THE CAMPUS MINISTRY GROWTH MODEL

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Since our inception in 1951 we have been committed to spiritual growth. Growth pertains to the "building" phase of "winning, building and sending;" yet how do we measure growth? How is it that seemingly mature leaders can fall off the deep end after so many years? Perhaps part of the problem is related to what we've historically valued and how we've measured growth. Possibly, because it is easier, we measure progress through a spiritual program rather than measuring genuine life change. Too often we've been content to measure linear progress through Discovery Groups, Training Groups, Action Groups, Project Leader, New Staff, Senior Staff, Director, etc. as if growth were a "dot-to-dot" process. These may be the same programs in which people grow but growth is not the "dots" (the programs) but rather what happens between the "dots." Growth is not just jumping through successive ministry hoops. Growth involves genuine, inner life change. Spiritual and emotional growth happens in the ministry programs but is not necessarily caused by them. A leader's ability to understand, outline and expound spiritual truth is not necessarily correlated to one's ability to live it. We plant and water through our programs, but it is God who causes the growth.

How can you tell if your associates are growing or just conforming to a program? How can you discern between the genuinely needy and the chronically needy? How can you tell if you and those you work with are emotionally healthy and growing without putting them through a check-up from the neck-up to correct their stinkin' thinkin'? How can you keep your ministry from being comprised of students like Cody Pendent, Cy Kotic, Beau Leemik, Lois Teem, Sharon Bedz, Lou Scannon, X.S. Rage, Hugh Manistic, Oliver Klosoff, Lou Smorals, Titus Finkter, Ann Orexic, Ben Ther or Don That?

GRACE, TRUTH, AND TIME

In his book, Changes That Heal (Zondervan, 1992), Henry Cloud outlines three ingredients of genuine spiritual growth and emotional health. The common elements of emotional health and growth are grace, truth and time. Real change and real growth happens only in the context of truth and grace. Henry writes, "Grace is the unmerited favor of God toward his people. Grace is unconditional love and acceptance. Grace is something we have not earned and do not deserve." "Truth is what is real. It describes how thing really are." We are transformed by Jesus Christ by his grace and truth. Twice Jesus is described as being full of "grace and truth" (John 1:14,17). He touched and changed the lives he encountered with both grace and truth. Repeatedly he preceded his statements with "I tell you the truth...." People are transformed by the truth--by what is real, combined with grace. Remember the woman caught in adultery (John 8:2-11)? After all was said and done, what did Jesus do? He said "Then neither do I condemn you" (grace). "Go now and leave your life of sin" (truth). When he healed the man, who for 38 years had been an invalid (John 5), Jesus healed him (grace) but also told him to "stop sinning" (truth). When Peter was so quick to proclaim his undying loyalty to Jesus, Jesus was quick to tell him the truth--"I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times....but after you have returned, strengthen your brothers" (grace).

How do we grow? Paul, writing to the Ephesians says in 4:15, 16 "...speaking the truth in love we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Truth without grace, or without being tempered by love is judgment. Without grace we become Pharasaical in our approach to spirituality. Rules without grace leads to compliance and condemnation. Grace without truth easily leads to licentiousness--no growth, no change, no limits...no consequences. Henry writes, "Grace and truth are a healing combination because they deal directly with one of the main barriers to all growth: guilt. We have emotional difficulties because we have been injured (someone has sinned against us), or we have rebelled (we have sinned), or some combination of the two." Notice that it is the members of the body who are instrumental in the growth process. We cannot grow in isolation.

The third ingredient is time. Growth always takes time. Although time by itself never produces growth, it is impossible to grow without it. The parable of the unfruitful fig tree (Luke 13:6-9) illustrates the importance of input (grace and truth) along with time. Henry makes the distinction between "good time" and "bad time." "Good time is time in which we and our experiences can be affected by grace and truth. If we have removed some aspect of ourselves from time, grace and truth cannot transform it." In other words, any area of our lives that is not brought into the light cannot be transformed no matter how much time we give it. It is the talent that is buried (Matthew 25:26,27) that goes unchanged.

FOUR DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

The growth model for our ministry is a description of four "developmental tasks" that every person has to go through on the road to a healthy adulthood.

BONDING

The first sign of emotional well-being is that of the ability to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with others. This is called bonding. Henry writes, "Bonding is the ability to establish an emotional attachment to another person. It is the ability to relate to someone on the deepest level." It is caring for others and having others care for you. God himself is a bonded being. He created us to be bonded to him in a relationship. Fruitfulness in the Christian life comes as the product of a bonded relationship. That relationship is called "abiding" (John 15:4,5). Where does the ability to bond come from? In Mark 1:11, after Jesus' baptism, the Father verbally affirmed him with these words-- "You are my Son (a sense of belonging), whom I love (unconditional love); with you I am well pleased (affirmation)." People who have

been raised in an atmosphere of belonging, love and affirmation have the trust that is needed to be bonded with others. This trust is an integral ingredient in building relationships. Henry writes, "If we were blessed with loving caretakers who met our needs when we were young, we develop our "trust muscle" and begin to perceive the world as a trustworthy place. We love because our parents first loved us; we love because God first loved us (1 John 4:19). If our needs were not met--if we were neglected, abandoned, beaten, abused, criticized, hated, or resented for existing--then our very ability to trust and be vulnerable is injured."

God not only created us to have a relationship with himself but also to have meaningful relationships with others. It was God who first said, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Genesis 2:18). Satan's plan is to isolate us. God's plan is to bring us into meaningful friendship with others. Life only works when it is lived according to design. God created every living thing to live in relationship with something or someone else. Scientists call this symbiosis. For believers it is called community.

No matter what you may have missed emotionally in your first family, there is still good news. As a child of God you've been placed in a second family called the church (Mark 3:31-35). The body of believers should be a place of belonging, love and affirmation. Because the history of our ministry has encouraged working in teams and small groups, with a little tweaking, the Campus Ministry could be a wonderful environment for bonding to take place.

BOUNDARIES

The second developmental task that all people need to go through is that of establishing boundaries. Just as bonding has to do with connecting with others, establishing boundaries has to do with being separate from others. Henry writes, "In a psychological sense, boundaries are the realization of our own person apart from others. This sense of separateness forms the basis of our personal identity. It says what we are and what we are not, what we will choose and what we will not choose, what we will endure and what we will not endure, what we will feel and what we will not feel, what we like and what we do not like, and what we want and what we do not want. Boundaries, in short, define us." A boundary is a property line that defines where you end and someone else begins. Boundaries define what is mine and what is not mine--what I am responsible for and what I am not responsible

for, what I can and cannot control. Understanding boundaries is then inner side of the outward "Just Say No!" campaigns. Created in the likeness of God, we need to understand that God loves and hates, he chooses, wills, wants, values and thinks. We need boundaries with our bodies, attitudes, feelings, behavior, thoughts, choices, toothbrush and the food on our plates unless the "priestly tithe" (1 Samuel 2:13,14) is in effect.

The second recorded time that God spoke audibly to Jesus, on the Mount of Transfiguration, he recognized his Son's separateness. "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him" (Matthew 17:5). The Trinity is a theological expression of both bonding and boundaries.

How does this relate to ministry? Sometimes we mistake a student's commitment for an inability to say "no." A sign of emotional immaturity is the inability to take responsibility to make one's own wise decisions. Symptoms of lack of boundaries often include the inability to choose what you want to do apart from what others want you to do. The inability to say "no" because you feel obliged and compelled--feeling so responsible for other people so you don't take responsibility for your own life.

Galatians 6:2-5 defines the balance between being bonded with others and establishing boundaries with them. "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ...each one should carry his own load." We carry one another's burdens when what they are bearing is overwhelming--something they cannot bear on their own. However, we don't carry their "load"--the responsibilities that are theirs. In other words, every person needs to bear the consequences of their own decisions. When we fail to allow others to reap the consequences of what they have sown we are dishonoring their boundaries. Rescuing others from their own consequences is not to honor their adulthood.

In the Campus Ministry, failure to establish boundaries is often two-sided. Trainers and disciplers often enjoy being needed and appreciated and consequently, mostly inadvertently, create an overdependent relationship. Trainees show up and seem to cry out, "I need, I need, I neeeeeeed! I want, I want, I waaaaant!" Staff need to own their own growth and development. They, not you, are responsible for their training. As a trainer, you identify needs and bring resources to bear but you cannot do it for them!

You are responsible to your trainee but you are not responsible for your trainee. Having boundaries means that after you give your trainee an assignment to complete, for example, you could say, "Call me when you get it done and then we can meet again." When a task or assignment is undone, you blur the boundaries and pass sloppiness off for grace when you say, "Well, that's OK, we'll do it together when we meet." Of course you are still free to serve and to give, but you do it out of free choice not obligation.

How do boundaries affect our ministry with students? We have perfected the art of making students feel obligated to us and our programs through heavy doses of truth or virtual truth (i.e. "Look, this school stuff is all going to burn one day, what will last is this conference"), but we need to recognize that without choice, there can be no growth. Yes, we still need to recruit others and challenge others to be committed to the Lordship of Christ and the Great Commission (truth), but the decision needs to be theirs, not ours. As we are bound to Christ...he is in us and we are in him, he still allows us to choose him. Never eliminate choice! Think of the words of Joshua. "...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). When Jesus' disciples left him en masse (John 6:66-69), Jesus didn't beg the twelve to stay, but rather also gave them the option of leaving. For growth to be genuine and lasting, the "want-to" must come from the heart. Individuals who are motivated by guilt or obligation rarely find lasting results. When people do give you a disappointing "No, I won't be attending that event," we need to apply the elements of grace and truth, recognizing that God's timetable may be different than ours.

BLACK AND WHITE

T The third developmental task is to learn to resolve the good and evil we find within ourselves and others. Crusade often seems to attract people who see everything in black and white without recognizing a myriad of shades of gray. We are used to idolizing certain individuals in the ministry--perhaps a certain speaker, discipler, director or leader. It's as if they can do no wrong. Once we see their feet of clay, and we will ("There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins"--Ecclesiastes 7:20), we are quick to write them off. The one who was "all good" has now become "all bad." Henry writes, "We are both good and bad. Our natural tendency, however, is to try to resolve this problem by keeping the good and bad separated. This creates a split in our

experience of ourselves, others and the world around us--a split that is not based on reality and will not stand the test of time and real life. Trying to keep the good and the bad separated results in an inability to tolerate badness, weakness and failure in ourselves and others." Some people deny the bad in them selves by never dealing with their problems. Others deny the good in them and focus only on their failures and weaknesses. We left perfection far behind in the Garden of Eden. A 41 day fast against pride or "one-ups-manship" rarely works. Evil, and the potential for evil, will be present within us until the day we go to be with the Lord. The developmental task here is to extend God's forgiveness to ourselves and others. Press on, yes! But give up your quest to be perfect or to have perfect relationships.

ADULTHOOD AND AUTHORITY

The last developmental task that all people must achieve before they can be personally mature is that of embracing their lives as adults. Growing into adulthood is the normal process of growth. The apostle Paul wrote, "When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me" (1 Corinthians 13:11). Henry Cloud writes, "Becoming an adult is the process of moving out of a "one-up/one-down" relationship and into a peer relationship to other adults....Becoming an adult is a process of gaining authority over our lives...Adults know what they believe, think through things for themselves, make decisions, do not depend on the approval of other for survival, and have an area or areas of real expertise." They don't have to ask anyone's permission to do the things adults are supposed to do. When we were children, we lived in a world of "big people." Granted, some were larger than others (supposedly due to a "glandular problem") but they were all big, nonetheless. Teachers, parents, Scout leaders, spiritual leaders, police, etc., were all "big people" in our lives. We lived "one down" with many "one up" people. To become an adult is to recognize our mutuality with every other adult. If God is our father, then we are all sibling and because there is only one Parent, we don't need to parent other adults or look for others to parent us (Matthew 23:7-10). In the book of Acts, the word "disciple" (learner) is quickly replaced by the term "brother" as the church matured. The "one another" verses confirm the idea of adulthood. Being an adult means that we can lead, follow or just be a friend.

We don't measure ourselves in terms of being "one-up" or "one-down." Because we are on equal footing with other adults, we can understand the role of authority. People who are over us are not better than us or bigger than us. We can willfully submit to proper authority without demeaning ourselves. With donors or campus officials, we don't need to approach them with fear but rather the confidence that we are on equal ground as adults.

APPLICATION

Henry Cloud says there are four questions we can ask to evaluate people we are working with:

- How connected are they? Are they in good relationships?
- What are they getting away with? Are they being responsible for their own loads?
- Where are they exposing their badness and hurts? Are things coming out of darkness into light?
- Where are they developing their talents? Are they taking appropriate stewardship of their lives or looking for others to do it for them

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