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ME A MENTOR?

**Establishing and Sustaining a Meaningful Intern Ministry in
the Local Church**

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And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

II Timothy 2:2

The Bible contains a remarkable record of relationships. It was the life of Moses that impacted the life of Joshua. Elisha was mentored by Elijah. Paul partnered in ministry with Silas, Barnabas, Luke, John Mark, Timothy and many others. The New Testament Christian is given a supernatural capacity for companionship (I John 4:8). Because Pastoral ministry is more caught than taught, every pastor ought to be involved in mentoring others for ministry (II Tim. 2:2). Let's give attention to what it means to establish and sustain a meaningful intern ministry.

A BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY

The Pastoral Epistles are filled with important information for all who would mentor men for ministry. Paul's ministry to Timothy provides 3 important steps to consider if you would be involved in passing the torch to the next generation through internship ministry.

STEP #1 - TOUCHING - THE RISK OF INVOLVEMENT.

It is likely that Paul met Timothy as he travelled on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6-7; 16:1-3). Paul's invitation to Timothy to travel would soon yield a well-worn passport (Acts 17:15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4; 21). For 15 years, Timothy travelled with Paul. Timothy's name would not be known to us had Paul not risked involvement with this young man.

STEP #2 - TEACHING - THE RESPONSIBILITY OF INSTRUCTION.

A quick reading of I and II Timothy proves that Paul is bold to teach Timothy. It seems that there is no topic too sensitive:

- Consider the subjects Paul discusses:
 - 1.) False doctrine and discernment (1:4-7, 18-20).
 - 2.) Submission (2:1-3 / Civil; 2:11 / Women).
 - 3.) Leadership (3 / Bishops and Deacons).
 - 4.) Marriage, Meat and Exercise (4).
 - 5.) Money (5)
- Consider the spirit with which Paul discusses these topics
 - 1.) A spirit of appreciation (1:12).
 - 2.) A spirit of contentment (2:7).
 - 3.) A spirit of expectation (II Tim. 1:4).
 - 4.) A spirit of commitment (II Tim. 1:11).

STEP #3 – TRUSTING - THE REWARD OF INSTALLATION.

Paul counseled care before installation. The bishop could not be a "novice."

- Paul spoke of his trust for Timothy (I Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:19-22).
- Paul showed his trust for Timothy (He sent him as a trouble-shooter).

The highest compliment that a minister can be paid is to be included in ministry (Luke 9:2; John 20:21).

A PRACTICAL MINISTRY

Mentoring through internship requires careful organization and brings many practical questions. Here are some practical tips for successful implementation of an internship program.

Practical Pointer for Participation – What to do with them?

1. Attend all board meetings, staff meetings, etc.
2. Plan a daily schedule with a weekly accountability meeting.
3. Have them teach and preach and serve in the services.
 - A balanced schedule of their ministry involvement should be prepared before they arrive – available.
 - Schedule their service opportunities ahead of time.
4. Have mentoring sessions with them on practical themes: How to preach, administration, church finances, etc. Build these times into their schedule before they arrive.
5. Build your mid-week ministry emphasis with interns.
6. Send them on mission trips.
7. Make sure they have their devotions, read and study.
8. Bring them to funerals, weddings, etc.
9. Send them to camp.
10. Do not make them _____!

Random Ruminations on Recruitment – Where to find them?

1. The best recruits may be homegrown but remember a couple of things:
 - Homegrown recruits may not be well-respected (Matt. 13:57).
 - Homegrown recruits may not be stretched like a stranger.
2. Only recruit interns who will first and foremost provide an _____ (I Tim. 4:12).
 - One of the greatest values an intern will bring is “rub-off value.” An intern who is an example will preach by his conduct.
 - You will want to check references and get references to provide references.
 - Do a thorough background check and include a criminal background check if necessary.
3. Ask specific questions in the recruiting process:
 - Is the intern “called to preach?”
 - Is the intern a leader on campus?
 - Has the intern preached or served in practical ministries before?
4. Good interns breed other good interns – ask for recommendations from those who have been successful.

Free Focus on Finances – How to pay them?

1. Set a goal of providing a little more than they could make working a 40 hour week. For example: If a young man works for \$10 per hour for 40 hours and works for 10 weeks, he could make \$4,000. Provide more.
2. Make it a matter of faith and planning.
 - \$1,600 from the General Fund at the end of 10 weeks.
 - \$80 per week from the General Fund for meals and vehicle.
 - An end of the summer offering.
3. Check that they carry health insurance.
4. Payment may be granted in the form of a scholarship to their school or taken in a lump sum and reported on a 1099 or W-2.

Helpful Hints on Hospitality – Where to put them?

1. Housing may be in church-provided facilities or with church families or a combination. It's best for them to have some privacy. Ask vacationers to volunteer to have an intern house-sit.
2. Be sure that you provide housing policies – available.
3. Evening meals in the homes of your church family are very much appreciated. We send interns out for meals everyday but Monday.
 - Have them ask for testimonies when they are out.
 - Have them in the pastor's home for a meal once a week and at other times!

Beneficial Blessings from this Burden – What good do they do us?

Aside from simply following our biblical responsibility, the following practical benefits flow from well-managed internship ministries:

1. The church family is encouraged that young people are serving the Lord!
2. The teens have young men to look up to and be like.
3. You are building a network from which you will draw when you are seeking partners in ministry.
4. Well-trained interns will keep the summer ministry alive.
5. Young interns help keep the seasoned-pastor connected to what's happening with young adults.