

## Establish Men to Spiritual Maturity

April 2019

This is our second installment on the 4 E's of Men's Ministry which are the cornerstones to make sure we are touching a man in every area of his walk with Christ. To make sure we are not only involved in "ministries by men" but, we are also involved in "ministering to men." Both are important but often the "ministering to men" element is overlooked and if one is more important, "ministering to men" is the one. For when men get the spiritual part right, then they will have a longing desire to do "ministries by men."

To remind us what are the 4 E's we discussed in a previous article, I have listed them again. They are;

1. **Evangelize** Men to Salvation
2. **Establish** Men to Spiritual Maturity
3. **Equip** Men to Ministry
4. **Extend** Men on Mission

In this article we will review the second cornerstone, **Establish** Men to Spiritual Maturity.

Many Christian men start out with passion for the things of God and then begin to coast. They end up compromising and many finish their lives with regret. Lonnie Berger in his book *'Every Man A Warrior: Helping Men Succeed In Life – Walking with God,'* states, "I believe that most men have never been trained and equipped with the necessary skills to fight and end well." I often say that men have often been told how to act and behave, but never trained. To put it simply, we are *'Often Told but Rarely Trained.'*

Part of our Men's Ministry as we minister to men should be to move men into discipling relationships. This is more than being in church on Sunday morning and attending a Sunday School class or a Home Group Study. All is important and every man should be attending these with their wife and families; even if they are single. But the relationship I am talking about is placing oneself in a position so a man can pour his life into us. Creating an environment where men feel comfortable to discuss issues and struggles they deal with every day.

Some of the most meaningful times I have experienced in the last decade of my walk with God is spending time with 2-3 other men for the purpose of digging deep into the scriptures, discussing how to apply them into my life, and allowing those men to speak into my life.

For 35 years as a Christian I limped along trying to advance my walk in Christ by myself. Never developing a relationship with other men who had permission to speak into my life – to speak truth. To provide encouragement – genuine encouragement and not the superficial encouragement we often hear for those just outside the boundaries we set up.

To Establish Men to Spiritual Maturity we need to develop an attitude of moving men into discipling relationships. How do we do that. Invite them to join you in working through a book of the Bible. It's not hard. A great book I have found to start with is by Dr. Gary Yagel called, *Got Your Back*. Easy read and it is a great book to help men understand why we need other men in our lives.

As someone once said, *"Discipleship is the answer to our evangelism problem."* Men who we invite into our group do not need to be Christians. One can use these groups to develop relationships to present the gospel in a comfortable and non-threatening environment to those who do not know Christ.

Paul made it personal by telling the Thessalonians in his first letter to them, *"We cared so much for you that we were pleased to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us,"* (1 Th 2:8).

So, if you want to move your men's ministry deeper to reach the men of your church and community, start by moving men into spiritual maturity by developing a discipleship ministry. As a seasoned man recently told me after experiencing a few weeks in a discipleship group, *"This is the best thing I have experienced since I became a Christian!"*

Together in the challenge and adventure to disciple men - Mike