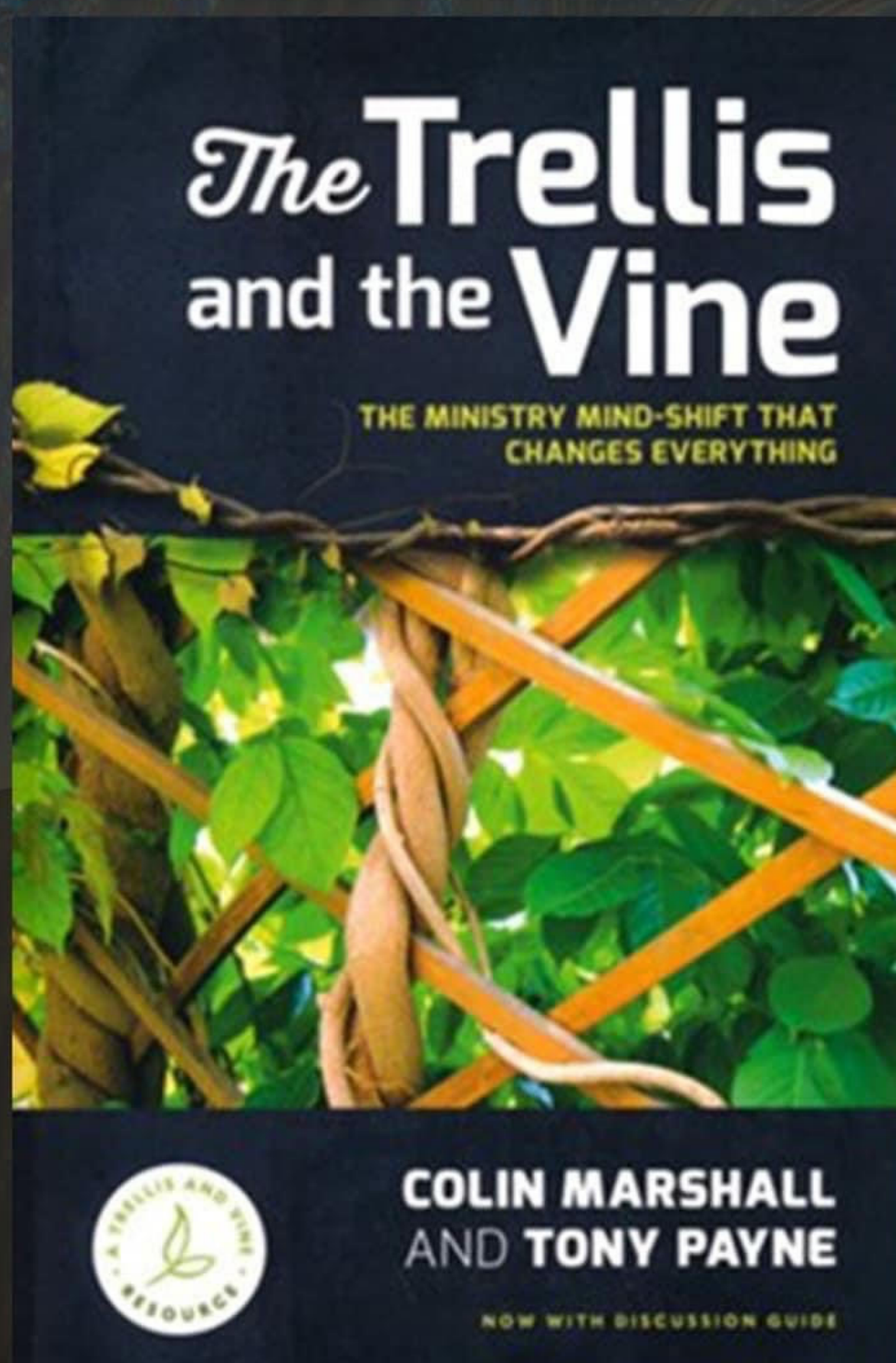


REVIEW

BOOK REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH
MID-ATLANTIC EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS WEEK



"THE TRELLIS AND THE VINE"

BY COLIN MARSHALL AND TONY PAYNE

**JANUARY 3RD-
JANUARY 8TH, 2022**

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PREFACE

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

“And Jesus came and said to them; ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

-Matthew 28:19

An earnest young pastor asked me why would I select the book “The Trellis and the Vine” for our Spiritual Emphasis Week when the AME Zion Church is so clearly preoccupied with what Marshall and Payne would term, “trellis work?” My response was that was exactly why the book was chosen.

The Great Commission is the Church’s mission statement. The core operating principle of every minister, lay leader, and follower of Jesus must be, as the authors state; “growing people who are disciple-making disciples of Christ.” And yet, an honest evaluation of much of the work of our churches has more to do with structures, meetings, reports, offices, titles, and raising funds - “trellis work!”

Unfortunately, with the loss of focus on making and training disciples of Jesus, we have exchanged vine work and prioritized trellis work thereby giving it an undeserved bad name.

Effective vine work, Christian growth requires structure. In fact, the disciplined habits of those early followers of John Wesley earned them the label “Methodists.” Throughout the history of the AME Zion Church we have sought to discern the correct balance between vine work and trellis work, between growth and structure. This balance is vital to healthy ministry.

So yes, the AME Zion Church is a church of structure; however, that structure must be designed to stimulate, not suffocate growth. The trellis is necessary but not primary. It only serves to provide opportunity for greater, healthier vine growth. Let’s not miss the importance of that balance.

Zion, our MISSION is the GREAT COMMISSION so let’s GO and GROW together!

Your Fellow Vine Worker,

Bishop W. Darin Moore



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CHAPTER 1

PRESENTED BY: REV. DR. JOSEPH A. PERRY

In this book, Authors Colin Marshall and Tony Payne opens by using a powerful illustration of a trellis and a vine, for thinking about the Church and its ministry. They discuss two trellises, one attached on the back wall of a garage. The first one he describes as a fine piece of latticework. It was sturdy and dependable; however, it yielded no vine. The second trellis he describes, leaned up against a fence and it was barely visible because the vine that ran on the trellis was flourishing. There was pruning that was needed every now and then. There were weeds that had to be removed from around the base of the trellis. Spraying at times would have to be done to keep the caterpillars from feasting on the leaves. He later sat back to notice how he had to do a lot of work to this vine to maintain it's growth. Whether it would be by planting, watering, and fertilizing. The vine had to be given care because it was growing and producing.

The Authors suggest that the Church is a mixture of trellis and the vine. In Christian ministry, we should be about seeing our church grow and flourish. It is through one's preaching and witnessing; under the power of the Holy Spirit, that we see transformation.

Every church should have a trellis to give structure for the ministries where we serve. Our finances, and our infrastructure inside of our organization would have to be developed to say we have a trellis. So it is that we have a trellis, we should have some vine. If you have some vine, you also need a strong well-structured trellis. A strong well-structured trellis is invaluable, and growing ministries need them in the life of the Church.

The thought-provoking question is asked by Marshall and Payne, "What is the state of the trellis and the vine at your church" The church have tendencies to focus on programs and the institution that make up the church. These components are needed, but they are not the ultimate aim of the church. Jesus tells us in (Matthew 28:19), to make disciples of all nations. The vine and the trellis are like the church. We need to see people grow in the structure that we give. It's good to have structure, but is your church growing within the structure? You can have a good well-maintained trellis, but if no vine is growing on it, then you're not accomplishing the mission mandate.

There are three key areas chapter one reveals to us. 1. Everyone should be engaged in ministry. It's not just pastors and ministers; it's every person who makes up the church. 2. It's people and not programs. Programs are great, but don't let them become primary. 3. It's about making disciples. As we become disciples, it is our charge to make new disciples.

This chapter concludes by saying, to be a disciple, is to be called to make new disciples. The goal of Christian Ministry is quite simple, and in a sense, measurable: Are we truly making and nurturing genuine disciples of Christ. Our goal is not to make church members, or members of our institution, but genuine disciples of Jesus. We as the Church must be about making disciples of Christ. We must be about vine work, and then discover that our trellis is at work. Let's engage in Christ mission.



CHAPTER 2

PRESENTED BY: REV. KATINA WILLIAMS

Entitled “Ministry Mind-shifts”, looks at making the point that structures do not grow ministry, but it is important for us to move towards growing people who are disciple-making Disciples of Christ. Any church steeped in the mindset of we have always done it this way or a church that does not allow ourselves to be curious and allow questions may find this process a little painful. But the authors contend it is important we all re-evaluate our churches’ ministries and that this re-evaluation should be a radical one. These ministry mindsets look at the type of structural thinking that can be harmful to the growth of the church, which should be steeped in the goal of making disciples. Helping us move from trellis work to vine work.

The first three mind shifts focus on building, training, and growing people. We all can agree God sends people to our churches and they come with various levels of ability, interests, and faith. It is up to us to discover how we can support their growth in God and what godly talents can be added to the kingdom. Leaders are responsible for supporting believers and helping them discover the opportunities where they can be enriched and equipped so they can serve God. Events can be time-consuming and most importantly it requires unbelievers to come to the church on our terms. Our mindset should instead be on training, which according to our reading increases the number and effectiveness of people who can speak the good news in personal conversations and in public settings. We are more effective if we utilize our event time to train workers. The most important take away for the third mind shift is service flows from Christian growth and not growth from service. Members can be overburdened and stretched thin. Rotation and breaks can be a way to support a member’s growth in their ministries while keeping programs running.

The fourth and fifth mind shifts talk about moving from filling gaps and solving problems to really moving to starting new workers off on the right foot but also continued support and growth.

God has given each of members gifts and through the process of training their individual gifts can be discovered and therefore be placed in the ministry that allows them to exercise their gifts and produces growth in ministry. It reminds us of our goal is to support people in their movement toward a closer relationship with God, to understand the character of God, to know His ways and increasing our faith so no matter the circumstances we know God would never leave us or forsake us, He is our provider. He is one we can always carry our worries, our doubts, and challenges to and he is always there. The authors suggest we move from a reactive ministry to a proactive ministry.

Our sixth, seventh and eighth mind shift focuses on developing team leadership, forging ministry partnerships, and establishing local training. These three mind shifts build on the first five and talks about connecting the individual worker to build a larger movement while taking the pressure off the pastor. Once again, these mind shifts are supporting the idea that the members are just as responsible as the pastor in building the kingdom. The authors are not encouraging members in leadership to take the place of the leadership structure of our church but to view all members as partners in ministry by increasing our capacities with training from all available opportunities, to include local church training.

Our ninth, tenth and eleventh mind shifts are about vision. A vision is built on our hope and belief in Jesus Christ, our faith that we are called to be workers in the mission of making disciples by going forth, baptizing, and teaching to all nations. We should identify opportunities to be proactive instead of reactive.

In closing, these eleven mind shifts aren't meant to stand alone but to be used in combination together. If we think beyond the traditional roles in our church, we open ourselves up to the possibility of discovering a new ministry but also helping a member discover their gifts and using them. We never want to stifle someone’s gift because it does not fit in with our traditional roles. God may be trying to do a new thing in our ministries and in us.



CHAPTER 3

PRESENTED BY: REV. GEORGE WHITFIELD

Psalms 80:7:13

Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved. 8 You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. 9 You cleared the ground for it, it took deep root and filled the land. 10 The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches; 11 it sent out its branches to the sea, and its shoots to the river. 12 Why then have you broken down its walls, so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit? 13 The boar from the forest ravages it, and all that move in the field feed on it.

Psalms 80 was written when Israel felt like many churches feel today. They felt that God was disappointed in them, and that redemption and victory were a thing of the past. They asked, "God, what are you doing? We feel the same way in some of our churches because growth is slow or non-existent. We moved along in our ministries with our excitement and enthusiasm gone. We often wonder; Is God listening, Is God going to act, and What is God's plan for us?"

This Psalms gives us an image of Israel as God's vine. When God delivered his people from Egypt and transplanted them into the land, he had promised. For a time, Israel flourished. However, then, God removed their protection because of sin. They felt like an untended vine whose fruit could be devoured by animals. The Israelites suffered, but the Prophets promised that they would rise again by the life-giving power of their God. We must understand that sometimes to get to the thing that God promised us, we must go through the path of suffering and judgment because we cannot avoid the consequence of our sin.

God's message to Israel was, "You will suffer deeply because of sin, but you will rise triumphantly to the place I promised." This gives us hope as New Testament Christians because this is what Jesus Christ does for us. He suffered and died for our sin but rose triumphantly to the place of glory. Because we know this, we must bear witness and proclaim the good news. Once the gospel is planted in someone's life and takes root, it bears fruit. So, it bears fruit and grows in the knowledge and love of God.

Three Implications:

1. Say goodbye to our small and self-oriented ambitions. (We must recapture the radicalism that Jesus says in Luke 9:60: "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.")
2. God is looking for growth in people. (No matter what signs we look at—the only growth that has any significance in God's plans is the growth of the believer.)
3. People-growth happens only through the power of God. (We plant and water, but God gives the growth.)

Our duty as Christians is to bring the truth from God's word to the community and pray that God will make that truth bear fruit through the inward working of the Holy Spirit. This is what we call vine work. Anything else is Trellis.



CHAPTER 4

PRESENTED BY: REV. DR. FRANCES "TONI" DRAPER

Who's really supposed to do the Vine work? Is it the pastor in charge? Afterall he or she is the one with the appointment. Is it the evangelists? Aren't they the ones uniquely gifted by God to compel them to come? Or perhaps, it's the Women's Home and Overseas Missionary Society? The authors acknowledge that congregations have answered these questions in a variety of ways: from embracing the pastor as the central character and everyone else as spectators, to ministry by committee with no regard for the role of a pastor, a presiding elder or a bishop for that matter.

But, as the authors point out, the call to discipleship is a call to confess our allegiance to Jesus even when it's not popular to do so; it's a call to serve Him, to obey Him, to worship Him regardless of the cost; it's a call to be both a disciple and a disciple maker; it's a call to abandon our lives to Christ; it's a call to speak God's word for the growth of the vine; it's a call to equip God's people for the work of ministry, for the building up the body of Christ; a call to speak the truth in love one to another; and even a call to sing to one another, to teach one another and admonish one another. How? In love. "This can only mean," the authors note "that God wants all Christians to be speaking to each other regularly, urging and encouraging each other to stick with Christ." And, as Paul's first letter to the arrogant, divided, sin-prone Corinthians points out, some vines are not getting enough SON light while others need constant pruning. The Corinthian vine was so entangled that their gatherings became a chaotic exercise in one upmanship with too many focusing on how great their individual gifts were rather than loving or encouraging others. In fact, some took great pride in recruiting others to hang out on their part of the vine thus creating factions and hurt

feelings and forgetting that the single criterion for the exercise of our God-given spiritual gifts is love.

But what about speaking the truth of God's word to non-Christians? The authors conclude that a Christian without a missionary heart and no passion for the lost is in serious need of self-examination and repentance. The vine grows, both in the number of leaves and in their quality and maturity through God's truth being heard, and the Holy Spirit making it effective in people's hearts. And this doesn't just happen when the church gathers. It happens as we speak to one another and to others; it happens in the home as we train up a child in the way that he or she should go. It happens in the world as we engage in everyday conversations, even those conversations that may seem controversial; even those conversations that call our faith into question should be laced with love. It can happen at home, over a zoom, at church and in small groups.

As I read this part of the chapter, I couldn't help but note the genius of John Wesley who understood that class meetings were an effective evangelism and accountability tool for strengthening the vine in love. From the beginning, Methodists were expected to grow in spiritual maturity. Wesley often described this sanctified life as "one moving toward perfection." Perfection was understood as a growing in love for God, and for humanity. The class meeting helped each individual make progress toward perfection. Class meetings were never intended to be a mechanism for collecting funds, but rather as a form of koinonia, form of fellowship designed to strengthen the members' communion with God and one another.



CHAPTER 5

PRESENTED BY: REV. DR. TERRIE E. GRIFFIN

Most Christians, if not all Christians, are familiar with and have had some experience with both guilt and grace. In Chapter 5 of “The Trellis and the Vine,” the authors discuss guilt and grace in the context of discipleship. They present the argument that every Christian is called to be a “vine-worker” and a “disciple-making disciple.” Then they raise the question, “Is it really true, that the normal Christian life includes disciple-making? They draw an analogy between those who are trained and experienced in making disciples with those who may be babes in Christ and haven’t grown into the fullness of their faith which impacts their ability to disciple others. Oft times we knowingly or unknowingly put folks on a “guilt trip” because they do not have the wherewithal or experience in disciple-making. The authors ask, “Aren’t we just making the average struggling Christian feel guilty? While these are serious questions to consider, the authors point us to Paul and his relationship with the Philippian Church. They address the significance of partnership or partakers in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The question the authors pose for our consideration is, “What was the practical outworking of the partnership between Paul and the Church at Philippi?”

First, the Philippians prayed for Paul. They understood the power of prayer. We know what happened when Paul and Silas prayed and praised God with song while in jail. Those who were incarcerated heard the gospel being preached by Paul. By God’s grace they were converted.

Secondly, Paul had partakers with him in the advancement of the gospel. One could say Paul had posse! While some left Paul either out of fear and guilt due to association, there were those who were faithful to Paul, his mission, and ministry.

Men and women, particularly Lydia, who heard Paul preach, she along with her household were baptized. Then there was Epaphroditus, a trustworthy member of the congregation at Philippi, who sent gifts to Paul during his imprisonment in Rome. He exposed himself to danger for the cause of Christ. Then he became ill to the point of death. But, it was God’s grace that restored his health. It was upon his recovery that Paul entrusted Epaphroditus with his letter to the Philippian congregation.

Finally, the Philippians, whom Paul loved, stood in solidarity with him. They understood the risk, and the price one pays for standing for truth in the midst of chaos, crime, and confusion. Here, the authors raise a critical question for our consideration as it pertains to guilt or grace, “How would you react if your pastor was imprisoned for preaching Christ as the only true God?” Would you have feelings of guilt by association? Or, would you stand for the cause of Christ in partnership with your pastor. For me it’s an easy answer. I choose grace over guilt. Serving alongside our senior pastor, Rev. Glenn Grayson of the Wesley Center AME Zion Church of Pittsburgh is no joke. He’s known as the “people’s pastor.” He’s been incarcerated for the cause of Christ; and opens the doors of our church to the gangbangers, the homeless, hungry and whores. We know these are those whom God calls His own. He sent His Son to die on the cross between two criminals. Think about it. There’s a message here. Are we going to try and guilt folks into the Kingdom because of who they are or are not? Or, will we extend God’s grace, because we are recipients of grace? Will it be grace or guilt? It’s your choice. Reflect on Paul’s words: “It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. Philippians 1:7 NIV.



CHAPTER 6

PRESENTED BY: REV. TINA NELSON

As Paul imitated Christ's suffering, social rejection, and sacrifice, Paul charged Timothy to do the same. As the authors suggest, we are always teaching others through our examples of how we live, whether intentional or not. People are always watching, and they become copycats, copying our example. The question is are they copying a godly example or a hellish one? The author cautions that when we tell people to imitate us that we do not create clones of ourselves or establish a cult following of our personality. Taking our egos out of the equation, trainers can then model integrity, dignity, respect, good conduct, and the fruit of the spirit to trainees.

The authors describe Paul's model of ministry training as the parenthood model. Ministry training brings someone to new birth; is long term and loving; passes on knowledge, wisdom, and practical instruction; involves modeling and imitation; and forms beliefs, abilities, character, and lifestyle. The trainee will resemble their trainer, much like children resemble their parents. As the authors state, ministry training "is caught as much as it is taught".

The author identifies three C's as goals of the trainer as relates to the success and growth of the trainee. That the trainee grows in conviction of their knowledge of God and understanding the bible, grows in their godly character reflected in a living a life that comports with sound Christian doctrine, and grows in competency of their ability to share God's word with others.

In summary, ministry training is personal and relational, involves teaching and modeling sound doctrine and a way of life and equips people with the ability to serve others.

The authors focus on training in the context of Christian life and ministry. When we hear the word "training", most people think about a course of study or practices or teachings that will result in learning something new or enhancing knowledge that we currently have in a particular subject or discipline. The authors note that training from a worldly perspective is usually task-oriented and focused on the process by which things get done. While ministry training can be task-oriented with a focus on the process, and enhancing our skill and competency level, the authors assert that ministry training is, however, different in that it is much more about Christian thinking and living rather than process.

The authors focus on the trainer-trainee relationship between Paul (trainer) and Timothy. Paul (trainee). Paul instructs Timothy on Christian living that strives for a life of maturity and righteousness in Christ. In 1st and 2nd Timothy, Paul emphasizes the importance of learning for the purpose of obtaining proficiency of Christian character and behavior based on sound Christian doctrine, which thereby, equips us for our ministry work. This, the authors find, is at the heart of ministry training - biblically based teaching on living godly lives based on sound Christian doctrine. Paul encourages Timothy to deliver this same instruction to those whom he is training, and they in turn will be able to share his instruction to those whom they are training.

The authors highlight the close relationship between Paul and Timothy, in which Paul serves as a model for Timothy. The authors state "it was not only the good deposit of the gospel that Paul passed on to Timothy, but a way of life." Paul advised Timothy to imitate him, not from a place of Paul's arrogance but as an example of Paul's imitation of Christ.



CHAPTER 7

PRESENTED BY: REV. JACQUELINE DEWBERRY

Training is the engine of gospel growth. The biblical idea of training that has been explored so far assumes that gospel work is a “growth industry”—that when the gospel is preached, and the Spirit is at work, then ‘growth’ is what happens. People (individuals) are considered as investments to the kingdom, i.e., If we’re taking this position of commission seriously. If we pour into the lives of people, mentor them and train them, as a result they will extend themselves to help others come to Christ, help others grow, and follow suit with the same process. The idea gears towards producing good fruit. In this chapter, the writer, states that Paul had in mind two facts of growth. Firstly, the gospel is growing throughout the world like a vine whose tendrils keep spreading across the field, and over the fence, and into the neighbor’s backyard. This results in fruit bearing. Secondly, it’s also growing in another sense—people’s lives are being transformed by the word of truth or shall I say by the renewing of the mind where faith kicks in, love is displayed and priorities change. What the younger people call it is – There is a remix taking place in people’s lives.

The gospel produces growth in people not the church structure/building. Just like it has been mentioned this week, the trellis was built with certain dimensions and does not grow but the vine keeps climbing upward. The people are the vine and trellis is what gives the vine ample space to spread out from left to right and from bottom to top. We must be willing to allow people to walk away knowing the truth, living the truth and discipling others in the word of God. Members will leave and others will come. But this is not an insult to you or the church for being good teachers and mentors. This is a sign that what people have been taught has taken root and now they are bearing more fruit for the kingdom.

Radical implication of this understanding of gospel growth lies in the way we think about people. People should be seen as individuals in their own walk of life. The main goal is that they are taken in by love, advance and make progress through our radical and intentional relationship with them so they can become fruit bearers. Newbies will need sound doctrine and learn how to live a godly life.

Stages of growth includes outreach, follow up and continued training. During our process with individuals and groups, they come into contact with the word of truth whether first timers or the ill-informed via conversations on any topic of discussion. This will lead to the good news or gospel being planted and hopefully taking root. And in God’s time his spirit will help the individual bear fruit. I Corinthians 3:6-9: 6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. 9 For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.

People hear/receive the word and given time will respond (yeah or nay). Faith takes hold and increases. Follow-up is included in the training process. We must remember training takes patience and time. Training leads to maturity. There is only one way to Christ and one way to enter the kingdom. It won’t be easy, but it will be rewarding. We all must remember we all have messed up. We’ve all come short, but the process even in us as trainers continue. Follow-up also continues to include meditation and studying the word of God for maturity sake. Those we mentor and work with will gain that understanding as we walk alongside of them and as they watch our lives mature each, week, month and yearly. As our lives and those we mentor grow in conviction, character and competencies, we will all be effective in the kingdom.

Out of this training will come creativity to minister to others in so many different ways. Each individual in our group will need help to grow individually and in cell groups such as the class leader ministry. Class leaders know their people and will seek out ways to help each one move towards the ministry God has planned for them. There will be challenges, however, throughout the training and mentoring section for the class or meeting as each begins to seek God’s will in his or her life. That’s why in the training process, prayer, fasting, intercessory praying in seeking God’s face is so important. It is not all about the book study, but it is about our encounter with the Holy Spirit to move us forward that counts.



CHAPTER 8

PRESENTED BY: DR. TIMOTHY FREEMAN

This chapter serves as the transition of how the model of training and growth that “The Trellis and the Vine” is proposing collides with the reality of the existing structures, models and practices. Prior to explaining or proposing why sermons are necessary but not sufficient the authors presented us as the readers two common approaches to pastoral ministry and contrasted them with the approach of this book: (1) the pastor as service-providing clergyman; (2) the pastor as CEO; (3) the pastor as trainer- which is the focus of the book.

The first approach which is the pastor as service-providing clergyman is a way of thinking about church life and ministry, and the pastor’s role is to care for and feed the congregation. The service-providing clergyman approach speaks loud and clear to church members that they are there to receive rather than to give. This approach to ministry reflects the culture and norms of a different world-the world of the 16th and 17th century in which the whole community was in church, and in which the pastor was the one of the few with sufficient education to teach. The Pastor as CEO is a direct response to the pastor as service providing clergyman approach that developed out of the “church growth movement of the 1970’s and 80’s. The pastor was still the professional clergyman, but the role became more focused on leading the congregation as an organization with goals. The Pastor as Trainer a prayerful preacher who shapes and drives the entire ministry through his/her biblical, expositional preaching. The job is not just to provide spiritual services, nor is it the job to do all the ministry.

The insufficient sermon is where our chapter name comes to be explained in that Sunday sermons are necessary but not sufficient.

The insufficient sermon is where our chapter name comes to be explained in that Sunday sermons are necessary but not sufficient. The authors noted that powerful preaching, faithful and compelling biblical expositions are necessary but weak and inadequate preaching weakens our churches. The authors presented an argument to us as the reader that Sunday is NOT the only place where the action is. The authors utilized not a modern theologian to present their argument but one from the 15th century in that of Richard Baxter. Baxter as the authors noted will always be associated with his class work “The Reformed Pastor”. It is interesting that the authors developed an approach to ministry with an approach that was developed out of the same time period in that of Pastor as Service-Providing Clergy. When reading this chapter considering the reference to Richard Baxter it is clear that the authors are denoting and presenting a shift that is taking place in ministry. A new approach is being developed out of an old practice because Baxter believed that Pastors had to devote extensive time to “the duty of personal catechizing and instructing the flock.” He saw personal work with people as having irreplaceable value, because it provided “the best opportunity to impress the truth upon their hearts, when we can speak to each individual’s particular necessity, and say to the sinner, “Thou art the man”. Baxter declared public preaching was not enough that people needed personal ministry alongside that. Remember that there may not be one clear cut example of these approaches in our congregations and sometimes we see a little of all these approaches within our ministries. But the key is to be able to recognize it and then follow the spirit to lead us to principles that will allow us to be able to continue to attend to the vine in a way that it will grow. It is a lot to do, and the authors reminded us at the end of this chapter that we need co-workers.



CHAPTER 9

PRESENTED BY: REV. DR. WILLIAM LEON WARD

As a Mathematician, I was blessed when I saw that Chapter 9 began on page 109 and I read the first word, then the first sentence, by the time I finished the first paragraph I knew that this was about to be a word for me. The first word was “Multiplying”. The first sentence was “to our inspired but overwhelmed pastor, but then when I read “he wants to equip his people as “vine-workers” but at the same time he is swamped with work”. I knew that right then the Holy Spirit had the Men of God speak to me. But that was not the only thing that blessed me. What really got me was that, here we are studying this in the year 2022 A.D., and my chapter’s major theme was inspired by 2 Timothy 2:2 which reads “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men and women who will be able to teach others also”.

As the Holy Spirit began to explain to me through the reading of this chapter, the summation of the chapter in essence was intended to encourage the Pastoral Leader to not just get “any” co-workers, but to be personally, prayerfully and intentional about inviting spiritually mature and Godly believers who are devoted to God and see themselves as disciples of Christ to join you, work alongside you, and be willing to be trained and developed by you in fulfilling God’s mission and mandate on the earth to carry the gospel message of Christ throughout the world, equip and exhort other believers to become disciples of Christ, and to sacrificially serve the kingdom of God with excellence, enthusiasm and excitement. Marshall and Payne advises that Churches Don’t Make Disciples, Disciples Make Disciples. They suggest that the best way to build a congregation full of disciple making disciples is to assemble and train a band of co-workers alongside you. Co-Workers are the terms inspired by the Pauline model of servant leadership as teams in the embodiment of either a “fellow worker” or “minister” the authors suggest that co-workers be soundly converted people of Christian maturity who can work alongside the pastor in evangelism, follow-up, growth, and training others.

The Pastoral leader must be willing to gather with the Co-workers on a regular basis to spend time together praying for the congregation, wrestling over scriptures, discuss theology, confess sins to each other, and to train them on different aspects of ministry. If committed to the process, together they will have a close knit, single minded team of gospel partners who will be theologically, practically, and strategically ready to provide support, refreshment, sharing of burden, and a multiplication of effective gospel work.

Marshall and Payne warns the Pastoral leader with some BE CAREFUL’s in choosing his/her team of Co-Workers:. Co-workers must be dependable to rightly divide the word of truth and be able to teach to others; Be careful for choosing people who don’t have the gift to relate to people; Be careful not recruit in desperation and choose just anybody; Be Careful not to teach someone who is unteachable to name a few. The authors suggest that we must not undersell most important detail that we are inviting people to join us in the most significant work that God is doing and we are recruiting people to a job worth giving their lives for because Christ gave up his life for us to be free. When Pastoral leaders meet with people they should not waste people’s time. Pastoral leaders should have a vision, a planned agenda, and give people a clear understanding of what the commitment will be, what preparation is involved, what training will be received, and how they will be expected to grow in competence, conviction, and in character. Most importantly, if we are going to call people to labor alongside us in ministry then we need to enthuse and excite them about the magnitude of what we are doing-which is making disciples, and to set clear, realistic, and attainable goals and expectations for their training. I am convinced mathematically and theologically that if we are dared to apply this principle and shift our mindset to this practice, not only will we grow spiritually, numerically, but God will blow our minds and grow exponentially, Eyes have not seen, Ears have not Heard all that God has for US, because GOD LOVES US, ASHE’



CHAPTER 10

PRESENTED BY:
REV. LAWRENCE E.
SPANN

What an awesome task we have as Vine Workers and Disciple-making Disciples! I'd be willing to say that if you really, really think about it, someone inspired you/encouraged you or led you into becoming a disciple-making disciple because of course, they were led/encouraged themselves...because God uses Ordinary People like you and me. The theme for this 10th chapter "The Trellis and the Vine", entitled, "People Worth Watching" could actually be: All people can become Servants of God...All can be ministers of the gospel. There may not be a "calling" that is supernatural or through Divine intervention, but they are called by their desire and love for serving, and their love of God-the fact of the matter is that God calls us to himself, to be Christian-thus, our vocation is to be Christs' disciple and to obey everything that he commanded including the commandment to make disciples of all nations. As the authors remind us in Luke 10:2, Jesus asks his disciples to "pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest". Thus, God works in and through us (his vine workers/his disciple making disciples) to achieve his purpose of creating more disciples. I Cor.3:6 "I planted", says Paul, "Apollos watered, but God gave the Growth."

In this chapter, the question becomes, who are we looking for to continue or expand our vocation as disciple-making disciples or to continue effectively ministering the word of God? Unfortunately, the authors tell us that, "Whatever the reason, most of us are reluctant to challenge people to full-time gospel work." Many carry the thought that it's part of the pastor's responsibility or the denomination. But as Christians, we are all a part of this universal ministry of spreading the gospel and making disciples, "ministry recruitment". We should all be "talent scouts...looking for people who have the desire to grow and for people who have the potential for growth to develop their ministries. The authors present four common questions or objections to this idea of ministry recruitment:

1. All believers are called to serve, so why should some be called into ministry?
2. Shouldn't we wait for people to "feel called", rather than urging them into full-time gospel work?
3. Can't we be involved in 'gospel work' without being paid?
4. Does it demean people who stay in secular work?

I will focus on the first two questions.

The authors share scriptures to reference the real meaning of "calling", not "called" to ministry but called graciously by God to follow him or repent, with all the privileges and responsibilities this involves. So, we, who love God, are all called according to his purpose--those whom he predestined, he called; those whom he called, he justified and those he justified, he also glorified. So, as disciple making disciples, and as we train disciples to become disciple makers, the authors tell us in this process, we discover some godly-gifted people who have the potential to be ministry leaders who can preach the gospel and lead God's people.

They suggest types of people, we should be looking for or people worth watching when selecting elders, overseers and deacons: Faithful in their understanding of and commitment to God's word; Blameless in their reputation and example of godliness; Gifted in their ability to teach others; and Proven in their ability to lead and manage a family. While the authors suggest these characteristics, my concern is everybody doesn't possess these suggested qualities, Some people come as a lump of clay and God molds them into what He needs or wants them to be. One may not be faithful in their understanding commitment to God's Word, but there is a thing called transformation; One may not be blameless in their reputation and example of godliness (all the time) but remember, we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, but by God's grace and His mercy, He uses us anyhow. One may not be gifted in their ability to teach others, but they are teachable and have the desire to learn and to love; One may not be proven in their ability to lead and manage a family --that's why we have Leadership Training Institutes and other opportunities to learn and grow. And then, they add other qualities and characteristics that often indicate people have the gifts and potential to be gospel workers: communicators, entrepreneurs, natural leaders, academically gifted people, people with potential to reach particular groups. These things are good but we must recognize that everyone does not possess these gifts or indicators but everyone is gifted because we are all created in the image of God and where we lack, He will provide...so these qualities can be developed and it is our responsibility as disciple-making disciples to be a part of that development process in ministry of others and to meet people where they are in their spirit-filled journey. It certainly helps to have the skills, but they are ordinary people who are simply waiting for a disciple-making disciple to approach, engage, embrace, and encourage them-- just plain old, ordinary people worth watching. The lyrics from the song, Ordinary People: God uses ordinary people, that will give Him all no matter how small your all may seem to you, because little becomes much when you place it in the Master's Hand."



CHAPTER 11
PRESENTED BY: DR. DARWIN LITTLE

Chapter eleven discusses ministry apprenticeship. The authors say that most of the time when a person pursues full-time gospel ministry, he goes to a seminary to be trained. They suggest that a good intermediate step should be apprenticeship, so that the person learns that ministry is about people and is prepared to frame their theological education in terms of preparation to become a disciple-maker.

The authors call it Ministry Training Strategy (MTS). In this Ministry Training Strategy, the apprentice would learn how to integrate word, life and ministry practices. This training would allow the trainer and the apprentice to study the scripture together on a weekly basis. The trainee would be tested in character by the pastor or trainer working close with them to see the real person revealed, the see their scars in the past, to see their true motivation and to capture their love for the ministry. The trainee will also learn that the ministry is about people and not about programs.

The beauty of this MTS is that the trainee will be well-prepared for formal theological study after this apprentice training. The trainees will learn the real world and understand how to deal with certain issues. They will become trainers of others so that ministry is multiplied, and they will learn evangelism and entrepreneurial ministry. This is what the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2 tells us concerning this, “what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

In conclusion this training mentality is an engine of growth and dynamism. It multiplies ministry because it multiplies ministers. It continually generates and develops disciple-making disciples both within our congregations and abroad in the world.



CHAPTER 12

PRESENTED BY: PRESIDING ELDER SCOT MOORE

I'm excited about this teaching because in November our Leadership Team was setting the Theme and Direction for Judah for 2022 and The Lord gave us "A Ministry on Mission". Bishop Moore would often make the statement, "Our Mission is The Great Commission".

We've gone through the previous eleven chapters of this book and we are reminded as chapter 12 begins that there's no magic bullet, no guaranteed path to success.... just THE SIMPLE TASK OF DISCIPLE MAKING!!!

Starts with 10 Propositions: the review of the previous chapters.

The problem is, If the truth be told, we are in an organization and a structure that has rewarded Trellis Work and Trellis Thinking!!! Unfortunately, VINE WORK OFTEN GOES UN-NOTICED and UN-APPRECIATED!!! So... HOW DO WE MAKE A START?

When I travel to do ministry, I love to take my wife me. Her favorite activity during the day is exploring new malls. When we arrive at a new mall the very first thing we must do is locate the mall map and devise a strategy to get to all the stores she wants to visit. We had to "FIND THE X, which says, YOU ARE HERE!!!!!!

If I were to use three points to discuss the principles I pulled from this chapter, they would be. If you're going to "Make A Start", you must:

I. Discover Your present LOCATION!!!!!!
(Trellis Ministry)

II. Determine The DESTINATION (Vine Ministry - The Great Commission)

III. Decide on The IMPLEMENTATION

Step 1 - Set The Agenda on Sundays

Step 2 - Work Closely With Your Leaders - work with your leaders and get buy-in. They should be involved in the thinking, planning, and the decision making.

Step 3 - Start Building a New Team of Co-Workers - new doesn't mean all new people...it should consist of a combination of old and new people

Step 4 - Work Out with Your Co-Workers How Disciple-Making is Going to Grow in Your Context - every church has a individual context and culture.

Step 5 - Run Some Training Programs

Step 6 - Keep and Eye Out For People Worth Watching - (PWW's)

One of the malls which became a favorite of ours in the Vineland Mall in Orlando, Florida. Vineland literally means a land suited for growing vines. How fitting as we discuss the Trellis and the Vine. If we are going to have vines that grow, we must know our present location, determine our destination, and decide on the implementation. How are we going to get there. Let me encourage you, YOU CAN DO IT!!!



CLOSING RECOGNITIONS

We would like to give a Special Thanks to each of our presenters, devotional participants, and prayer warriors for sharing their wisdom, insight, and knowledge with us. It is our prayer that the information shared and enclosed within this book will stimulate further study and deepen your desire for the Word of God.