

Introduction

Any context of relationship is valuable in the business of training fellow-workers in Christ. In some ways the informal moments of life are the most formative. The life and ministry of the evangelist and pastor is 'caught' as well as 'taught'. The unguarded, spontaneous words and actions expose the heart of both trainer and apprentice, the good, the bad and the ugly. It is in this cut and thrust of life that the relationship is deepened, the trainer gains insights into character and the apprentice learns from the modelling of the trainer.

Here are some possible contexts and activities for the training relationship.

The Home

In the home the trainer is no longer the public preacher, the ministry leader. The professional persona is lost. He is the husband laughing with his wife, the father dealing with a daughter not eating her food, the cook enjoying his creative side, the home-maker fixing the tap, the wreck watching TV. He is living out life in the Spirit in the hardest context. The wise trainer is also observing how his young charge listens respectfully to his wife, ignores the children, expects to be waited upon, can't relax. It is all stored away for later lessons and assessment of suitability for ministries.

Personal training sessions

Although much is observed and learnt in informal contexts, some pattern of one-to-one meetings is necessary in training

Possible activities:

- read books of the Bible together
- prepare a Bible study or sermon together
- feedback on Bible studies or sermons
- prayer
- discussion of a current theological or ministry issue
- guided reading program
- discussion of people in depth, their needs and progress
- review of ministry activities and lessons learnt
- setting goals for training

Leadership team

Apprentices learn much from being part of a ministry team and observing their trainer lead the team. This is the engine room of the ministry where the vision and mission is carved out, where the ministry is constantly being reformed by the Scriptures, where God's power and mercy in Christ is

called upon, where plans are made and logistics are worked out.

In the team context the apprentice watches the trainer select the members, build unity, set budgets, handle the group dynamics, deal with tensions and move forward. Even in the details of administration there are lessons about ministry priorities and principles.

Personal and small group ministries

Apprenticeship training is by definition 'hands on', 'on the job' and not just in the classroom. There is great benefit in observing each other in real ministry situations.

Possible activities:

- walk-up evangelism in parks, campuses
- visiting newcomers
- visiting members
- leading a Bible study group together
- teaching a Sunday school or Scripture class together

Public ministry

Trainers and their apprentices stand shoulder to shoulder preaching the gospel in church meetings, lunch time Bible studies, mission meetings and the like. In this context there are numerous training opportunities.

Possible activities:

- setting up the meeting
- welcoming
- making the most of conversations
- reading the Bible
- leading in prayer
- leading the singing
- preparing and leading the meeting
- preparing and giving the Bible talk