

Principles and Values are essential for right action!

By Bob Young

We are hung up on methods. We want to clone ministry. We hope that what worked somewhere else will work where we are. We try to get the actions right without establishing a firm foundation of principles and values.

Success in God's work does not depend upon a certain methodology. Principles and values must be applied creatively in each individual church or mission context.

Relationship with God is not developed through techniques and methods. The church is not built through techniques and methods. The church is a community that functions to evangelize and edify—to save and keep saved – because it is driven by principles and values.

Procedures or practices that have worked in one church can be learned and reproduced in a second church, but that does not mean that disciples will automatically be developed in the second church. The key to effective church work (and mission work) is teaching the principles and values of the kingdom and training in how to live out the values. This teaching and training must continually keep the goal in sight — mature Christian discipleship.

Successful ministry or mission work is not the result of discovering the magical formula for church success or church growth. Each church or mission context is unique. The question is, “how can we help believers become more and more like Jesus?” To the extent that the local church is making and maturing disciples – evangelizing and edifying – baptizing and teaching – saving and keeping saved – the church is successful.

Don't miss the lesson: methods and models are not transferable. Foundational principles and values must be established in each church, and then those principles and values must be applied to inform the way ministry is done in the context of the church (or in the mission context). Methods and models are unique to each church context. Cloning and copying programs and methods will not work in the long term. Each local church must develop its own model, understanding principles, developing values, and identifying the actions that will lead others to discipleship.

Biblical principles and values work together in the development of faithful disciples who imitate Jesus. That is why ministry that is not solidly based in Bible teaching will struggle to produce long-term and lifelong results.