



Course Name: SALT Discipleship Lesson 8 - Making Authentic Connections with Others
By Mike Vaughn

Course description:

This course brings forward ideas on how to make authentic connections with those around us for the cause of Christ.

Course Objectives: By the end of this class students will have:

- A. Considered and discussed how we can connect with others for the cause of Christ.
- B. Created a plan for how to connect with others to share the gospel.

Outline of the class: Divide the class into groups of three or four. Ask each group to spend about 10-15 minutes and write out or list answers to each of the questions below. Afterwards, ask them to share their responses with the entire class.

A. Who here are disciple makers?

- 1. Have you ever told people about your favorite restaurant or TV show or book or movie?
When you do, you are a disciple-maker for that restaurant, TV show, book, etc.
- 2. We can all be disciple-makers for Jesus?

B. How do you get connected to those around you? Do you genuinely care and love others? (*Ask each group to spend time working on this before sharing the information below*)

- 1. Really care and listen – giving your full attention.
- 2. “Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity.” – Simone Weil
- 3. Are you actively listening *or* wanting to share what’s on your mind? Active listening is a skill that can be developed.
- 4. Be vulnerable and share your struggles. So many are afraid to share their struggles for fear of being judged harshly.

C. To develop an authentic relationship:¹

1. How do we make authentic relationships? (*Ask each group to spend a few minutes working on how they would answer this question*)
2. Consider 3 question conversations with those we interact with.
 - a. Polite question
 - b. Interest question
 - c. Caring question – Is there anything we can pray about?

D. Probably during a subsequent interaction:²

1. Are they on a spiritual journey? Where are they?
2. Not interested / Curious / Seeking / Following / Growing

E. How do sociologists say people convert to a religion?

“The basis for successful conversionist movements is growth through social networks, through a structure of direct and intimate interpersonal attachments. Most new religious movements fail because they quickly become closed, or semi-closed networks. That is, they fail to keep forming and sustaining attachments to outsiders and therefore lose the capacity to grow. Successful movements discover techniques for remaining open networks, able to reach out and into new adjacent social networks.”

“Data based on records kept by a Mormon mission president give powerful support to this proposition. When missionaries make cold calls, knock on the doors of strangers, this eventually leads to a conversion once out of a thousand calls. However, when missionaries first make contact with a person in the home of a Mormon friend or relative of that person, this results in a conversion 50% of the time.”

“... we must discover how early Christians maintained open networks...”

The Rise of Christianity, Rodney Stark

F. Where can we make new connections? (*Ask each group to spend a few minutes working on how they would answer this question*)

1. Do *their* things in *their* places - get behind mercy ministries needed in the community.
2. Do *their* things in *our* places - do the mercy ministries in our building. AA or Celebrate Recovery or community parenting classes or American Heritage Girls or Young Life, etc.

¹ Stan Granberg: *Empty Church*

² Stan Granberg: *Empty Church*

3. Do *our* things in *our* places - get nonbelievers in our facilities to attend our services or have a meal in your home.

Conclusion:

- A. We can make disciples by genuinely caring about the souls of others.
- B. We must get back to basics in connecting with others - love and seek the lost.

Book Recommendations:

Rodney Stark: *The Rise of Christianity*

Stan Granberg: *Empty Church*