

Theme: Disciples recognize that God commands them to become active, participating, committed members of a local church.

I. The Basis for Discipleship: Knowing Christ

A. Disciples: Knowing Christ

1. Disciples have come to Christ (v4)
2. Disciples side with God, not men (v4)

B. The effect of knowing Christ on disciples

1. They begin to take on nature of Christ (v4-5)
2. Christ is Master, they embrace cross, deny self, etc.
3. Relationship with Christ totally changed!
 - a. Disciples embrace Christ as Master
 - b. Disciples embrace the cross of Christ
 - c. Disciples deny self, take their own cross
 - d. Disciples worship God

II. The Context of Discipleship: the Local Church

A. Living stones – being built together (v5)

1. Disciples not only linked to Christ – each other
2. Not just random stones – built together!

B. Does built together mean a local church?

1. Barna quote, pg 115 – he says NO!
2. Where is the local church in the NT?

C. The local church in the NT

1. Analogy of the church – building; body
 - a. Building – 1 Pet 2:5; (Eph 2:22)
 - b. Body – 1 Cor 12:12-13
 - c. No floating bricks or parts – specific location!
2. Paul established local churches (Acts 14:21-23)
 - a. Corinthians, Galatians, Thessalonians, Philemon
 - b. Every Pauline epistle mentions local church
3. The local church has definite structure (elders)
 - a. Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5; 1 Tim 5:17; Phil 1:1;
 - b. 1 Th 5:12-13; 1 Pet 5:1; James 5:14; Heb 13:7, 17

D. Why discipleship requires the local church

1. The NT commands it! (see above)
 - a. All NT commands are in local church
 - b. Barna's idea unknown in NT

2. We need it for encouragement (Heb 10:24-25)
3. We need it for fullness of gifts (body 1 Cor 12)
4. We need it for sanctification

Disciples and the Local Church

1 Peter 2:4-5
August 27, 2006
?????
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III. Conclusion & Summary

- A. Have you come to Christ – first essential
 1. Can't be disciple without relationship with Him
 2. Are you a living stone, living body part?
- B. Do you see the necessity of the local church?
 1. It is not an option – essential for discipleship!
 2. To embrace Christ is to embrace a specific local church
 3. Note child dedication vows (and my wedding vows)
 4. All else is radical disobedience to our Master
- C. Are you committed to a local church?
 1. Are you a member – or just an attender?
 2. Do you regularly attend on Sunday?
 3. Are you part of a small group?
 4. Do you give: time, finances, gifts?

“The Bible never describes ‘church’ the way we have configured it... It provides very little guidance in terms of the methods and structures we must use to make those principles and insights prevail in our lives. It seems that God doesn’t care how we honor and serve Him, as long as He is number one in our lives and our practices are consistent with His parameters. If a local church facilitates that kind of life, then it is good. And if a person is able to live a godly life outside of a congregation-based faith, then that too is good.” George Barna, *revolution*, page 115

12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-- and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

²¹ They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch,²² strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.²³ Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. Acts 14:21-23

5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. Titus 1:5

¹⁷ The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. 1 Tim 5:17

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: Philippians 1:1

¹² Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you.¹³ Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

¹ To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who 1 Peter 5:1

¹⁴ Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. James 5:14

7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.... 17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. Hebrews 13:7, 17

24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25