

Relating to Disciples(hip) | David Geldart | June 9, 2019 | Mat 28:18-20

1. Recap
 - a. Relating!
 - b. Since the fall, all our relationships have been damaged
 - c. The Good News is God in Jesus wants to help us heal and reconnect.
 - d. Foundational to all our relationships is relationship w/ Self and God
 - i. Catch up on those online
 - e. Today we're going to look at one of the most important relationships for Tallgrass this year.
 - i. Indeed it's one of our strategic priorities for 2019 identified by our elder team.
 - ii. relating to DISCIPLES
 - iii. Or perhaps more englishy "DISCIPLESHIP"
 1. Along with parenting and neighboring
2. We're going to be looking at what the BIBLE Says about Dship
3. Lets start by looking at reading Mat 28:18-20
 - a. great commission

4. PRAY

5. Mat 28, Wait – so what IS discipleship?
 - a. Greek MATHATES → student / learner
 - b. 1st, general sense that any follower of Christ is Jesus' disciple.**
 - i. General discipleship is a believer's process and journey into greater Christlikeness
 - c. But more often in the scriptures, is the sense of personal discipleship:**
 - i. Common social practice in JC's day.
 1. Pharisees and scribes had disciples
 2. JTB had disciples
 3. JC had disciples
 4. We know PAUL was disciple by the famous Rabbi Gamaliel
 - a. And paul had disciples
 - i. Timothy, ephaphrus, others
 5. We know it usually involved a teacher devoting years of doing life together to help the disciple(s) mature in the faith and begin to make their own disciples
 - d. That's what JC is talking about in Mat 28
 - e. WHY are we believers still here?
 - i. Because there's work to do! → To make disciples of all nations
 - ii. Was that just for the original disciples?
 1. No, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL I HAVE COMMANDED YOU
 - iii. Including the command to go and make disciples
 - f. Personal Disciplemaking was JESUS' master plan to advance and build his Kingdom
 - i. And because of the Gospel, Personal Discipleship is one of God's primary ways he's restoring our relationships with others!!!
 - ii. The good News of the Gospel is that we can step out in Discipleship because he's already done that with us!

1. He's already taken the initiative and moved toward us in self-giving love
2. So he's not asking us to go where he hasn't already gone.... With you!

6. But..... WHY? Why Dship specifically?

- a. Why not public debates and sermons (JC did these)
- b. Why not Bible Studies or Events, or Programs?

7. Inherent POWER of multiplication

- a. Growth through addition (traditional church, programmatic approach) vs Organic Multiplication (organic church paradigm, personal discipling)

b. Simplistic case study to illustrate – 2 churches

- i. 1st traditional church goes after large scale growth through addition
 1. And are able to win 25,000 new believers EVERY YEAR
 2. That's 50K every 2 yrs
 3. That'd be a pretty incredible megachurch!
- ii. 2nd church relies instead on personal discipling. Slow going. Each member discipled 1 new person every 2 yrs.
- iii. Both start w 30 ppl
- iv. End of yr 2 the megachurch now has 50,030 ppl! (round to 50K) incredible
 1. That's Bill Snyder Family Stadium with every seat filled!
- v. The discipling church has 60. 2 small LIFE Groups.
- vi. After 6 yrs, the megachurch has 150K members!
 1. About the population of KCK
- vii. The discipling church has 240. That's about this sanctuary full plus kids classes.
- viii. At 10 yrs Megachurch quarter of a mil
 1. Discipling church still under 1000
- ix. At 20 yrs Megachurch has half a mil
 1. Discipling church up to about 30K
- x. Around the spring of the 29th yr, the discipling church catches up to the megachurch at around 700K
- xi. By year 56
 1. Megachurch has almost 1.5 million people!
 2. But the discipling church has reached every human on the planet.

c. Of course this doesn't really happen this way as it doesn't account for losses

d. But does illustrate the inherent POWER of the seemingly slow, modest growth method of personal discipling

e. BEST METHOD FOR NUMERICAL GROWTH!

- i. In fact this is exactly what happened in the first years of the church!
- ii. The period from the death of Jesus until the end of the first century was the most fruitful in the history of the church. During these few decades, Christianity spread clear across the Roman Empire and even penetrated into Africa, the Parthian Empire, and India. The best estimates put the number of Christians at the end of the first century at around one million. That's an increase of two thousand times the number of Christians before Pentecost (perhaps 500). And all of this growth was facilitated by the process of discipleship. Without mass media, without advertising,

without church buildings, and without seminaries, the primitive church expanded at a rate never equaled in the nineteen centuries since. If the same rate of growth had continued, everyone on earth would have been a Christian before the end of the second century.

1. McCallum, Dennis; Lowery, Jessica. *Organic Discipleship: Mentoring Others Into Spiritual Maturity and Leadership (Revised Edition)* (Kindle Locations 868-876). New Paradigm Publishing. Kindle Edition.

8. That's pretty incredible.

9. That's why

- a. Personal discipling was the original vision for the spread of the Good News
- b. Personal discipling is normative for all believers. Commanded by Jesus TO US!
 - i. And repeated in 2 Tim 2:2
 1. 4 generations → Paul, Timothy, faithful men, those faithful men teach
 - ii. Keeps going!

10. Personal discipling is the STUFF!

- a. It's what really builds the Kingdom of God
- b. It's what gives real purpose and meaning to our lives and our engagement in church
 - i. Rarely boring!
- c. And it's what we want to lean into in OUR Church, here at Tallgrass

11. And it turns out that not only is personal discipling the most efficient means of numerical growth, it's also the most effective means of personal growth, maturity!

- a. Because THAT is the goal of the Christian life and of ministry— maturity!
- b. Wait, isn't it the church leaders' jobs to disciple folks to maturity?
- c. It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ...¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Ephesians 4:11-13, 16
- d. Maturity is a HIGH THING!!! We ALL become mature AS CHRIST!!!!
- e. That's a TALL order
 - i. What can DO such a thing?????
 - ii. Do you think this will be accomplished by simply coming to church gatherings?
 1. Even LIFE Groups?
 - iii. ...requires something as personal and engaging as discipleship to move people along toward maturity.

12. So, so far, we've heard from Jesus that we're all called to make disciples.

- a. And that most ANY believer can do it – THAT PROBABLY MEANS YOU!
- b. But don't freak out as you see the immensity of the task!
 - i. remember that what is impossible with Man is POSSIBLE with God
- c. The POWER comes from the HS

- i. ONE OF YOUR MEMORY VERSES!
Col 1:28-29 - ²⁸Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.
- ii. ²⁹For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.
- iii. All sorts of problems arise when believers begin to think it's up to THEM to make people change.
- iv. No, it's GOD'S POWER alone that can change hearts.
 - 1. But it nearly always pre-requires our obedience

13. So what might this look like at TG:

- a. But bible gives a GREAT deal of leeway with exactly how this process should look.
 - i. Making it completely malleable across all times and cultures.
- b. For our purposes: discipleship is this:
 - i. A Believer intentionally meeting together with one or two others for the purpose of helping that person grow in Christian maturity and learn to do the same with others
- c. Typically most success in 1-on-1
 - i. But also can be great in triads
- d. But much more than that and the dynamic tends to change too much.
- e. Need to meet regularly, pref weekly. At least an hr, pref 1.5-2 hrs per
 - i. Need to plan to meet for multiple years
 - ii. And expect a relationship you'll continue on some level the rest of your life.
- f. Mentoring Dship
- g. Peer Dship
- h. Mentoring Dship (often what most ppl think of)
 - i. Someone more mature invests in helping someone younger than them in the faith grow
- i. Peer Dship is when believers with similar maturities intentionally meet together to help each other grow
 - i. Note with peer dship, still requires someone to take the lead
 - 1. Someone to bring the intentional direction, plan, questions, etc
 - 2. Could alternate
- j. Both can work great!
 - i. **There are opportunities for BOTH These flavors of Dship at TG**

14. Most ppl WANT to be discipled, but much more hesitant to Disciple someone else

- a. There's a practical disconnect here. Cant work
- b. We need MORE ppl willing to disciple others
- c. Chances are, if you're thinking that's NOT you, you're probably wrong
 - i. Unless you've been a believer less than a yr

15. Who would I meet with?

- a. Start with considering those in your LIFE Group
 - i. Strongly encourage you to disciple someone in your own LG for many reasons,
 - 1. Relational overlap ... building more deeply into the genuine love ethos
 - 2. Ability to observe their life and interactions with others

- 3. Able to model and give feedback on interpersonal issues and ministry
 - b. Sometimes a person will ASK you to disciple them, especially if you're a more visible leader
 - c. But usually you have to ask them
 - i. This kind of initiative is foundational to the kind of sacrificial love JC models for us
 - ii. If you have no idea, ask your LG leader for ideas
 - iii. You're looking for someone who will be FAT
 - iv. If you've got multiple options,
 - 1. Faithful, Available, and Teachable
 - a. In a word – HUNGRY
 - v. Otherwise put it out there and see what happens
16. Often best to initially ask if someone would like to do a study with you for a prescribed length of time (6 wk study?).
- a. Will give you a better idea where they're really at in their interest level AND their followthrough
 - b. Give you a natural OUT if not a good fit, avoids relational hurt
 - c. But always easy to suggest continuing if going well
17. What do I do when we meet?
- a. HAVE A PLAN
 - b. Choose a book or topic in the bible to study
 - i. Or a quality Christian book
 - c. Start with scripture EARLY
 - i. Often we shoot the breeze and catch up first, but this often means we don't give much time to bible
 - ii. If you instead start with scripture, then your sharing will come, but will be more productive having been filtered and focused through the Word
 - d. Read a paragraph. Then stop and discuss what it means.
 - e. Share about how that passage intersects with your life.
 - i. This usually transitions to personal sharing
 - f. Consider together what God might be up to in the person(s) life related to what you read in his Word
 - g. Pray for one another
18. Then, Be flexible with the plan
- a. Respond to opportunities that come up
 - b. May just need to ditch the study and talk about something important happening in your lives right now.
 - i. Listen and encourage
 - ii. Offer wise counsel
 - iii. Pray for guidance, help, etc
19. And don't forget to pursue genuine friendship with one another outside the time
- a. This will take TIME
 - b. No way around it
 - c. Multiple hours per week
 - d. Over multiple years

20. Lots more HOW TOs for another time. But this is enough to get us started! Just start!

21. One more reason to lean into Discipleship: JOY

- a. And yes, it does come mingled with the pain
 - i. For more on this, read Ajith Fernando's excellent book THE CALL TO JOY AND PAIN
- b. But JOY that far outstrips all the sorrow.
- c. Joy that starts NOW
 - i. Get to actually experience God's transforming work in
 - ii. Relationally, You nearly always gain a real friend, Often where you least expect it
 1. With folks quite different from you, whom you'd probably never have become "natural" friends with
 2. But turn out to be exceedingly rewarding relationships
 - iii. Purpose, personal discipling is a purpose you can build your life on
 - iv. AND PAYS DIVIDENDS INTO ETERNITY
 1. **1 Thessalonians 2:8, 19-20** ⁸ We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. ... ¹⁹ For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.
 - v. AJITH FERNANDO (CJP, Ch 27) QUOTE
 1. The verb used in Paul's description of the goal of discipling is significant. He says, ". . . that we may *present* everyone mature in Christ" ... Paul is speaking here about the Second Coming of Christ. We are working toward a goal that will be realized only at the end of time. Our great joy will be to present the fruit of our labors to God at the judgment. On that day the people we invested in will be to us what Paul called the Philippians: "my joy and crown" (Phil. 4:1).
When my daughter was little, I used to take her to her preschool on my motorcycle each morning (motorcycles are the standard means of economical transport for middle-class people in Sri Lanka). I would often see a lady who brought about four little children to school in a van. They would get out of the van with her and then hold on to her, each one holding a finger as she led them to school. I often think this is the way I would like to go to heaven - taking along with me several people in whose lives I have invested.

22. Next Steps

- a. **Become a Disciple of JC – start following JC**
 - i. **Maybe you're here this evening and you've never yet become a disciple of Jesus Himself.** You've never told Him you want to put your trust and hope in him saving and directing your life.
 - ii. If that's you this morning, and you're hearing the call of Jesus to follow him, don't resist that call.

- iii. Why not respond to him even now. In your mind, tell Jesus what you're thinking, and how you want him to save you from your empty life of self-rule, and lead you as one of his own.
 - iv. If you tell God that this morning, the scriptures promise that He hears you, and will not delay to come to you. His Spirit will come to live in you immediately and begin to make you into a new person!
 - v. If that's you this evening, please tell someone about it. Someone you came with. Or let us know so we can help you enter into this process of discipleship and help you grow in your new life.
- b. Ask someone to disciple you.
- i. If you're not in a LG, that'd be a great natural first step
 - ii. If you're in a LG, talk to your LG leader for advice. Could be with one of your leaders, or perhaps even better, an opportunity to meet with someone in the group who also needs to take that next step into discipling.
 - 1. Remember it's GOD who does the heavy lifting
- c. Look for someone to disciple.... and ask them
- i. This is SCARY!
 - ii. I was so resistant to this for so long
 - iii. Me walking w/ Todd neighborhood sidewalks around old office
 - 1. SAME CORNER/TREE
 - iv. Journey discipling Kyle
 - 1. He said yes!
 - 2. Awkward, Will you be my guinea pig
 - 3. Developed into RICH Times together that grew us BOTH
 - v. Sometimes happens other ways
 - 1. Jon → thought he asked me to Disciple him, but actually as asking about someone else
 - 2. Rich, difficult, rewarding.
 - a. Seen him grow significantly over years
 - b. Recent Konza walk
 - i. He's leading LGs now, Discipling
 - ii. RICH time
- d. Jump in, and get equipped as you go
- i. LG leaders, elders, Ben and I love to chat 1 on 1.
 - ii. Resources
 - 1. ORGANIC DISCIPLEMAKING
 - 2. PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP: PRACTICAL TIPS by DeLashmutt
 - a. <https://www.xenos.org/teachings/?teaching=2213>
 - 3. Discovery Groups!
- e. Parents, you need to be discipling your kids!
- i. Yes this counts! It's imperative. It's exceedingly important.
 - ii. **More about that in a future teaching.**
- f. **For TG: love to see a significant amount of new discipleship relationships forming this year. Summer is a great time to start!**

- g. I promise you that if you do decide to obey Jesus' command for all his followers to make disciples, you won't regret it
 - i. Yes it may be hard at times
 - ii. But it's also uniquely and profoundly fulfilling and rewarding
 - iii. **Who knows what God might do if we all leaned into Disciplemaking?**
 - 1. In our neighborhoods
 - 2. In our church body
 - iv. What kind of a life might you be missing OUT on if you resist the call to discipleship today?
 - 1. If you were to close your eyes for the final time tonight, and take that walk into eternity, who'd be holding on to your fingers?

23. ACTIVITY

- a. Take out pad of paper, Write out this sentence
 - i. MY NEXT STEP WITH DISCIPLESHIP IS PROBABLY _____
 - ii. I wonder if I could meet with _____ for discipleship

24. Q&R

- a. What's a next step with discipleship you sense God calling you to take?
- b. What has your experience been like with dship?
- c. What questions do you have about this?

ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK:

25. Be prepared for setbacks, failures, and pain

- a. Not everyone you invest in will turn out how you hope
 - i. Because they STILL have a will
- b. Some may experience personal or ministry failure, taking significant steps back
 - i. And you'll wonder if you wasted your time
- c. Some may walk away as if nothing happened
 - i. Without ever a thank you
- d. Some may walk away from the faith entirely
 - i. And some will blame you for their ills.
- e. **I've had EACH of these happen!**
 - i. **It's hard.**
 - ii. **I see their faces in my heart.**
- f. The every act of discipleship is itself a practice of the sacrificial love of God.
 - i. Without preconditions
 - ii. Without self-protection
 - iii. Makes self vulnerable for the good of the other
- g. But God will walk you through that, should it happen.
 - i. And will make it work for YOUR good.
 - ii. Sacrificial love is NEVER wasted → end in itself
 - 1. Reclaiming Love by Ajith
 - iii. And you never know what God will do even with seeming failures
- h. It's not about results, it's about faithfulness
- i. And remember, change usually takes a LONG time
 - i. Many of us get discouraged too quickly because we expect quick change
 - ii. But we need to learn patience
 - iii. And develop an eye for MICRO-MOVEMENT
 - iv. Usually God is doing something in their hearts
 - 1. You just need to develop an eye attuned to seeing its subtle movements
 - 2. Learning to discern these will not only encourage YOU but also your disciple

26. Contrary to what you might be thinking:

- a. Don't have to have been discipled to do it
- b. Don't need to know everything about the bible
 - i. *You can almost always find someone who knows less than you*
- c. Don't need to have your life together
 - i. *We're helping them become more like CHRIST, not primarily ourselves*
 - ii. *Will also be a boon to our own spiritual lives, as discipling someone tends to get us kicked into gear with our OWN personal growth.*
 - 1. *Especially if your guy really begins taking off*
- d. Don't need to do it alone
 - i. *Contrary to what many americans think, confidentiality isn't the highest value in the Body of Christ*
 - 1. *Of course we want to be wise and discrete, keeping circles as small as possible*

2. *But the main goal is the person's GOOD → the body GROWING*
- ii. So that means you'll have access to church leaders, starting with your LG ldr, to consult with for the good of your disciple
 1. *This is actually a great RELIEF*
 2. *And a far more loving tact than our American hyper-individualistic privacy mindset*

27. Common barriers to / misconceptions about Dmaking?

- a. Historically dship lost
 - i. After early days of church, church largely went more corporate and hierarchical
 - ii. Largely In reaction to heresy
 - iii. Increasingly took leadership out of hands of lay people
 1. Then ministry
 2. Then even word of God itself
 - iv. And by and large, dship was lost as a practice normative to Christians until VERY recent times
 - v. So it's not surprising that many come in with at least IGNORANCE about Dship and what it should be like
 - vi. And at worst, outright skepticism and hostility to what to them seems weird and even unhealthy
- b. Most folks default to NOT wanting to have to do anything "at" church
 - i. I come here to get served
 - ii. Maybe I'll give you my money if it's good enough (for me)
 - iii. But Dship runs in the opposite direction. A wilder, more taxing adventure.
 - iv. And many aren't willing to give out.
 1. To put in the time and energy required.
- c. I don't have time
 - i. You have the same amt of time as everyone on the planet
 - ii. You're just choosing to allocate it differently
 - iii. Yes our lives are full and demanding. Esp in the life stage many of us are in (young kids)
 - iv. It's not primarily about production, but faithfulness
 1. Maybe you can just invest in one person. THAT'S FINE
 2. Some may have time/resources to invest in 3-4 ppl, but most esp in our time of life will be more modest.
 3. THAT'S FINE!
 4. But DO THAT. Keep plodding.

MORE MISCONCEPTIONS

- i) **You have to be young/in college**
 - (1) Discipleship is not just for college students
 - (2) Yes, they typically have more time to engage in discipleship

(3) But the call to go and make disciples is for everyone, regardless of your age, life stage, etc.

ii) You have to be OLDER than the person you're discipling

(1) Not true. Sure, human nature tends to think that people older than them are wiser and more mature. Easier for the younger to trust and submit to the older because of this.

(2) But it's completely possible (common) in the body of Christ for someone younger in age to be more mature in Christ, especially if they've been following Christ longer.

(3) And all else being equal, if you can find someone older AND more mature in Christ to disciple you, Great! But beware of constraining your options to this ONLY. God may have something else in mind for you.

iii) You have to meet in a coffee shop

(1) Nope. Discipleship happens in real life.

(2) For many, going to a coffee shop or the greenhouse works best because it's before work, or a lunch break, and offers a easy meeting space with reasonable expectation of relative privacy.

(a) And reading the bible, praying, and sharing our struggles are all great things. And there's a reason they tend to stay on the surface of what folks think discipleship times should include.

(i) When I meet with guys, we typically meet in my office, read the word some, sometimes a section in another good book, like A Gospel Primer, share our lives, ask each other heart-level questions, and pray. Usually we meet for 1.5 hrs, gives good time to settle in, and really connect in the context of the Word.

(b) But NO, there's no hard formula.

(c) You're free to try WHATEVER you want to accomplish the goals of helping your disciple grow in maturity in Christ and sacrificial love towards others.

(d) Just don't reject some of these time tested best practices simply because you want to be different. The Goal of maturity and multiplication is what matters. Be humble enough to do what works.

(i) Get creative!

(3) Many moms with young kids go to each others homes. Kids play in the basement while mom and discipler talk.

(4) Many go for runs together

(5) Work projects together (working on house, making fence together, fixing car)

(6) Sometimes the most meaningful and spiritual thing you can do during your dship time is to go do something fun! -- movie, golf, etc

(7) Let me also say that one of the most overlooked, but most practiced forms of discipleship is parenting!

(a) Of course not all parents treat it as such, but for the believer especially, we have a sacred duty and privilege to help our kids mature and grow in character, wisdom, and in their relationship with God. The Goal is pretty much the same as discipleship. Come along side and help someone mature in Christ and become a Gospel giver and liver.

- (b) I want to make sure to emphasize that if you're a parent, your child is your first and main priority in discipleship.
 - (i) THIS COUNTS!!!
- (c) And there are times in your life where your margin will increase and decrease. For example, when you're in college, or retired, your margin may be larger than someone who has three young kids. That's ok. We're simply called to be faithful to steward what we have.
 - (i) So for example, if you're retired or your kids are out of the house, you may be able to disciple 4 or 5 girls. Maybe more!
 - (ii) But if you're a mom, and have young kids, you may only be able to meet with one person. Or even just focus on your kids for a while.
 - (iii) Give yourself grace to be where you're at, and be honest with yourself enough to hear from God about what he's calling you to.

iv) You have to have BEEN disciplined

- (1) It's just not true
- (2) The core of offering discipleship to someone else is your willingness to love, engage, and prayerfully offer your presence and observations to them. The rest will come

v) You have to be very mature in Christ and know a lot

- (1) NOPE.
- (2) If you're getting disciplined, you can be 2 minutes into the kingdom – that's the whole point!
- (3) If you're discipling someone else, as long as they're not more mature than you, it can work!
 - (a) There's always someone younger in the faith than you that you can pour into.
 - (b) Even peer-to peer discipleship can be quite successful.
 - (i) This is where two friends who are at generally the same place maturity-wise, decide to commit to meet together for mutual discipleship.
 1. They commit to offering their perspective to the other, praying for them through the week, etc
 2. Sometimes they trade off weeks with one person in focus one week and the other the next.
- (4) You can get started right now
 - (a) Share what you know with who you know
 - (b) And go from there.
 - (c) Take the journey together. If you don't know something, don't fake it. Say "I don't know, but I'm gonna try to find out." This kind of authentic humble modeling can be great discipleship stuff in itself!
- (5) And as you dive deeper into discipleship, you'll inevitably begin to naturally feel the need to get better equipped!
 - (a) Also a good thing!

vi) We should meet with only one person

- (1) One on one tends to work best generally. But groups can also work great

- (2) Triads can be very successful.
 - (a) They can trade off focus weeks like the peer-to-peer groups
 - (b) Or can be a great context for someone's disciple to get their feet wet trying to disciple someone else. All three meet together for a while under the supervision of the seasoned discipler. Then once things get firmly established, sometimes the new discipleship pair can begin meeting on their own.
- (3) You can even ask more than one person to pour into you during seasons of your life. This can help a disciple recognize where/if there are any amounts of possessiveness in their heart.
 - (a) Some potential downsides: somewhat confusing when one discipler is trying to move one direction, and the other in the opposite direction.
 - (i) Also need to beware of those looking for many many folks to disciple them. This can be an indication of lack of willingness to follow, and constant flitting around looking for someone to just tell them what they want to hear. Not to mention it's a major drain on typically precious leadership resources within a body.

vii) You have to be in a LIFE Group

- (1) Tends to work best when the disciple and discipler are in the same immediate community/sphere. Allows them to more easily do life together and gives discipler natural eyes on the disciple's life in day to day living – valuable to offer perspective.
- (2) And also this has the added benefit of a group being able to build itself up in love. Experience it. Raise up their own leaders through personal discipleship within the group.
- (3) BUT no, doesn't have to work this way. Don't let that stop you! Just might take some more work on your end.

viii) You have to wait till someone asks you to disciple them

- (1) Nope.
- (2) Of course this scenario works well. If someone asks you to disciple them, you have some added benefits like:
 - (a) You know they want to do this!
 - (b) You can more easily set ground rules and expectations from the get-go.
 - (c) You always have the ability to remind your disciple "you're the one who wanted to do this" if/when things get difficult.
- (3) BUT, it can work great too to seek out prayerfully and ask someone if they'd like to be disciplined by you.
 - (a) I've done it both ways... even with some of my earliest disciples
 - (b) Cody Canterbury – asked to meet with me
 - (c) Kyle Gach - I asked to meet
 - (d) Jonathan York – I misunderstood him (only recently found out)

ix) You should meet with someone who is like you

- (1) Nope.
- (2) Many of us tend to think or dship relationships should be just like our friendships – homogenous and affinity based.
 - (a) And don't get me wrong, those can be great!

- (3) But many times that's not what God has.
 - (a) We meet with people (either as disciple or discipler) who are vastly different from us in some areas.
 - (b) Cody and I have some similarities – type A, hard worker, attention to detail,
 - (i) But we're VERY VERY different in other ways
 - (ii) We would NOT have been friends otherwise.
 - (iii) But God used our differences for GOOD
 - 1. Sometimes someone who is very different from you can help you see things you wouldn't have seen from your same perspective. This can be insanely valuable. Not only personally, but for the kingdom.
- x) You have to be naturally extroverted, excited to do this, and it shouldn't be awkward or difficult**
 - (1) NOPE.
 - (2) Introverts can make GREAT disciplers because they have the potential to be more reflective.
 - (a) Extroverts can fail miserably at dship because they rely too heavily on their “front stage” energy-centered friendship skills and not enough on their “backstage” skills of prayerfulness, etc.
 - (b) All can be disciplined. All can disciple.
 - (3) And no, you shouldn't wait to be excited to do it (chances are you never will)
 - (a) My story with Todd → Kyle
 - (b) Just like any real discipline
 - (i) 1st date “awkwardness – Guinee Pig
 - (4) And anything worth much will take work. Things always start new, awkward. Awkward is the new awesome!
 - (a) But it's all about being willing to anticipate it (even laugh together about it), and keep moving forward. It WILL fade.
- xi) No one would want to meet with you / You don't have anything to offer**
 - (1) This is almost certainly untrue
 - (a) Unless you're a gigantic jerk. In which case, you should get disciplined, grow , get your rough edges buffed some, then offer your self to disciple others.
 - (2) Everyone has something of value to offer another. Even if it seems initially like it's just a different perspective. A willingness to offer what you see to the other. Because humans are terribly unable to see themselves rightly.
 - (a) The gift of “eyes on someone's life” is hard to overstate.
 - (3) In my experience, deep down, almost everyone longs for someone to pursue them with genuine relationship and come alongside them, to help them grow and walk through life.
 - (4) Let me share something personal on this
 - (a) A few years ago at NH, our staff went to the annual meeting for our KS-NE convention of southern Baptists churches. Hutchinson KS.

- (b) There was one message given that really struck a chord and has stuck with me. A younger leader spoke about the opportunity we have to bridge the generational gaps within the KNCSB and be a blessing, rather than a frustration to each other.
- (c) About how it's easy for older leaders to look at younger ones, see their print t-shirts, ear piercings, loud music, etc, and get annoyed. Think these guys are immature, disrespectful, and want nothing to do with those in the older generation, no desire to be led or learn.
 - (i) And here's where my heart jumped into my throat.
- (d) But, the speaker said, this is largely a tool of the evil one to keep our old men on the sidelines, our young men discouraged, and our churches divided. The fact is, and I want you older folks to hear this from my heart as well, us younger leaders and lay-folks LONG, LONG DEEPLY for someone older like you to come alongside us. To show an interest in us. To be FOR US. To step into our world with love and relationship.
 - (i) And to help us grow!
 - (ii) We WANT your input, as long as it's wrapped in your genuine care and in relationship.
 - 1. We know we've got a lot to learn.
 - (iii) What you may sense as us thinking we have it all together is almost always a us feeling like you don't like us, and that we have to try to figure it out on our own.
 - (iv) What may seem like disrespect is actually simply a different culture.
 - 1. Young people today are actually fiercely concerned with authenticity, and long deeply to make an impact for Christ in our lives.
- (5) I can really resonate with this. If you're a little older and wondering if you'd have anything to offer the younger generation, or if it would even be wanted, here me now: Yes! Overwhelmingly yes.