



The
FLOW
Adult CURRICULUM

#49

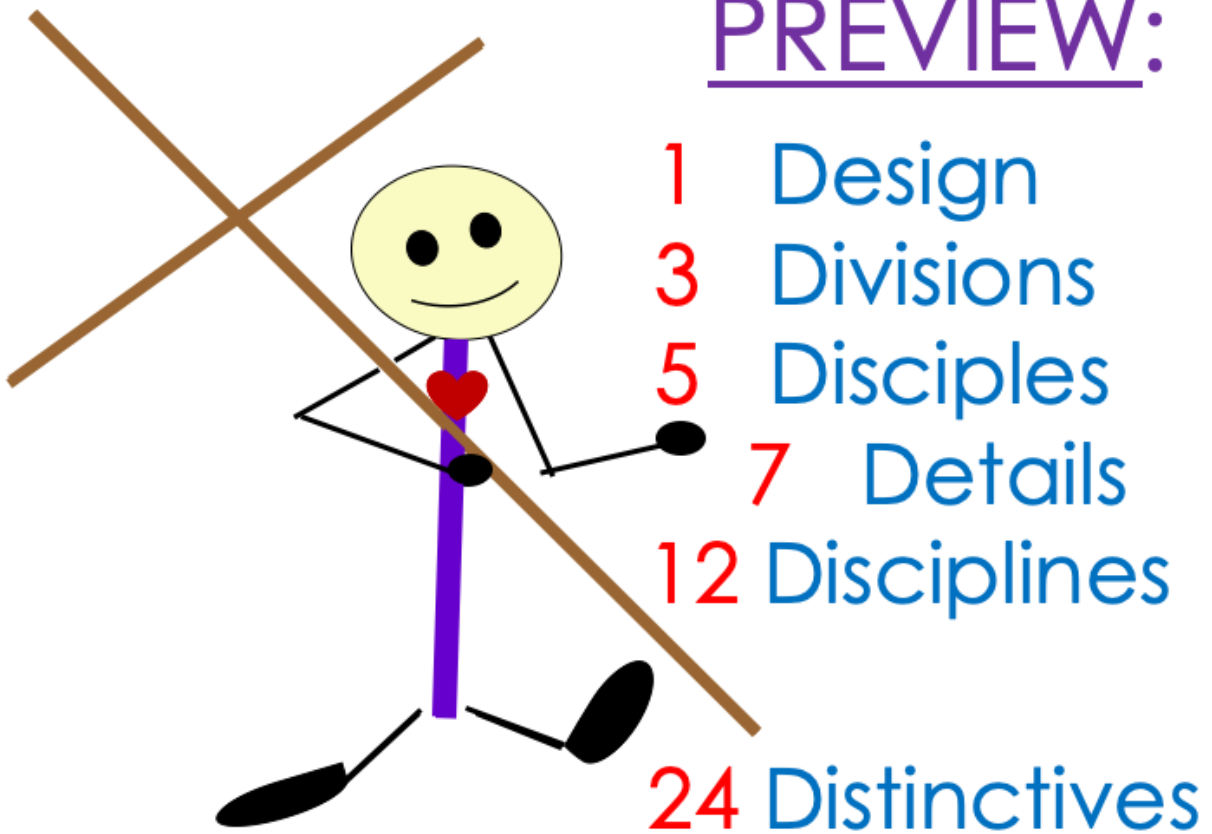
Making Discipled Warriors

Matthew 28:19a

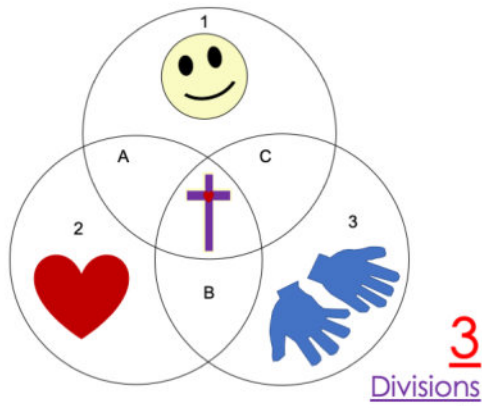
(Come And See Christianity book page 112)

The FLOW

PREVIEW:

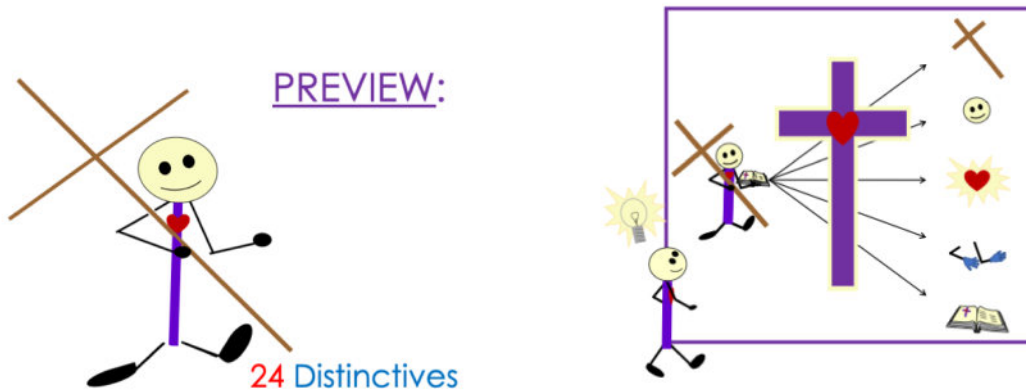


SECTION SIX: 12 Disciplines



The Disciple's "Hands" put into **action** the **truth** & **love** of God's Word, God's will, & God's ways. In short, when **each Christian's Head, Heart, & Hands** are united in purpose & power, the family of God is **living** as the **Body of Christ!**

24 Family Distinctives:



24 DISTINCTIVES:

The “distinctives” are a family portrait... When you add God’s Word, God’s Spirit, God’s Truth, God’s love, and God’s people all together, the distinctives are what we look, love, & live like :-)

We are...



Making disciplined warriors

INTRO:

As we begin to **see the beautiful, biblical portrait of Christ's faith-filled family** defined and described by God's Word, will, and ways, it is critical to remember that the Holy Bible is to ALWAYS BE our ultimate source, authority, and interpreter in ALL things pertaining to one's understanding of reality and application of truth in love.

**Remember,
The biblical Church is Christ's missional family...
Moreover, God's Word reveals our Father's will and His family's ways.**

[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17**so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Here are ***24 defining & describing HANDS-on DISTINCTIVES of Christianity:***

True Christians are biblically, miraculously, intentionally, missionally, and imperfectly...

1. *Responding to grace*
2. *Repenting of sin*
3. *Trusting the Bible*
4. *Obeying God's Word*
5. *Growing in Christ*
6. *Living Spirit-led*
7. *Praying for guidance*
8. *Following by faith*
9. *Dying to self*
10. *Carrying our cross*
11. *BE-ing The Church*
12. *Loving one another (truly loving one another)*
13. *Equipping the saints*
14. *Exemplifying supernatural unity*
15. *Ministering as ambassadors*
16. *Discerning matters shrewdly*
17. *Worshipping God vertically*
18. *Experiencing Him horizontally*
19. *Proclaiming the Gospel (no matter what)*
20. *Fishing for men*
21. *Making disciplined warriors*
22. *Winning spiritual warfare*
23. *Loving our King*
24. *Serving His kingdom*

PRAYER:

LORD, we seek to bless You with all that is within us. Help us here, we pray, to be that blessing as we come to better understand You and Your eternal truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Help us to see with Your eyes and love with Your love, all that You would reveal to us through Your Word, Your will, and Your ways. May we grow in our grasp of Your realities, Your means of restoration, and Your mission of reproduction. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen and Amen

CONTEXT:

Macro

This lesson marks another major transition point in our curriculum's eye-opening explanation of Christianity. By way of review, we began in Section One with the reality of Almighty God having 1 Divine DESIGN (also known as a biblical worldview and the eternal application of Jesus Christ's Gospel). In Section Two, we addressed the 3 DIVISIONS (Head, Heart, and Hands) that make up the "being" in every human being. Next, in Section Three, we demonstrated how Christianity accounts for, defines, and describes all of humanity, every person, past, present, and future. We noted that all people can be identified as one of the 5 DISCIPLES – Lost, Lover, Learner, Leader, or Lifer. Moving forward, Section Four revealed, engaged, and explained the 7 fundamental DETAILS of God's Divine DESIGN... because **we all need to know what we need to know**. To be more specific, those seven truths are: The Foundations, The Framework, The Facts, The Fight, The Faith, The Family, and the truth about Forever.

Then, in Section Five, which we just completed, our focus shifted from HEAD based truths to 12 HEART shaping exercises or disciplines - each having the potential to strengthen one's personal relationship with Christ, His Church, and their collective mission: bringing God glory by finding & growing more glorifiers.

We used the acronym **J.E.S.U.S.'S. P. S.W.O.R.D.** to outline and harmonize a biblical, missional, and intentional methodology for growing in God's love - & His loving witness. The 12 HEART DISCIPLINES are: **J**ournaling... **E**ating-nothing (fasting)... **S**cripture-intake... **U**nderstudy of Scripture... **S**tewardship... **S**olitude... **P**rayer... **S**erving... **W**orshipping... **O**utreach... **R**elationships... and **D**evelopment.

Now, our curriculum and study will transition to The HANDS. This is where **Christians demonstrate to the world that Christ is in their worship & witness**. Whereas our time spent in the HEAD sections (1-4) focused on the truths that Christians need and seek to LEARN, and our concentration on the 12 HEART DISCIPLINES of section 5 helped us to grow in God's LOVE, our sixth and final section will **walk through the 24 DISTINCTIVES, which explain & exemplify how Christians are to faithfully LIVE... and fully BE The Church... together** – all by God's grace & ALL for His glory!

God's Word puts it this way:

"Let us not love with word and tongue but in action and truth." – 1st John 3:18

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47](#)praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. – Acts 2:46-47

I. **DISTINCTIVES are FRUIT:**

It is important to realize that God’s miraculous and authentic **Christian DISTINCTIVES are the FRUIT of saving grace and faith** (Ephesians 2:1-10). As Jesus described in John 15, people can do nothing outside of their abiding in Him and obeying His Word, will and ways. In short, there will be no fruit unless one remains attached to and provided for by the true Vine and divine Root. With that said, a cautionary note is worth sharing here, beware the counterfeits that abound around the world. ***Plastic fruit is deceptive vs. DISTINCTIVE!***

Galatians 5:22-25

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

II. **DISTINCTIVES are FAMILY:**



DISTINCTIVES, by definition, are those “distinguishing characteristics that are notable for having a special quality, style, and/or attractiveness” (Dictionary.com).

When it comes to God’s family, the true Church, each Christian and their individualistic DISTINCTIVES are as unique as their potential. At the same time, in the same way that a billion unique snowflakes can be combined to make a single snowstorm, or countless swatches of scrap fabric can be sewn together to make a single quilt, so it is with God’s family. The LORD creates His Christian family with a both/and combination of DISTINCTIVE uniqueness, as well as DISTINCTIVE love and defining unity.

Christianity’s DISTINCT family (ecclesia) has a DISTINCTIVE unity (koinonia).

“By this all people will know that you are My disciple, if you have love for one another.”
– John 13:35

“The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

III. **DISTINCTIVES are WITNESS:**

The most biblical and healthy understandings of Christianity will include an embrace of two overarching and DISTINCTIVE purposes. Namely, per God’s Word, will, and ways, every Christian has received miraculous, saving grace, as well as the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to:

1. Bring glory to God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.*

2. BE Christ’s witness.

Acts 1:8

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, **and you will be My witnesses** in Jerusalem (locally), and in all Judea and Samaria (regionally), and to the end of the earth (globally).”*

God’s DISTINCTIVE people have been filled with His Holy Spirit for the express purpose of living DISTINCTIVE lives. When the world sees the LORD’s loving family living out their divinely empowered and God-honoring worship, work, and warfare, the resulting fruit will serve as a faithful witness, built with supernatural, grace-based, and missional DISTINCTIVES.

“God created me—and you—to live with a single, all-embracing, all-transforming passion—namely, a passion to glorify God by enjoying and displaying his supreme excellence in all the spheres of life.”

- John Piper

The Christian Distinctive

What distinguishes Christianity from all other religions is that it is a *revealed* religion. Christianity is not about our search for God or our means of finding him. Christianity is not a religion that works its way upward. It is all about God coming to us — God in grace making himself known to us and making a way for us to enjoy fellowship with him.

And so, at the very heart of Christianity is, simply, a message — a message from God to us about what he has done to bring us to himself.

If Christianity is distinctively revealed religion, then it is also uniquely *authoritative*. It does not offer itself as the best and highest of human thinking about God or even the best or most successful of human efforts to know God. It professes to be nothing less than the unique word from God, his very own self-disclosure and the record of the actions he has taken in Jesus Christ to bring us into fellowship with himself.

One of Rudyard Kipling's characters declares, "The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone; He don't obey no orders unless they is his own." That is to say, human religions lack authority — they form their own ideas and "discover" their own beliefs.

By contrast the Christian is "under orders," because unlike human religions, Christianity is a revealed religion — divinely revealed. We Christians are not our own touchstone of truth, and we do not confuse our ideas about God with His own self-revelation. We learn truth about God not from "inner lights" within ourselves but from God's own objective Word.

And apart from this external authority, there is no Christianity. This, at bottom, is Christianity's leading distinctive.

And so, we **Christians prize Scripture as God's Word. We joyfully submit to it. And we enthusiastically proclaim its message of grace in Jesus Christ to the world.**

- Dr. Fred Zaspel

Micro

Judges 6:12

*When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said,
"The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."*

While **ONLY** Almighty God can missionally initiate and biblically complete the MAKING of miraculously-transformed DISCIPLLED WARRIORS, ***EVERY Christian and every church is called, commanded, & commissioned (John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 2:8-10; Ephesians 6:10-20) to both BE and build Christ's Body of DISCIPLLED WARRIORS.***

Matthew 28:19a

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."
- Jesus The Christ*

Message

In the same way that lions rear roaring lions (not laughing hyenas) & tigers raise regal tiger cubs... in the same way that eagles fill the skies with soaring eagles (not pigeons, nor parrots), & rhinos alone give rise to the next generation of fearless, thundering, T-9 rhinos... so it is, by God's grace and for His glory, that ***Christ-like DISCIPLLED WARRIORS "fight for the heart of their King," in part, by clearly, comprehensively, and completely devoting themselves to learning, loving, & living Almighty God's vision & mission.***

BE-ing Gospel WARRIORS is one of the most definitive blessings of the Christian's eternal adoption and their collective, koinonia-calling to do life together in God's tribe... To say it another way, by BE-ing "one" faith family (Ephesians 4:4-7), fighting in and for God's supernatural unity, per John 17:20-23, the true Christian Church prioritizes missional multiplication as a privilege & responsibility that has been divinely designed into our core DNA. ***It's who we are & how we BE!***

In short, again, in the same way that fish instantly take to swimming & bees instinctively make honey... in the same way that cherry tree roots grow cherries for fruit... **DISCIPLLED WARRIORS MAKE DISCIPLLED WARRIORS!** Take a moment and think about it... To expect any different would simply be illogical, nonsensical misguidance – period. Make no mistake, God's Word, will, and way(s) repeatedly & consistently both declare & demonstrate these essential, fundamental, authoritative, and authenticating truths.

Healthy, biblical DISCIPLES will want to MAKE healthy, biblical DISCIPLES.

To teach, preach, or advance in any way, with one's actions or attitudes, any other point of view, is poisonous, damnable heresy. Moreover, to accept anything else other than the Lord's missional mandates and biblical manifesto is cancerous, sinful disobedience (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Remember, for the authentic Christian, ***there is no excuse*** (2 Peter 1:3 & Philippians 4:13). God Himself promised that His genuine faith-family would BE those followers who live radically "*transformed (lives), the old is gone and the new has come.*" **We "are new creations"** (2 Corinthians 5:17).

At the same time, battles will abound. Keep in mind, according to the world's standards & expectations, DISCIPLED WARRIORS march to the beat of a distinctly different drum. To that end, if anyone makes the mistake of listening to and aligning with the loud majority, they will be told that our Christian cadence is "off" - that the Church is "out of step" with social media and societal norms. While the counter-cultural and convicting contrast could and should be true (see James 4:4), any perception or reported diagnosis of the DISCIPLED WARRIORS being the ones who are "off" and misleading is totally misguided and perversely corrupted.

1st Timothy 4:16 speaks directly and definitively here, exhorting the Christian Church: ***Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself & your hearers.*** Eternity is woven into those words! In the end, reality will prove that the DISCIPLED WARRIOR's cadence was correct & it was the world's way that was corrupt. May we all "*fight the good fight*" & "*finish our race*" (2 Timothy 4:7) valiantly.

2 Timothy 2:1-7

1You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. 3Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. 5An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 6It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. 7Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

"Let us not glide through this world and then slip quietly into heaven, without having blown the trumpet loud and long for our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Let us see to it that the devil will hold a thanksgiving service in hell when he gets the news of our departure from the field of battle."

– C.T. Studd

BIG IDEA: **MAKING DISCIPLED WARRIORS, which requires loving, finding, and growing others, is the multifaceted, missional bullseye that Christ commanded & commissioned as His biblical blueprint for kingdom expansion and Christian dedication.**

PREVIEW:

1. MAKING
2. DISCIPLED
3. WARRIORS

TEXT:

Matthew 28:19a
Go make disciples...

1. MAKING

Illustration:

Dr. Chuck Lawless is a missional, born-again believer in The LORD Jesus Christ. He is also a seasoned pastor, seminary professor, stalwart practitioner, and a very special person in lives of many Christ-followers. ***He is a DISCIPLED WARRIOR who has made many DISCIPLED WARRIORS.***

When this writer attended the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Lawless was Dean of The Billy Graham School of Missions & Evangelism. He was also my inspirational instructor & compassionate discipler who both explained & exemplified Christ-like discipleship to me. ***He lived 1 John 3:18: Let us not love with word and tongue but in action and in truth!***

Dr. Lawless also stands tall as a gifted & empowering author. To that end, his book entitled “Discipled Warriors” has served as the namesake of this lesson... But even more, “Discipled Warriors” (through its unpacking and application of the New Testament book of Ephesians) offers us a biblical blueprint for BE-ing the army and the aroma (2nd Corinthians 2:15) of Christ. With that in mind & knowing how this book has shaped our church, all that follows in this lesson will come directly from “Discipled Warriors,” in hopes of highlighting and validating the invaluable insights and inspiration(s) that Dr. Lawless has articulated & aptly applied from God’s Word, will, and ways.

DISCIPLED WARRIORS... this is our battle cry & call to the war of worship!

Explanation:

Has it ever seemed as though supernatural forces were doing everything possible to keep you or your church from growing (the explanation can be found in Matthew 16:18)?

God's people will win, but not before first wrestling against the forces of darkness (Ephesians 6:12). ***The enemy wars against any church that seeks to grow for God's glory.*** Regrettably, he often wins battles simply because we are unprepared for the conflict.

I fear that church growth principles sometimes are being abused to produce something other than a biblical church. The inherent danger... they might grow a crowd rather than a church. Church members, if biblically and theologically ill-equipped, often don't recognize the difference between the two.

I am concerned that ***too little attention has been given to the theological foundation required for any healthy church.*** ...far too many churches that appear otherwise "healthy" lack a solid foundation.

I contend that prayer is so evident in the early church that prayer itself should be a purpose of the church.

Disciple-making is much broader than a program or strategy. Indeed, biblical discipling encompasses all purposes of the church.

We have had years of discipling programs, and we are not disciplined. Donald McGavran coined the term "church growth" to refer to evangelism that results in fruit-bearing disciples of Christ. ***"Church growth" was to be measured not in "decisions" but in "disciples."***

Peter Wagner argued that ***church growth principles are often ineffective unless they take into account the spiritual battlefield*** on which the secular person must be approached.

This battle is real. We cannot ignore the reality of spiritual warfare as we grow healthy, biblical churches (Ephesians 6:12). At the same time, the ***biblical church must do spiritual battle in a biblical manner.***

Many believers err in ignoring Satan, others err in giving him too much attention. Warfare strategies often focus more on our power, rather than on our weakness and God's strength (2 Corinthians 12:9).

The process of "putting on the full armor of God" (Ephesians 6:10-17) is essentially biblical, lifestyle discipleship.

Application:

This book (“Discipled Warriors”) is both theological and practical. **Local churches must learn to reach and disciple their communities** while maintaining a biblical foundation.

Our greatest enemy is the flesh. (Romans 7:14, 18; 8:1-17; Galatians 5:19-21) Satan often wins because we are easy prey.

Spiritual warfare is not about reacting to the Enemy – it is about putting on the armor of God in preparation for the battle. The church, rather than the Enemy, should have the upper hand in the battle.

2. DISCIPLED

Illustration:

Only a biblically healthy church will win the very real spiritual battles that we face daily. The healthy church produces Christian disciples who are prepared for spiritual war.

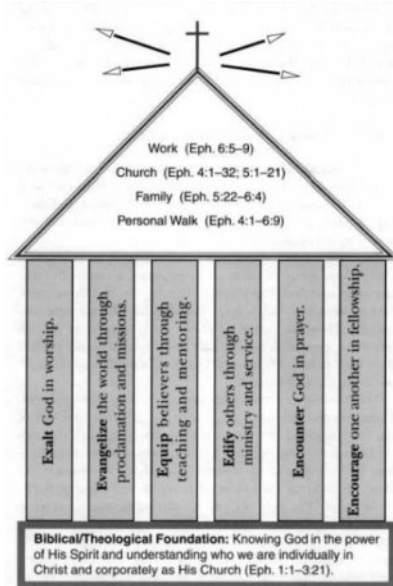
Explanation:

CHAPTER ONE: *Establishing the Foundation of a Church*

There are four essential elements to the Ephesians model:

1. The **FOUNDATION** – the foundation must be biblically and theologically sound, focusing on our knowing God and our identity in Him (see Ephesians ch. 1-3).
2. The **PILLARS** – represented by the purposes of the church as described in the Scriptures, particularly the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-40), & the portrayal of the early church (Acts 2:41-47). The “pillars” or purposes are:

1. *Exalting* God through Worship (Matthew 22:36-37; Acts 2:43, 47).
 2. *Evangelizing* the world through proclamation & missions (Matthew 28:18-20) (Acts 2:41, 47).
 3. *Equipping* believers through teaching & mentoring (Matthew 28:18-20) (Acts 2:42).
 4. *Edifying* one another through ministry & service (Matthew 22:39) (Acts 2:44-45).
 5. *Encountering* God through prayer (Acts 2:42).
 6. *Encouraging* one another through fellowship (Acts 2:42, 46).
3. The **ROOF** – depicts where the truths of this model become evident in one’s life... it is the “external component” of this model (see Ephesians ch. 4-6).
 4. The **CROSS** – reminds us that our mandate as a biblical church is to proclaim the gospel to the world. A healthy church always looks beyond itself to fulfill the Great Commission.



The most basic component of congregational health is a biblical understanding of Christianity & the church.

Churches without a biblical foundation have little to offer to a world searching for purpose. They certainly do not alarm Satan very much (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Because so few churches offer solid biblical and theological training, we have produced generations of believers who have a weak foundation for their faith.

Only the church that accepts and follows God's Word as authoritative will ever be healthy.

The healthy church must first have a theological foundation based upon knowing God and who they are individually and corporately in Christ. It is He who gives us power to win the battles (Ephesians 1:18-19; 3:14-21).

Ephesians chapters 1-3 describe the theological foundation (and roof) of the healthy church model. Chapters 4-6 shift the practical side of life and the believer's victory in Christ.

Paul essentially said to the Ephesians, "Who you are in Christ must affect every area of your life." ***Our faith must affect our personal walk*** (Ephesians 4:1-6:9) at home (5:22-6:4), at church (4:1-5:21), & in the workplace (6:5-9).

Leaders must then ask: "Do we as a body help members to live out their faith in all areas of life? To assume church members automatically apply our teachings is naïve.

The continual challenge for a church is to develop a comprehensive strategy that addresses ALL the areas noted in Ephesians while maintaining a solid biblical and theological foundation.

Satan is seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). He wants believers to question God's Word and make choices independent of it (see Genesis 3:1-7).

What do we do about the enemy's strategies? Putting on the full armor of God in preparation for spiritual battles (Ephesians 6:11) was imperative for the Ephesians. It remains imperative for us as well.

Our focus must be on God alone! The armor we are to wear is His armor (Ephesians 6:13). Unfortunately, we preach more about human needs than about the grace of God.

Salvation is in Christ alone! It is imperative that we remember that our position "in Christ" depends on Him alone (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). We who were dead in our sins were without hope apart from the grace of God (Ephesians 2:1-9). Only by grace through faith in Him are we "in Christ" (Ephesians 2:8-9). His love is so great for us that we ultimately cannot comprehend its magnitude. Furthermore, we are sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13).

A healthy church teaches that eternal salvation is available only through a personal relationship with Jesus.

Focusing on God's grace has the following benefits:

- A.** Believers who begin to understand the depth of God's grace are less likely to boast (Ephesians 2:9). Pride weakens a church's health, producing strife & division (see 1 Corinthians 1:11-13; 3:1-4; 11:18-19). Understanding God's grace produces Christ-like humility.
- B.** Believers who appreciate grace resist temptation.
- C.** Knowing who we are "in Christ" (in grace) helps us ward off spiritual attacks.

Application:

In Christ, we have privileges & responsibilities...

We need to recognize our privileges and fulfill our responsibilities!

***A church that expects anything less
from its members is not biblically healthy.***

A new Christian must be taught kingdom privileges and responsibilities...

Every believer needs guidance.

***Churches built upon scriptural truth
produce believers who aren't afraid in the storm.***

3. WARRIORS

Illustration:

***The healthy church produces disciples of Jesus rather than just
converts. Only disciples can overcome the inevitable
spiritual battles that all of us face.***

Explanation:

CHAPTER TWO: *The Goal: Disciplined Warriors*

Expressions of the Great Commission occur five times in Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8. All five statements challenge us to be His witness to the world! The statements reveal **five basic truths about the commission:**

1. Christ is the authority who demands our obedience (Matthew 28:18; John 20:21).
2. Christ commissions us, and He is the focus of our message (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47).
3. Preaching, teaching, and baptizing are strategies to fulfill the commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47).
4. The message we proclaim is for the world (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8).
5. Christ promises His power and presence as we go (Matthew 28:20; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).

The Nature of Discipleship:

1. The term translated “disciple” comes from a verb meaning “to learn.”
2. At the core of discipleship is learning – a disciple is first a student.
3. But... biblical discipleship is much more than intellectual learning..
4. *Biblical discipleship is a lifestyle!* (Luke 5:27, 6:40; Matthew 9:9, 19:21; Mark 1:17, 2:14, 8:34; John 1:43)
5. *A disciple is a committed follower who seeks to model his/her life after his (ultimate) teacher.*
6. The book of Acts reveals a community of disciples whose entire lives were controlled by their commitment to Christ!

The Process of Disciple-making: *Equipping is a better term for discipleship.*

1. The process of discipling is captured in the instructions “baptizing them” and “teaching them” in Matthew 28:19-20.

~ Baptizing represented conversion & commitment to Christ (Romans 6:3-4); evangelizing also happens as an outcrop of this process.

~ Teaching was the task of instructing, a command to obey all that Jesus taught.

- i. *Head knowledge was to become heart knowledge & a changed lifestyle.*
- ii. *Obedience to the commands of Christ indicated the disciples’ love for Jesus (John 14:15, 15:10).*
- iii. Those who obey the Great Commission make disciples through evangelism, leading to baptism, and teachings that result in obedient lifestyles.
- iv. *Legitimate church growth is Great Commission growth!*

2. Challenges to the process of disciple-making:
 1. ***Making disciples is a process... NOT a program!***
 2. *The process of teaching and obeying should never end.*
 3. *A disciple is always in the process of becoming more like Jesus.*
 4. Too many discipleship “programs” do not include evangelism training.
 5. Too many discipleship programs thus become inwardly focused, often missing entirely the “baptizing” element of the Great Commission.
 6. ***Biblical disciple-making assumes/requires accountability.***
 7. Where obedience was not evident, the church took steps of discipline (1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1st Timothy 1:18-20).

3. Model for disciple-making:

- A. **Healthy, disciple-making churches teach their members:**
 - i. ALL that Jesus commanded...
 - ii. Purposes of the biblical church...
 - iii. How to worship...
 - iv. How to serve...
 - v. How to evangelize...
 - vi. How to pray...
 - vii. How to equip...
 - viii. How to fellowship...
- B. *Healthy, disciple-making churches help believers apply & evaluate this faith in EVERY area of their lives.*
- C. ***The entire process – taking believers from theological foundations to practical living – is biblical disciple-making!***

If we are satisfied with leading people to Christ (conversion) but not discipling them after the fact, we have failed them and our calling.

Disciple-making:

Making disciples is the central aspect of the Great Commission.

FACT!

Satan schemes against churches that seek to produce disciples.

***The Enemy always fights against believers who obey
the Great Commission.***

The Enemy often strikes at new believers... often with the same temptations they faced before they became Christians (causing the new believer to doubt the authenticity of their conversion).

Undisciplined leaders don't produce disciplined warriors.

The Church's Proper Response: (Ephesians 6:10-20)

1. Be strong
2. Put on the full armor of God
3. Stand
 - By putting on the full armor of God, we (like the Ephesians) can resist the Enemy and stand against his schemes. The full armor of God consists of:
 1. **Belt of Truth**
 2. **Breastplate of Righteousness**
 3. **Foot-covering of the Gospel of Peace**
 4. **Shield of Faith**
 5. **Helmet of Salvation**
 6. **Sword of the Spirit**
 - Summary of Ephesians 6:10-20... ***Theologically & positionally, our victory is secure in Christ. Practically, the spiritual battle continues. Prepare for and fight the spiritual battle by putting on & living out the armor of God.***

Biblical spiritual warfare is not about knowing Satan... it is about knowing God so well & walking with Him close enough to readily recognize the counterfeit offers of the enemy.

1. ***Faithful Christian living is itself effective in undermining the enemy.***
2. ***We don't need new ideas and fancy programs, just obedient lifestyles!***

God's Full Armor... Defined:

1. **Belt of Truth**
 1. Know Christ, Who is the truth.
 2. Trust the truth of God's Word.
 3. Live truth by practicing honesty & integrity.

2. **Breastplate of Righteousness**
 1. Be grateful for God's righteousness given to us.
 2. Live a life of holiness.
 3. Make righteous choices – imitate God.
3. **Foot-covering of the Gospel of Peace**
 1. Stand firm in faith.
 2. Be willing & ready to share your faith.
 3. Go wherever God calls.
 4. Proclaim God's peace... even in the midst of spiritual battles.
4. **Shield of Faith**
 1. Know & trust God's promises.
 2. Act in accordance with assurance that God will keep His promises.
5. **Helmet of Salvation**
 1. Having God's salvation, live with hope.
 2. Know who you are in Christ.
 3. Think differently than the world thinks!
6. **Sword of the Spirit**
 1. Know God's Word (a.k.a. the Bible).
 2. Proclaim & teach God's Word.
 3. Live & love God's Word.
7. **Having put on the full armor of God, believers are to pray.**

Application:

Believers must be taught. Through teaching, believers learn to live effective Christian lives.

***Churches that fail to teach believers
send them unarmed into the spiritual battles.***

Discipled warriors walk courageously into the battle.

Churches that fail to strategize discipleship are easy prey for the enemy.

Because Satan is a strategist, we must also strategize against his attacks. Some churches are easy targets simply because they have no direction, no purpose, and no united front.

Strategizing for growth is a necessary weapon in the spiritual war!

***When the Devil attacks (and he will),
undisciplined believers are wounded because they do not have the armor.***

CLOSE:

CHAPTER THREE: *Disciplined Warriors - Exalting God*

Healthy churches recognize that the Enemy often uses internal arguments over worship style as a strategy in spiritual warfare. Discipling churches keep the focus on God and train disciplined warriors how to worship.

*He who created the universe,
including us, has a right to expect worship from us.*

Worship is the proper response of the...

1. ...created to the Creator (Revelation 4:11).
2. ...dependent to the Sovereign (Revelation 22:12-13).
3. ...redeemed to the Redeemer (Revelation 5:9).

When we truly realize who God is, worship should be the result (Matthew 22:37-38; Acts 2:43,47).

Worship should be a "lifestyle" of submission & service.

Words used in the Bible for "worship" indicate:

- A. To bow or stoop before someone (Exodus 4:31)
- B. To labor or do service (Exodus 3:12)
- C. To prostrate oneself or to kiss the hand (John 4:24)
- D. To do ministry or service (Romans 12:1)

Christians badly miss the point if they understand "worship" as only a Sunday morning gathering designed to make us feel good about ourselves and about our religion. So do those who assume that worship is an evangelistic event directed toward nonbelievers. Worship has become more about humans than God.

The Enemy does not care if we gather for a worship service - as long as our attention is on anything & everything but God.

Worship is one of the six purposes of the church that is built on a theological foundation centered on God.

Each of the purposes is equally important... BUT, none of the other five exists apart from worship.

The “Worship Purpose-Umbrella”

1. We **EVANGELIZE** so that all the world will be drawn to worship a holy & merciful God.
2. We **EQUIP** believers so that their lives give worthy praise in service.
3. We **EDIFY** others through ministry intended to be a practical expression of praise & adoration.
4. We **ENCOUNTER** God in prayer as One worthy to hear our praises & confessions.
5. We **ENCOURAGE** each other through fellowship as part of our mandate to honor Him with our lives and uphold His standards.

One reason Satan attacks worship is that the entire church is weakened when our worship is wrong.

*Genuine worship develops from a proper attitude of the heart.
Satan’s primary goal is to direct us away from God so that
worship is at least misdirected if not nonexistent.*

*The enemy invites us to focus on ourselves,
while genuine worship requires us to focus on God.*

One of the enemy’s subtle ways to direct us away from genuine worship is to focus us on our own needs (Exodus 32:1-10).

The Enemy wants us to focus so much on ourselves that we can attend an entire worship service and never really see God.

NOTE: On this issue, the critics of “felt need” preaching (a.k.a. typical “topical” preaching) deserve to be heard. *Addressing “felt needs” might be a legitimate (and effective) means to attract the unchurched, but this approach to preaching is insufficient to foster genuine worship. A steady diet of human-centered messages furthers the enemy’s agenda to focus attention on ourselves.*

***“Consumers” seldom become disciplined warriors.
The enemy offers the temporal, while genuine worship
demands a focus on the eternal.***

Satan directs our attention toward the temporary, so the eternal seems insignificant. Our goals & plans become more important than what God wants.

What are we doing to help believers develop a lifestyle of worship?

“...lost people are still looking for spiritual answers, but they no longer look to the church.” (- Tom Clegg & Warren Bird) The problem is not that the alternative religions are so attractive but that the church no longer focuses on the eternal.

The enemy offers power, while genuine worship results in brokenness.

Believers succumb to the temptation of power even in the very context of what are supposed to be worshipping communities... (Ouch!)

Some people think that they should have control over what happens within the church. Power-hungry groups welcome some & reject others with an attitude that exudes: “This is our church, and we’re in charge here.”

Pastors & staff are also vulnerable to this temptation of power. Some are driven forward by unspoken dreams of an earthly kingdom.

Worship services can consequently become a mere showplace where God is often being used to display man’s talent rather than man’s talent being used to display God.

The enemy encourages careless worship, while genuine worship requires that we worship God’s way.

Careless attention to the details of worship might bring the judgment of a God for whom worship is deadly serious (Genesis 4:3; Leviticus 10:1-3).

Ritual means little if our hearts are not broken & contrite (Psalms 51:16-17).

How might worship change (and how might the enemy be more threatened) if the people in the church arrived/gathered ready to worship? How might worship change if we worship God’s way?

The enemy encourages division over worship, but genuine worship unites believers. Because disunity threatens the church’s witness (John 17:20-23), the enemy will exploit any disagreement to foster disunity – especially in worship.

Learning to truly worship together prepares us for heaven!
(Revelation 7:9)

For What?

The Healthy Church Stands Armed:

1. ***Genuine worship is not optional for a healthy, biblical church.***
2. Genuine worship affects ALL that the church does...
3. ***Genuine worship (and a healthy church) will focus on God.***
 1. *Focusing on God reminds us that worship is a lifestyle issue.*
 2. *The Lord calls the church to give their whole lives to God.*
 3. *The enemy cannot stand against such worship.*
4. ***Healthy churches keep the Word (biblical teaching) central.***
 1. *Three times Satan tempted Jesus in the desert & three times Jesus responded by quoting God's Word (the Old Testament) (see Matthew 4:1-11).*
 2. *We must be cautious about emphasizing the power of warfare "techniques" over the truth of Scripture. Popular strategies focus more on proclaiming power instead of proclaiming biblical truth. The truth of God's Word ultimately sets people free (John 8:32).*
 3. *The proclamation of the gospel is itself an act of warfare against Satan.*
 4. *Our primary weapon against the enemy is the Sword of God's Word (Ephesians 6:17).*
 5. *The Word of God is alive and we have God's promise that it "will not return to Me empty" (Isaiah 55:11).*
 6. *The Enemy is dislodged when the Word is proclaimed.*
5. Pastors who devote themselves to the study & teaching of God's Word train disciplined warriors & grow healthy churches.

So What?

What about "Warfare Worship?"

1. 2 Chronicles 20:14-23 describes the defeat of an enemy king through prayer & praise, rather than through armed conflict... Consequently, there are some who would say that praise "binds" the devil.
2. How should we respond to this understanding of worship?
 1. A case can be made that praise & worship does, in fact, counter the work of God's enemies.
 2. What is not so evident, however, is that God's people are to praise & worship Him "so that" the Enemy will be defeated... and unfortunately, some practice "warfare worship" from this position.
3. ***The enemy may at times win over us, but he will not win over God*** (Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:1-3).

Effective spiritual warfare might be the by-product of worship, but it is not the purpose of worship. Discipled warriors worship God because of who He is, and that focus on God weakens the Enemy's hold.

Now What?

Teach Members to Worship:

1. **Keys to understanding genuine worship:**
 1. ***Worship is about God*** (not you, me, the regulars, or the visitors).
 2. We don't invite God into our worship services; rather, God invites us into His presence.
 3. ***Holiness is not optional for the worshiper.***
 4. ***Genuine worship changes people.***
 5. There should be a certain degree of mystery to genuine worship.
 6. More than one worship style is modeled in the Bible...
 7. Heaven is about worshipping God forever.
2. Teach the theology of worship...
3. Teach about holy living (Hebrew 10:31).
4. Teach people to worship in their homes. Note: Families who read the Bible together, pray together, & praise God together will contribute much toward worship in a healthy church.
5. Teach the church about worship around the world – help others to see the value and beauty of other styles.

PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, thank You so much for the Truth and Love of Your Word, will, and ways. Please help us to absorb and apply ALL that You have shared and commanded in the Bible. May our heads be infilled with Your defining Scriptures, for the express purpose of informing, inspecting, and inspiring our sanctified hearts and serving hands.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen and Amen

Support Sermon: *"Overcoming Truth, Love, & Faithful Obedience"*

1 John 5:1-5

December 8, 2013

Sermon Series: BE-ing The Church