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Building A Discipling Culture



Synopsis

We often wonder what Jesus will ask us when we meet Him face to face. We believe that some of his first questions will be about discipleship. How have we followed His Great Commission to make disciples? How many disciples did we raise up to do greater things than we ourselves achieved? Who "imitates our lives as we imitate Christ"? Jesus did not command us to build the church; He called us to make disciples. Effective discipleship creates the church, not the other way around. This is the first of many new Huddle resources that will give you practical and Biblical insights on building a culture of discipleship in your community.

Book Information

Paperback: 236 pages

Publisher: 3DM Publishing; 2nd edition (September 10, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0982452101

ISBN-13: 978-0982452103

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (150 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #17,228 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Pastoral Resources](#) #16 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Leadership](#) #3893 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality](#)

Customer Reviews

I have the good fortune of knowing the authors and some of the other people that stand behind both the content and the lived-out reality of the text. I titled this post "The Church Could Use More Books Like This," for 3 reasons.1) This book isn't theory, it emerges from decades of experience and reflection. And not just any experience, but experience in the trenches of Post-Christian Britain. It's not a perfect symmetry, but in many ways, the United States is following quick on the cultural heels of Western Europe and we would do well to pay careful attention to the insights of our brothers and sisters who are seeking to live into the reality of God's Kingdom in that context.2) The focus of this book is something that a great many of us should be embarrassed is not more central to our ecclesiologies, discipleship. For far too long, discipleship has been seen as an add-on to the life of our churches. The assumption of these authors, however, is that churches actually only exist for

one single purpose, to make disciples of Jesus. They'll come right out and tell you that their way isn't the only way to go about it, but they are unrelenting in their assertion that creating a discipling culture is imperative to a healthy identity and life for local congregations.³) The final reason the Church needs more books like this is because it will provoke important questions. Vested readers are sure to find their margins filled with marks and notes. The assumptions and conclusions in this book emerge from a theological perspective which, though not fully unpacked here, will undoubtedly result in readers discovering that they may need to rethink some of their own perspectives and paradigms in order to really receive what the authors are saying and doing.

As a book on personal discipleship, that is reflecting on how I worship, pray, and work in God's kingdom around me, *Building a Discipling Culture* is excellent. The author has some unique and Bible-based insight around all parts of how we relate to God and the world around us. I especially liked his section on prayer that for the first time, for me anyway, really took the Lord's prayer and used it as a structure for daily prayer. It seemed to address how God would have us pray much more completely than, say, the ACTS approach. The other breakthrough I had with this book was personal gifts. Mr. Cockram presents the five gifts of Apostle, Pastor, Teacher, Prophet, and Evangelists. His concept that we have a dominant one but use all of them seems much more on-target than so many presentations on gifts. It is also interesting how he separates Pastor and Teacher. The explanation goes a long way in showing how we can all be pastors while most "pastors" are probably primarily teachers. As a book about alternative ways to approach church, something I know it is used for, I found it a bit odd. The whole shapes approach is interesting but seems to create a new "secret language" of worship. Now instead of a "bullwark never failing" and various other churchy references, we can talk about the hexagon, circle, or various charts. The gifts, for example, are the five-fold ministries, the pentagon. He even goes so far as to say "this language should be the DNA....shared by you and the people you are discipling". I found it all too intentionally cryptic and think there is too much "secret, special" words we use amongst ourselves.

Source: <http://bit.ly/1vppM3K> Author Mike Breen believes that biblical discipleship in the church of the western hemisphere has fallen on hard times, and came up with the system he shares in *Building a Discipling Culture* to help combat this problem. The apparent main contributing factor is that most western Christians are altogether unwilling to make the necessary commitment that would foster a successful discipleship culture. Breen claims that we live in an era where said believers are typically content to make an appearance at church once or twice a week, and

avoid engaging in anything that resembles true spiritual intimacy, making it no surprise that such a “problem” would exist. Well, I can’t pretend to know how “discipleship” as it’s addressed in the book has fared in supposed “challenged churches” over the years, but I’m inclined to agree. Even so, while in general I appreciate the intentions of how the “authentic biblical discipleship” subject is broached, I also think Breen presents several strange and questionable concepts. An interesting work to dissect, this is. Specifically, Breen zooms in on all that Jesus Christ did with the Twelve while here on Earth, and attempts to translate it into a system he’s convinced believers ought to follow so as to be genuine, biblical disciple-makers. The questions I would pose then are: does Scripture actually support Breen’s plan for effective disciple-making, and if so how can we integrate it within our own local fellowships? My answer to the first question is yes, at least it seems to be as far as the system’s foundation goes. I have no reason to argue that it’s unbiblical since the core ideas are pulled straight out of the gospel accounts. The connections are clear.

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