only one left on the sideline—cheering!

3. Equipping is best evaluated by what the class member does after class.

- The real game is played in the marketplace, not in the classroom.
- Churches, and church leaders, tend to “keep score” of the “practice sessions” (Connect group time):
 - ✓ What’s your total membership?
 - ✓ What’s your annual budget?
 - ✓ How many people are on staff?
 - ✓ How many attend your SS/Connect groups?
 - ✓ How many baptisms this past year?
- How many of these reflect if the pastors/teachers have equipped the saints?
- How many of the questions reflect whether or not the saints are doing the work?
- See Handout.

4. Equipping should impact both character and conduct.

- We are called to equip people not only to “do the ministry” but also to “be a minister.”
- All work for the Lord essentially comes out of our walk with the Lord.
- Who we are determines what we do.
- Equipping must influence both actions and attitudes.

5. Equipping should focus more intensely on the most committed.

- The Lord knew the apostles for a period of time before He selected them.
- Why did Jesus spend some time with the seventy, more with the twelve, and still more with the three?
- We cannot equip everyone in the class, but we should follow Christ’s example and equip a few of our class members at a deeper level.
- Read 2 Timothy 2:2.
- Paul knew the equipping process is God’s living link to pass the ministry from one generation to the next.
- Carefully select the most faithful, and make them the most equipped.

6. Equipping requires knowledge, skill, and long-term commitment.

- Equipping is one of the hardest things you’ll ever do.
- But it is one of the most strategic ways you’ll ever invest your life.
- We must guard against “instantitis” in our equipping.
- Equipping is a long-term commitment.

7. The ultimate goal of equipping is independent equippers.

- God doesn’t want us just to train people, He wants us also to train people to become trainers who will eventually train others to become trainers.
- The Lord wants the godly line to grow and exert more and more influence through physical and spiritual multiplication.
- All it takes to drop the baton is for one generation of teachers to be content-focused rather than equipping focused.

MONITORING THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY

1. Tests of the effectiveness of the teacher in equipping his students for an effective work of evangelism:

- What percentage of your class members shared the gospel with another person during the past week?
- What percentage of your class members have led a person to Christ during the past year?
- What percentage of new converts attending church during the past 12 months are the result primarily of lay evangelistic efforts rather than the pastor's preaching or other staff involvement?
- What percentage of last year's new members are involved in a formal evangelism training class?
- What percentage of new converts came through ministry in the neighborhood or workplace rather than through the church?

2. Tests of the effectiveness of the teacher in equipping his class members for an effective work of discipling one another:

- What percentage of your class members are involved in a regularly scheduled meeting with other laypeople for the purpose of spiritual accountability and growth—not including scheduled church functions?
- How many different discipling courses or tracks has the pastors/staff taught to provide a tool for the laypeople to disciple others?
- What percentage of your class members are involved in teaching a Bible study/discipleship group outside the confines of an officially sponsored church function?
- What percentage of your class members during the past 12 months have taken a teacher-training class of at least six hours to equip them to teach more effectively?
- What percentage of the lay Bible study groups have spawned another group during the past 12 months?

3. Tests of the effectiveness of the teacher in equipping his class members for spiritual vitality:

- What percentage of your class members have regular (at least 5 times a week) personal devotions?
- What percentage of your class members have regular (at least 3 times a week) family devotions?
- What percentage of your class members have regular ministry in which they serve the Lord at least once a week?
- What percentage of your class members tithe?
- What percentage of your class members would rate their spiritual life and growth as a 7 or above on a scale of 1-10?