

LAMPLIGHTERS INTERNATIONAL – DISCIPLE-MAKER TIP #1

TITLE: "SANCTIFICATION 101"

There are three types of small groups – the Fellowship Group, the Affinity Group, and the Discipleship Group. The primary focus of the Fellowship Group is connecting (usually food is a close second). The primary focus of the Affinity Group is the particular spiritual goal (prayer, social activism, etc.) around which the group members rally. The primary focus of the Discipleship Group is spiritual life change – transformation into the image of Jesus Christ.

The Bible uses the word sanctification to describe the process of spiritual transformation. The Greek word (*hagiazō*) means “*to set apart and dedicate a person or thing for the service of God and to dedicate it as a sacrifice.*” When Paul told the Roman Christians to present their lives as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1), he wanted them to reject the world’s values and priorities and dedicate themselves to God and His service.

How is fallen man, sinful and self-centered, transformed into a dedicated servant of God? Nothing less than the power of God’s Word and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit is needed. Jesus said, “Sanctify (set them apart) them (believers) by (means of) Your Truth. Your word is truth.” (John 17:17, parentheses added). **THE PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION IN THE BELIEVERS’ LIFE IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO HIS RELATIONSHIP TO GOD’S WORD.** The believer must expose himself to God’s word and humbly submit to what the Word says. The Bible says, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.” (Romans 10:17)

Two important questions: “If we are seeking to influence others for Christ, are we allowing ourselves to be transformed by God’s Word every day?” and, “As a discipleship leader, is God’s Word the focus of our group time with those we are trying to move forward in Christ?” If not, we can’t expect them to become living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is every believer’s reasonable service to God.” (Romans 12:1).

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