

Rethinking Our Practices

DiscipleShift, Session Nine (Chap. 9)

(How) Does each ministry in our church lead to discipleship?

4th Key Shift: From Activity to Relationship

The Necessity of Alignment

“You can end up doing a lot of things not very well and become a mile wide and an inch deep. You must direct your people to things that make the biggest impact” (p. 170).

“Problems arise anytime a church doesn’t think this through intentionally and strategically. So to counteract this trend, it’s important for leaders to cast a _____ for why the church does what it does, and then _____ to that vision” (p. 171).

“It’s far easier to do fewer things well than to do a lot of things haphazardly. Having a lot of unconnected ministries creates energy and staffing problems” (p. 173).

“If a program is to exist (and clearly some should), it must move people to venues where spiritual growth can occur. Everything the church does relates in some way to the primary mission of discipleship” (p.171).

Everything? Can’t there just be [insert favorite program here]? Why or why not?

“The reality is that many ministries within a church exist without any clear, overall sense of purpose. They operate in isolation and don’t end up reproducing people who are committed to the Lord and know how to make disciples. The ministries were started because good people wanted them. Year after year they continue, even if there’s no great reason for them any longer, because they have become _____ over time and nobody wants to challenge their existence, much less kill them off if they’re ineffective” (p. 172).

“We must learn to _____ the difference between good and the great, the well-meaning and the highly focused, the ineffective and the effective. Church leaders must examine every program and ask, ‘What’s the best use of our time according to the mission God has given us?’” (p. 174).

The key questions for evaluation: “Did we take energy that could have been better spent on fulfilling the God-given purpose of church and waste it? Could we have made a change that led that fun social event to a much bigger kingdom win?” (p. 172). What does Jesus define as a success?

GOOD

BETTER

BEST

Make a:

Take a look at FCLC's ministries and programs. Evaluate them based on the criteria of discipleship. Then pretend "all authority on heaven and on earth has been given to you" to make three piles: Keep, Fix or Toss. What would you put where and why?

Keep

Fix/Revamp

Toss

"Every ministry in the church must funnel people back to the relational small group, where biblical discipleship can happen" (p. 174)

"_____ is one of the hardest things churches grapple with. To say yes to your calling, you must necessarily say no to a lot of good things, and when you say no to a lot of good things, you say no to a lot of good people who don't understand why you're saying no. You're saying no to something they are emotionally invested in" (p. 177). Risky, but necessary! Otherwise...

Five Key Components

If we want programs to be aligned with the purpose of discipling, there are five key components each ministry/program must have.

- 1) A clear goal of discipleship (not fellowship, not Bible study, not serving)
- 2) An intentional leader who makes disciples (not a leaderless group)
- 3) A biblically relational environment (life group)
- 4) A reproducible process (Jesus modeled SCMD)
- 5) A supporting organization (part of the church, support and accountability)

"The more entrenched in tradition a church is, the more difficult it is to align the various ministries together around a common purpose...And it's also true some people will have become accustomed to being spiritual children and will not want to see things change" (p. 179).

"The truth is no one can stop you from making disciples, but they can stop you from making it the official mission of the church" (p. 179).

So! When leading change...do it:

--slowly

--intentionally

--with vision

--as a team