

Vulnerability in Disciple-Making

“Talking points” for the person leading the Equipping Time; prepared by (doesn’t need to be stated): Tim Dorsch

I. [State the Objective and Intro]

1. **Vulnerability is a powerful but often underutilized tool for growth. The focus of this time is to encourage you to be courageously vulnerable as you make disciples for your benefit and for the benefit of others.**
2. Ask everyone to **look up 2 Corinthians 12:9-10**
3. As they’re doing that, **share a brief personal story** of experiencing vulnerability in disciple-making and how it impacted you.

II. [Motivation]

1. What you/we have seen is that **vulnerability is a strength not a weakness.**
2. Read **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**: Paul says “But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for *my power is made perfect in weakness.*” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my *weaknesses*, so that the *power* of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. *For when I am weak, then I am strong.*”
3. **The gospel fuels true vulnerability. We should be courageously vulnerable since we have God as a “safety net.” Regardless of how our vulnerability is received by others, we know that we are completely forgiven of our sins and approved by God.**
4. These are the **ways that you will personally benefit** from being vulnerable:
 - A. **Sin loses its grip** when we confess and speak it out loud to others. Satan would prefer for us to be secretly ashamed and to fight our battles alone.
 - B. **We experience the power of being “in it together” with others.** It’s easy for us to feel like we’re the only ones that have a specific struggle. The shared “me too” connections help us fight sin together.
 - C. When we get specific about our sin, it helps us grow by owning it and seeing the need for God’s grace, which *has* been given to us. **If we share shallow, we are set up to grow shallow. If we share deep, we are set up to grow deep.**
 - D. Vulnerability breeds trust and knowing and being known. Thus, **our friendships become more close and meaningful.**
 - E. **Vulnerability helps us remember that we grow in Christ in the same way we were saved, by God’s grace. Seeing and sharing the depth of our sin motivates us with gratitude to trust and love Jesus.** As we do this we are filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit and yield the fruit of the Spirit as we grow.

III. [Equipping] **So what does vulnerability practically look like in disciple-making?**

- 
1. **Pay attention to *how* you need to be truly vulnerable by daily reflecting on your fallenness and need for God's grace.** As you study Scripture, privately and corporately, look for how you are "broken" in the same way as those for or by whom the text was written. This will breed true humility and vulnerability as you see the breadth and depth of your fallenness.
 2. **Be vulnerable as you share your faith with non-Christians.** A willingness to share how you presently need God's grace reveals that *all have sinned and fall short* of the glory of God, and **we all need what we can't earn--that is the free gift of grace** by which we've been saved through faith in Jesus. Rather than "a holier than thou" demeanor, unbelievers can see more of Jesus and how he has and is rescuing you.
 3. **Help set the tone for vulnerability with your discipleship partners.** As long as you're not gossiping about or slandering others, be as specific as you can. Your deep vulnerability encourages deep vulnerability in others, which shines a light on our need for Jesus and his amazing grace.
 4. **Remind your discipleship partners that everything shared is confidential and isn't to be shared outside of the discipleship time.** Friendships built with trust allow for greater vulnerability and, in turn, greater trust and growth.

In conclusion, consider again the words of the Apostle Paul: "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my *weakness*" (2 Corinthians 11:30). **As we mature in Christ we will become increasingly vulnerable, because we want to grow, help others grow, and to shine a spotlight on Jesus and his grace.**