

Patrick Morley: A Plea to Disciple Younger Men

A former business colleague is discipling a college student and asked me which of my books I would recommend he use. Without blinking I wrote back, *"How God Makes Men."*

In the email, I included the following book excerpt, which explains why:

"By now, I'm sure you're not surprised that God sends men in much the same way He has been sending them down through the centuries. Once you've been enlisted in God's army and learned how to clean and shoot your weapon, you're going to be deployed. Sending is simply going wherever God wants you to go to do whatever God wants you to do. Of course, making disciples is not the only thing God sends us to do. But in this chapter we're focusing on the Great Commission, or 'making disciples,' part of sending. Let's consider the priorities of making disciples.

"First, making disciples starts at home. Your most important ministry is to your wife (if you have one). A friend of mine was having marriage problems. He came to one of our conferences and got inspired to disciple men. Since that brought him joy, and home brought him distress, he started putting more and more time into discipling men and spending less and less time with his wife. When he asked me about it, I said, 'I don't want you doing ministry to men until you get your ministry to your wife right.' To his credit, he went back and put his own marriage in order. Today, he has a flourishing ministry to men.

"Second, after your wife, your most important ministry is to your children (if you have any). A man's number one discipleship group must be his family. No amount of success

anywhere else can compensate for failure here. God has ordained you to disciple your children. If they don't get disciplined, that one's on you. You are God's designated way to release the power of the gospel to your children.

"Finally, once you have your own house in order, then you can have a disciple-making ministry to others. All kinds of people need discipleship. But let me make a special plea. You see, one of the greatest needs in our day is to disciple younger men. An incident from the animal kingdom illustrates this.

"When elephants overcrowded South Africa's Kruger National Park, the government authorized killing adult elephants and relocating their offspring to other parks. As the orphaned male elephants became teenagers, they were clueless about what normal elephant behavior looked like. When their testosterone levels spiked, the orphaned bulls turned aggressive. In one park they savagely killed thirty-nine rhinos. A park ranger watched as a young bull elephant intentionally knocked over a rhino and trampled it. The situation was out of control.

"Then rangers brought several adult bull elephants into one of the parks. Just by being themselves, these animals 'mentored' the younger bulls, demonstrating to them what normal male elephant behavior looked like. No more rhinos were killed after the mature bulls arrived.

"It's not easy to become a man. Many young men today have grown up as 'practical' orphans. They've been left to guess at what normal male behavior looks like. The faith of young men is under severe attack. That's where the battle is raging. And frankly, mature Christian men are just not getting the discipleship job done. Consider these challenging words:

"If I profess, with the loudest voice and the clearest exposition, every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I

may be professing Christianity. Where the battle rages the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle-field besides is mere flight and disgrace to him if he flinches at that one point.”

So, consider discipling some younger men. That’s a place where you can really make a difference.

Patrick Morley is founder and CEO of Man in the Mirror. After building one of Florida’s 100 largest privately held companies, in 1991, he founded Man in the Mirror, a nonprofit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the best-selling author of *The Man in the Mirror*, *No Man Left Behind*, *Dad in the Mirror*, and *A Man’s Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines*.