

Everyday, Part 2

At CCC, we're starting 2010 with a series called "EVERYDAY" - so we can learn (or relearn!) some of the biblical steps that build us into disciples. None of them are dramatic. None of them are quick fixes. And none of them work if we only do them sporadically or if we quit after a week or two. But all of them are powerful if we just take a few minutes "EVERYDAY" to invest strategically in the only part of our life that will outlive our life! Some things you just need to do EVERYDAY.

Today we want to talk about the first of "five discipleship habits" ...

ENLIST (ministry)

VOICE (prayer)

EXTEND (evangelism)

READ (Bible)

YIELD (time, talent, treasure)

The first century church impacted their world, not just because of their DOCTRINE, but because of what they DID with what they believed!

Acts 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

THE LORD "ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY" PRECISELY BECAUSE HIS PEOPLE DID THESE THINGS DAILY! THEY "CONTINUED STEDFASTLY" IN THESE HABITS, WITHOUT A BREAK – **EVERYDAY!**

Every Apostolic church in the 21st century has an opportunity to have a revival like they had in the 1st century. But it doesn't happen just because we preach the same DOCTRINE. It only happens when we have the same level of DISCIPLESHIP. It will not happen because we make one commitment in one service. It will only happen if we live this EVERYDAY.

From the riot at Thessalonica ...

Acts 17:6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

From Paul's trial before King Agrippa ...

Acts 26:26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

How were they able to accomplish such a saturation of the GOSPEL in their culture? Because everyone EVERYDAY exercised their MINISTRY.

Paul explained how MINISTRY is supposed to work ...

Ephesians 4:11-12 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

We call verse 11 the "five-fold ministry" – these are the offices that lead the Apostolic church. But we often mistake verse 12 to be their "three-fold job description" – nothing could be further from the truth! The leadership offices have ONE job – to "mature" the saints so that THEY can do the work of the ministry. Only THEN can the body be "built up" – and when that happens, REVIVAL is the inevitable result!

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE, EVERYDAY, IS TO BE A MINISTER!

1 Corinthians 12:18-20 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.

THIS "GOD IDEA" ALMOST GOT DERAILED IN THE FIRST CENTURY:

Acts 6:1-8 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

God's idea of "letting the leaders have liberty to lead" resulted in a great revival in the first century, because everyone was enlisted as a minister!

But one of the men the Apostles invested in and trusted eventually turned against them – secretly at first, but then openly. And finally, his attitude became a cancer that infiltrated parts of the body of Christ. His name was Nicolas, one of the Gentile converts (proselytes) from Antioch.

By the end of the first century, Nicolas' doctrine and followers had polluted two out of the seven churches of Revelation, and his spirit still exists today! Nicolas is laughing at the church from the grave!

To the church in Ephesus ...

Revelation 2:6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.

To the church in Pergamos ...

Revelation 2:17 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

Nicolas taught TWO FALSE DOCTRINES that negatively impact the BODY MINISTRY that the church is supposed to have ...

- 1) Nicolas was a Greek dualist, teaching that Christians could have a spiritual experience on the INSIDE that did not affect the OUTSIDE. His followers' constant refrain was "we are not under the law, but under grace" – never realizing that grace is a higher law than the Law of Moses, not an excuse to avoid God's commandments!
THIS TEACHING ROBBED MINISTRY OF POWER.
- 2) Nicolas didn't like doing the "everyday work" of the church along with the other men appointed in Acts 6. He thought the Apostles should be responsible for that, while he and his followers were free to indulge their lifestyle! "Nicolaitanes" comes from two words, the first meaning "to dominate, intimidate or manipulate," and the second meaning "the people." Nicolas imposed on the church his idea that there was a division between the leaders and the laity, and that only the leaders should be involved in ministry. It crippled the church!
THIS TEACHING ROBBED MINISTRY OF PEOPLE.

In both cases, Nicolas robbed people of their COMMITMENT to an Apostolic lifestyle. Without MINISTERS, the church is crippled at best, or totally immobilized at worst. Do YOU believe the lie of Nicolas?

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