

## Discipleship Strategy

**Intro:** If I don't make disciples our local church dies. Jesus is building His Church (Matt. 16:18), so His work does not rise and fall on our local church, however, His work is demonstrated through our local church and if we're obedient to His command, holistic flourishing will be the result.

**Main Point:** The discipleship strategy I'm implementing consists of three levels of multiplication; *my inner circle* (my wife + 1-2 men); an *Intermediate Council* (5 men); that prayerfully results a maturing *Interdependent Congregation* (48 adults & 30 kids).

**Much of this is rooted back to Ephesians 4:1-16**

### I. Inner Circle (Ephesians 4:1-6)

- a. *“walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called”*
  - i. The whole of my life is to be made visible to my wife and those I'm discipling, who are members in my local church.
  - ii. This is the group who holds my reputation because they assess my moves in life and dig to find the motives of my heart.
  - iii. Navigation in a Complex Setting: Los Angeles/Long Beach
    1. Matt. 28:20 – Observe Jesus' commands (social & spiritual)
    2. Eph. 2:2-3 –
      - a. I believe there is a sinful Spiritual Systemic rhythm in society
      - b. I believe there is a sinful Social Systemic rhythm in society
- b. They walk with me and I them in *“all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love”* are *“eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”*
  - i. This is work. Relationships run well with consistent maintenance.
  - ii. **Illustration:** My first car needed constant attention to run
  - iii. **Application:** Regular attention, checking in, confession of sin, assurance of forgiveness, Scripture's the balm to heal wounds
    1. We put times on the calendar w/ spouses present
    2. We engage with texting, voice notes, and face to face time during the gaps
- c. This all personifies the truths of Ephesians 4:4-6 – because when this foundation is laid and practiced, it sets the rhythm for the rest of our discipleship relationships
  - i. There's a timeline on these relationships (*ending with my 2 and already approached a new one and praying about the 2<sup>nd</sup> person*)
  - ii. ½ way – the challenge is given and followed-up on for them to now disciple another
  - iii. The strategy expands from personal care for them only to “how to” with their new disciple.

### II. Intermediate Council (Ephesians 4:7-11)

- a. This group is multi-ethnic, made up of men I've observed over time and approached in April w/ wives about entering into a "**Elder Candidacy**" process
  - i. 6 Months – 1 Tim 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5 – and preaching (Licensure)
  - ii. Focus is on handling Scripture, shaping content, cutting teeth in the pulpit all the while assessing life at home – challenging them to get to know the members
  - iii. Meet Twice a Month (one w/ wives)
  - iv. Connect via GroupMe; Marco Polo, some Phone calls, Texting, Face to Face times
  - v. Asking "who are you discipling/being disciplined by" – challenging wives
- b. "**Elder in Training Process**" – Ordination
  - i. 12 months
  - ii. Holistic leadership development (emotional, financial, mental, sexual, spiritual, theological)
  - iii. Divvy up responsibilities around these staples:
    - 1. Organize our 13 ministries under 5 headings – Family, Outreach, Hospitality, and Worship
    - 2. Organize Pastoral Responsibilities under 5 headings – Administration, Community Groups, Discipleship, Evangelism, and Fellowship
- c. Why do things this way? **Ephesians 4:7-11**
  - i. **4:7** - The gift of grace is given to every believer (salvation)
  - ii. **4:8-10** – The language of Psalm 68:18 is a victorious king sharing the spoils of victory with His people (*Jesus gives people to churches as gifts*)
  - iii. **4:11** – Jesus also gives gifted leaders to local churches (5Q Alan Hirsch)
- d. **Identify the men in this groups giftings:** Apostolic; Prophetic; Evangelistic; Shepperd-Teachers = train them on how to, through discipleship rhythms, cultivate an environment of familial interdependence!

### **III. Interdependent Congregation (Ephesians 4:12-16)**

- a. Maturity is the goal of discipleship.
- b. Maturity is gained through suffering (**James 1:2-5**) – we must lead in how to suffer well ... together
  - i. "*equip the Saints for the work of ministry*" – preparing people to be in a position to do what God has laid upon their heart to do
    - 1. **Illustration:** The Dodgers organization (Coaching, Managers, Trainers, Position specialists, Laundry (for uniforms))
    - 2. **Application:** Pastors are Player/Coaches
  - ii. They are being challenged to live in discipleship from:
    - 1. The Pulpit – in sermons
    - 2. The pastor – in example and exhortation
    - 3. Their peers – "who are in discipleship with"
- c. Content is navigation through obeying Social and Spiritual Commands of Christ – over the course of time it results in "unity of the faith", "maturity", growth that is built up in love. This is what I want to see!

**If I don't make disciples our local church will die.**