

The Disciple-maker as a Pacesetter  
Your life is your ministry and your message

I Cor. 4:16, 11:1; Phil. 4:9; II Tim. 2:2. 3:10-11

PACESETTING:

Pacesetting means to set the standard, the goal. It is to be a model of what one desires to be replicated. It is walking ones talk and demonstrating what is to be reproduced. It is a life being lived in such a way that it is worthy of being followed. It isn't like being the 'rabbit' in a race that starts off fast but soon fades. Pacesetting is being the one who is out front setting the stride that the other runners must match or exceed to win the race. Literally speaking, the pacesetter, sets the beat and rhythm of what is required for those who follow.

When thinking about pacesetting one must begin with Jesus who over and over said "follow me". This is the essence of pacesetting, getting others doing what we are doing. It isn't to make them like us, but rather to help them be more like Christ. Jesus never said, "do what I say, not what I do." He did say 'follow me', 'do as I have done', 'I have given you an example that you should do as I have done unto you.'

In John 13:15-17 Jesus had just washed the disciple's feet and then said, 'for I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you, if you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.' I think it is clear that over and over whatever Christ thought was important He would model as well as teach the principle.

Luke 6:40 – "A disciple is not above his teacher but everyone when he is fully taught will be like his teacher."

If our objective is Christ-likeness, we ought to do what He did! Discipleships focus is getting others doing the same, then and only then will we be like our teacher, Christ!

To set the pace one must be clear about some things.

What is my objective and am I sure I know where I am going?

Is there anything in or about me that would be a hindrance or cause an unnecessary detour?

Am I asking of other's, what I am unwilling to do or do poorly?

Am I asking for something that is really unimportant?

Am I replicating principles or methods?

THE OBJECTIVE:

Setting the pace is all about living a transparent life worthy of being imitated. It is life without guile, not perfect, but yet one of integrity and consistency. A transparent life is an open life where life is shared and the welcome mat to join is extended to those we are helping. Consider Paul's challenge in Philippians 4:9

- 1) What you have learned from me
- 2) What you have received from me

- 3) What you have heard from me
- 4) What you have seen in me, DO....and God's peace will be with you!

This verse is a testimony of a man who set the pace and lived a transparent life.

To further grasp what this looks like consider Paul's reminder in II Timothy 3:10-11. Paul says now you have observed my

- 1) teaching
- 2) conduct
- 3) aim in life
- 4) faith
- 5) patience
- 6) love
- 7) steadfastness
- 8) persecutions
- 9) sufferings

Consider what Paul said in II Timothy 3:14, "But as for you continue in what you have learned and firmly believed knowing from whom you learned it..... vs. 15 goes on to talk about the influence of the scripture in his life and then vss. 16 and 17 talk about the power, purpose and nature of scripture. We must live a life like Paul's rooted in scripture, focused on Christ.

Every aspect of Paul's life had been fleshed out, lived out, in front of Timothy. In Paul's life nothing had been hidden, everything had been opened to the public, from his theology to his suffering. Paul's aim was that Timothy do the same! I believe Paul wanted every aspect of II Timothy 3:11-12, to be reproduced in Timothy. This is living as a pace setting disciple-maker in the purist sense.

#### THE VISION:

II Timothy 2:2 had already broken down Paul's strategy: Paul to Tim, Tim to faithful men, faithful men to others.....that is the strategy of a disciple maker. II Timothy 3:10-11 is the example of Paul pacesetting, setting the standard.

The pacesetting disciple-maker is always aware that they must live a transparent life others can replicate and never satisfied until the vision is cast to future generations to do the same! He/she is never content to just do it by them selves but always looking for a Timothy, a Silas, a John Mark to invest in and not content unless they reproduce the same in others!

What sets the disciple-maker apart from the one content to simply follow after Christ him/herself, is the vision to reproduce in others what has been given to him/her.

What do we wish to have others imitate? How do we reproduce the main stuff from the other stuff? For example, I am a Baptist, but I don't believe it is critical for me to make Baptists, even though I am thoroughly Baptist. I am however to make disciples! I have to make sure that what I am calling discipleship is not blatant indoctrination!

I am to help my fella learn how to grow in the word, not necessarily draw my same conclusions.

I am to help my fella share his faith, but not try to squeeze him into my style and methodology.

I am to help my fella learn how to pray, but not make him pray just like me with my structure and forms.

I am to help my fella know what is critical doctrinal positions but hold on loosely enough to allow him to disagree on secondary positions.

I am to help my fella develop the disciplines of faith without squeezing him into my mold. I have to allow him to be true to himself as he practices the disciplines.

I am to help my fella imitate my faith, not necessarily my attitudes regarding politics, church polity, music tastes, to home school or not, etc...I must know the difference.

**THE OBJECT OF DISCIPLESHIP IS RAISE UP FOLKS WHO ARE LIKE CHRIST!**

THE CONCERN:

The pacesetter disciple maker can never take a sin break! We must never forget what is at stake. We can't afford to take extended breaks from the game.

Consider of Paul as found in I Corinthians 9:24-27.

We must always practice the disciplines of obedience.

We must always be harder on ourselves than others would be.

We must not lose sight of the objective.

We must realize that we can become un-useable for God's purpose.