

# Essentials of Discipleship

## Chapter 8 – The Church and Body Life

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**Resource:** Essentials of Discipleship by Francis Cosgrove published by Roper Press in 1988.

*This short 12 chapter book outlines eleven essentials of what a disciple of Jesus Christ is and how each disciple should become a disciple-making disciple. These study guides offer an outline of the book with some questions to be used in reviewing and discussing the content. Each student will need to obtain and read the book as well. After the initial chapters titled: What is a Disciple? & The Disciple is a Learner; the author reviews the Lordship of Jesus Christ which is the umbrella for the remaining nine essentials or characteristics of a disciple.*

- I. Introduction – EOD #7: A disciple attends church regularly to worship God, to have his or her spiritual needs met, and to make a contribution to the body of believers. (Reminder - the Church is the people – not a building.)
  - A. Summary (from Chapter 1):

Christian fellowship is part of God’s Plan. Since the early church, men and women came to the Savior to band together in small groups to form churches. These were the bases to evangelize the regions near them. Paul’s mission trips resulted in new church fellowships. His first objective was evangelism which is the proclamation of the Gospel. The second objective was follow-up (read Acts 14:22). He sought to strengthen the disciples (people not organizations) to remain true to the faith in Christ. Thirdly, Paul was committed to church planting with the appointment and training of elders (leaders). Hebrews 10:24-25 warned against forsaking the gathering together for many benefits.
  - B. Scriptures:
    1. Psalm 122:1 \_\_\_\_\_
    2. Acts 16:5 \_\_\_\_\_
    3. I Corinthians 12:12-27 \_\_\_\_\_
    4. Colossians 1:15-18 \_\_\_\_\_
    5. Hebrews 10:24-25 \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Points from the chapter introduction:
    1. Peter’s profession of faith (Matthew 16:16-18)
    2. Jesus gave his disciples (followers) a task of reaching the world for Christ. This is still true today.
    3. The church that is faithful to the true Church is making disciple-making disciples. Not just disciples.
    4. The Church must be growing reproductive churches. Church planting is the main task of the Church.
- II. The Church in the New Testament (Cosgrove offers some major points in this section):
  1. The NT Church was unique in that it was formed by Jesus.
  2. There were 500 new believers between the resurrection and ascension
  3. These new believers had to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit? WHY?
  4. The Holy Spirit came to the believers on the Day of \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2).
  5. The Holy Spirit permitted the disciples to speak in many \_\_\_\_\_.
  6. Why? The purpose was for them to \_\_\_\_\_ in all languages.
  7. The result was over \_\_\_\_\_ professions of faith in Christ (the pattern and expectation of NT churches).
  8. New believers must be associated with a \_\_\_\_\_ church.
  9. WHY? The goal is to provide a source of \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ growth.
  10. Review the list of 12 results of this immediate training.
  11. Cosgrove affirms that the mission of the local church (all true and faithful churches) is to carry out the \_\_\_\_\_ by reproducing the whole process of making \_\_\_\_\_.
  12. This is what I call Biblical Mentoring, that is - making disciple-making disciples. Not just disciples for their personal spiritual growth but disciples of Christ who actively train others with programs like this.
  13. Describe the message in Figure 6 starting at the top and going clockwise. Where are you on this chart?
  14. The early Church recognized the mission to “Go & Make Disciples”. Let’s help today’s Church do this.

15. What did Vergil Gerber say is the ultimate two-fold evangelistic goal of the Church? Answer: To make responsible, reproducing \_\_\_\_\_ and producing \_\_\_\_\_.
16. History shows the Church of Jesus Christ spread to all parts of the Roman Empire in a single generation.
17. By AD 323, approximately 10% of the Roman citizens believed in Christ. This was when the concept of belief meant submission to His Lordship. Matthew 16:18 records that Jesus said, "On this rock (the Church) I will build my church and the gates of hell (Hades) will not overcome it".
18. There was a problem of fake news (teaching and doctrines) then as well. Yet there has always been a nucleus of people making disciple-making disciples, i.e., obedience to the Great Commission.
19. What was the main contribution of the Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century? Answer: Luther and Calvin translated the \_\_\_\_\_ into the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.
20. How did this give rise to the modern missionary movement? That is, the obedience to the Great Commission to send out trained missionaries to the ends of the earth to carry the message of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ world.

III. The Leadership of the Church (Key Points)

1. The author says that God established His \_\_\_\_\_ to proclaim \_\_\_\_\_ so the leadership of the church is His \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Review Figure 7. What Scripture passage is this illustration based on? \_\_\_\_\_ (BTW, this is my life time verse that prompted me to go to seminary and study for the ministry).
3. What are the responsibilities of the God-approved leader (elder) whom we are to respect and obey? They are to \_\_\_\_\_ us, to \_\_\_\_\_ us from sin, to \_\_\_\_\_ us to fellowship and to help us avoid \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (Hebrews 13:17)
4. Review the specific roles of Apostles; Prophets; Evangelists; Pastors & Teachers.
5. Who in your local church is responsible for the purity of the Gospel? \_\_\_\_\_ These are the guardians of the faith? They are also known as overseers or bishops.
6. What are the two roles of the deacons? \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_.

IV. Church Membership

Cosgrove says that as a Christian (a believer in Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord), you became a member of the universal (catholic) or invisible church. You became a part of the Body of Christ (Galatians 6:10). Thus, we have responsibilities to a local church body. What does Hebrews 10:25 encourage us to do? \_\_\_\_\_

A. He then offers us seven guidelines for selecting a local church – one that includes the following:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

V. Conclusion -

Be sure you are associated with a local congregation that is committed to carrying out the Great Commission. Be willing to switch your church membership to find this kind of dynamic fellowship as you will reap many benefits as a follower of Jesus Christ. Cosgrove says that you need the church and the church needs you. After all, you (the people) are the church which is described as the Bride (the Body) of Christ.

**TMS D8 – BE CHRIST'S DISCIPLE – Serve Others for Chapter 8 (2 Corinthians 4:5)**