

What Drivers Ed Taught Me About Discipling Others

Every teenager looks forward to that moment when they turn 16 and are handed that golden ticket to freedom: a driver's license! Of course, that freedom depended on dad loaning you a car (or better, giving you a car!), money for gas, and insurance. And then there were the parental stipulations on where you could go (and couldn't), who could be in the car, and when you had to be back. Looking back, my sixteen-year-old freedom wasn't all that free, but you couldn't convince my adolescent brain otherwise.

There was one more hoop to jump through before the keys were handed to me: Drivers Ed. I only liked one thing about Drivers Ed: driving. The rest of the time we had to sit in a classroom and listen to the teacher



talk *about* driving. We had the occasional graphic film (for educational purposes, mind you) of horrific car accidents, but the worst was the driver simulators. We'd sit in these boxy contraptions with pretend dashboards, pretend steering wheels, and pretend pedals, watch a film, and pretend we were driving. Good grief, kids today learn more about driving from playing Mario Kart. (If the film was taking our simulators into a potentially dangerous situation, my friend Dale would throw his simulator into reverse, scream, jump out, and roll on the floor.)

But then there was Tuesday. Every Tuesday, three of us would pile into a car with Mrs. Moore and take turns driving. We observed. We punched each other when Mrs. Moore had to correct the driver. And we waited our turn to get behind the wheel.

I never thought about Mrs. Moore as a mentor, but she was in her own way. She showed us how. She let us try. She corrected us when we needed it. She rode with us. Even one hour with her was far more helpful than a week's worth of lectures, gory films, and stupid simulators.

We need more Mrs. Moores in the church. Discipleship is more than reading and Bible study. That may seem like an odd statement coming from someone who spends his week developing Bible study curriculum, but if you want to disciple someone, you need to mentor them. Walk alongside them. Let them see how you live and apply God's Word in your daily life. Sure, let the process begin with teaching and preaching, but don't let it stop there.

Paul reminded Timothy of what he had been taught ...

*"What you have **heard** from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to **teach** others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).*

... and he reminded Timothy of the things he had observed.

"But you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, and endurance" (3:10).

That's discipleship at its best. That's mentoring.



Several years ago, my oldest son wanted to build a desk. He didn't want just any desk; he needed it to fit a specific corner and contain just the right drawers and features. He

designed it, and then for several weeks, we worked together building it. With each phase of the project, I started out the work, showing him how to set up the tools. Explaining along the way, I did the preliminary cuts and then let him take over. It progressed from me doing the work to us doing it together.

Fast forward to today. My son wants another desk with a whole different configuration, but this time he's doing the work. I'm there just to assist if he needs it. Our roles have changed.

In fact, a few weeks ago, he was in the garage with a co-worker. His friend wanted a cart, and my son was building it—and showing his friend how.

Discipleship should be like that. As we walk alongside someone, we help them learn to walk and grow in Christ. Eventually, they grow to the point that they are doing the same for others. As Paul said,

*"What you have **heard** from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to **teach** others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).*

We're not all called to preach. We're not all called to teach. But we are all called to make disciples.