

Show Notes

Show Opening (JM)

Welcome to Let's Chat, an ongoing conversation with youth workers and leaders about student ministry and whatever else we end up talking about. Thanks for joining us!

Today's episode will focus on Discipleship and as part of our discussion, we'll fill you in about The Journey Event that is right around the corner.

[Introductions]

I'm your host, J.M. McGinnis and today I'm thrilled to be joined by:

Lisa Aparicio -Co-Lead Pastor at New Hope Church of the Nazarene in Kansas City, Missouri, Ministry Development Coordinator for the Global NYI Team, and editor of the Be, Do, Go book series outlining our global vision of evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development (*Say hello or whatever is natural*)

Kent Davenport - Lead Pastor at Morgan Church of the Nazarene in Fort Morgan, Colorado and the DP for the Colorado District

Noelle Eichenberger - Lead Pastor at Keeseville Good Shepherd Church of the Nazarene in New York and DP for Upstate New York

Jeremiah McClure - Student Ministries Pastor at Amplify Church in Willow Spring, North Carolina

Episode Preview (Host)

Today on Let's Chat we're going to discuss the question . . .

- [What is discipleship and what does it look like today in practical, everyday, walking around terms?]
 - Discipleship is a term we use a lot and I'm sure we would all agree is important, but what it is in practical terms and how we measure its success is sometimes a bit of a moving target. So today we want to make the concept as practical as possible and give you the listener some best practices on implementation as well as evaluation when it comes to discipleship in student ministry.

Host's Outline / Questions

- **Let's define what it is we are talking about - What is discipleship? Lisa**
 - The big picture - what is it in broad terms?
 - When does it happen in the life of a Christian?
 - How well is the church doing this and why?
- **What does it look like / feel like from the discipler's perspective? Kent**
 - In terms of time and energy
 - How do you know you are discipling someone?
 - Are there "deal breakers"?
 - Is it for every student?
- **What does it look like / feel like from the disciple's perspective? Noelle**
 - How comfortable should I feel?

- What should I expect to happen?
- **How does discipleship work programmatically? (or does it?) Jeremiah**
 - When and where?
 - How does curriculum fit in?
 - How much is on-site vs off-site?
- **How do we know it's working?**
 - What does success look like?
 - What does it look like when it's not going well?
 - How often do we measure? (Or do we measure at all?)
- **Let's talk about The Journey event - how can we utilize this discipleship tool?**

-> (This is Lisa's note): I'm happy to explain about The Journey event and the follow-up resources however much or little you are wanting. :)

YES TO ALL!!!

Lisa's notes:

- *When does it happen in the life of a Christian?* - I like how the current denominational emphasis on discipleship (A Journey of Grace) reminds us that as parents we don't wait until our children make a profession of faith to start discipling them. How we live, how we orient our lives, our times of prayer, sharing the truths of Scripture, and our conversations about faith begin right away. This can be similar in how we interact with others, knowing that God's grace has already been at work in their lives and we are invited to be attentive to what God is doing and how God is inviting us to join in that work.
- *What does it look like / feel like from the discipler's perspective? In terms of time and energy* - Even when we are working with youth, we have much to learn from them and on good weeks I remember that the discipleship journey is a shared one and I am not there just to give, but to be challenged and to grow as well.
- *Is it for every student?* - Everyone might not be ready for a more focused time of discipleship, but discipleship is for everyone.
- *How comfortable should I feel?* - The disciple should feel comfortable in the sense that there must be trust between all those in the group, a commitment to respect, support, confidentiality (of course acknowledging the limits of confidentiality if topics of harming oneself or others or being harmed comes up). However, discipleship itself is not a comfortable process. It invites God to shape us, to help us unlearn that which is contrary to who God has created us to be and to relearn what it means to live in this world as a disciple of Jesus. That's not been a comfortable process for me, but it is deeply fulfilling.
- *How does discipleship work programmatically? (or does it?)* - I think this depends so much on the culture of one's community, church, youth group, etc. I think the commitment to journey together, to be shaped by God, and to seek God's best for our own lives and each other's lives, can transcend the format, the material, etc.
- *How do we know it's working?* - This is the million dollar question in all areas of ministry! I don't know how popular my answer will be, but it's one I deeply believe to be true when it comes to discipleship. Discipleship is "working" when our youth are disciples who are making other disciples. I find this deeply challenging in my own ministry, but nonetheless, I believe that gets to the heart of how discipleship is to be shaping and sending us and our youth.
- **Let's talk about The Journey event - how can we utilize this discipleship tool?**

Noelle's notes:

- What is discipleship?
 - I think we often overcomplicate this... we love to formalize discipleship...and that's not a bad thing, but I think a big part of discipleship is simply living your life with the other person. I think of Jesus and how he didn't just teach the disciples, but he ate with them, fished with them and allowed them to see Him in His most vulnerable moments. It's also a challenge; Does your private life match up with what you present on a Sunday or in a weekly Bible study?

How well is the church doing this?

We can always do better... if we've learned anything from the last year, it's that we need to be willing to try new things. It doesn't have to be a formal program, it's investing our time. We love to get people to the altar and push people to that moment of decision... But what happens after that? There needs to be some intentionality to walk with our students through those initial moments of grace and to allow space for doubt, for questions and wrestling through some things....

I always think of my husband. I would not be a pastor today if it wasn't for the time my husband spent with me as a new believer... I had QUESTIONS and he let me ask them... he also wasn't afraid to admit that he didn't know ... what he did well was always pointing me back to my Bible for answers... and we'd do it together. It wasn't "just read this chapter." It was, let's look at this and talk about it and see if it matches up with what we are seeing.

Programmatically- I am loving our church's current focus on discipleship. The Journey Event-it's starting from the global church, but gives resources to trickle down to the district, local and personal level.... Knowing that we are doing this together, and being able to show our students that there are so many others out there who have a desire to live for Jesus, that's huge! I think programming gives us a place to start-It equips us to move forward, but we also have to know that that is just the start... As the discipler, our time is huge and our desire to spend our time with disciples is very obvious. Programming gives an opportunity to get into the Word together, to ask questions, eat together and get to know our students... but it needs to go beyond that, whether that's a small group or something else.

How do we know it's working? I always think of the fruit of the Spirit...It's an outward reflection of an inner working... Are we seeing our students' lives transformed? One question that I love to ask my congregation is this; "Do people know that you've been with Jesus?" "Can the people in your life tell that your life has been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit?"

Numbers matter and that can be discouraging if you're not seeing physical growth in your group, but it always comes down to life change. Are students getting in the Word? Are they asking questions... Do their lives look different than when they first accepted Jesus... What kind of fruit are we bearing?

What does it feel like? I think back to my early days as a Christian... I would go out on Saturday night and roll into church on Sunday, late and only half awake... But I would go because I knew that Ben (my now husband) would call me and ask me about service. I had many Sundays that I had no desire to go but I went because I knew I needed to be able to answer the questions he asked me. It should be a healthy mix of comfort/familiarity but also some discomfort as the disciple is challenged to stretch. There has to be the expectation of growth and some accountability to move forward.

Kent's notes:

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Jeremiah's notes:

- Host's Outline / Questions
- • Let's define what it is we are talking about - What is discipleship?
- *Direct and indirect discipleship. In terms of direct to the student thru myself and the youth ministry team, small group leaders, etc... but also indirect because we disciple parents, who hopefully disciple their children.*
- ○ The big picture - what is it in broad terms?
- ○ When does it happen in the life of a Christian?
- ○ How well is the church doing this and why?
- *Sometimes the church can focused on one piece of a bigger concept. With discipleship that trap is knowledge. Specifically, knowledge (good) without application. Without a reason for learning the knowledge, you are learning, but not growing. What it is not... knowledge for knowledge's sake*
- • What does it look like / feel like from the discipler's perspective?
- ○ In terms of time and energy
- ○ How do you know you are discipling someone? I personally look for the lightbulb moments. Those aha times...
- ○ Are there "deal breakers"?
- ○ Is it for every student? Yes. And for every parent
- • What does it look like / feel like from the disciple's perspective?
- ○ How comfortable should I feel?
- *"And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child." As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong."*
- Hebrews 12:5-13 NLT
- ○ What should I expect to happen?
- • How does discipleship work programmatically? (or does it?)
- *To me it is similar to worship - we plan and practice and prepare... but ultimately God has to show up. We make room for God to do the growing.*
- ○ When and where?
- ○ How does curriculum fit in? *Give guidance*
- ○ How much is on-site vs off-site?
- • How do we know it's working?

- ○ What does success look like?
- ○ What does it look like when it's not going well? *Boredom - No Change - false confidence of knowledge alone.*
- ○ How often do we measure? (Or do we measure at all?)

	I Struggle with...	<u>How Often?</u>
1	Anger	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
2	Unkind, criticizing, gossip	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
3	Destructive or Violent Thoughts	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
4	Difficulty Forgiving Others	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
5	Difficulty Forgiving Myself	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
6	Discontentment	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
7	Discouragement/ Depression	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
8	Envy/Jealousy	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
9	Fear, Anxiety, &/or Worry	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
10	Feeling like I'm not growing Spiritually	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
11	Feeling/Acting Proudful	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
12	Laziness	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
13	Loneliness	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
14	Feelings of Lust &/or Viewing Pornography	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
15	Lying	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily
16	Feeling Loved &/or Liked	Rarely/Never - A few times a year - Monthly - Weekly - Daily

- • Let's talk about The Journey event - how can we utilize this discipleship tool?

Next Step

What are some resources we could point our listeners to who'd like to know more about discipleship?

SIGN UP FOR THE JOURNEY! August 13th and 14th

Gotandem.com

nazarene.org/nyijourney

Dr. Busic's book

Youth and young adult leader's guide

Travel log

Summary

Host summarizes the discussion in a few sentences and then transitions into the show closing.

Show Closing

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