

Level Three Discipleship— Training Leaders within the Local Church through Mentoring

Some time ago I set out to learn principles of leadership from the life of Paul. To do so I read and re-read the book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul, stopping to scribble down actions and attitudes that seemed to drive Paul and make him a successful leader in ministry. Several would-be principles received support from verse after verse. Others had only a verse or two. I scratched out several, consolidated others, and the result was a list of *twenty principles that I believe are important to develop if one would lead well*. What I didn't realize at the time was that these 20 principles are the characteristics of people that we are looking for and want to develop in Level 3 Discipleship.

Remember, Level 1 is simple follow-up after salvation; using the *Way to Joy* booklet for example.

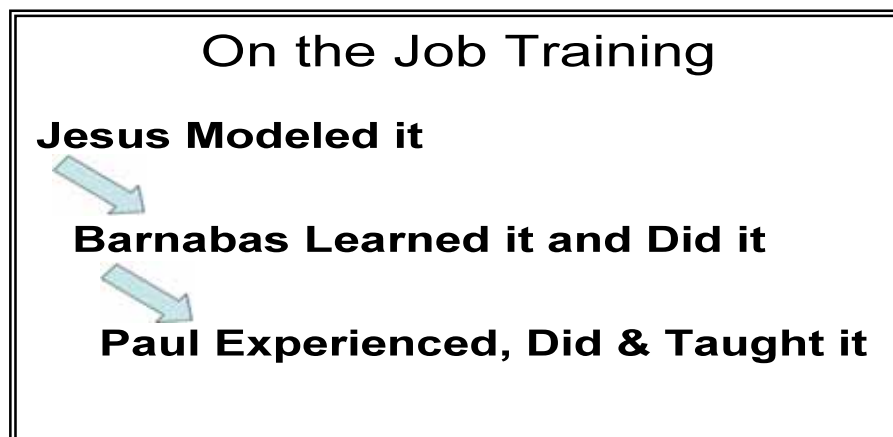
Level 2 is more intense, building the believer into a fruitful member of the church; possibly using the Chronological Bible Teaching method, theology ala bridge, and helping them to effectively tell God's story. The *Way to Joy Personal Growth Journal* could be used to help the disciple with their quiet time. In Level 1 we are making disciples, while in Level 2 we are making disciple-makers.

Level 3 Discipleship looks for and develops Key Partners: ones who may become leaders and deacons in the church; pastor(s) in your church and others; and missionaries.

As we begin to look at the principles in the life of Paul, I must emphasize what I believe to be the overriding principle in Paul's life. I believe that this is what he was about: Mentoring, or in other words, on-the-job training.

I know that mentoring is popular today, almost a catchword for the last decade of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. Good books have been written about it. But it is an old concept. You see, although Jesus didn't use the word or even talk about it very much, he certainly modeled mentoring for us. He picked out men and spent time with them; poured His life into them and then asked them to carry out a task for Him. Mark 3:14 says, "...he ordained twelve, that they should *be with him*, and that he might *send them forth* to preach." He said (recorded in Matthew 28) that they were to "make disciples". They were to develop followers in much the same way he did. As Ron Berrus says, "being with him" is the power of proximity and "send them forth" is the purpose of proximity.

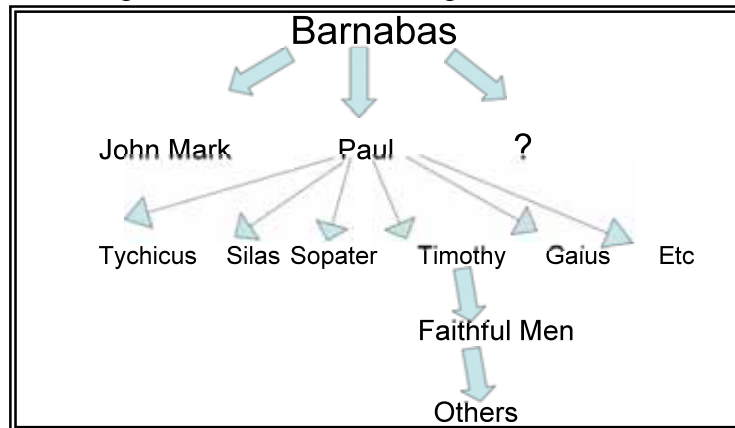
Now whether the Twelve picked up on this methodology, taught it and carried out well or not, we cannot say with certainty. However, we know that one caught the vision. That was Barnabas. We don't know if he got it directly from Jesus or put it together from the teaching of one of the other apostles, but he got it one way or another.



Barnabas was sent to Antioch by the apostles (Acts 11) to find out what was going on there. Apparently, believing Jews scattered by the persecution were sharing Jesus with Gentiles! Barnabas was the apostles' man to check it out. When he arrived, he saw "evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts." (11:23)

So what did he do? Being the good man that he was and full of the Holy Spirit (11:24), he went to work and “a great number of people were brought to the Lord.” He had a good ministry started and could make a name for himself—maybe even be promoted to ‘apostle’!

But verse 25 tells us that he *left*. Why would he leave such a good thing? *He left the work and went looking for Saul*. Barnabas had met him earlier (chapter 9) and was even quite instrumental in Saul’s acceptance by the believing community. At this point, he remembered Saul and the potential he had to serve God and wanted him for this work. Barnabas saw the importance of working alongside someone with potential; of pouring one’s life into someone that could multiply his own ministry. And he did it *so well* that Paul would go on to do the same thing and teach men to train others.



When Paul and Barnabas split up what happened? Barnabas (convinced that on-the-job training was still the ticket to develop someone who had bailed on them earlier) took John Mark with him on another journey (Acts 15:3-40). Although we don’t hear more about Barnabas after this, we know he was committed to mentoring. Later we find that John Mark, the deserter, is valuable to Paul (2 Tim 4:11). Way to go, Barnabas!

What about the other half of the split-up duo? Paul “chose Silas.” (Acts 15:40) We know that Barnabas trained Paul well also, because we see that he continued to take people alongside for training. All through the next chapters of Acts he is “taking” (16:3, Timothy), and being “accompanied by” (18:18-19, Priscila / Aquila) people, until in Acts 20 he has at least eight different men with him from four different churches (20:4-8).

When we move to the epistles, we see that the theme continues. There, in passages we will look at later, he “sends” and “brings” and “leaves” people in various places where they can be used by God. Whether one calls it on-the-job training or mentoring or whatever—Paul did it and he taught it. An entire section of the characteristics of Level 3 Disciples is devoted to this idea, but let me simply mention 2 Timothy 2:2 here. Addressing Timothy, ‘his son’ (a phrase that illustrates the mentoring idea) Paul says “...the things that you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” Pass it on! Keep it going! Share it with others who will keep passing it on!

We should be able to see this happening not only in our lives, but in the lives of our disciples. Jurandir Rodrigues illustrates this well. A prostitute’s son, he struggled to get out of a difficult lifestyle. When he trusted Christ as Savior, his life was radically changed. I went to his house for his first discipleship Bible study and there sat Zé Felício. I shared the Gospel and he trusted Christ that night. The next week I went back for discipleship—Jurandir had another friend there. He prayed to receive Christ as Savior that night! The bigger thrill came a couple weeks later when I Cebola told me that *he* trusted Christ after Jurandir shared with him! Jurandir became an evangelist and discipler. In one year, 10 people came to know Christ through his influence...and he is still evangelizing.

Was on the job training important to Paul? Outside of the mystery of the church that is possible through the wondrous grace of God, I believe this to be Paul’s most important message for two reasons:

1. Because of the sheer amount of material that deals with it. At least 128 verses in Acts and Paul’s Epistles deal with on the job training in some way.
2. Because without this basic concept functioning, the communication of the mystery, the grace, and the mercy of God could not have reached the 20th century. OTJ Training was Paul’s way

to pass the message of the Gospel not only from one person to another, but from generation to generation.



Without “on the job training”, the communication of the grace of God will not reach the *next* generation. We need to do what Paul did. We have got to seek out, choose, and disciple men and women and train them to disciple others. If we don’t, we’ll be dropping the baton.

The twenty leadership principles in Paul’s life that helped him to develop disciple-makers can be divided into these four categories:



Our objective is to develop discipleship “eyes”.

One other thing that we must remember while looking at these principles is this: We see them in Paul’s life. We’re looking for them and desiring to develop them in the lives of others. BUT...if they are lacking in our lives, we must first give attention to them there. We can’t very well hope to develop in others what is non-existent or weak in us.

Mentalizing Saints

If you look in your dictionary for the word ‘mentalize’ you will not find it. As I wrote this article on the computer I had red, squiggly lines all over the place because the dictionary in the program was trying to tell me ‘mentalize’ is not a word. I transliterated it from a Portuguese word I like very much. It simply means **to develop a mind-set**.

As we begin to work with new believers and continue to work with older brothers in the Lord, it is imperative that they develop a mind-set for God, a mind-set for ministry—in essence a mind like Christ’s (Phil. 2:5-8). “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...”

One Sunday after I had finished playing my horn in church, a singer got up and said, “We’ve all had this happen—a bright flash of light, all we see is dots. We close our eyes—all we see is dots. It has kind of burned itself into our eyes for a moment. As Gil played just now, I closed my eyes to listen to the beautiful music—and all I saw was the cross. The lights on the cross immediately behind Gil had made it impressive enough that it burned it into my vision.” That’s what we need in disciples and disciple-makers—the cross burned into their vision; the selfless cross-bearing example of Christ burned into their hearts and ours. Then we will be “mentalized”.

Our early follow-up and discipleship booklet *The Way to Joy*, is geared to developing a new world and life view. With TWTJ we begin the mentalizing process. As you develop the six principles below you will also help to mentalize them (create that Christ-like, others-oriented ministry mind-set) as they see these principles at work in your life.



Mentalize Saints

- Treat disciples as vital, important to the work, even as equals.
- Encourage your people, tell them for what you are thankful in their lives.
- Pray for your trainees and let them know of your prayers.
- Show a caring spirit toward your people.
- Make instruction of the Word a priority.
- Lead your trainees into new areas of growth and new heights of spirituality by example.

Let’s take a bit closer look at each principle.

Mentalizing Saints # 1: Treat disciples and trainees as vital, important to the work; even as equals.

Even though Paul was clearly (far and away) the authority and leader, he treated his co-workers as equals and referred to them as such.

Listen to how Paul refers to his disciples in some of these passages:

“Priscilla and Aquila, my *fellow workers*...” Rom 16:3

“Timothy, my *fellow worker*...” Rom 16:21

“As God’s *fellow workers* we urge you...” 2 Cor 6:1

“As for Titus, he is my *partner* and *fellow worker* among you...” 2 Cor 8:23-24

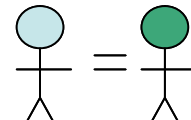
“Epaphras, our dear *fellow servant*, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf...” Col 1:7

“Tychicus...is a *dear brother*, a faithful minister and servant in the Lord.” Col 4:7

“Timothy, who is our *brother* and God’s *fellow worker* in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith...” 1 Thes 3:2

(Also, look at how Paul treats Philemon in 1, 2 and 24 of the book by his name.)

When so many these days would like to “lord it over them” this is a good lesson for us to learn. Let’s treat them like equals. (They are, you know!)



Mentalizing Saints # 2: Encourage you people; Tell them for what you are thankful in their lives.

Not only do our people need to feel that they are with us in this thing called ministry, they also need to be encouraged.

Time after time in his epistles Paul thanked God for his addressees. We also have evidence of him encouraging (instilling courage in) people in person. In Acts 20 we see that he gathered a group of disciples together to *encourage* them before he left—



no other reason—just to encourage them. Acts 27 reveals Paul trying to calm and encourage sailors on the ship as they were suffering a severe storm. (The sailors were seasoned veterans at this, but they were scared and Paul was the encourager.)

Maybe you say, “It’s not my personality to be ooshy-gooshy, or warm and fuzzy.” We’re talking about rough-and-tumble-former-church-persecutor Paul here. I don’t think it was part of his personality profile either, but listen to what he says. Do we sound like this?

“ I have **great confidence in you**; I take **great pride in you**. I am **greatly encouraged**; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.” 2 Cor 7:4

“**How can we thank God enough for you** in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?” 1 Thes 3:9

All through the epistles we see Paul thanking people and commending them for their work.

He is thankful for...

Their faith;
Saving his life,
The first convert in Asia,
God’s grace in them,
Spiritual gifts
Their concern for Titus and Paul
Accepted Word as from God
Faith growing
Love increasing

And commends them for...

Working very hard
Being outstanding
Being tested and approved in Christ
Remembering his teachings
Their faith in Jesus
Their love for the saints
Their faith and love
Their partnership in the Gospel
Gospel is spreading through them
Standing firm

(See Rom 1:8; 16:3-16; 1 Cor 1:4-9; 11:2; 2 Cor 7:4-7; Eph 1:15-16; Phil 1:3; Col 1:3-8; 1 Thes 2:13-14; 1 Thes 3:8-9; 2 Thes 1:3; 2 Thes :13-15)

How about it? Do we sound like that? Are we encouraging people? Are we thanking them for the ministry they’ve had in our lives and the lives of others? Are we commending them before others? Sometimes we get the idea that if we speak too highly of others, we are downplaying our own importance. That is tragic. Be happy when others shine; thank God for it and let them know that they are appreciated.

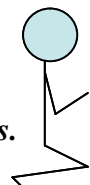
We also need to be praying for our people.

Mentalizing Saints # 3: Pray for your trainees and let them know of your prayers.

Almost as often as he encouraged his disciples, Paul told them of his prayers for them. There is a lot to be gained by studying the content (the ‘what’) of Paul’s prayers. He prays that his people would gain the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they might know Him better...that the eyes of their heart would be enlightened so they might know the hope of their calling, the riches of their inheritance and the power God expends for them...that they would be strengthened with power through the Spirit in their inner being so that Christ would dwell in them in love. His prayers are so rich. Our prayers need to emulate them.

But today, don’t think about the ‘what’ of Paul’s prayers. Instead, for just a few moments, think about the ‘when’ and ‘how’.

Look at Philippians, chapter one below. Notice adjectives that are highlighted in the passage. What does this tell you about how often Paul prayed for his disciples and about the intensity of those prayers?



I thank my God upon **every** remembrance of **you, always** in **every** prayer of mine for **you all** making request with joy, for **your** fellowship from the **first** day until **now**; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in **you** will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Even as it is meet for me to think this of **you all**, because I have **you** in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, **ye all** are partakers of my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after **you all** in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and this I pray, that **your** love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

We learn at least two things: Paul prayed a lot and fervently. Check out these passages as well:

Paul prayed “**constantly**...at **all** times...” Rom 1:9-10
He said, I “**keep** asking” Eph 1:17-22
“since the day heard...we have **not stopped** praying...” Col 1:9-14
“**Night and Day** we pray most earnestly...” 1 Thes 3:10
“...we **constantly** pray for you...” 1 Thes 1:11

Why did Paul pray so much and so fervently for his disciples? Because he cared so much about them. There’s the fourth principle:

Mentalizing Saints # 4: Show a caring spirit toward your people.

Paul, aggressive and motivated as he was, still cared for people and he showed it. Again, personality is not in question here. Love is. Take a few minutes and observe Paul’s caring spirit in action.



Acts 27:33-36
Romans 9:1-4; 10:1
2 Corinthians 2:1-4;
Galatians 4:20
Colossians 2:1-5
1 Thessalonians 2:7-9

Mentalizing Saints # 5: Make instruction of the Word a priority.



The majority of ‘mentalizing’ comes from right here. It is only the Word of God getting into people’s hearts and lives that will change them. The only way people can keep from being conformed to this world and be transformed is through what? (“The renewing of the mind.” Rom 12:1-2)

After Paul proclaimed the Gospel (and even *as* he proclaimed the Gospel!) he taught his new converts how to live. Then he sent back letters full of instruction to continue the mentalizing process. We need to do the same. From the verses that reveal this vital discipleship principle, I believe we can derive four mini or sub-principles.

- * **Dispel** ignorance of God’s Word and Plan. 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1;
1 Thes 4:13
- * **Share** what you have already learned. 1 Cor 11:3, 23
- * **Remind**, review. Rom 15:15;
1 Thes 4:1-2ff
- * **Build** on it. 1 Cor 11:34b; 12:31b

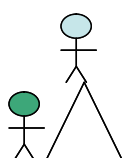
First of all, Paul was concerned with dispelling ignorance. He said, “I don’t want you to be ignorant.”

Secondly, note that he was sharing what *he* had already learned with *them*. Two quick notes here—1. It’s tough to teach it if you haven’t already learned what you want to teach; and 2. we see our responsibility—God has already taught us so much—let’s not keep these things a secret!

Next, Paul wasn’t afraid of reminding his followers. This is a basic principle of teaching. Don’t leave it out! This is a basic principle of teaching. Don’t leave it out! This is a basic principle of teaching. Don’t...Get the picture?

Finally, as with God’s revelation, Paul built upon what he had already taught his people. They can’t take it all at once, but they can take it. Start with basics and build. This is what we hope to do with by starting with TWTJ booklet and following up with the Chronological Bible Teaching. They are parallel, with one building upon the other.

Mentalizing Saints # 6:



Lead your trainees into new areas of growth and new heights of spirituality by example.

If, as we said, the majority of mentalizing occurs through the teaching of the Word, then the introduction and the conclusion are ‘read’ right here. What even sparked that eager young man’s interest in the first place? Your life. The difference he saw in you made him want to know more. Why will she give up old habits, keep trying to do something that seems impossible? Because she has seen that it is possible by watching you.

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” (1 Cor 11:1)

Paul led by example. He didn’t force people to do something or “lay down the law” even though he could have. He appealed to them on the basis of love and a Spirit-controlled life. He did first what he expected of others. Three quick examples:

- 2 Timothy 1:12 “For this reason I also suffer these things...”
(Paul boldly proclaimed the gospel just as he was encouraging Timothy to do!)
- Philemon 8-18
(Paul gave unselfishly!)
- 2 Timothy 2:2 “And the things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”
(Paul showed how to disciple!)

Remember that this principle is “Lead your trainees into *new areas of growth and heights of spirituality* by example.” We, as leaders, have got to be developing our spiritual lives. It doesn’t come automatically. And it’s not just maintaining an emotional “High on Jesus” attitude. It takes work. Note these five disciplines for godly leaders from Blanchard and Hodges.

- **Solitude**
- **Prayer**
- **Storing Up God’s Word**
- **Faith in God’s Unconditional Love (Exercising confidence grounded in trust)**
- **Involvement in Accountability Relationships**

- Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges. *The Servant Leader*, pp. 84ff.

Think about your spiritual life now and in the past. What are you doing now that you didn’t do five years ago? What’s helping? What isn’t? Let’s commit ourselves to working at developing our spiritual lives.

Mobilizing Servants

Do me a favor. Before you read about the three disciple principles contained in this section, take the opinion poll below by marking 'A' for agree or 'D' for disagree for each statement.

Opinion Poll

- A D **Mobilization of servants is not as important as the mentalizing of saints.**
- A D **Mobilization comes after leaders are taught and are maximized for ministry.**
- A D **Mobilizing servants is sending people to the mission field.**
- A D **We should get people mobilized and then equip them for the task.**
- A D **Care should be taken not to mobilize too many people all at once.**

Now that you have some idea of where you think you stand on this mobilization thing, let's see what the Bible says about how Paul operated. As you move through the material, see if the answers become evident. Will you change your mind?

There are three principles in this area of mobilization. Read through them on the following chart.

Mobilize Servants

- **Choose key men/women to work beside you, train and put to the task (where you are or in another location).**
- **As you delegate, give the equipment necessary for the delegated task.**
- **Use people (and other resources) creatively and extensively.**

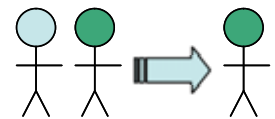


Now let's look in our Bibles to see several of the verses from which these principles were taken.

Mobilizing Servants # 1:

Choose Key Men/Women to Work beside You, Train and Put to the Task (Where You are or in Another Location)

Paul was constantly choosing good men to work with him whom he would leave behind as he went to a new location, send ahead of him, or send back to one of the works. His objective was to train men and women to train others.




One could think that this would be the last category or principle—after we get people all ready, *then* we send them out. Right? However, it appears that Paul would grab up people and bring them along to work with them, getting their feet wet early on in their Christian and ministry experience. After all, that was *his* experience!

The passages are divided into three categories to give us a feel for what happened. In the book of Acts we can see that Paul took men along to help. Open your Bible to the book of Acts and see how, beginning with John Mark in 13:5, Paul had people accompanying him, etc.

Choose Key People to Work...

- **Accompany, Bring Along**
Acts 13:5; 15:40; 16:1-3; 20:4-6
- **Examples of Process—OTJ Training**
Acts 18:18-19 w/18:1-3, 18-24; 19:1;
Rom 16:5 (P & A); Phil 2:19-30 (T & E)
Col 4:10-15 (Others)
- **Sent With a Task**
1 Cor 4:17-18; 16:10-12;
Col 4:7-9; Eph 6:21-22; 1 Thess 3:1-5



We also have a few examples of how it actually worked—a sort of demonstration of on the job training. (See how Paul worked with Aquila & Priscila, took them with him to Ephesus, actually left them there, came back and saw a group of believers already. They also taught Apollos and went on to Rome. There they also had a church in their house. The Philippians passage tells how Timothy and then Epaphroditus worked with Paul, became valuable, and went on to serve God. The same is seen in Col 4 with several others.)

We also have some specific examples of Paul sending ones that had worked with him on to another place with a task.

Mobilizing Servants #2: As You Delegate, Give the Equipment Necessary for the Delegated Task


As you read the passages listed below, notice how Paul worked with his people, treating them as sons, so that they would do the same. In the 2 Timothy 3:10 passage) we can see how Timothy actually learned what he needed through the on the job experience.

Similarly, Paul asked Timothy and Titus to do specific tasks (appoint pastors, etc.). The passages show how he didn't just leave them high and dry. He told them what they needed to teach and what to look for in pastors that they would appoint.



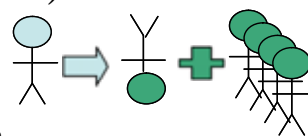
As You Delegate, Give the Equipment Necessary...

- **Paul's Men were Equipped through their OTJ Training** 2 Tim 2:2 w/1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2 & 2:1; Titus 1:4; 2 Tim 3:10-17 (10 14)
- **Paul Gave Special Equipment for Special Tasks**
1 Tim 1:3-4 w/chap 3 & whole of 1 & 2 Timothy
Titus 1:5 w/v.6ff, 2:1ff & 2:15



Mobilizing Servants # 3: Use People (and Other Resources) Creatively and Extensively

We've already seen above how Paul would have someone with him, send on ahead, or back to a former work. Many of those verses would apply here as well. But notice a few more examples below before we try to make application.



Use People...Creatively & Extensively

**Paul did this to minister to others
(as he sent them out) but also to
minister to himself.**

Acts 19:22

2 Tim 1:15-18

2 Tim 4:9-13, 19-20

Titus 3:12-14



Acts 19:22: Paul sent some on so he could stay longer. We need to be open, thinking and creative to maximize the use of the personnel we have.

2 Tim 1:15-18: The fact that many had deserted him indicates that they *were there* at one time. Paul needed refreshing and he allowed some of his people to do that for him. Onesiphorus helped in “*so many ways*”!

2 Tim 4:9-13, 19-20: Look at all the movement of people in this passage!

Titus 3:12-14: Again, Paul is doing some shifting around of people to get the best use of them at the time.

How are you doing? Are you “using” people like Paul? Are you training them to do the same? Write down the names of five people that you could use creatively in your ministry. Then brainstorm some new ways that you could put them to work—creatively and extensively—to multiply your ministry. If you come up with some things people could be doing that they haven't been, share your ideas with others.

Minimizing Self

Part of ‘mentalizing’ saints and mobilizing servants is helping them to grow spiritually. A significant part of that growth process is minimizing self. We can minimize self in our own lives and help others to do the same by putting these four principles into practice.

Minimize Self

- **Don't be afraid to address problems.**
- **Be unselfish in all your dealings.**
- **Develop a learning spirit.**
- **Be open, honest, transparent about your own struggles.**



Minimizing Self # 1: Don't Be Afraid to Address Problems

Paul did not shy away from problems. He dealt with sin and other difficulties in ministry when necessary.



Have you ever thought about why we avoid problems? Why did I not share the Gospel with that gas station attendant? Why did I avoid conflict with that colleague? Why do so many people not want to go to the mission field? Etc. It's because number one is on the throne. We're looking out for ourselves and our own comfort. We don't want to suffer.

Don't Be Afraid to Address Problems

- **Facing Difficulties Courageously Helps Us to Demote Self and Promote Christ.**
Acts 13:46; 19:30-31 w/20:24; 21:39; 23:1; 25:10-11
- **Confronting About Sin Helps Others to Demote Self and Promote Christ.**
Acts 13:6-11; 15:2; 1 Cor 3:1-5; 5:1-12; 6:5; 11:17-18; Gal 2:11-16



Paul had self in the right position. Look at Acts 19:30-31. He wanted to face the crowd knowing that physical harm could come to him. Read 23:1—He stared them down! Why? The answer is in Acts 20:24—“none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, in order that I may finish the course given me, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.”

Confronting others about sin helps them demote and promote as well. Paul confronted unbelievers about their sin (Acts 13:6-11—sometimes we're hesitant to do this because we don't want to lose our contact with them), he confronted church folks, he even confronted 'big wigs' when necessary (Gal 2:11-16).

I have a little formula I use and have taught for years that helps with confronting. It's called, "O.I.C." I make an observation with non-threatening language. "I've noticed that..." It is strictly an observation of verifiable facts and does not accuse or evaluate. I follow up with interpretation. "I interpret that to mean..." I don't have all the answers and something that I observe certainly does not guarantee that my friend/colleague is doing anything wrong—my interpretation could be way off. So, I follow with clarification: "Could you clarify that for me?" I not only allow for my possible error in this—the clarification could set me straight. It also gives the colleague either a way or out (through explaining how things really are) or gives the opportunity to admit an error on his part and ask for forgiveness. (Observation/Interpretation/Clarification—O.I.C.)

Minimizing Self #2: Be Unselfish in All Your Dealings



By being an example in this area we can help others minimize self and the world's hold on them. Follow the directions in the next box to learn how Paul was unselfish in his dealings.

Be Unselfish in All Your Dealings

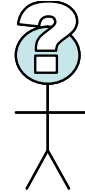
- What was Paul's motivation?**
- What did he do? Or What happened to him?**
- What are some modern applications for us?**

1 Cor 10:31-33



Phil 1:12-26

Minimizing Self # 3: Develop a Learning Spirit

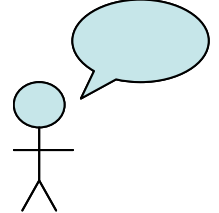


If anyone had reason to think he was someone special and knew everything he needed to know, it was Paul; yet he had learning spirit. He is even listed after Barnabas at first, indicating who was considered the leader.

Paul was trained by Gamaliel and had already experienced fruit, yet he humbled himself and learned from Barnabas—a lay preacher. (Acts 11:26, 30; 13:1-3, etc.) Remember John the Baptist’s credo: “He must increase, I must decrease.” And how about Barnabas—he was enjoying the lead role, but after Acts 14 the roles flip-flopped. That may have been hard to take, but he didn’t appear to have a problem with it.

Minimizing Self # 4: Be Open, Transparent about your own Struggles

Finally, it is so important that we admit (first to ourselves!) that we are weak creatures. Even as the great spiritual leader that Paul was, he admitted he had struggles (Rom 7:14-24). Having a person with whom we can be transparent and accountable is a must. Who is your accountability partner?

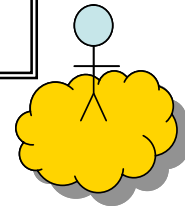


Admitting our weaknesses emphasizes the first principle under Maximize Service—the final category of principles. Read through the list below.

Maximizing Service

Maximize Service

- **Depend upon God.**
- **Set goals and plan your work**
- **Be assertive.**
- **Know your culture and use it for ministry.**
- **Learn to be orderly and methodical in your reporting and teaching.**
- **Be determined, seeing through the problems to the prize.**
- **Seek out fruit.**



Maximizing Service # 1: Depend upon God

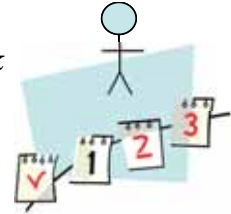
Paul gives us seven principles that can help us maximize our service and that of our trainees for God. The first thing we see is that Paul had a humble trust in God that He would do the work. Notice how he came without eloquence (1 Cor 2:1-5); he felt he was nothing realizing that God gives the fruit (1 Cor 3:7); he felt that only through God’s grace he was least of the apostles (1 Cor 15:9-11); he believed he was not competent in himself—only through God (2 Cor 3:4-6); he gave no room for boasting (2 Cor 10:12-18 and 11:30); God’s grace was sufficient, His power made perfect in Paul’s weakness (2 Cor 12:1-10); he desired the prayers of all believers (Eph 6:19); he considered himself a servant (Phil 1:1; Col 1:23); he realized that it was God who gave him strength (2 Tim 4:16-18).

Why was he able to maintain this dependence on God and not self? First of all, he really did have a proper view of who he was—nothing without God. Second, look at 1 Cor 2:1-5.—

Paul **resolved** not to go in human wisdom
to know only Christ
to go only in the Spirit’s power.

We need that kind of resolve. Then we will depend on God as we should and not try to do things in our own strength.

Maximizing Service # 2: Set Goals and Plan your Work



Paul was goal-oriented; he made plans. In the graph below look at the action verbs or phrase that demonstrate Paul's planning, and then the purpose, reason, or result of the plans that he made.

Acts	20:7	"intended to leave"	so he spoke longer to the people
	20:16	"had decided"	in order not to waste time
	20:22-24	"I am going"	to finish the course given him
	21:14	"not dissuaded"	he was ready to die for Christ
Rom	1:13	"planned"	to have a harvest
	15:20	"ambition to preach"	in order not to build on others' foundation
	15:24-26	"I plan"	to visit the Romans
	15:28-29	"I will go"	to complete the task
1 Cor	16:5-9	"I will come/stay"	had a great opportunity to minister
2 Cor	1:15-17	"I planned"	for their benefit
	5:9	"make it our goal"	to please Him
	13:1-2	"will be/not spare"	discipline of the believers

What does this mean for us? Are we planning like Paul? Do we have purposes similar or dissimilar to his?

Maximizing Service #3: Be Assertive



Paul was also assertive; a self-starter; an initiator. What is a self-starter? Dr. Howard Bixby defines a self starter like this: "One who knows what needs to be done and gets at it without others ordering, manipulating or rewarding him to do it." Read the passages that reveal Paul's self-starting tendencies: Acts 9:20, 26; 15:26; 26:19-20; 27:10; 28:17. Notice words like "straightway"—he got right at the task at hand. In several cases, too, he could have sat back and done nothing, but he saw what needed to be done and got to it.

How can we be self-starters? You may say, "It's just not my personality." Start by asking God to help you. Then take one daily task that you don't like to do. Put it down first on your calendar. Make yourself do it. Discipline yourself. Develop a calendar/to do list and make yourself look at it. Keep yourself accountable to it.

Maximizing Service # 4: Know Your Culture and Use for Ministry.



Paul knew the culture (and leaders) of his target people, was flexible, adapted to it and used it to further the Gospel. (His head was not in the sand!)

Read the following passages and ask yourself what Paul knew about his culture and how he used that knowledge or the culture itself. Then try to brainstorm ways your culture could be put to use in ministry. Then go on in the article.

Acts 17:16-34 & Titus 1:12-14

Acts 18:3-5, 19

1 Cor 9:19-23

"How does this passage show us that Paul knew his culture?"

"What is a lesson or principle that we can learn from this example?"

"Is there more than one principle evident?"

Acts 17:16-34—verse 23—he was creative, insightful; found common ground in their poetry. In Titus 1:12-14 he also found poetry from the culture that applied to the situation. Lessons: Be looking for such things in the culture. Be reading materials from the culture. Apply them when possible.

One recent example of this in Portugal is the following: One of the car companies had phrases like these: Peace and love...and money

Romeo and Julieta...and Maria

on billboards and then a picture of the car with this phrase: “For those who want more.” They thought they were being so coy, but it showed how decadent the culture was. In essence they were making light of the idea that all we need are peace and love—I need money, too! Juliet was not enough for Romeo—he wanted Maria, also. I was able to take something that was happening right then in the culture and illustrate man’s sinfulness.

Acts 18:3-5, 19 Paul adapted to the situation and took advantage of resources (people) around him. Made tents with P & A. Used that for ministry. When others came, devoted self to ministry. Did they then do the manual labor? He used people well and was flexible. Later, P & A are helping in spiritual matters. Lessons: Be flexible. Find people and ways in the culture to multiply your ministry. Put them to work.

I Cor 9:19-23 Paul tried to become all things to all men. How can we apply this lesson? Play the horn with those who like to? Lead choir to reach singers? Play sports with urbanization on Sunday morning?

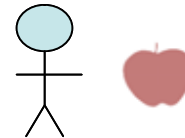
Maximizing Service # 5: Learn to be Orderly and Methodical in your Reporting and Teaching



- *Acts 21:19 Paul reported *in detail* what God had done.
- *1 Cor 7 (teaching on marriage and singleness)
- *Eph 5 & Col 3:18-4:1 (teaching on believer’s responsibility in different areas of life)
- *Titus 1; 2:1-9; 3:1-2; 1 Tim (necessary teaching for Timothy and Titus to do their jobs)
- *the book of Corinthians (deals with so many subjects—he introduces a new one with “Now...”)
- *two halves of Ephesians (doctrinal in first half, practical in 2nd half), etc.

These all show how Paul was orderly and methodical in teaching.

Maximizing Service # 6: Seek Out Fruit



Just as Paul organized himself for optimum fruitfulness, he also sought to minister where he could be most fruitful. Acts 13:51; 18:6-7 and 19:9 show Paul “shaking off the dust”. But it wasn’t just to “show them” or go off and pout. He then went next door to have a home Bible study or off to the lecture hall of Tyrannus. Paul didn’t waste time in a non-productive area. He sought a fruitful venue.

Maximizing Service # 7: Be Determined, Seeing through the Problems to the Prize



Paul was not easily daunted; he was persistent. Read the Acts 14 passages below one by one, and note how that even with the previous difficulties, Paul kept on preaching. They even went back to previous towns where they had been persecuted—chased out of town—so that they could strengthen the believers. Notice the other familiar passages, too—the Macedonian Call, Paul and Silas singing in Prison—these men would not quit!

Read the 1 Thessalonians passage along with verses 17 and 18 of the same chapter and ask yourself, “Why? Why did Paul keep going?” How could he keep at it even though he faced so many difficulties?

The answer is in Romans 8.”

Be Determined, Seeing Through the Problems to the Prize

Acts 14:6-7 → 14:19-20 → 14:21-22
Acts 16:6-10 **Macedonian call**
 16:25 **Singing in Prison**
1 Thess 2:1-2 **Persecuted, dared to preach**
 Gospel in Thessalonica, too
Phil :12-16 **Lived 'with and without'**

Why?

Rom 8:18, 22-25
(2 Cor 4:16-18)



Paul was convinced that the present sufferings could not compare with the future glory. And so he “waited patiently.” That’s not the type of waiting we normally think of. What it means is that he hung in there. He kept at it even in adverse conditions, waiting (looking forward to) the time when he would be with Jesus. The term in Portuguese (and other Latin-based languages) “esperando por” literally means “waiting for,” but it carries with it the idea of eagerly, actively waiting. That’s what Paul was doing in his suffering.

We need to be determined...not easily stopped. This is a significant principle for discipleship and church ministry. Some have said, “Church work would be great if wasn’t for the people.” Church work *is* people. Discipleship *is* people. But people will let you down. Determination is vital if we are not going to quit. In Western Europe the ones who have made it, were all determined. They didn’t let problems stop them. It seemed like nothing would ever happen, but over the long haul, (20 years and more!) with determination, great things have been accomplished.

Mentalizing Saints. Mobilizing Servants. Minimizing Self. Maximizing Service. Four characteristics to look for in people and four major tasks we need to carry out, especially in level 3 discipleship.