

Disciple-Making Leadership in the Local Church

Discipleship is central to the life of the mature Christian. One cannot take salvation seriously, nor one's purpose in the world, without embracing this concept embedded in biblical teaching. Established as Jesus' plan, discipleship is not an "add-on" to the individual Christian's life or a "programme" added to the schedule of a local church. Rather, it is a serious and intentional response to how we live and conduct our lives in answer to the call of Jesus to "come and follow Me." Each local church is intended to be a disciple-making body, and each Christian is called to discipleship as a way of life. This session will look at how we nurture a discipling consciousness and establish local churches that have discipleship at the heart of their ministry.

Tom Streeter is the teaching elder of the church he began in Zionsville, Indiana, in 1981. Having planted churches in Illinois and Indiana, his 45 years of pastoral ministry have been characterised by a devotion to developing disciples within the context of the church. Whether training believers in participatory worship, meaningful relationships, cultural engagement, or a vigorous life of the mind, he has a passion for right thinking and authentic living. His lifelong study in theology, the church, and history has included leading several Reformation tours in Europe along with his wife, Judy.

I. Is it true that all believers are called to be involved in the work of discipleship?

A. *It is evident too as we read the pages of the New Testament that the new church as a whole understood that it was called to participate in the mission to the world. They saw clearly that it was not only the apostles who were sent by Jesus, but all believers. To demonstrate this we need only look at the way Luke describes the spread of the Gospel beyond Jerusalem. The apostles...very soon taught the whole church this calling.*

-- Jerram Barrs, *The Heart of Evangelism*, p. 16

B. The call of Jesus is multi-dimensional:

a. "Follow Me"—called to live faithfully in relationship with Jesus

b. "Ekklesia"—called to live faithfully in the church

- c. “Go into all the world and make disciples”—called to live faithfully in the world, making disciples.

II. Making disciples and the local church

A. Equipping ministry: “Equip the saints to do the work of the ministry”

- a. Pastors must know their role

- b. Build a mentality of discipleship and plan church-life for discipleship

B. Discipleship Cycle

- a. Pre-evangelism: contact

- b. Evangelism: living and telling the Gospel

c. Conversion: coming to Christ

d. Christian Formation: learning Christ

e. Reproduction: passing the baton

III. Practical considerations

A. Living faithfully in the work place

B. A life of love

C. An open home

D. The New Community