

4 Conditions for Optimizing Transformation

What “climatic” conditions that provide the optimum setting to maximize growth, which we call the hothouse or greenhouse effect? The micro group (3s and 4s) brings together the four conditions which release the power of the Holy Spirit to transform and multiply disciples. In this session, we will explore each of these four elements and show how when they converge together bring about transformation into Christlikeness and lead to impact upon the world around us.

Greg Ogden retired from professional church leadership in 2012 and now lives out his passion of speaking, teaching, and writing about the disciple-making mission of the church. Most recently Greg served as Executive Pastor of Discipleship at Christ Church of Oak Brook, Illinois in the Chicago western suburbs. From 1998-2002, Greg held the position of Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Fuller Theological Seminary and Associate Professor of Lay Equipping and Discipleship. Prior to coming to Fuller, Greg enjoyed 24 years in pastoral ministry. He is the author of six books including *Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple* (Intervarsity Press, 2016); *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Intervarsity Press, 2016); *The Essential Commandment: A Guide to Loving God and Others* (InterVarsity Press, 2011); *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ, 3rd Edition* (InterVarsity Press, 2019). Dr. Ogden is a principal partner in a new ministry entitled the Global Discipleship Initiative (GDI). GDI trains, coaches, and inspires pastors and Christian leaders to establish indigenous, multiplying, disciplinemaking networks, both nationally and internationally. (globaldi.org).

“The Environment for **Transformation**: Creating the Hothouse Effect”

When we...

- open our hearts in transparent trust to each other
- around the truth of God’s word
- in the spirit of life-change accountability
- while engaged in our God-designed mission

...we are in the Holy Spirit’s hothouse of transformation.

I. Climatic Condition #1—Transparent Trust

- A. The extent to which we are willing to reveal to others those areas of our life that need God’s transforming touch is the extent to which we are inviting the Holy Spirit to make us new.

Discussion: Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

B. Trustworthy: What builds trust in relationships?

C. Stages of trust-building:

1. Affirmation

2. Walking together in difficult times
3. Prayerful listening
4. Mutual confession

“In confession the break-through to community takes place. Sin demands to have a man by himself. It withdraws him from the community. The more isolated a person is, the more destructive will be the power of sin over him, and the more deeply he becomes involved in it, the more disastrous is his isolation...In confession the light of the Gospel breaks into the darkness and seclusion of the heart...Since the confession of sin is made in the presence of a Christian brother, the last stronghold of self-justification is abandoned.

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

II. Climatic Condition #2—Applied Truth in Community

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”(II Tim. 3:16-17)

A. The Need for Truth

1. We have lost the memory of Christianity.
2. We need systematic instruction. Why might having a curriculum be an important asset to making disciples?

B. Mosaic image/Disconnected Puzzle Pieces

III. Climatic Condition #3: Life-Change Accountability

A. What is a covenant?

B. Why is a covenant important?

A Disciple's Covenant

In order to grow toward maturity in Christ and complete *Discipleship Essentials*, I commit myself to the following standards:

1. Complete all assignments on a weekly basis prior to my discipleship appointment in order to contribute fully (see "Suggested Study Format").
2. Meet weekly with my discipleship partners for approximately one and one-half hours to dialogue over the content of the assignments.
3. Offer myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated transformation during this discipleship period.
4. Contribute to a climate of honesty, trust and personal vulnerability in a spirit of mutual up-building.
5. Give serious consideration to continuing the discipling chain by committing myself to invest in at least two other people for the year following the initial completion of *Discipleship Essentials*.

IV. Climatic Condition #4: Engaged in our God-designed Mission

- A. Be a link to those within our network of relationship who don't know the gospel
- B. Adopt an unreached people group
- C. Find your particular heart call and serve God within this design.
- D. Live out a heart of compassion and justice for the broken of this world.

Suggested Readings:

Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Discipleship a Few at a Time* (InterVarsity Press, 2016), Chapter 8: *Transformation: Four Necessary Ingredients*.