

38. The neediest men in our churches are often the least visible ones.

39. Suppose you know a man will leave your church five years from now. What things are so important for that man's "system" that you will feel like you've failed if he doesn't get them by the time he leaves? This, then, is your discipleship curriculum.

40. Looking back ten years, we've all said, "I wish I knew then what I know now." What are those things so we can build them into our disciples? Examples:

- An understanding that God knows, cares, and can do something about it.
- An understanding that faith begins with understanding, proceeds to belief, but must be consummated in trust (*fiducia*).
- We can, and must, test our faith by asking the questions, Is it true? Do I believe it? and Has it changed my life?
- A sense that He is worthy of our praise, worship, and service.
- An encounter with the holy--which will change our view of the world, ourselves, and ourselves in the world.
- Patience in view of God's promises and faithfulness. (versus Anxiety-Worry about the present and future).
- A deeper love for the God Who is.
- An understanding that neighbor love, or lack of it, reveals the true heart.
- A Spirit of Gratitude.
- The Nature of the Kingdom. An understanding that the kingdom of God, presently all around us, consists in righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit.
- The Armor of God
- Holy Spirit: The Fruit of the Spirit
- Spiritual Gifts
- Calling
- The Sermon on the Mount, with a special emphasis on the Golden Rule.
- Prayer: The Lord's Prayer. It's hard work, but the only work that releases the power of the kingdom of God into our human actions.
- Strongholds: If we have a correct knowledge, belief, and trust in the character of God, Jesus Christ will set us free from the strongholds which keep us shackled to sin and futility.

40 of "The Most Important Things to Know" about Ministering to Men

Patrick Morley

A few years ago I started a list of "the most important things to know" about men's discipleship ministry. I realized the task was way bigger than I first thought, but here's how far I got with my list. Though it's far from comprehensive, I do think it reflects many of the felt and real needs of men today. And at the end there are a few ideas to help men do something about it.

How Men Are Doing and Why

1. Most men have it in their hearts to do the right thing. That part of a Christian man that would love, trust, obey, and worship a holy God is far bigger than the flesh in him that would do wrong.
2. No man fails on purpose. No man wakes up in the morning and thinks, "Well, I guess I'll see what I can do today to irritate my wife, neglect my kids, and work too much." But they do.
3. Despite this, most men are living by their own ideas. Their lives are not turning out like they planned.
4. Many men are getting exactly what they want, only to find out it doesn't make them happy.
5. A lot of men are in what we might call a "structural hurry." They have structured hurry into their routines. The price of this pace is peace.
6. Men are tired. We have created a culture which requires more energy than men have to give.
7. A lot of men are worried, confused, disillusioned, disoriented, and sad.
8. Many men are burdened down by debts. It never occurred to them that it takes more energy to service a debt and earn a living than just to earn a living.
9. Many men are angry because they didn't get what they wanted and wonder, "Now what?" Or, they did get what they wanted but now can't

remember why they thought it was so important.

10. Most men play a role during the first part of their adult lives--a role that they believe will make other people happy and get them where they want to go. At a midpoint they come to a place when they realize they haven't lived with authenticity, and that is the thing they now want to get back to.

11. The problem is not that men are failing to achieve their goals. They are. The problem is: they're the wrong goals.

12. Failure means to succeed in a way that doesn't really matter.

13. No amount of success at work can adequately compensate for failure at home.

14. Some men have been inoculated against Jesus. An inoculation is a small dose of the real thing. They've heard just enough about Christ to think they've heard enough, found it irrelevant, and rejected it. In actuality, they've haven't "heard" it at all. Sadly, they have rejected the wrong thing.

15. Some who do know Christ have become polluted by the world—they are cultural Christians. Their children are spiritual orphans and their wives are practical widows (James 1:27).

16. Most men only know enough about God to be disappointed with Him. Why?

17. Because it takes a long time to make a disciple. Why?

18. Because most of the really big ideas about Christianity take 10 to 20 years to sink in. Why?

19. Because a man has to replace a system he has built over 10, 20, 30 years or more. He doesn't become a follower of Christ one day and abandon those deeply held beliefs the next.

20. Your belief system has been perfectly designed to produce the result you are getting.

21. The wisdom of the years is confusing. Kierkegaard said, "The wisdom of the years is confusing. Only the wisdom of eternity is edifying."

What Men Need To Know About God

22. The solution will be to help men seek the God who is. There is a God we want, and there is a God who is. They are not the same God. The turning point of our lives is when we stop seeking the God we want and start seeking the God who is.

23. We must call men to look heavenward. Karl Barth said, "You cannot call God by shouting man in a loud voice." And we are drawn to that upon which we are focused.

24. God loves you with an everlasting love.

25. Apart from God life has no meaning.

26. If you get exactly what you want you will still not be happy without God.

27. God will not force you to revere Him, but he will make it impossible for you to be happy unless you do.

28. The great question of the faith-life is, "Do I really believe that God will always take care of me?" Does He know? Does He care? Can He do anything about it?

29. He knows you--when you sit and lie, every word before spoken, He knit you together in your mother's womb, every hair is numbered, all your days have been ordained before one of them came to pass.

30. He cares about you. You are a much loved son. Chosen. Adopted. An heir.

31. He can do something about your concerns. He will do something about it. You don't have to work 80 hours a week to make it. He wants you to rest. God will provide.

32. God is sovereignly orchestrating all of the seemingly random circumstances of our lives.

33. At our moments of desperation, God will intervene to keep us from moving in the wrong direction.

34. Because God is good your life will not turn out like you planned.

How Men Should Integrate Faith Into Their Daily Lives

35. Once you are married, make your mate your top priority after God, but before all others.

36. Once you have children, spend time with your kids; tell them you love them and that you're proud of them.

37. God calls us to build the kingdom and tend the culture. There is no biblical separation between sacred and secular. Every moral vocation is holy to the Lord. To wait tables, fix computers, or practice dentistry is no less spiritual than being a teacher at a Christian school.

Leadership Issues