

COMMUNITY: Mentoring The Next Generation

After listening to Os Hillman speaking on the 'Faith, Work, & Culture Radio Show #28'¹ a number of points 'stick out' for a Kingdom Community:

1. Be more flexible – less set in your ways
2. Don't be an 'oldies' club
3. Accommodate the ways of younger members
4. Fathering & mentoring are critical
5. Fathering & mentoring are different methods
6. Mentoring should start now, so look for those to mentor

Part of the failure of revivals in the past (including Elcho Island in Australia's Northern Territory) has been due to the absence of succession planning. However, what is also apparent has been the lack of fathering and mentoring of the 'next generation' so that they were able to carry the flame without it being extinguished. I lay this squarely at the feet of Christian religion – in all its levels and forms.

Paul spent years teaching new communities of believers in sound doctrine, and he wrote unknown numbers of letters to them with further teaching. This drivenness to ensure that believers have strong foundations is definitely absent in the churches today, especially at a personal level.

Kingdom Communities are self-replicating 'organisms'. This cannot happen if the next generation – as well as all new believers – are not personally mentored at one level or another. Leaving them to drift along is a simple recipe for laziness and compromise to seep in.

Mentoring others is a relational activity. It cannot begin until relationships are formed, tested and found to be beneficial. Here is a process to begin mentoring or fathering/mothering:

1. Strongly desire to be a mentor/spiritual father/spiritual mother to others
2. Ask the Spirit to show you those who you can impact
3. Ask the Spirit to bring people to you
4. Build a basic, close relationship with each of them at the start
5. Look for opportunities to impact their lives
6. Look for opportunities to ask them for your input
7. Foster questioning in them so they can see that you have worthwhile knowledge to impart
8. Develop a 'listening ear' rather than a 'let-me-tell-you' attitude
9. When they are responsive to you by seeking your wisdom and knowledge, ask if you can mentor them. Listen to the Spirit prompting you for this.
10. Ask to father/mother them as they respond and benefit from your impact

Mentoring and fathering are not about 'rocking up' to people and asking if you can do it with them. Look for those who appear to need extra care and start by being a support to them. Things will develop into mentoring if you desire to mentor and you have a valuable connection with people.

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24-7-2016

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