



## Coach Approach Ministries Podcast

### Episode 94: Coaching Enhances Discipleship

Published: April 5, 2018

#### [Intro Music]

**Brian Miller:** I'm Brian Miller, strategic director for Coach Approach Ministries, CAM for short, and I'm joined here today by the president of Coach Approach Ministries, my good friend, Mr. Chad Hall. How you doing today, Chad?

**Chad Hall:** Brian, I'm having a good day so far.

**Brian:** Chad, this is episode 94, 94. We are six away from triple digits, and I've got to tell you, I'm getting kind of excited about it.

**Chad:** This is reminiscent of when Hank Aaron was getting close to beating Babe Ruth's homerun record.

**Brian:** That was almost as exciting as this. I agree with you. I mean, I wasn't there, but I can imagine that sense of excitement, of one more, is he going to get it this time? When we step up to the plate with that 100<sup>th</sup> episode, there'll be that tension. You'll be able to sense that tension. Are they going to get a podcast this time?

**Chad:** Yep. The tension will be so palpable, you'll be able to cut it with a knife, and here's my prediction. Just as we're bringing home that 100<sup>th</sup> episode, a couple guys are going to jump out of the stands and run alongside us. It'll be great.

**Brian:** Jesus will think, "I'm coming back." We're like, "Whoa, whoa. We've got one more. Can you just hold it just a second?" Not at all. If Jesus wants to come back before episode 100, we would welcome him gladly and move our podcast into the true Cloud, if you will.

**Chad:** There you go.

**Brian:** Our topic today, Chad, enough of this silliness, is how coaching enhances discipleship. There's a lot of buzz words in there. Discipleship should not be a buzz word, but it is a hot word today of people saying that's what we're missing right now in church. We've missed growth. We've missed social justice. A lot of people have been saying, I would say for many years now, we've been missing the discipleship. That's a hot button piece there. Coaching's kind of a hot piece too. How does coaching come alongside discipleship? Where should we start on this, Chad?

**Chad:** Well, I think, Brian, let's take our audience into mind and know that some people are coming to this podcast, could be your first podcast, and I don't know, you searched the term discipleship, and you're really into discipleship, and you just happened upon a coaching podcast. Most of our regular listeners, they're into coaching and using coaching within their ministry, so they're coming more through that coaching door. So, it might be helpful for us to begin with, just define some terms, especially the term discipleship. Not that we have the one, forever, true definition and understanding of discipleship, but so people know when we're using the word, here's how we're using it.

**Brian:** I wish we did. I think just defining it is something people need. It's a word that honestly, when people say it to me, I don't know what you're talking about because there are a hundred definitions in peoples' mind of what that is, what that looks like.

**Chad:** We could be talking about a lot of things. Who knows, you and I could have a different understanding. We'll get on the same page too hopefully. When I think about discipleship, I'm thinking anything that helps someone else become more like Jesus.

**Brian:** Yeah. More like Jesus. Say a little bit more about that. What would that look like if somebody became more like Jesus?

**Chad:** More like Jesus in terms of their character, in terms of how they see the world, how they understand the world, what they believe to be true about themselves and about others. What do they think the operating system of life is? What's the system going on here that we're a part of, but also, it could be more like Jesus in terms of a relationship with God the Father. So, are we reliant? Are we thinking of God in some way of like a giant Santa Claus? I don't think that's the way Jesus did. Jesus said, "I come to do the will of the Father." He's closely connected, and of course, us ordinary people, we're never going to be Jesus, but are we becoming more like Jesus in those ways? To me, that's discipleship. We're following the Master.

**Brian:** What I would add to that, you alluded to it, so it may already be in your mind, but I want to firm up that definition in this way, that maybe even before we think about becoming like Jesus. I'm not sure if I want to put this after or before becoming like Jesus, is learning to walk with Jesus, in his presence. Certainly, the Bible is the word of God, but to be in connection with Jesus, and hear his voice, and be able to respond to that, and in so doing, becoming more like Jesus. If you don't caveat that, you can spend a lot of time arguing about what Jesus is like. I asked this question in a coaching situation just the other day, what would Jesus do with this particular person you're talking about? How would Jesus respond to this person? The truth, in my mind as a coach... It sounded like, "Because we all know what Jesus would do with this person." I even said, "I don't know what Jesus would do with this person."

**Chad:** We're making this up right now.

**Brian:** We want to make sure discipleship is not getting caught, lint in the bellybutton, navel gazing of, "I don't think Jesus is like that." "Well, I think he is." We've got to do some of that, but we've also got to add to that, "Let's ask him."

**Chad:** I think what you're getting to also there, Brian, is if we're not careful... What's the old Mark Twain quote? God created mankind in his own image, and we've been returning the favor ever since. So, I'm going to be more like Jesus who happens to be a lot like me. So, we've really sort of replaced. Our

concept of Jesus has been replaced by what's a good person kind of do, and how do I know what a good person kind of does? Well, I'm kind of a good person. I think you're right. When we spend time with Jesus, we learn, "Wow, Jesus, that's offensive," therefore, something's wrong with me, or that doesn't make any sense. That means I don't know yet. For me, discipleship is it's crafting me into being more like Jesus. So, we've got to spend time with him to know what he's like. We have to spend time with other people who know what he's like. Otherwise, we become David Koresh.

**Brian:** Right. I don't want to become David Koresh, but before you said David Koresh, what that was giving me was that sense of... People say, "I want to be around people who smell like Jesus." They don't even just act like Jesus or look like Jesus, they just have that scent, that feel to it. There's something there that's different, and I can recognize that. That's not to say... I think we start with the Bible because we know where that's at, and we know how to access that, and we also bring this presence in with Jesus. They've both got to be together. The topic is, "How does coaching enhance discipleship?" The thing that popped out at me is enhances, enhances discipleship. Chad, there's something you introduced a couple years ago that has just put some distinction on coaching that has been so helpful to me and to so many others.

This idea of whether coaching is free-range, meaning coach about whatever you want; something I'm familiar with, so I'm familiar with discipleship; or if it's framework, which says there's some pieces here we can categorize and coach around, and I can give you a little bit of content. I think little bit is a keyword there, or is it formula, meaning I'm going to give you a whole bunch of content, and you really need to conform to the content, and we'll coach around how to get you to conform to the content. We see a lot of people wanting to coach in the framework area. I want to suggest, and maybe I'm jumping ahead here, how coaching enhances discipleship, there does need to be a framework in order to be enhanced by coaching. How would you begin that conversation about what a framework should look like, or if you could just give us the Amazon search word, we'll go get it.

**Chad:** I'm kind of wresting with that in my own head. If this were a video podcast, you would see I'm looking up and to the right. Hmm. I think frameworks work well in coaching. They work well when people who are being coached want the framework. People who are familiar with that four F table that you just described, free-range, familiar, framework, formula. I want to be clear. You can do discipleship coaching in the free-range.

**Brian:** Absolutely.

**Chad:** Somebody comes and, "What do you want to be coached around today?" "I want to be coached around buying a new house. I'm thinking of moving." That's an opportunity for some discipleship coaching, just whatever comes up, but with framework, it's someone wants a particular outcome, and they're coming to coaching with that particular outcome, so I think there when we're looking at framework, we do have an idea as the coach of maybe some characteristics of Jesus, some attributes, or maybe a different way of saying that would be what's a mature follower of Jesus look like. So, we've got some kind of understanding of that, so we're not just making that up on day one of the coaching.

**Brian:** And adding, I think that kind of hits that definition that you started with, and the definition I added, not only some characteristics of Jesus, but some ways people in the past have come into Jesus' presence.

**Chad:** Think of it this way. If we were all pieces wood, and we were trying to be crafted into a piece of furniture, you'd probably want some examples of the furniture, but you'd also need some tools to get crafted.

**Brian:** Absolutely. That's good. What a great analogy that you got there about furniture.

**Chad:** Well, I do live in Hickory, NC which is the furniture capital of the world. By the way, there are 12 other cities around here that claim themselves to be, but they're posers.

**Brian:** They're not the real thing. We've got the Amish around us, so we've got the real deal, but I see what you're saying. I don't know. I was just joking with you. I was just making fun of you. Best I could. It wasn't even easy. I had to work at it. So, there's this idea of what a framework could look like. You're saying let's look at some characteristics of Jesus that need to be enhanced. Let's think about what tools we need. We need to introduce... When you're talking about furniture, too. What kind of wood should we use?

**Chad:** I'm thinking... Look at Christ, and what kind of person was he? He was fully connected with God the Father. That's outcome, in a way, but how did he get connected? It was through a lot of prayer, and meditation, and getting away. Those things are both a means and an end. Prayer is a crafting process that gets us more like Jesus, but it's also the kind of thing Jesus does. It's shaping us, conforming us, into that final... Not that there's a final product. That's where the analogy breaks down pretty quickly. The furniture breaks down quickly, Brian. It's free.

**Brian:** I got you. I got you. One way we can look at discipleship, we talked about framework and the four F model that you described. There's another model that we use at Coach Approach which looks like a graph, back to geometry, and from left to right, it's "I'm the expert" "They're the expert." In coaching, we say, "They're the expert" and come at it with that attitude. There are other distinctions like counseling, the counselor's more of the expert. Consulting, they're more the expert. Teacher, they're more the expert. Even in our material, it says "discipler." I'm never always sure where to put that on this graph of "I'm the expert" "They're the expert." "I tell" "I ask" from top to bottom. Give us some insight into that.

**Chad:** It's interesting. I think when some of our materials were written, discipleship had a very narrow focus which was kind of a curriculum based. It was much more in the category mentoring and teaching. My understanding of discipleship is that discipleship transcends that model. Again, the model is, from top to bottom, the top is ask. The bottom is tell. That's a spectrum. How do I help? By asking or by telling. Who's the expert? Am I the expert, or is the person I'm helping the expert? Of course, in coaching, I help by asking because the other person's the expert. Counselors mostly ask, but they believe they are the expert, and they are, on diagnosing, understanding pathology, those kinds of things. Teachers, mentors, consultants, those types, they are the experts, and they mostly tell.

Again, the key words here are "mostly." So, if you're a counselor, and you're like, "I don't just ask." That's okay. Mostly. To me, discipleship transcends that. It doesn't fit on the model. The model describes ways we could disciple. Now, I tend to think most, traditionally, discipleship models fit in that quadrant of, I, the discipler am the expert. I'm going to disciple you by telling you. Sit down, take notes, listen to me, fill in the blanks, we have a 13-week study course, watch a video. It's a very much put information into you kind of methodology, which just to be clear, I am not criticizing. There's a need for

that. It's just not the whole picture. So, for someone to be more like Jesus, I think they need teaching. They probably need counseling from time to time. Coaching is really the stretch for a lot of people, and I think that's why it enhances discipleship. It rounds out the methodology.

**Brian:** Some of the methodology there... The first thing we do is we think in coaching about asking. What does asking look like in discipleship?

**Chad:** To me, the greatest question in discipleship or maybe of any question any time is where is God at work in your life? Who knows that? The person knows that, and that's going to take a lot of deep reflection, and maybe this is just because I'm a deep believer in the Henry Blackaby experience and God curriculum, but where is God at work? What would it take to join him there? How willing are you to do that?

**Brian:** That's interesting that Blackaby put that up front. That's at the top of his framework. That's the question, and I'm pretty familiar with the 3DM stuff with Mike Green, and he puts that second, which is pretty high. I'm not trying to make the point that it's not first. I'm trying to make the point that it's at the top, and he talks about Kairos moment. He puts it in a little more biblical term, and he says where did Jesus show up in your life? Here's some ways to think about it, a little bit of framework, and then there's a coaching model. Literally, in my mind, it is a coaching model that I didn't see from Blackaby, so that's what attracted me to this stuff. He puts it in a circle. You work around the circle and think, "Okay, what's really going on with Jesus, and what am I going to do about it?" I like Blackaby's terms a little better when you say it. Where's God showing up in my life, and how can I join him?" I like how can I join him better than what am I going to do about it?

**Chad:** What am I going to do about it is a really good coaching question. It really gets to action, but I think both of those give us the idea of a person's moving through life. Things are happening. They're both saying, "Stop and pay attention to what's happening. Notice. Notice what's working and what's not working." Where God is at work isn't just, "I just had a baby. God's at work. It's a beautiful, wonderful thing." God could be at work in the loss of a loved one. What are you noticing in life right now? Again, those are great coaching questions. What are you noticing? How's it affecting you? What do you think? What do you feel? The unintentional disciple just kinds of moves through life without reflecting, noticing, and even noticing what they're noticing. Coaching allows us to slow down, to reflect, to notice, and then to respond appropriately.

It's the responding appropriately to what we notice. That's coaching because it draws out of the other person what they're noticing and the impact it's having. When your kids are doing something good, or not so good, and then you notice how you're responding and how you wish you could respond, that's an opportunity to be more like Jesus versus just to get through the moment to the next thing. I think that's how the coaching enhances discipleship. It gets us really good at asking questions that gets a person paying attention to what's happening, what's going on with them, all of which I put under that category of where's God at work.

**Brian:** I want to go to the other side of this because discipleship transcends this model. How does telling look in discipleship?

**Chad:** Yeah, I think this is why discipleship happens best in community. I'm a big believer in the individual. Individual's great. That's one of the things that makes coaching so strong is it's very

[Transcribed by Alyssa Miller](#)

individualized. Instead of a bunch of Jesus soldiers moving through the bootcamp in lockstep, God is really paying attention to each person. On the other hand, the individual is in a community who can also pay attention, who is also noticing where is God at work, and also reflect to the person, "Here's something I'm noticing in you that maybe you don't even notice yourself. We need the people around us to speak into our lives and that's a discipleship thing. By the way, when someone speaks into your life, now something's happening because now you have to decide do I believe that? What do I want to do with that? Do I own it? Which kicks us right back into coaching.

**Brian:** In my family discipleship group just the other night, we were asking the question, "What's a story, a fictional story, TV, movie, book, that you resonate with, and you identify very strongly with the lead character," and we thought of some things that we thought was true for us, and the thing I noticed with everyone coming up with their own story, it was really highlighting the negative aspect of the story, the conflict, the drama. Which is fine. It's an awareness piece. That's an asking, and then I wasn't sure how it would work, but I went into, "Okay, now everyone else in the circle think of a story for this person. What story do you resonate for them," and those stories were always positive. What I want to say about this with telling is that it's telling of something I observe or see, but the thing it needs to do is create awareness in the disciple. They can't just say, "I see. I'm great. Thanks. Now I know." That's not the way we've seen it work. It's, "I'm surprised you said that. Thanks for saying that." It has to internalize. The telling is something that can be an observation that can bring awareness, but also could be a scriptural mandate. "Well, scripture says that's not okay, or you should do this," but then you have to stop and let that awareness come out of the disciple. You don't want to just be a legalistic, "Okay, I'll keep the sabbath. Okay, I'll tithe. Okay." That creates maybe people who act like Jesus, but they're not like Jesus.

**Chad:** Yeah, which isn't very like Jesus. I like the word internalize that you used there. So, when we are told something, we're receiving something, and we don't know if it's true or not, or we don't know how true it is. It's interesting because I think those kind of telling opportunities sometimes land in ways that we don't anticipate. I know in my own mind, sometimes it's been... I don't buy what the person is saying. They've given me a piece of feedback, or they've given me something they really believe is true, and I've wrestled with it, and chewed on it enough to process it, and internalize, and come to not necessarily the opposite conclusion, but a very different conclusion. God uses that too.

**Brian:** I had a friend say to me the other day, "I hate it when people explain things to me. If I could never have anybody explain something to me ever again, I would be glad. I'd be happy," and then he began to explain things to me.

**Chad:** Began to explain that to you probably. Yeah.

**Brian:** I thought, I resonate with that idea. It's a cultural thing, at least in America, don't tell me anything. Don't tell me anything, and that's not a healthy attitude, but coaching does enhance that so that I'm saying, "Here's what I think. Here's what I know. Now let me be concise about it, and then let's make it a conversation."

**Chad:** To me, in discipleship the best time to tell someone something is when they ask. So, if you have a relationship with someone, and they understand themselves as moving through this story of life, becoming more like Christ, and they reach a roadblock, a gap, an uncertainty, and they are looking for answers, and they don't have them yet, and they come to you, or to me, or to a pastor, or a coach and

say, "I'm stuck. What do you think about this? I'm driving everyone at work nuts, and I can't figure out why? If you worked with me, what would drive you nuts?" I'm going to tell you, but that's a different... They're open in receiving it because they asked for it versus, "Hey Brian, there's something I need to tell you."

**Brian:** Because what coaching brings to discipleship as well, which we haven't even touched on, is safety. They feel safe to safe, "I'm asking you to tell me what drives you nuts. I'm asking, and I trust that you're going to tell me, but you're not going to say it to hurt me. You're not going to judge me," or I could say I'm really struggling with this, and I trust you not to judge me but to help me think it through.

**Chad:** I love the safety word there. One of the things I really like about coaching, and I think this really connects to enhancing discipleship, is when you think and operate like a coach, you want to engage people but not so you can control them. The reason most people don't just beg for discipleship from other people is people tend to want to be controlling, so I'm going to tell you a bunch of stuff, but it's really a way of controlling, to form you into what I think Jesus looks like, or whatever. If you can master the art of engaging without controlling, I think you'll earn a lot more success. I think coaching gives us some of the mindset, some of the skill set to do that.

**Brian:** Two episodes ago, I was interviewing Mel Ming who is a pioneer in coaching, and consulting as well. He mostly consults with churches of 10,000 people. He's a big-time consultant, if you will. He has trained people to do the same thing within his organization. I said, "What's the major thing that needs to be broken in these guys," I don't just mean that male/female, "In these people who are coming up to do the same kind of work," and he said, "So many of them come to me because they want to be the expert. That's a sure sign they're going to be lousy at this." At the same time, he brings a lot of information. There's a framework.

**Chad:** Oh yeah. He's a smart guy. He's got a ton of information.

**Brian:** There's a ton of information he brings, and he doesn't go in and say, this is how you ought to do it. There's a humbleness he brings. A lot of discipleship stuff, we haven't even talked about making a plan, accountability, making an agreement because discipleship's an agreement as a relationship. I think there's so much of coaching that can go into this. Chad, we're out of time, and I appreciate so much you taking the time and thinking through how coaching enhances discipleship.

**Chad:** Brian, we've got a webinar on this coming up for people in our community. Bill Copper and I, along with Kathryn McElveen, on Faith Coaching. I figured we weren't going to cover everything in the podcast, and I was right.

**Brian:** Again, you were right.

**Chad:** That's the first time today actually.

**Brian:** I doubt that. Thanks for everybody for joining us. Don't miss any of our podcasts. Subscribe to our podcast at iTunes, Overcast, Stitcher, or Google Play by searching for Coach Approach Ministries Podcast. We'll see you next week.

**[Outro Music]**