

# Thoughts About Training Young Preachers

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## **Introduction:**

- I. The responsibility of conducting a training program for a young preacher is a serious challenge. It is deeply rewarding and fulfilling. It is also exciting.
  - A. With every program there are many positives and many problems.
  - B. There are many decisions, skills and a cost of much of your time and some of the Lord's money that go into the effort.
  - C. Your wise preparation will affect your long term emotions about a training program and its value.
    1. Some preachers undertake this opportunity and become disappointed and disillusioned. They quit and speak negatively of the experience, sometimes blaming the young man they selected.
    2. Some young men come into a program with a glowing expectation and leave in disappointment.
    3. Even Paul and Barnabas clashed over judgments about how to do it.
- II. Plan wisely! Watch your expectations! Don't dream of one exciting result and make a plan that will not produce your desired results most of the time.
  - A. It takes time, training skills, mentoring attitudes, plus a young man's desire, humility and effort, and a congregation's accurate financial awareness, support and patience.
  - B. With those things, a marvelously close and rewarding relationship develops and the Lord's work is immensely benefited with many souls pointed towards eternity!

## **Body:**

- I. **Some Biblical Resources To Turn To For Guidance**
  - A. The Biblical pattern of what a spiritual Christian should be like
    1. One who is going to speak about it should live it
    2. Yet, how long does that maturity take to develop
    3. So what should I expect of the young man?
  - B. The broad pattern of Jesus
    1. We are all to grow up into him Eph. 4:15
    2. Yet how long does that take?
  - C. The commandments in Timothy and Titus
  - D. The lessons and examples of Jesus in developing the twelve
    1. His care and prayer in selecting them
    2. The great proportion of his time that he gave the twelve
    3. The training activities that Jesus practiced
    4. His short developmental practice missions Mt. 10:1-11:1

5. Jesus patience with them
  6. Jesus' spurs and stimulations of them Mt. 8:26; 14:30-32; 17:16-20
  7. Jesus' attention to the next step they needed to learn
  8. The continual evaluation that Jesus made of them
  9. The clear goals that he had for them
- E. The examples of Paul's interactions
1. With younger preachers John Mark, Timothy, Titus,
  2. With older ones for development? Silas, Luke
- F. The example of Barnabas, the Encourager
1. With Paul
  2. With John Mark
  3. Who was right on John Mark – Paul or Barnabas?

## II. What Do Young Preachers Have To Know?

- A. What a godly spiritual character is
- B. They have to know God's Word to some degree
- C. Doctrine
- D. Biblical background information
- E. Presentation Skills
- F. People Skills
- G. Resources, Library, Authors, Computer Programs
- H. Attitudes towards leaders, the congregation, and fellow workers
- I. The wise mature responses to problems and criticism
- J. How to stay out of Satan's moral traps
- K. What they have to learn yet. Where the need to grow
- L. How to be more mature at their age
- M. How to seek and accept evaluation and guidance

## III. Many Levels Of Training Needed In Differing Situations

- A. Timothy, just starting out
- B. John Mark, not quite ready yet, needs some time and encouragement
- C. Saul, Luke, advanced
- D. Common age levels I see
  1. Young High School Students
    - a. Mentor needed
    - b. Some early lessons of technique, preparation, speaking skills
    - c. Needs a vision of preaching

2. Mid-College Student
  - a. Summer program
  - b. Highly structured in requirements? Stress?
  - c. Motivational. Inspirational. Instructional.
  - d. Less program, just speaking time
  - e. Training by doing – yet it is hard to create valid activities
3. Full time single man with desire but little specific preparation
4. Full time single man that has prepared and is ready to be productive
  - a. With High School students
  - b. With college students
  - c. Learn more by doing
5. Full time married man
  - a. More support needed
  - b. Better focused, less problems, more mature

#### IV. Every Program Has To Be Developmental And Accurate

- A. It has to start at the needed place and evolve with the young man's development
  1. On Paul's journey with Barnabas, he developed very quickly
  2. John Mark's needs and development was much slower
  3. Question: How many different levels could I handle?
  4. Question: Which level could I deal with the best?

#### V. Key Questions To Consider

- A. How much structure and control?
- B. How will it be paid for
  1. With a very low salary?
  2. What will his living arrangement here cost?
- C. How will we deal with corrective situations and maintain development?
- D. How much "production" or "results" will we expect?
  1. Some expectations are too high and some are too low
  2. There are problems if our expectations of him are at the wrong level
- E. How much effort should we have to plan on to find the young man that fits our program?
- F. What do we expect the program to do?
  1. What is realistic?
  2. What is discouraging?

#### VI. How Do You Find The Right One?

- A. It probably will take a lot of phone calls and a lot of checking

- B. You have to look at how much effort that he has already made.
  - 1. The less effort he has made, the more effort you will have to make
  - 2. What kind of study has he put in already, or has he just got interested with little effort yet?
- C. What people skills do you seek?
  - 1. Moral judgment
  - 2. Basic knowledge of the Bible
  - 3. Speaking skills
  - 4. Personal maturity – wisdom, self control
- D. Which is faster – finding the right one or giving the time to improve the less qualified one who is near by?
- E. What do his peers think of his morals and his life over the last three years?

**VII. What Length Of Training Program Will You Set Plan?**

- A. 3 month summer program:
  - 1. One heavy on information, assignments and regimentation
  - 2. One set to introduce, encourage and inspire the uncertain possible preacher
  - 3. One set to give an inexperienced possibility a broad picture of all activities
- B. 1 year program:
  - 1. 4 months to settle in
  - 2. 4 months to work
  - 3. 4 months looking with his mind elsewhere
- C. 2 year program:
  - 1. For the right man, they build better relationships
  - 2. For the wrong men, it can become a drag on the mood of the congregation
- D. Variable length:
- E. Longer duration: (In order to move them into the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> man role there)

**Conclusion:**

- I. What kind of program do I think I would like to run?
  - A. Very structured one
    - 1. Classes
    - 2. Assignments
    - 3. Evaluations and corrections
  - B. One for men of higher qualifications, abilities and experience
    - 1. Does more effective work for the congregation
    - 2. Requires more support. Harder to find

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3. Has more continual support from members
  4. Jesus selected the best men he could find
- C. One with committed, mature men but those with less knowledge
1. Is that a contradiction generally – therefore hard to find?
  2. Higher salary required – family generally
- D. Total beginner program
1. More productive because of bigger change, bigger improvement?
  2. Shape every outlook and doctrine
  3. How long will that take? What if you cut corners?
  4. What cost in time and money?
- E. Economic bare bones program where they have to have a job and have less time
- F. Advanced men's training class with special students (1 to 3) of them
1. Married men with a job and family
  2. Also very busy – it is not like the 1950's
- G. Local congregational development – only deals with students from that congregation
1. Find one every decade or so
  2. When one is found, many hours are required

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