



SELECTION • Eric Swanson

“It all started by Jesus calling a few men to follow Him. This revealed immediately the direction His evangelistic strategy would take. His concern was not with programs to reach the multitudes, but with men whom the multitudes would follow....Men were His method of winning the world to God.” Robert Coleman in *The Master Plan of Evangelism*.

Selection has to do with our calling as a movement—to fulfill the Great Commission in this generation. If we had unlimited time or fuzzy goals, we could individually work with anyone and everyone. But as it stands, as a matter of stewardship and effectiveness, we must be selective with who we choose to disciple. Like Jesus, we cannot and should not personally disciple everyone. We select, not to show favoritism, or elitism, but rather for a purpose—leadership development. The future of our movement rests on our next generation of leaders. Not everyone is called to lead, gifted to lead, or willing to lead. We are looking for spiritual leaders. It has been said that Christianity is only one generation from extinction. The selection, training, and development of leaders, insures that the faith will prosper and propagate.

Jesus and Selection

Jesus was intentional about who He chose and intentional about what He wanted his disciples to do. After spending the night in prayer (Luke 6:12), “Jesus called to him those he wanted, and ...he appointed twelve...that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach...” (Mark 3:13,14). Jesus did not invest His life in everyone. Certainly, He influenced the multitudes, but impacted and invested in the few. Coleman wrote of Jesus’ selection, “...though He did what He did to help the multitudes, He had to devote Himself primarily to a few men, rather than the masses, in order that the masses could at last be saved....One can not transform a world except as individuals in the world are transformed, and individuals cannot be changed except as they are molded in the hands of the Master.” Jesus knew that in order to change the world, it was far better to have twelve (really eleven) disciples who were 100% committed, than 100 tag-a-longs who were 12% committed.

Selection and Basic Follow-up

After introducing a person to Christ—or contacting a believer who wants to grow—one of the most helpful things you can do in this prayerful process, is basic follow-up. Basic follow-up accomplishes at least three things. First, it introduces students to the basics of the faith from which we live the Christian life. Second, it provides a context for building a relationship and provides a format for observing faithfulness and spiritual hunger. After meeting six or eight times individually with a student, you can personally determine who wants to continue to grow and who doesn’t. Third, it provides a model for what they will do with other students. Multiplication needs to be modeled.

Don’t mistake follow-up with discipleship. Follow-up is comprised of those concepts which will begin the process of grounding a student in their faith. After follow-up, they now know what they need to do to keep growing...to become a disciple. Although all students may desire a spiritual mentor, we want to focus our individual attention on those who want have a desire to minister, share their faith, and help others grow. We are obligated to take everyone through follow-up, but we are not obligated to disciple/mentor everyone.



Who to Work With

After follow-up, how do you determine who you should disciple?

The oft-quoted admonition of the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 2 still stands as the plumb line for spiritual multiplication. “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” Historically, we have had two “entrance qualifications” for those we invest in—1) a teachable attitude, and 2) a heart for God. Added to these, ex-staff Cynthia Burnett, recommends three supplementary criteria for selection:

- Willingness to share one’s faith.
- Willingness to lead.
- Wanting to do the above within the ministry of Campus Crusade.

Mark McCloskey writes, “By ‘selection’ we mean ‘choosing a few on which to focus from the many raised up through broad sowing and the filtering process.’ Just as Jesus’ ministry depended on those He selected from among the many, so will ours. Therefore, we must look for those qualities Jesus looked for when He selected His disciples—a heart for God, teachability, faithfulness, availability, and potential to multiply.”

In Crusade, we have historically used the criteria, “move with the movers,” which is to say, we work with those in whom God is already at work and in whose lives He is moving at this present time. How can you tell who the “movers” are? Just as Jesus could tell who was following Him simply by turning around, our litmus test is providing students with regular opportunities to declare themselves faithful in evangelism, training, the weekly meeting, retreats, etc. These people more or less select themselves. Disciples emerge from a multiplicity of growth opportunities. Actually, you can ask for any requirements that you want to, and then wait for God to raise up students who meet those qualifications. Your reasonable requirements can be the door through which you discover who God wants you to invest in. More than anything, selection is made on the basis of observation and prayer.

Disciples are Made

In his classic work, *Disciples are Made—not Born*, Walt Henrichsen outlines several principles to bear in mind in recruiting a prospective disciple, four of which are mentioned here:

- Recruit to a vision, not to an organization.
- Do not create the impression that people are doing you, or God, a favor by being faithful to the cause of Christ.
- You recruit a man to discipleship by being his servant.
- You reproduce after your own kind, whether you like it or not.

Henrichsen emphasizes that in the process of making disciples, in order to impart biblical convictions and perspective, we should:

- Major in principles rather than methods.
- Major in meeting the needs of others rather than in developing and imparting techniques.
- Major in developing the thought processes rather than the skills.
- Major in how to trust God rather than teaching theories about God.

Who Not to Work With

Just as there are basic qualifications of potential disciples, there are also basic disqualifiers of who not to disciple. Barry Rush has identified six “leading indicators” of who not to disciple:

- Refusal to share one’s faith.
- No heart for God.
- Unyielding to the Lordship of Christ.
- Overly involved in other Christian groups.
- Unwillingness to commit to the overall Crusade movement.
- Emotionally unstable.



When disqualifying a potential disciple, be certain that you distinguish between what is a settled conviction, and immaturity or ignorance. Sometimes it's easy to think, "Well, it's better to fill my schedule and disciple somebody (even though they don't meet any of the requirements), than have an empty schedule." This is not necessarily true. A schedule filled with the wrong people will keep one from evangelism and reaching out to others. The goal is not to simply be busy doing any kind of ministry. It is far better to disciple three of the right students, while looking for six more, than fifteen of the wrong students, who will never multiply and minister to others.

Synergy and Movements

Does the following scenario sound familiar? "Tim is discipling the sharpest guys in the ministry. The problem is none of them come to our retreats and conferences and rarely attend weekly meetings or even bible studies." Remember...we are involved in a spiritual movement comprised of people going in the same direction. If those you are meeting with one on one, after follow-up (or a reasonable amount of time), are not significantly involved in the larger ministry, you will have very little momentum and synergy in your movement. What you do with them as individuals will be dissipated and not returned into the ministry. On the other hand, if the men you are meeting with get involved in the ministry, the time and energy you invest in them will be multiplied, as it is returned to the ministry. It will be very, very difficult to build a movement (or even a larger ministry) if those you are discipling are not involved in the larger Crusade body.

Our commitment to others is reciprocal to their commitment, not only to us, but also to Crusade. Our history reveals that very, very few people go on in ministry leadership if they are not involved in the larger body. A good rule of thumb might be that four of five students you meet with after basic follow-up must be involved in the greater Crusade ministry. The fifth person you meet with can be anyone you want to meet with. Sometimes you just have a hunch, that given enough time and love, a student will come around. However, these should be the exception, not the rule, of your ministry. Others you can fit into your personal life but not necessarily your personal ministry.

Multiplying Disciples

Mark McCloskey writes that, "Discipleship simply means the 'process of following Jesus and learning from Him.' Spiritual multiplication is a strategic form of discipleship intent on maximizing the number of laborers in the harvest. While all spiritual multipliers are disciples, not all disciples are spiritual multipliers."

Give plenty of opportunities for students to demonstrate their faithfulness. Most of the time, if our motives, purpose and objectives are clear—students, more or less select their own level of involvement. You can love and influence others without personally discipling them. Jesus ministered to the 5,000, the 500, the 120, and the seventy, as well as the twelve. He offered something—probably what they most needed—to everyone. Is there a place in your ministry for the "Barnabases" and "Geresene demoniacs" (presently clothed) as well as the "Timothys" and "Pricillas?"

Remember, intentional leadership development is an organizational value, but in no way is a gauge of measuring the value of a person. Every student is deserving of an atmosphere of acceptance, love, and safety, regardless of ministry performance. In this type of environment, God will raise up His laborers.

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The Compass is the discipleship curriculum for Campus Crusade for Christ's Campus Ministry. It was created by Centerfield Productions, the field based division of CruPress. We'd love to hear your feedback on this lesson. Please write us at centerfield@uscm.org