

# COMMUNITY

## Part 4

### Community: It's Purpose, It's Power, and It's Promise Becoming a Team Player

Discipleship is a Team Sport!



The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus. A disciple is a follower of Jesus who is becoming like Jesus.

Rom. 8:29

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

NKJV

It was never God's will for one man in the church to be able to disciple another man in the church to become a spiritually mature man.

We do not have one prophet that we follow. The bible contains 66 books written by 40 different authors.

The apostle Paul rebuked the church at Corinth for their narrow sectarian view of discipleship.

1 Cor. 1:10-13

10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

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Discipleship is a Team Sport!



God can use one man to disciple us in a significant way. But it is God's intention for discipleship to be a team sport. This means every member of the team is playing a role in the discipleship process of all the other members.

Team discipleship can only happen in small groups. This is why the early church met in small groups in homes. Small groups can be relational so that everyone can play.

To have a team that is winning it has to be comprised of team mates that are team players. This is true in any organization; including business, sports, or church. It is true for team discipleship in small groups in the church.

Learning to be a team player is a process. I wish I knew 50 years ago what I know now. I have learned so much about what it takes to be a team player by being on teams. This includes my family, sports teams as a player and a coach, business teams as an employee and as a director on boards, and church as a member and as a leader.

To be a team player on any team you have to possess the right kind of character.

In sports, great coaches demand this from their players. They use discipline to form the right character in their players. In the military, officers do the same thing. In the family, parents should do the same thing. It is an amazing thing to watch. It is even more amazing to be a part of a team of individuals that are growing in character as a team.

If secular leaders can develop the character of men and women into team players, we should expect Jesus to be able to do the same in His church.

### What are the characteristics of team players?

#### I. Team players follow the leader of the team

God established order by creating government and giving government the authority to rule. This occurred before the fall of man and the fall of man only made government more important.

Rom. 13:1-2

13 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

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In various places in His Word, God specifically prescribed government for nations, for business, for the family, and for the church. Every organization needs government.

1 Tim 5:17

17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

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Heb. 13:17

17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

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There are no perfect authority figures. You will be treated unfairly. The authority that you will be the most satisfied working for is yourself.

There is a time to appeal to the authority. There is a time to challenge the authority. There is a time to flee from the authority. As Christians our highest authority is Jesus Christ.

But before you appeal, challenge, or flee, you need to make sure you have God's blessing. God uses the imperfections of our authority to accomplish His mission in our life; to transform us into the image of Jesus.

Jesus was the supreme authority and He was subject to authority; His parents; the Sanhedrin, the Roman government.

God hates rebellion and as we read in Romans 13. If you rebel to His authority, you will bring judgment on yourself.

This judgment is normally a more difficult authority. This judgment is not intended to destroy you but to complete His mission in you.

If we rebel and reject God's authority, God just raises up new pressures from authority to accomplish His mission in us.

To be a team player you must develop the character of submission to authority.

## II. Team players are committed to the mission of the team

If you want to become a navy seal, in bud training you must demonstrate that you are willing to sacrifice your life for the mission of the team. The Navy Seals are looking for soldiers who will trust their superiors and not quit their mission even if it cost them their life.

Jesus wants the same character in His soldiers. His mission is to make disciples. He wants us to be so committed to the mission that we will sacrifice our life for the mission.

Matt. 16:24-25

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

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The mission of Jesus conflicts with our self life. Our self life does not define who we are. Our self life is just what we would do with our time, our money, and our energy if we were not on a mission for Jesus. To fulfill the mission we always have to deny our self life.

God uses the challenges of the mission to accomplish His mission in our life; to transform us into the image of Jesus. He makes us self-less.

Jesus sacrificed Himself for the sake of the mission.

When you sacrifice yourself for the mission of the team you are demonstrating loyalty.

To be a team player you must develop the character of loyalty.

### III. Team players are willing to accept the role they are given on the team

One of the powers God gives to government is to determine our role on the team. God was very specific about the roles of husbands, wives, and children in the family. (Ephesians 5:22-6:4).

In other forms of government God gives those in power a lot of latitude to determine the roles subordinates will play.

It can be very frustrating to be in a role that you do not want and it can be very disheartening when you are not chosen for a role you do want.

We tend to look at the role and what we think we do best. Those in government look at the bigger picture.

There are no perfect authority figures. Even the best ones will make errors in judgment. God uses these errors to accomplish His mission in our life; to make us like Jesus.

Jesus was never given by mankind the role that He was best suited to fulfill; King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Jesus emptied Himself.

Phil. 2:5-8

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

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God the Father used the errors in men's judgment to fulfill the mission He had for Jesus. He will do the same in our life. Jesus trusted God the Father and fulfilled the role He was given. This is called meekness.

To be a team player we must develop the character of meekness.

Submission to authority, loyalty, and meekness are three of the significant character qualities we must develop to become a team player in the church and on any team.

Followers of Jesus should be best team mates on any team. They should be the best citizens, the best employees, the best team mates, the best soldiers, the best children, and the best church members.

- To develop the character of Jesus Christ, you need to be born again and have the Spirit of Christ. (John 3:3).

To be born again, repent of your sin and follow Jesus. The outward sign that you are following Jesus is baptism. (Acts 2:38).

- Character training for children should occur in the home. (Ephesians 6:1-4).

Eph. 6:1-4

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

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The church exists to assist parents in the training of their children. (Ephesians 6:1-4)

- Character training for adults should occur in the church. (Matt. 16:18; I Cor. 14).

Discipleship is a Team Sport!



Since discipleship is a team sport, God wants you to join a team that has a biblical guide and relational environment where you can grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ. God wants to use the other members of your team at church to accomplish His mission in you.

If you join one of our small group teams you will discover that each small group has guidelines and a biblical lesson guide that are designed to help you develop these character qualities.

Developing good character requires....

Practice

Trial

Error

Correction

Encouragement

Accountability

Support