

## **What is our primary role?** By Durk Meijer, March 31, 2016

### ***Should we all be mentors, catalysts, or disciplers?***

As mentioned before, relationships are foundational to helping people engage with God and the Bible. Even though there may be more words that could fit, I am using three different words to describe the primary role of the person involved in drawing people to God and His Word. Their official ministry role may be a translator, church planter, pastor, consultant, or teacher, but if they are not primarily serving as mentor, catalyst, or discipler, then a key element is missing. We're not serving people to become dependent on us, but to become dependent on God as they see their relationship restored with Him. I use mentor, catalyst, and discipler as someone who fits the description of those following Jesus' directions and live their lives accordingly. In that context, the word 'discipler' is one who is involved in discipling others. I don't want to use the word 'teacher' since in our culture today the role of a teacher is usually that the teacher is superior to a learner. We need to reflect the relationship Jesus had with His disciples as mentor.

The qualities of a mentor, catalyst or discipler should reflect:

- A person who is in love with God and growing in his/her relationship with God.
- A person of integrity (the difference between a person being real and doing things to look like being real).
- A person who gives themselves over to loving and building up the people they serve like Jesus did as a servant leader, friend, brother/sister, and as a fellow servant of Jesus.
- A person who is abandoned to God, looking for God to work in him/her and through him/her, instead of working for God.
- A person who recognizes their short comings and is willing to admit them and ask forgiveness as needed.
- A person who seeks to empower others become dependent on God, without creating dependency on himself or herself.

Even though relevant training and experience are of essence, they should not become overruling factors, since the need of building deep relationships is far more important in context of these recommended qualities. Depending on the situation, the best discipler can be illiterate, blind, or deaf without any formal education. The discipler won't also be always a step ahead of those they disciple, because he or she is learning as well. The discipler should also be disciplined by someone else.

The ideal for the discipler and disciples is to both be so in love with God, so that above all they want to see Him glorified as they discover the truths from the Bible together. In a real and deep relationship, both will know their place and respect each other, yet work together as peers or best friends. Sometimes the relationship may be like one of father and son and that in itself can also be a beautiful picture, reflecting potential qualities as seen in God and Jesus.