

be to carry the truth to the regions beyond.

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- Can you suggest how people were taught to be disciples?

In 1998 we had the NET '98 satellite evangelism series with Dwight Nelson as the speaker. In his last sermon he highlighted the following process for church accession, 'Belonging, Believing, Behaving'.

Until then we had largely followed 'Behaving, Believing, Belonging'.

- Contrast the two views. When does a person start behaving in a Christ-like manner? Is it before belief in Christ or after?
- Is a person who feel accepted and who feels he or she belongs, likely to want to believe?

Now read *John 8:1-11*

- If you were that woman would you feel a desire to belong?
- Is she already behaving in a godly manner?
- With all that we have said, what kind of things can we ask our children to do in church to help them feel as though they belong?
- Can we invite a young man off the streets and ask him to lead in a Bible Study?
- Could we ask him to help clear away hymn books?
- Could a young lady be invited to help look after the children in the afternoon programme—so long as she has a CRB?
- How do we prepare people to take part in church activity?

DISCOVERING THE BIBLE

55 WHO CAN BE ACTIVE IN CHURCH?

There is a natural caution about who can get involved in church. Famous people, like Bob Dylan, have become Christians and have been over-exposed at too early a stage—and have left their early zeal.

When is it wise to involve people in the church?

Tradition

- Not until after a person is baptized
- Church manual. Some limitations are made about the membership of a main church choir—but not about being a member of a children's choir
- Should we rely on tradition alone?
- The example of Bury Fishpool

The Bible is to be our prime guide on decisions. We need to work out how to apply the following teaching

1 Timothy 3:1-6

- What is Timothy being warned against?
- Can a person aspire to being an Elder?
- How would this transition occur?

Exodus 32:1-8

- What is happening?
- Who is involved?
- What do you think EGW says?

Feeling their helplessness in the absence of their leader, they returned to their old superstitions. The "mixed multitude" had been the first to indulge murmuring and impatience, and they were the leaders in the apostasy that followed. Among the objects regarded by the Egyptians as symbols of deity was the ox or calf; and it was at the suggestion of those who had practiced this form of idolatry in Egypt that a calf was now made and worshiped. The people desired some image to represent God, and to go before them in the place of Moses. God had given no manner of similitude of Himself, and He had prohibited any material representation for such a purpose. The mighty miracles in Egypt and at the Red Sea were designed to establish faith in Him as the invisible, all-powerful Helper of Israel, the only true God. And the desire for some visible manifestation of His presence had been granted in the pillar of cloud and of fire that guided their hosts, and in the revealing of His glory upon Mount Sinai. But with the cloud of the Presence still before them, they turned back in their hearts to the idolatry of Egypt, and represented the glory of the invisible God by the similitude of an ox."

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John 4:2

- How long had the disciples been disciples?
- Would you rate them as 'mature Christians'?
- Is Jesus taking a risk here?

Acts 2:38-47

- If this church suddenly grew by 5000 members how would we cope?
- What do you think was going on in this passage?

Acts 14:21-23

- Describe this situation
- How does Paul set out to care for the new church?
- What would you suggest is the progress for the new leaders?

What steps did the leaders of the church take to care for the fellowship?

2 Corinthians 3:1,2

What is the precaution here?

Luke 9:1-6

What does Jesus do to prepare the disciples for the future?

John 1:43-45

How soon did Philip get to work as a witness?

The basic advice

"Place after place is to be visited; church after church is to be raised up. Those who take their stand for the truth are to be organized into churches, and then the minister is to pass on to other equally important fields.

Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labour successfully. Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received."

Some of the new converts will be so filled with the power of God that they will at once enter the work. They will labour so diligently that they will have neither time nor disposition to weaken the hands of their brethren by unkind criticism. Their one desire will