

# GLOBAL CONNECTIONS India Forum



## 1. The importance of Discipleship-making for Mission in India

- a. Character – Who we are
- b. Competency – What we do
- c. Content – What we believe and how we know what to do and be

Especially important

- where Christians are a minority
- where the dominant worldview is in conflict with the Gospel
- where disciples are first generation believers
- where the churches lack significant training resources

## 2. How disciples are formed

- a. In context
- b. In Christian community

Some myths about discipleship

- Only for basic/new Christianity
- It can occur in isolation
- It involves no content
- It only involves content
- It can be achieved by equipping church leaders without recognising their place in building up the body of Christ as his disciples – The myth of trickle-down discipleship

## 3. The place of Theological Education by Extension in discipleship making and making disciplers

- a. accessible
- b. contextually appropriate
- c. interactive
- d. church-based
- e. enables life-skills

## 4. The focus of Theological Education by Extension

- a. Equipping all the people of God – Eph 4.11,12
- b. Seeking maturity for all – Col 1.28
- c. Passing on what has been learned – 2 Tim 2:2

## 5. The example of TAFTEE – from basic discipleship to professional ministry training

- a. Basic Discipleship – Abundant Life
- b. Foundational Discipleship for Local Leadership – Following Jesus
- c. Intermediate Discipleship and Leadership – BTh
- d. Professional Training – MDiv and MTh

*Other Indian providers of Theological Education by Extension*

**ITEEN (Institute for Theological Education by Extension Nepal):**

Offers SEAN programmes in Nepali for the Nepali diaspora, especially in North and East India.

<http://www.iteen.org.np/>

**ACTS Academy Distance Education programmes :**

The ACTS Academy based in Bangalore offers the following distance learning programmes - M.A., M.Th, M.Phil, Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management and Doctoral degrees. For more information and application details, please write to [communications@actsgroup.org](mailto:communications@actsgroup.org)

**Southern Asia Bible College/Global School of Open Learning**

Offers a BTh and MDiv by Distance Learning. Also offers an M.Div. Integrative. This programme is offered to those who have completed their Bachelor of Theology and would like to upgrade to the M.Div. degree for the specific purpose of ministerial advancement. This two year programme includes two residential modules (four months each) and four distance learning modules (four months each).

<http://sabc.cgld.org/contact-us/>

**Union Biblical Seminary, Pune**

The extension courses have been designed to be appropriate for people studying at home while continuing other occupations and being involved in Christian ministry. This situation is challenging, but also provides unique opportunities for integrating study with life and ministry.

Courses offered in English

Certificate in Mission Studies (CMS)

Diploma in Mission Studies (DMS)

Master of Divinity (MDiv)

Courses offered in Marathi

Bachelor of Biblical Studies (BBS)

<http://www.ubs.ac.in/external.php>

See also

**SEAN International**

Whose materials are used by TAFTEE and ITEEN for discipleship and ministry training and who were a significant partner in developing the Train and Multiply (<http://www.trainandmultiply.com/>) materials that are now offered as an independent programme. <http://www.seaninternational.com/>



So far in this lesson you have been considering where, when & how you, as an individual, could sow God's word. But now I want to suggest a sowing project which you & your group can do together

### Scripture distribution project Why?

We have already seen that there are many different means of sowing the word, and that it can be done at any time or place. So why do we need to organise a project? And why should the project be for distribution of the scriptures?

#### Why organise a project?

23.17 Jesus conducted two sowing projects with his disciples.

i) In the Year of Popularity how many sowers did Jesus send throughout Galilee? Read Matthew 10:5 and answer.

ii) How many did he send out during the Year of Passion? Read Luke 10:1.

\_\_\_\_\_

iii) Did they go alone or two by two?

\_\_\_\_\_

23.18 Jesus didn't do his work single-handed: he shared his ministry with the disciples. He sent them out on sowing projects. We too have a share in Jesus' ministry of sowing to-day. This means that:

- a) he wants us to sow alone.
- b) he wants to send us out in pairs.
- c) he wants us to stay at home.

23.19 Why organise a sowing project? The first reason is:

- a) it is Jesus' own method.
- b) it is a very efficient use of manpower.
- c) it is likely to produce good results.
- d) it is more personal than an advertising campaign.

23.20 So the first reason for organising a sowing project is that it is Jesus' own method. The second reason is that it creates an opportunity for witnessing instead of just waiting for an opportunity, for which we may not be prepared when it does come. Jesus not only welcomed people who came to him, but also went out seeking them.

A. Christian should always be on the alert for opportunities of witnessing.

B. Christian should create opportunities for witnessing.

Which of the above is true?

- i) Only A
- ii) Only B
- iii) Both A & B
- iv) Neither A nor B

23.21 We must create opportunities of witnessing. That is the second reason for organising a sowing project. What is the first reason ?

23.22 i) In considering a scripture distribution project we have now looked at the first question, which is:

ii) Two reasons were given in answer to that question. They are:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_

23.23 Now we must look at the second question, which is:

**Why distribute the scriptures?**

23.24 We answered the first question by appealing to Jesus' own practice. If we try to answer this question in the same way, what answer are we likely to get?

- a) That Jesus' disciples did distribute the scriptures on their preaching tours.
- b) That they did NOT distribute the scriptures.

23.25 Read Matt. 10:5-10. These are Jesus' orders to the sowers of the word.

They are to preach as they go, and (1)\_\_\_\_\_ the sick, (2)\_\_\_\_\_ the dead, (3)\_\_\_\_\_ lepers and (4)\_\_\_\_\_ demons. According to this, are they to distribute the scriptures? (5)\_\_\_\_\_.

23.26 Why did they not distribute the scriptures?

- a) Nobody in those days could read.
- b) Jesus couldn't afford to buy tracts.
- c) Scripture portions were not available

23.27 The Jewish Bible in those days was written by hand on large scrolls of cloth which were heavy and expensive to produce. There were no books with pages as we know them, and printing had not been invented.

For all these reasons scripture portions \_\_\_\_\_(were/were not) available.

23.28 All Jewish boys were taught Hebrew in the local synagogue. So the people were not illiterate. Moreover, we know from the gospels that Jesus knew and loved the scriptures. So if Bibles and scripture portions had been available, do you think that Jesus would have supplied them to the apostles for distribution ? \_\_\_\_\_

23.29 Whenever a pair of apostles arrived in a town or village to preach the gospel, we can imagine that they would be busy from morning to night - healing, exercising and talking about the kingdom of heaven. People would know that they had been with Jesus by the power that they demonstrated. Many would believe because of their words and deeds. As long as they were in the town, people would find new life in Jesus. But then they would go to the next place. If they could have left the word of God behind with the people in that town

- a) the work of sowing would go on.
- b) the sowing would come to a stop.

*Questions for Discussion*

- 1) Do we agree that mission will fail without discipleship?
  - a. What does this mean for evangelism and church planting in India (especially in the face of persecution)?
  - b. What does it mean for social, relief, and medical mission?
  
- 2) How can we encourage contextually appropriate church-based forms of discipleship?
  - a. Do the resources of TEE/Train and Multiply meet this need?
  - b. How do we encourage the training of facilitators?
  
- 3) Is it important to keep a balance between the three aspects of discipleship?
  - a. How can we encourage a true interaction between content, character formation and teaching competencies (skills)?
  - b. What advantages do church based models of learning (such as TEE/Train and Multiply) have in this?
  - c. What dangers (if any) do we perceive to these modes of learning?

