

DISCUSSION QUESTION: You are a doctor at an emergency room. A patient comes in complaining of stomach pain. What should you do to help the patient?

Check their shoe size—measure the length of their hair—tell them you're sorry but you're not doing stomach pain tonight--

AS LEADERS, WE MUST TAKE ON THE TASK OF EVALUATION!

Not enough to keep the system going—must ask whether the system is working!

THINGS YOU DON'T DO...

1. “Try as many treatments as possible to see what works!” *imagine the emergency doc saying—well, lets just keep giving the patient medicines from the cabinet until we find one that works—not only time consuming and wasteful but dangerous—could make the patient more sick!* Similar problem with the “try a new program” approach to women’s ministry. *Idea of getting together with other women’s leaders and just sharing what programs worked and then trying them—like trying to fix a meal by just grabbing ingredients randomly from your pantry—might get lucky, but likely not! And you might just end up with a dinner disaster—many women’s ministries are a hodgepodge of activities and programs that don’t necessarily fit or complement one another—just keep us busy—*
2. Evaluate by the wrong STANDARDS. *Doctor in the emergency room—evaluating by height and hair color and shoe size—WRONG Many times measure our women’s ministry by the number of women coming or how much enjoyment they are getting out of our programs—wrong standards WRONG QUESTION TO ASK—“DID YOU LIKE THAT?” A good doctor will start with the VITAL SIGNS.—Critical standards by which person’s condition is measured. In medicine, it’s the pulse, respirations, blood pressure—then on to specific tests—not “scattershot” but designed to get to the heart of the challenge. In women’s ministries, our VITAL SIGNS are given to us by **SCRIPTURE!***

NEED TO GO TO THE “EXPERT” FOR OUR VITAL SIGNS:

Our MISSION: Matthew 28.19-20. *Great Commission—Jesus gives “marching orders” to his church* Only one command there—“MAKE DISCIPLES!” *the going, baptizing, and teaching are descriptive words in the original language—as you are going, as you are baptizing, as you are teaching, MAKE DISCIPLES! Not “keep your women busy” or “make your women happy” but MAKE DISCIPLES! Goal of Women’s ministry!*

DEFINITION OF A DISCIPLE: Someone who WALKS as Jesus WALKS! 1 John 2.5-6 *Someone who thinks as Jesus thinks, feels what Jesus feels, does what Jesus does*

THE CRITICAL TEST OF OUR WOMEN’S MINISTRY: Are our women walking more and more as Jesus walked?

Not enough to have good Bible studies, good fellowships, good activities—ARE THOSE ACTIVITIES TRULY MOVING WOMEN TOWARD BEING BETTER DISCIPLES OF JESUS?

CRITICAL “VITAL SIGN” AREAS FOR OUR WOMEN’S MINISTRY: *WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL RESULT AREAS THAT MOVE WOMEN FORWARD IN DISCIPLESHIP?*

1. A foundation of PRAYER. (John 15.5) *A wise person has said that prayerlessness is a declaration of independence from God—that we think “WE” can handle it and do it—discipleship can only take place in a God-empowered environment—requires prayer—for each other, for the lost, for the church, for the world*
2. An Environment of LOVE (Matthew 22.34-40) *GREAT COMMANDMENT—love God and love others--do our women love God and love each other? How is that being proven? Where is it evidenced in visible ways?*
3. Intentional Spiritual TRANSFORMATION (2 Corinthians 3.18, Romans 12.1-2) *not haphazard “bible studies” and service projects and video series, but purposeful spiritual accountability, Biblical growth, and service to each other and the world*

4. Intentional identification and training of leaders (Matthew 4.18-20, Luke 6.12-13) *Jesus prayerfully and purposefully chose and brought into training specific persons who would lead his ministry work—we must do the same—can't be lone rangers and were called to build the ministry!*
5. Intentional missional efforts to reach women LOCALLY and around the WORLD (Acts 1.8) *Personal evangelism training, mutual efforts in reaching friends for Jesus, short term missions trips and missions support*

TAKE A QUICK “PULSE”—HOW ARE YOU DOING IN EACH OF THE “VITAL SIGN” AREAS ABOVE?

Remember, leaders must identify “weak vital signs” and find God’s answers, either changing the purpose or getting rid of activities that do not advance God’s mission and seeking out activities and structures that advance God’s mission!

REMEMBER: God’s answers often come in the form of gifted PEOPLE! (1 Corinthians 12.7,12, Matthew 9.37-38) *SO WE MUST PRAY FOR GOD TO IDENTIFY AND RAISE UP women.*