

Faith Pulpit

Decide to Delegate (It's the only way to make a disciple)

Many ministers struggle with stress and the lack of ministerial fulfillment. I would like to suggest that one decision can provide the cure for both of these diseases. You must decide to delegate.

D. L. Moody said, "It's better to get ten men to do the work than to do the work of ten men!" Moody's sage advice is filled with scriptural wisdom. The Bible is filled with detailed descriptions of delegation. Solomon mastered the fine art of managing through men, and the kingdom was enlarged. The fourth chapter of I Kings introduces us to those responsible for Solomon's armies, meals and taxes. Our Savior was certainly willing to delegate. The first eighteen verses of Luke 10 records the sending out of seventy itinerant preachers. After the Lord gave them detailed instructions, He sent them to preach. Though these messengers were inexperienced and far less capable than the Master, their ministry was blessed by God, and the Savior even complimented their noble efforts (Luke 10:18). Eventually these messengers would "turn the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

Solomon and the Savior knew something that we in ministry often forget. They knew that disciples are made through delegation. They knew that delegation is godly and that the failure to delegate is ungodly. They knew that when God created Adam, He placed Him in Eden to "dress it and keep it" (Gen. 2:15). God brought the "beasts of the field" and the fowl of the air" before Adam "to see what he would call them" (Gen. 2:19). The Psalmist explicitly reveals God's intent to delegate in Psalm 8:4-6, saying, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet."

Many ministers need to hear the wise counsel of Jethro, who told his very capable son-in-law, Moses, to “divide and conquer” or else be conquered by frustration (Ex. 18:18). Exodus 18 tells us that Moses swallowed his pride and listened to his father-in-law. Soon seventy men were recruited, trained and commissioned. Moses discovered long before Moody that “it is better to get seventy men to do the job than to do the job of seventy men!”

Why Don't We Delegate?

- We fail to delegate because we fail to plan. Delegation requires foresight. Recruiting someone at the last minute is called “dumping,” not delegating. Successful delegation will require successful communication, and such communication will require time. In order to delegate you will need to think ahead.
- We fail to delegate because we don't think anyone can do the job as well as we can. Our education, experience, and aptitudes can build walls between ourselves and those that God has called us to mentor. We tend to think that, since the person in the pew was never a student in seminary, he is unfit or unprepared. Have we forgotten that God was more qualified to name the animals than Adam was and that Christ was a far more powerful preacher than the seventy? In order to delegate you will need to be humble.
- We fail to delegate because we lack vision. Ministries are built by men who understand that pyramids are made tall by widening their foundations. In order to widen the foundation of our ministries, we must decide to delegate. Spectators become critics, and participants become partners. In order to delegate we must maintain a vision for growth.

What are the Benefits of Delegation?

When delegation is done rightly, great blessings are enjoyed.

- Burn out is avoided. When Barnabas was overwhelmed with the growing needs of the ministry in Antioch, he recruited a man of questionable qualifications by the name of Paul (Acts 11:19–25). The decision Barnabas made spared both the minister and the ministry, bringing blessings instead of blisters (Acts 11:26).
- Leaders are developed. The best way to protect a church from the plague of inexperience is to solicit involvement and thereby develop leaders. The Bible teaches us that “every member needs to be a minister” (I Cor 12). Pastors are specifically commissioned to take the treasures entrusted to them and pass them along to another generation (II Tim 2:2). Pastors who provide people with tools and times to minister will soon find themselves sending forth ministers into the ministry. Where disciples are being developed and deployed, the Spirit will always replenish the ministry with ready recruits.

- Rewards are earned. Since every one will appear individually “before the judgment seat of Christ” (II Cor 5:10), it is important for each one to be involved in the work of Christ. People who never run will never hear, “Well done!” It is our Savior’s desire that “every man have praise of God” (II Cor 4:5). Making sure that men and women involve themselves in the carrying cups of cold water in the name of the Lord is the duty of the disciple-making minister.

- Devotional life is strengthened. When church members become servants and teachers, their knees bend and their Bibles open. It is natural that involvement in ministry will inspire involvement in prayer and Bible study.

- Creativity is inspired. It’s an amazing thing to discover that involving two workers in a task will result in four different ways to do it. This input can either instigate or frustrate, but it should never be used as an excuse to stagnate (Amos 3:3).

In order for disciples to be made, delegation must be maintained. Sit down and make a list of the tasks that you need to give away. Now write the name of someone that needs to be recruited. Write out a job description and make an appointment with the person that the Spirit placed upon your heart.

“A person may be in a leadership position, but if he isn’t willing to delegate, he isn’t a leader at all—he is a hired hand” (Myron Rush, *Management: A Biblical Approach*, 132).

Dr. Charles R. Phelps

Pastor at [Colonial Hills Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN](#) | [Other Articles](#)

Dr. Charles R. Phelps (D.Min., Bob Jones University), commonly known as Chuck Phelps, is a Baptist pastor with over thirty years of ministry experience. He has served as a youth pastor in Minnesota and Colorado, a senior pastor in New Hampshire, and a college president in Wisconsin. Currently, he is the senior pastor at Colonial Hills Baptist Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, where he ministers alongside his wife, Linda. They have five children and four grandchildren.