

Daniel Trygg

Affectionately called “Pastor Dan” by many of those he works with, Dan is one of the founders and the president of DTM. He also is the main shepherd-teacher of one of DTM’s Ekklēsia meetings. Many of his sermon notes, articles and other writings from the past years can be found by clicking on the Resources page.

Dan is a home-grown Minnesotan, born and raised up in the north country. During those early years, his dad owned and ran a logging business, so Dan spent a great deal of time in the woods. He and his brothers grew up around axes, bow saws, hunting, fishing and berrypicking. His mom was in love with the outdoors, and introduced her five children to those outdoor activities from their earliest days. Dan has an older sister, and three younger brothers from that union, along with an adopted brother much later.

Unfortunately, alcohol ravaged Dan’s family, affecting both parents and bringing chaos and destruction in its wake. Dan’s father left the logging business and relocated the family to St. Paul, MN in 1965. The alcoholism he struggled with became worse, for a time, but he went to several treatment centers and finally managed to break its hold on him in 1967. Dan’s mother, however, continued in her addiction, unwilling to submit to treatment. The alcohol continued its devastating progression in her life, until she succumbed to it through esophageal hemorrhaging in the fall of 1970, Dan’s senior year in high school.

Like many young people of that time, Dan was pretty cynical about society. With his love of the outdoors, his plan for his future life was to drop out from the rat race and move to the wilderness of British Columbia. God had other plans, however.

Dan’s parents, while they had their problems, saw to it that their children went to church. The three living grandparents that Dan knew growing up were all Christians. The grandmothers, and one of Dan’s aunts, had a special influence in keeping the gospel in front of him. He had come to believe in Jesus since childhood, but in the spring and summer of 1971, God began to speak to him, culminating in a decision to make a “no-holds-barred” decision to give God his future.

He attended Bethel College in St. Paul, MN, graduating with highest honors in 1975, having completed a double major in Biblical Studies and Philosophy. He went on to do graduate work at Bethel Seminary in 1975-1977.

Dan had been somewhat reserved and emotionally shut down as a young man, partially due to the unhealthy family dynamics. He was shy and would *never* have chosen to be a pastor, or to speak in front of a group. Shortly after the consecration of his future life to God, however, the Lord pushed him into ministry with youth. He began to have a passion for study, teaching and discipleship. The youth group started a Friday night coffeehouse outreach, and Dan was leading a Bible study on Saturday evenings. The ministry extended beyond his church to several others. As these youth entered college, they rented a discipleship house, where several people lived together in order to be

discipled. *They* were the ones who first encouraged him to step out into doing Bible study and discipleship training as a full-time vocation.

In 1980, Dan left the other part-time work he had been doing, and began doing ministry full-time. Most of his work has involved one-on-one discipleship training, Bible study and spiritual counseling. In 1983, again at the encouragement of others, Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc. was founded. Dan has worked in conjunction with DTM through all these years.

Beginning in 1989, God began to reveal to Dan the importance of Body-life, the reality that every believer has gifts and abilities which the Lord desires to use to build up His people. In 1996, Dan helped start Ekklēsia, an interactive gathering for the Body of Christ to learn to exercise their spiritual gifts by serving God and one another. (The name, “Ekklēsia”, [pronounced, “ek-clay-see-ya”] is the New Testament Greek word that is translated as “church” in English.) We are attempting to “do church” in a way that hearkens back more to the NT model. Church is not a building. It is the gathering of believers, called out to meet together *to help each other* grow, mature and serve as the Lord directs. We typically gather in small groups, meeting in homes. We spend extended time together, often from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Sundays. We share a meal together, and concentrate on talking about the real life struggles we have. We employ the gifts of the Spirit in prayer ministry with each other. The goal is to build each one up to become an effective member of the Body.

Following the strategy of Jesus and the early church, Dan has focused on discipleship. Often this involves one-on-one mentoring, spiritual counseling and problem solving. The goal is to train someone up so that they become mature, independent and can then move on to minister and train others. Jesus’ strategy was to spread out and infiltrate the world. He spoke of the church as being like yeast spreading through a lump of dough. Instead of gathering people to one localized ministry, Dan has encouraged people to move out and develop new ministry expressions, however the Lord may direct.

Dan lives in Saint Paul, Minnesota, with his wife and his two youngest sons. His three older children are out on their own.

If you wish to contact Dan, you can email him at dantrygg@msn.com.