

Identifying the sources of a disciple-maker's message is important for both the disciple and teacher and can be found by following the examples that Paul gives us in the New Testament. In several chapters of the New Testament, Paul accomplishes this by going back to the original source of the material in question and then creating a curriculum or the subject material around that original source using tradition, observation, participation, and inspiration. (Mitchell 2004, 1-2) What is important in the church today is making sure our curriculum choices are credible, Biblical sources for Christian education to create disciples for Christ.

First, if at all possible, it is important to go back and locate the original source of the material, and try to determine its credibility or worth to include in a church curriculum or Christian education. We live in a time in our society today where we have access to more information than any other time in history, but this does not make the information credible. With this many sources it is now possible for anyone inside or outside the church to create an agenda first, then go find a source to back it up. This is taking a highly subjective or eisegetical approach, finding scriptures that fit the ideals, instead of the more proper exegetical approach. Any church or Christian based curriculum must start with scripture first then move to create a curriculum around those scriptures, not the other way around. A person does not have to look very hard to find a church that has built a curriculum on false teachings and their own agenda, but the most credible source comes from the scriptures themselves. Sources can, and often do, provide more mis-information than biblical truth, therefore it is important to find the original source of the material. When Paul was speaking to the Corinthians he said "I did not come to you with superior wisdom... but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power" (1 Cor 2.1,4), and then spoke wisdom from the Spirit. If we try to determine the source of

Paul's teachings we can see that in verse 9, he is quoting Isaiah 64.4 and then again in verse 16 Paul is quoting Isaiah 40.13. Isaiah is Paul's original source and certainly gives credibility to what he is teaching in Corinth.

Second, we need to take the original source (subject materials) chosen and create a curriculum around four criteria. From Mitchell, these include traditions (the history behind the source), observations (what is happening in the lives of the students), participation in the lesson, and finally inspiration or wisdom of the Spirit working through us as we put the lessons learned into practice in our daily life. (Mitchell, 1-2) These four points can be summed up with Romans 15.18 when Paul says "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me." The church wants to create a well-rounded curriculum, one that creates maturing disciples. To accomplish this we have to, like Paul, be willing to let Jesus accomplish something through us, not create something of our own doing, but something inspired by the Holy Spirit.

If we look hard enough we can find a source to justify just about any sin, inaccuracy, or disagreement we have with the original scriptures. For that reason, we have to be very careful when choosing a church curriculum to make sure it is Biblically factual and based upon the teachings of Christ. Does the curriculum teach the Truth or an agenda filled version of the Truth. We should be guarded and knowledgeable about the original source of the materials we use, and when we create the curriculum (using methods outlined by Mitchell) it should use all four methods while making sure the end result is still congruent and supportive of each of the methods chosen.