

DISCIPLESHIP DEMANDS CONNECTING WITH OTHER DISCIPLES (#6)

By Bob Young

Introduction

I am not trying to confuse, I want to clarify. The first word I thought about was relationship. Disciples must be in relationship with God, with other disciples. That is true, but it did not communicate with me—my new word is connecting!

Understanding discipleship is the key to understanding unity. Genuine followers have no trouble with unity. Followers who bring their own thoughts, teachings, desires, preferences, methods—this is the stumbling block to unity.

Disciples follow the example of the teacher—the Bible calls this a model, a pattern. The pattern is not just the teachings, the pattern is the example. A pattern can be explained, but the explanation is not the pattern. The pattern of New Testament teaching is action.

Following ONE teacher results in ONE group of followers.

Students who enjoy the same teacher spend time together—camaraderie, talking about the teachings, focused on their points of commonality as they share relationship with the teacher. Disciples spending time together because they are disciples—remembering, sharing, encouraging what unites them. A bane of the modern church—too many activities that say nothing about and have nothing to do with our common allegiance! The earliest disciples assembled specifically—time, activities, why, how.

The modern church has a lot to learn because too many “Christian groups” have altered the definition of shared discipleship.

Discipleship is a lot easier when we are “in class”—around the teacher and other learners, which facilitates our connections. Students who enjoy the same teacher spend time together—camaraderie, talking about the teachings, focused on our common choices, learning, actions, commitments.