EMPOWERING OTHERS

We often put too much emphasis on program and activities in the process of empowering others and often forget that there are always people involved in the process. When we look back on our own lives and how we have grown as disciples and servants of the Lord, we see that people were always involved. Sombody has seen us, streched us, let us see into their lives, modelled holiness for us, challenged and comforted us. We are called to pass the gospel on to the next generation. Paul had trained Timothy and now he gives Timothy instruction to continue thise process:

"You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." 2 Tim 2; 1-2 (NIV)

Spend a couple of minutes reflecting on these three questions:

- Who has had most influence on your spiritual journey?
- What did this influence look like and how did this influence affect you?
- How can I become a person who is empowering others to later on empower others?

We will now take a look at the apostle Paul, how he was trained and how he trained others.

BARNABAS AND PAUL:

1. **Barnabas recognised Paul and introduced him to the disciples**
   Acts 9; 26-29
   When Paul came to Jerusalem shortly after his conversion the disciples did not accept him. They did not trust him since he had been persecuting the Christians. Barnabas though recognised what God had been doing in Paul´s life and brought him to the disciples.
   - Is there anyone in your environment who needs to be seen and introduced to the leaders of your corps?

2. **Barnabas trained Paul**
   Acts 11; 25-26
   The gospel had spread to Antioch as a result of the persecution following the martyr death of Stephen. Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem to Antioch to visit this new church plant. Many came to faith, but he needed a co-worker to teach the new converts, so he travelled to Tarsus and looked for Paul an brought him to Antioch. There they served together for one year. Later on the church in Antioch sent them on their first mission trip.
   - Is there anyone who you can train and empower by letting them join you in your ministry?
   - What would be the next step?

3. **Paul trained others**
   Acts 15; 36-41 and 16; 1-5
   After a conflict between Barnabas and Paul about the question whether Mark should join them on their second mission trip, Barnabas and Paul split up. Barnabas took Mark with him and Paul

took Silas. In Lystra the young Timothy also joined Paul and Silas. Conflicts do not always have to be bad. Through this conflict at least three new leaders were trained. Paul and Barnabas continued the empowering process.

- What do you have to consider to guaranty that the person you are empowering also will become an empowering leader?

PAUL AND TIMOTHY

Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. He joined Paul on his second and third mission trips. Later on Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to look after the congregation there. Paul´s two letters to Timothy give us an impression on how the relationship between them was. Let us now take a look at this relationship. It was a...

1. **Father-son relationship**

   1 Tim 1:2, 1:18-19, 5:23

   Paul regarded Timothy as his son in faith.

   - Do you have a father/mother relationship to anyone outside your family?
   - Should you?
   - Read Mal 4:6. Why is the relationship between generations important?

2. **Teacher-student relationship**

   1 Tim 3:14-15

   Most of 1 Timothy is instructions for church life.

   - Are you giving your trainees enough knowledge to do their job properly?
   - If not, what will you do about it?

3. **Counselling relationship**

   2 Tim 1:6-8, 2:1

   Something must have happened in Ephesus. We do not know what, but the character of 2 Timothy is different than in the first letter. Here Paul is comforting his younger co-worker.

   - How do you handle the emotional side of your trainee?

4. **Modelling relationship**

   2 Tim 3:10-11

   Paul was not afraid of using himself as an example. He lists up both his experiences and the fruits which they had brought.

   - Do you let those you are training look into your life?
   - What do they see?

Let us take our spiritual parenthood seriously!

Major Margaret Saue Marti
Coordinator for Spiritual Life Development
Norway, Iceland and the Faeroes Territory