

## **E&E Review: Handout for Review and Mastery**

In the January 2019 Engage and Equip Live talk I talked about the fact that people's temperaments tend to focus with different emphasis on three things – truth, passion, action. Or in Christian terms, doctrine, devotion and duty.

There are three areas of human focus for the three areas of vision we talked about in the first three Engage and Equip gatherings.

### Ministry in the human triumvirate:

1. Devotion (Passion) - Ministry is a love; you have to care about what Jesus loves
2. Doctrine (Truths) - Ministry is a craft; you have to know how to do it
3. Duty (Action) - Ministry is a commission; we have been called to DO something

## **Devotion (passion) – Ministry is a love; you have to care about what Jesus loves.**

John 21:12-19

Ministry takes sacrifice. Time, reputation, relational risk, disciplined preparation, loss of privacy, financial generosity, lifestyle change. We will only make these sacrifices and enjoy them over the long term if our hearts are tuned to the things Jesus loves, and we want to serve him by serving them.

1. How tuned and passionate is your heart these days in loving what Jesus loves and wanting to serve them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What has God left you responsible to do to “keep up your spiritual (fire) fervor, serving the Lord?” (Romans 12:11)

## **Doctrine (truths) – Ministry is a craft; you have to learn how to do it.**

Ephesians 4:12ff

Craftsmanship is a thing you get better at over time. You can be solid at a few things, but it takes time to master anything, much less many things. The itinerant ministers in Ephesians 4 are not charged with ministry, but with equipping all of God's people (every disciple) for ministry. There is an implicit command here: “Be equipped for ministry by these people who are called gifts from God.”

1. What ministry can you do solidly, even if not with mastery? What way/s can you serve people for good, even if it isn't pretty?

2. What kind of service have you learned to do better over the last year? Who is equipping you and how are you getting better at the craft of ministry?

**Duty (action) – Ministry is a Commission (a people given a mission). Go and DO it.**

Matthew 28:19-20 (“Great Commission”)

Jesus has charged his people with making disciples by going to people, lead them to the new identity in Christ displayed in baptism, and into the full obedience of mature discipleship - which includes accepting this commission for ourselves.

1. Have you share the gospel, invited anyone to faith, invested in an evangelistic relationship or invited anyone to where they would hear the gospel or experience God’s people fairly recently? (In the last three – four months)?
2. Vince and Niccole broke down the Evangelism process into three parts: 1. Ask questions 2. Give invitations 3. Share the gospel. (See the E&E Live talk from October 2018.) Think about a relationship you have with a person who isn’t a believer. Which step is the next step? What are you going to do?
3. Obedience: obeying “everything Jesus commanded” doesn’t just mean sharing the gospel to make disciples, it means everything. Is there any area of your life that you know you are not obeying Jesus in? Do you know the real reason why you are resisting him?

## June Practical Lesson: shepherding people through the danger window

All of us know that people are more in danger of making the wrong choice or doing the wrong thing or thinking the wrong way at sometimes in their life as opposed to others. For example, ages 13 – 16 are well-known among parents as difficult ages where kids can go in many different directions. It is an important and difficult window in which to shepherd children.

Sometimes we think that once somebody accepts Jesus, they have passed a major danger window. They have considered the gospel, and they have been drawn to it, and they have believed. They are safe and God. We can relax and rejoice.

This is the opposite of the truth, from our perspective. When somebody professes Jesus, they are in fact in the most dangerous window of their faith other than the moment where they first hear the gospel, or when they are the beneficiary of success or the sufferer of pain.

Why is this?

1. There is usually a strong and stiff spiritual counterattack – demonic.
2. There is a natural human reaction to flip back after big decisions. The more absolute the decision is, the more likely this reaction is.
3. The person is a “baby Christian” - which is a relevant name, since they don’t know how to do basic things in the Christian life- including defend themselves, and feed themselves. They are in an exceedingly vulnerable state.
4. They will begin to feel the alienation that comes from parting company with the world. This may be the first time the real fear of isolation from the world, and possibly persecution, will dawn on them.
5. They will find change hard, even though they thought it would be easy, since they were happy and excited to come to Christ. Yet all of their habits are still in the World’s favor. When they find Christian life difficult, they may leave it as fast as they began it.

### **Key example: the parable of the sower.**

Matthew 13:18-23 18 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. 22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. 23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

(See also Mark 4)

The point of the parable is to let us know that the good word will have 4 different results:

- a. It can go nowhere- the seed can be stolen
- b. It can grow a little and then shrivel up- It can wither from having no root
- c. It can get choked - over time, the Gospel can get choked out

- d. It can grow to fruit- and produce exponentially what was sown.

We are supposed to take form this that: **there can be nothing wrong with the sower, or the seed, and the seed may not produce fruit (faithfulness), or even plants (faith).**

But all of the ministry of Jesus and the apostles tells us that **we should not accept this lying down. These four results are not to be seen as fate- but simply what happens. The apostle Paul for example, teaches people constantly how to avoid the other three fates.**

Much of our ministry inside the church is to help people avoid the third fate, and find the fourth. (see Substance series, and escaping Babel series)

But **one of the ministries that can easily be neglected is the second-** the person that comes to faith and is excited. This person, sometimes launches into a life of faith, and matures nicely. But **many times, the new believer professes faith early, and then falls away seemingly as quickly.**

**So how do we shepherd people through this dangerous window of their lives to become fruitful Disciples?**

**1. Preach the whole Gospel before they believe.**

- a. If you don't talk to them about the gospel in a whole way before they believe, you may be artificially limiting what you can talk with them about after they believe.

**2. Warn them of the difficulties they are going to face in this period of transition**

- a. they will usually face at least the following:
- i. They will fear they have made the wrong decision
  - ii. They will think negative and critical thoughts about you- the person who shared with them.
  - iii. Something inexplicable may happen to them they did not expect- an emergency or a surprise.
  - iv. They will find something in the Christian faith hard
  - v. everyone in their life may not be very excited about them coming to faith.
  - vi. They will experience spiritual warfare

**3. Have frequent personal meetings with them.** Spend more time with them, not less. (3 day rule)

- a. My practice is to follow up the very next day.

**4. Go over key doctrines and practices very early on.**

- a. What salvation is and what has happened to you
- b. Basic components of Christian life
- c. Assurance
- d. Surrender/ total commitment
- e. Reading the Bible
- f. Prayer
- g. Indwelling of the Spirit
- h. Telling others about Christ
- i. Your new family, the local church

**5. Do devotions together:**

- a. Blueprint, Substance
- b. Reading the Bible together

**6. Engage in groups**

- a. Worship
- b. Small Groups
- c. Classes
- d. connect them with a mentor