

Train the Trainer

One of the last projects I had the privilege of working on in Special Operations was SWAT and EOD integration. With the increase of tactical units encountering the use of IED's, booby traps, and other explosive hazards, it made sense to integrate the two *disciplines*. SWAT Operators were not Bomb Technicians nor were Bomb Technicians SWAT Operators. Blending the two assets increased operational efficiency for a wider base of scenarios. It also increased overall safety and improved speed of movement should the team encounter any IED while moving to the target.

I attended a committee meeting at the ATF facility at the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. As a representative for the NTOA (National Tactical Officers Association) we were tasked with condensing an FBI 5 week program into a 2 week program blending the two assets. Initially, we were told once developed, the program would be given to a vendor for implementation in the field to the operators. This struck me as a bit backwards as to why we would develop a program only to have it sold back to us. I suggested to the group we put on a "train the trainer" course and send out instructors nationwide to get the program to the

operators with minimal costs to the agencies. Having the additional instructors going out, the program would spread much faster to those who needed it. It happened that the FBI Director for the Hazardous Devices School at Redstone was sitting behind me. To make a long story short, he liked the idea and the FBI fully funded the program, and we put on the first “train the trainer” course a few months later in Anaheim, CA. It didn’t cost the agencies anything. We had a responsibility to get the word out. The program was instituted as a regular program at the FBI-HDS in Huntsville, AL the following year.

There is a definite correlation with the “train the trainer” concept to the Great Commission in Matthew 28.

Matthew 28:18-20- “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make *disciples* in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even until the completion of the age.” Amen.”

As we usually define word meanings, according to several dictionary sources, the term “*disciple*” does not directly mean to teach. (although one source listed *teach* as an obsolete definition). It rather implies a committed follower or a learner who adopts the teachings and the lifestyle of the teacher. While disciples learn, they also teach.

Christ’s twelve disciples were His followers and embodied His teachings and way of life. They had a direct relationship *with* the Master. They learned and grew in understanding from Jesus’ teachings and example. They were dedicated to following Him, learning, and growing in His likeness. The major difference between a disciple and an apostle is that a disciple is more of a follower in the learning process, observing the teachings and lifestyle of the teacher. An apostle is a distinctive type of disciple who is sent forth to spread the faith and teachings. The role of the disciple shifts from learner to one who now shares the teachings.

When Jesus sent out His Apostles, He told them to make disciples in all nations. Did that mean they ran out and started knocking on doors in every country? No! Nation does not necessarily mean country. It does mean “peoples.” What people?

Jesus actually sent them out before His crucifixion.

Matthew 10:5-7- “These twelve Jesus sent out after commanding them, saying, “Do not go into *the* way of the Gentiles, and do not enter into a city of the Samaritans; But go instead to the lost sheep of *the* house of Israel. And *as you are* going, proclaim, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”

This may cause some confusion as didn't Jesus die for everyone's sins? We know the Bible does not contradict itself nor can God lie. He later says in **Matthew 15:24-** “But He answered *and* said, “I have not been sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

This too may be confusing, but Jesus sent the Apostle Paul to the gentiles.

Romans 11:13- “I am speaking to you, *the* Gentiles, inasmuch as I am an apostle of *the* Gentiles—I magnify my service,”

Paul became an Apostle after his conversion on the road to Damascus.

Acts 9:15-16- “But the Lord said to him, “Go, for this man is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; For I will show him what great things he must suffer for My name.”

Paul was sent to the gentiles as the Israelites (the Jews and others) rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior. The gentiles would become the Israel of God.

Romans 9:6-8- “However, this does not mean that the word of God has failed because not all of those who *descend* from Israel *are* Israel, Nor because they are Abraham’s seed does it mean that they *are* all children *of the promise*. But “In Isaac shall your seed be called.” That is, those who are the children of the flesh *are* not the children of God; rather, the children of the promise are reckoned as *the* seed.”

Galatians 6:15-16- “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any *spiritual* force; rather, *it is* a new creation *that avails*. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.”

We know from the Old testament that the tribes of Israel constantly rebelled against God and failed to keep the faith.

Romans 10:18-21- “But I say, did they not hear? Yes, indeed, *for it is written*, “Their voices went out into all the earth; their words went out even to the ends of the habitable world.” Nevertheless, I say, did not Israel know? First, Moses said, “I

will provoke you to jealousy through *those who are* not a people. I will anger you through a people without understanding.” Then Isaiah was very bold and said, “I was found by those who were not seeking Me, *and* I was revealed to those who were not inquiring after Me.” However, to Israel he said, “All day long I have stretched out My hands to a people who are disobeying and contradicting.”

This is why Paul was the Apostle sent to preach to the Gentiles. God grafted the Gentiles who *believed* into the family of Abraham.

Galatians 3:26-29- “Because you are all offspring of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.”

God *will* bring back the scattered sheep of Israel, those He cut off for disobedience.

Jeremiah 23:3- “But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them again to their fold. And they shall be fruitful and multiply.”

Romans 11:21-23- “For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He not spare you either. Therefore, behold *the* graciousness and the severity of God: upon those who fell, severity; and upon you, graciousness, if you continue in His graciousness; otherwise, you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, shall be grafted in because God is able to graft them in again.

This slight detour should clarify any concerns over “what people.” All of mankind has the opportunity to follow Jesus Christ and God’s plan of salvation if they so choose. Knowing this, where did the Apostles go to make disciples?

All through the New Testament, the Apostles addressed the believers. They went to the churches that were already established. Why? Believers already attended them. You cannot make a disciple from an unbeliever. The epistles that were not written directly to a church were sent as messages to those believers who were scattered. Let’s take a brief look at the beginning verse of each.

James 1:1- “James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which are in the dispersion: Greetings!”

1 Peter 1:1- “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia;”

2 Peter 1:1- “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:”

1-3 John was written to believers to discern true teachers by their ethics.

Jude 1:1- “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to the called *saints*, sanctified by God *the* Father and kept in Jesus Christ:”

Romans 1:7- “To all those who are in Rome, beloved by God, *the* called saints: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *our* Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 1:2- “To the church of God that is in Corinth, *the* called saints who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, together with all those in every place who are calling on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:”

2 Corinthians 1:1- “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, with all the saints who are in *the* entire region *of* Achaia:”

Galatians 1:2- “And all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:”

Ephesians 1:1- “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of the Father, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus:”

Philippians 1:1- “Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, together with *the* overseers and deacons:”

Colossians 1:2- “To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colosse: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thessalonians 1:1- “Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of *the* Thessalonians, *which is* in God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.”

2 Thessalonians 1:1- “Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of *the* Thessalonians, *which is* in God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ:”

Hebrews- was written to Jews and Christians facing persecution.

1 Timothy 1:2- “To Timothy, *my* true son in *the* faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

2 Timothy 1:2- “To Timothy, *my* beloved son: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God *the* Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Titus 1:4- “To Titus, a true son according to *our* common faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.”

Philemon 1:1-2- “Paul, *the* prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy, a brother, to Philemon, *our* beloved and fellow worker, And to Apphia, *our* beloved, and to Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the church *that meets* in your house:”

Revelation 1:1- “*The* revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show to His servants the things that *are* ordained to come to pass shortly; and He made it known, having sent *it* by His angel to His servant John;”

This should serve as definitive proof that the Apostles did not go out into all the world and knock on doors. They did carry the gospel message to all who believed in order to make them into disciples who in turn would make other disciples. That mission has not changed. *It still applies to all of us today.* Those who do lobby for new followers may just be casting their pearls before swine.

Matthew 7:6- “Do not give that which *is* holy to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before the swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn around and tear you in pieces.”

This in no way negates *our responsibility* in sharing God’s Word and truth whenever we are presented the opportunity. God’s tests run both ways, for those who ask and for those who answer. We must know God and His Word and be prepared to have that “ready answer.”

1 Peter 3:15- “But sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts, and **always be prepared to give an answer** to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope *that is* in you, with meekness and reverence:”

Everyone who has ever been called by God (**John 6:44, 65**) has been called to duty. Regardless of what assignment we may have here on Earth, *it all involves preparation for the First Resurrection and service in God’s Kingdom*. Like the Apostles were, we are now the disciples *in training*. The more we grow in wisdom and knowledge AND in likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ, the better trainer we will become. Amen.