

## 10. Learning to Develop Biblical Goals

One of the keys things to help developing spiritual leaders learn to do is develop Biblical goals rather than to follow the pattern of the world in the development of goals. The reason why this is so important is that Christ uses a completely different standard to measure success than the world. The world measures success by nickels and noses – how much money they make and how many people buy their product to give them a larger market share. (Some churches measure success by the size of their offerings and the number of people who attend their services.)

In contrast, Christ measures effectiveness by transformed lives. The night before His crucifixion, in John 17:4, Christ said in His prayer to the Father, “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” Christ had trained the men who would carry on His work when He returned to heaven. Then, in Acts 4:13, we see the results of the work Christ had finished before His crucifixion, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.” We want to help developing leaders realize that their goals should produce transformed lives so others will recognize that those they lead have been with Jesus and have been transformed by Him. Paul expressed the same thought, when he said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.”

We need to help developing leaders realize that those they lead will imitate them and become what they are whether that is good or bad. In our Great Commission, in Matthew 28:19-20, verse 20a says, “...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...” We could also translate that thought, “Showing them how to obey all that Christ commanded.” We want developing leaders to learn how to show people how to obey all that Christ taught.

People learn to follow the Lord by following the Lord’s people. Paul said, in 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10, “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

In these verses, we have a model for helping developing leaders develop the goals that will guide them in their leadership. These verses show us the goals we should have, as leaders, for those we lead:

1. We want them to receive the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit because we are depending on the Holy Spirit as we share the Word.
2. We want them to receive the Word with much assurance because they see how the Word has changed our lives.

3. We want them to become followers of us and of the Lord – they follow our example.
4. We want to help them become examples to others.
5. We want them to become such examples that people everywhere are talking about their faith.
6. We want to see them turn to God from idols – true repentance.
7. We want to see them learn to serve the living and true God.
8. We want them to develop anticipation as they wait for the coming of the Lord.

As leaders, these are the goals we should have for those that we lead. In the same way, we want to help developing leaders develop these same goals for those they are beginning to lead. Developing leaders will develop these goals only as they both hear us teach them and also model them in our relationships with them. They will imitate our style of leadership. If we follow the world's style of leadership, they will lead the same way the world leads. If we follow Christ's style of leadership, they will become more like Christ.

In addition to goals for what they want the Lord to develop in the people they are leading, leaders also need to develop goals for their own personal growth. Paul gives us an example of his personal growth goals in Philippians 3:10, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." As Paul was coming to the final period of his ministry, he summarized his goals for personal growth by four things:

- ◆ he wanted to know Christ better.
- ◆ he wanted to know the power of His resurrection better.
- ◆ he wanted to know the fellowship of His sufferings better.
- ◆ he wanted to become conformed to the death of Christ.

As we look at the personal goals Paul had at this period in his life, we see that these goals are not focused on worldly success. Instead, they are goals that focus on pleasing God. If we are going to help people develop goals that will have an eternal impact, they must be goals that focus on pleasing God instead of goals that focus on earthly success.

In order to help people develop Biblical goals, we need to encourage people to ask some of the following questions:

About their personal goals:

- What does God want to do in my life this year to help me become more like Christ?
- What changes do I need to make in my priorities in order to become more like Christ in these areas?
- Are there attitudes and habits in my life that I need to ask God to give me His strength to change?
- How do I submit to God and allow Him to work in these areas of my life?

About their ministry goals:

- If I could choose to do any particular ministry for the Lord for the next period in my life, what kind of service for the Lord would get me most excited? (my heart or passion)
- What spiritual gifts has the Lord given me to carry out this kind of ministry?
- What natural abilities has the Lord given me to carry out this kind of ministry?
- What are the things in my personality that the Lord can use to help me carry out this ministry?

- What are the experiences the Lord has given me in my life to prepare me for this ministry?
- What particular things in my life are hindering me right now and preventing me from carrying out this particular ministry?
- Then, ask yourself the two questions that Paul asked, in Acts 9:1-6. “Who are you, Lord?” and “Lord, what do you want me to do?”

As people ask themselves these questions about personal goals, they will often realize that the Lord is speaking to their hearts about those areas where they need to be growing to become more like Christ. As they ask themselves the questions about ministry goals, they often realize that the only thing hindering them is fear, because they are depending on their own strength instead of yielding to the Lord and ministering in His strength. May the Lord richly bless you as you help people to focus on what Christ wants to do in their lives and through their lives.