

T Cell Training #7

I. Introduction

- A. In this class we are trying to equip you to be a disciple who makes disciples.
- B. More specifically we are attempting to train you to be part of and potentially even lead a new opportunity we are putting in place at CBC called T-Cells.
- C. What are T-Cells? I thought I could highlight some of the explanations I have given of T-Cells over the past six weeks.
 - 1. **Class 1:** "What are T-Cells? It's not too complicated. Since the first word is transformation, that kind of gives you an idea what these groups are about. Personal transformation in community with other believers is the purpose of transformation groups. And they are groups or cells. So transformation groups. We're talking about groups of 3 to 4 men or women. So they are going to be either men or women. And they are going to meet twice a month, at the least. So these are groups of 3 to 4 men or women who meet twice a month, and the goal is to help each other grow. Bible study will be part of that. Fellowship will be part of that. Discussion will be part of that. But changing and growing to be more like Christ is the purpose of transformation groups."
 - 2. **Class 2:** "This class is about discipleship. Or you could say counseling. Since we've got a lot of doctors, discipleship is like preventative care in a sense and counseling is more reparative, is that a word, restorative. It's Galatians 6:1. Someone is stuck. And our transformation groups are going to be a little bit of both, I think."
 - 3. **Class 3:** "There are certain means the Lord ordinarily uses to enable us to grow. 1. Teaching and worship and communion 2. Fellowship with other believers 3. Close friendships 4. Service. Also of course trials, but that's not part of our job as a church. But these are four ordinary means God uses. You might think of them as ingredients in the recipe for a growing Christian, and we want to do our best to provide you opportunities for all four. But specifically lately, we've been emphasizing fellowship and close friendship. What do I mean by fellowship? There's a lot. But basically Christians in church you love and spend time with like really good family. And then close friendship. Somebody who knows you. Somebody you trust. Somebody you meet with on a regular basis. Somebody who helps you apply the Bible to your life and keeps you accountable. And somebody who gives you an example how to follow Jesus. Now, the reality is, you normally need all four of these to grow, and yet, you could possibly go about getting some of these ingredients different ways. But one way we are trying to help you enjoy fellowship and pursue close friendships is by putting certain structures in place. First of all life on life groups. And the focus here is fellowship. This is a group of members of the church you eat meals with on a regular (twice a month) basis for the purpose of sharing life together. And then second of all T-Cells. And the focus here is close friendship, knowing someone, accountability, example. This is a group of normally three to

four individuals you meet with on a regular (twice a month) basis for the purpose of being good biblical friends to one another.

4. **Class 4:** "One thing that is really important for you to understand from the beginning, is the fact that that we don't have a script to follow. "Gospel care is improvisational. Your ministry to a friend may be built upon your biblical knowledge, wisdom, life experience, ministry experience and the knowledge of the person and situation. But the words you choose to speak and the actions you choose to take are not predetermined. They are improvised in the context of relationship. There is no script for gospel care."
5. **Class 5:** "We are going to be putting a special opportunity in place hopefully, toward the beginning of next year that we are calling T-Cells where are giving you the opportunity to practice what you are learning the information you are receiving in this class. And so there are going to be groups of three to four people, and these are going to be groups that you sign up for, where you meet about twenty times over the course of a year, for the purpose of discipling one another."
6. **Class 6:** "And what are T-Cells? They are groups of three or four people where you get together to help each other change and grow."

- D. One question we might have after hearing all that is how do we do this? This is the reason we are having this class. So far, we have laid out several elements of the process:
 1. Build a relationship by really caring for the person in your T-Cell.
 2. Ask good questions and listen to the answers and think carefully about what you have learned.
 3. Consider that data that you have gathered together. Make sure you understand the way they are interpreting the data, and seek to interpret it biblically.
 4. Look for ways you can serve them through praying, pursuing, sharing, bearing and forgiving.
- E. This morning we are going to take a step back quickly and summarize those four steps by talking about one quality. Those four steps are practical steps to help you live out this quality, and so if this quality isn't true of you, then obviously all those steps aren't going to help you.

II. Practice Hospitality

A. Romans 12:13

1. What is hospitality?
2. What does it mean to practice hospitality? "This particular phrase is actually pursuing the love of strangers."
3. "Biblical hospitality is more than room and board. Hospitality is both action and affection, receiving and loving a stranger. You might ask why is this distinction important? And the answer is that it is possible to offer all the components of hospitality - food, a bed, a shower, without love, but this is not biblical hospitality. Anyone can do acts of hospitality, the outward dimension. But there is an inner dimension that requires a change of heart. 1 Peter 4:9 says we are to show hospitality to one another without grumbling or complaining. If we grumble or complain while giving food or lodging, we have not truly

shown biblical hospitality. This is because hospitality is the glad reception of the stranger. Hospitality engages the stranger with both our hands and our hearts.”

4. And it's the heart part I am wanting to get at.
5. “We tend to think of hospitality as a single action that is pursued occasionally, as if we are some kind of quota system. I, and maybe you also, think that if we do something hospitable every once in a while we have checked off the box for the month and are free to go back to our private life until we feel some measure of guilt again. But for the Christian, hospitality is not just an act to be performed, it is a posture to be assumed.”

B. Why?

1. It's talked about a lot in Scripture.
 - a) The earliest books
 - b) The prophets
 - c) The gospels
 - d) The epistles(1) Important insight in 1 Peter 4:8,9
2. It's emphasized as very important
 - a) The parable of the Good Samaritan
3. It's not something we can be neutral about. Paul says we need to pursue it.
4. Clearly, this is not just a command for females.
 - a) 1 Timothy 3:2
5. It's not just a command for people we like.
 - a) Love your enemy
 - b) James 2:1ff
6. We see the importance of hospitality by looking at Jesus
 - a) His life
 - b) The gospel itself is an example of God's hospitality(1) Ephesians 2:11-13
7. It's rooted in worship
 - a) The biblical motivation for hospitality has to do with God's hospitality. Looking back and being amazed at what God has done to welcome you in. Looking forward and being amazed at the eternal hospitality God is going to show you. And then looking at your life right now and see the way God is currently loving you the stranger by adopting you and making you his child.
 - b) How do you respond to that?
 - c) You worship through praise and you worship through imitation!

C. There's lots of reasons to pursue hospitality and one great place to do that is here at church and that's one thing we are trying to do in these T-Cells. There's much more to what the Bible teaches about hospitality than just this, but this one specific way we can be hospitable. Through these T-Cells you can seek to show love to someone you don't know very deeply and pursue a deeper relationship with them so they can mature and grow in Christ.

1. Colossians 2:1-3!

