

Disciple-Making Leadership

This plenary session argues that our practice of Biblical leadership should be shaped by a Biblical understanding of what the church is, what it is for and the God-given purpose of its leaders. Paul's letter to the Ephesians answers these questions in a way that is profoundly challenging to the contemporary church. The indivisibility of discipleship and mission means that what is at stake in disciple-making leadership is nothing less than the God's mission through His Church to reach lost Europeans. If we take seriously what Paul says, then our leadership and indeed our churches ought to look different.

Mark Stirling is the leader of the European Disciple-Making Leaders Network. He is a former medical doctor who pioneered work amongst university students with the Navigators in Edinburgh from 1998 to 2004. In 2007 he completed an MA in Exegetical Theology at Covenant Seminary in St Louis and in 2011 gained a PhD in Biblical Studies from St Andrews University, his thesis examining issues of discipleship and maturity in Ephesians. He, his wife Jenny and their four children now live in St Andrews, Scotland. Mark currently pastors a new church (Cornerstone St Andrews) and is the director of The Chalmers Centre, a learning community that exists to resource and equip men and women to exercise faithful biblical leadership in the church and in society.

A. Introduction

What is the problem?

What is at stake?

God's mission through God's people

B. Introduction to Ephesians

Overview of Ephesians

Key Themes in Ephesians

Transformed Walking

The Church as God's Missional Temple

C. Ephesians 2:11-22

The Peacemaking Work of Christ on the Cross

One new humanity

Fellow citizens and members of God's Household

A Holy Temple

Dwelling place for God by the Spirit

Use of Old Testament (Isa 52:7, 57:19, Zech 6:12-15, Isa 2:1-5)

Summary

The peacemaking work of Christ on the cross creates a new humanity that corporately constitutes the "dwelling place for God by the Spirit", functioning as the OT temple. The building of this new "temple" is described using OT concepts and texts that describe the Gentiles coming to God's presence and worshiping Him - in other words, this "temple" is inherently expansionist and missional.

D. Ephesians 4:11-16

Fitting together the dwelling place (2:21) and fitting together the body (4:16)

The body/temple grows as each part does what God made it to do

How does each part do what it's made to do? (4:11-16)

Equipping the saints (4:12)

For the work of ministry (4:12)

For building up the body of Christ (4:12)

What are the results?

Unity (4:13)

Maturity (4:13)

Stability (especially doctrinally) (4:14)

Community (4:15)

Growth (4:16)

E. Discipleship and Maturity in Ephesians

Applications of “putting off the old and putting on the new humanity” (4:22-24)

Relational transformation (4:25-6:9)

F. Implications and Applications

Leadership shaped by purpose

Missional temple building

Every member growing toward maturity

Therefore no little people

A healthy, functioning body

Relationship out needs relationship in

No false choice between relationship and content

Content full relationship

Role of leaders in the body

Capacity?

G. Challenge to all leaders

What this actually looks like

A way of being; not a technique or formula

A call to reformation