

## **DISCIPLES AND DISCIPLE MAKING CULTURE – Summary 26 April 2022**

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*Conversations have been anonymised and categorised for conciseness.*

### **TOPIC: DISCIPLES AND DISCIPLE MAKING CULTURE**

#### **Summary of key points:**

- Disciple – follower of Jesus, learn, replicate / reproduce.
- Relationships are highly important in the discipleship process.
- Don't assume discipleship is happening or will happen.
- Being intentional is a key to commencing and sustaining discipleship.
- Discipleship tools are helpful to build confidence.
- Gaps in discipleship for NHB – youth, young adults, men, women, low intentional connection, inadequate knowledge of resources available to people to assist in the process of discipleship.

### **PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLESHIP**

From the discussion on “Who or what is a disciple?”, the common themes were: a follower; expressed by action and application; following a teacher – following what others do, observing others, seeing, receiving – experiential. A discipler is someone who gives their time to others in an intentional way. Discipleship is about specific things in following Christ, not general. 1 Thess 1,2 – as you received instruction... do this even more.

Relationship is key to discipleship, with the aim of leading someone to Christ and helping to bring them to maturity. While sometimes it's assumed discipleship is happening, discipleship has to be intentional and any ministry should be underpinned with discipleship. Heart of serving with love. People need to feel loved in being discipled, otherwise legalism. Be on the lookout for new people.

### **DISCIPLESHIP AND CHURCH LIFE AS WHOLE**

Are there observable outcomes? Or are there gaps? Assumptions?

A comment was made that the group meeting (April 26 at Rochedale) was largely a Rochedale people and there might be different observations for each congregation. An example was given re Balmoral: new conversions, very intentional discipleship, people meet often during the week, doing life together as a family.

Discipleship looks different at different congregations (context-dependent). Discipleship needs to be inter-generational also and discipleship groups need to be kept small otherwise effectiveness/relationship is lost.

### **Gaps identified:**

Youth/ Young Adults (16-22 yrs) – young people need to be listened to, we need to recognise they're valuable and allow them to make decisions and to actually do it. Life has changed so dramatically – they need somewhere safe. Train them so they can lead their own Life Groups.

Men and Women - one size doesn't fit all. There needs to be an intentional focus to have every demographic covered.

Tools & resources – there's a problem with knowing what's available and how to locate/obtain it, either online or hard copy. Having discipleship tools grows confidence for discipler.

Making Connection – if a person doesn't feel connected to someone else, there's the potential to slip away.

We need to be intentional about connecting new people, including young people. If they go through issues, there would be people to follow up. Can information be given to someone so that a person can be followed up? Could we have a list of people available that people can be referred to?

Some people are great at matching (HS guidance) – need to know who to match (a discipler with another needing discipleship). We used to have a large pastoral care team who were always on the lookout for new people. Can our Congregation Leaders do more with this?

### **Where do we want to be in 5 to 10 years in discipleship practices and outcomes?**

- Filling the gaps.
- Being intentional in discipling, no matter what area of service.
- Youth and young people being disciplers.
- A shift in culture and evaluating more regularly. Disciples who make disciples – ingrained in who we are – see this as the missional focus.
- The budget should look different. If everyone is doing the job of a disciple, where are our human & financial resources to make sure that people are trained? To make it sustainable, people & money have to be invested. We need a God-inspired person to grow people, teams.