

T. E. A. C. H.

November, December, January 1995 Provided by the General Christian Education Dept. Volume 2, Number 3

Discipling to Spiritual Maturity

Dan Harrison, CE Chairman

It might be helpful at the outset of this article to define spiritual maturity before we make any attempt to figure out how to produce it.

In the King James Version, maturity is often translated "perfect." In that sense, maturity is engaging in behavior appropriate to the present stage of development. A four-year-old is mature when he or she does everything that's reasonable for a four-year-old to do. We would never consider a four-year-old immature because he can't do what a twelve year old can do. On the other hand if the four-year-old doesn't do what four-year-olds are capable of, then he's immature. So one definition of maturity has to do with living up to the capacities God has made possible for believers.

Another definition has to do with qualities like those listed in Ephesians 4. A mature person is one who uses his or her spiritual gifts, who is building the body, who is discerning truth from error, who is speaking the truth in love, who is in God-honoring relationships with people. Maturity is a mind-set and heart-set of pressing toward the mark; immaturity is complacency and self-satisfaction.

How does spiritual maturity come about? Who is responsible for a quality and quantity of spiritual formation that could truly be defined as spiritual maturity? The person in Ephesians 4 who carries the primary responsibility is the pastor-teacher. It is the pastors responsibility to intentionally nourish the congregation in such a way that spiritual maturity is the end result.

Today numbers of pastors are trying to fill too many roles and the end result is that their primary roles and responsibilities are suffering as a result. A good many local church leaders have not been able to move their congregations to true spiritual maturity because they have lacked a clear focus for their limited time and energy

A key task for spiritual leaders is to create a climate and a context in which spiritual growth are possible. Some of the very primary means of spiritual nourishment are worship, pastoral care, and the teaching of Scripture for life application. Small groups such as Sunday School classes are excellent places for at least two of these to take place. Pastoral care is most effective when it is

relationship based and not position based. Just because a pastor fills the position of pastor does not mean he is in the best position to offer pastoral care to someone in need. Obviously the person who best knows and understands the individual and their needs is in the strongest position to minister. Also Biblical truth is best learned within a context of accountability for application where a person can be taught to obey.

Discipleship has a lot to do with being in community with other believers. We set people up for failure when we allow them to muddle along by themselves with no one to honestly share their struggles with. There must be a commitment to honest and personal sharing if believers are to progress in the faith.

I believe there is a lot of guilt in the body of Christ when it comes to spiritual maturity. Some find it easier to move through the motions and do what is expected of them rather than honestly admit that they are not growing and maturing in the faith. It would be a wonderfully liberating
(cont. on page 2)

Table of Contents

1995 Spring C. E. Rally	pg. 2
Church Growth Conference	pg. 2
C. E. Convention Results	pg. 3
1995 C. E. Convention Invitation	pg. 3
Model Church Highlights	pg. 4
Spring Sunday School Promotion	pg. 4
C. E. Lending Library Resources	pg. 5
Discipleship at Circleville Jefferson	pg. 5
Church Board Retreat	pg. 6
"Kids & Us!" Notebook	pg. 6

(Discipling to Spiritual Maturity.... Cont. from page 1)

thing if pastors and board members could honestly confess their sense of failure and spiritual hunger with one another. If they could also agree to commit themselves to pressing toward spiritual maturity by praying together and holding each other accountable for Christlike living, a wonderful model could emerge for the entire congregation.

Spiritual vitality is something all believers hunger for. If those in leadership positions will in fact lead the way to spiritual maturity others will gladly follow. When churches are filled with healthy Christians who are sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit outreach ministries will happen naturally. Discipleship may well be the key to renewed evangelism in our lives and in our churches. Healthy believers are essential for healthy churches and healthy churches generate growth. Growing inwardly may well be necessary before we can grow outwardly but we must be careful and not allow inward growth to be an end in itself.



1995 Spring C. E. Rally

The Christian Education Rally will be held March 10, 1995 at 7:30 pm at the Heritage Temple Church, 2295 South High Street in Columbus, Ohio. Richard Gauch of Fellowship of Christian Ministries of Columbus, Ohio will be the speaker.

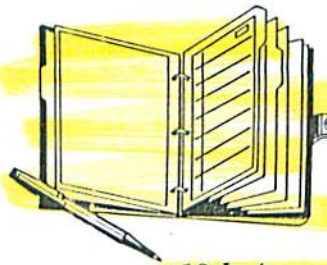
Mr. Gauch was a man who felt the world was his to master and he expected the rewards to come. They seemed to come frequently and in great quantities with ever greater future prospects. At the height of success he suddenly realized he was losing the things of greater value because he had given them so little attention. He was sure he could make the repairs in the family but his solutions did not work. The answers he found were in the Bible. He says, "It is the last book I would have looked for answers."

The problems he deals with reach all of us in different ways. The answers were not automatic or immediate but painful and slow. The results have been worth the trip.

This rally though it features a man with an experience, will speak to each of us. We all have to walk similar paths even though ours may not be as pronounced. This promises to be a service you will remember through the year and it will help you often in situations that you will experience.

Join us on March 10 at the Heritage Temple Church and you will be touched by a man and his story that could be much like your own.

David Cyrus, Rally Coordinator



19th Annual Church Growth Conference

Date: March 31 - April 1, 1995

Location: Anderson University
1015 East 5th Street
Anderson, IN 46012

Who Should Attend: Anyone and everyone who is involved in the growth and success of your church---

- * Pastors
- * Staff Members
- * Lay Leaders

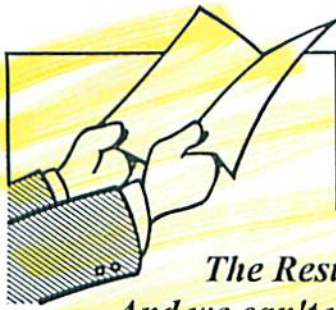
Your Host and Speaker: Dr. John Maxwell

At the time of the printing of this newsletter we were unable to obtain further information regarding the conference. More information will be available after December 1, 1994. You may call Injoy Ministries at 1-800-333-6506 to receive the mailing with all the information needed to register. If you would like additional information regarding lodging, call the CE Office at (513) 695-0025 and a listing of area hotels and motels will be sent to you.

Make plans NOW to attend the Church Growth Conference. If you're involved in ministry, you should be at Anderson, Indiana on March 31 - April 1, 1995.



BRING A FRIEND!



**The Results Are IN!!
And we can't wait to tell you . .**

**1994 Christian Education Convention
Review**

The Christian Education Convention, "Rediscover Evangelism/Reaching With Relevance" was a wonderful day of educating, challenging and motivating Christian educators. Almost 400 people gathered that day to laugh, learn, and rediscover the importance of evangelism in all of our duties as educators. All of the workshops that dealt with evangelism received very positive comments from the surveys, especially the one for children, "How Can Jesus Live in Me." The workshops that were designed for youth workers also received positive comments. The top vote getter was W.I.N.G.S., Women In Need Growing Strong. There were very few negative comments concerning the workshops, general sessions, and the convention overall. It was truly a great day for everyone who attended.

Our special speakers this year did a magnificent job in the general session. Susan Gift Porter was the refreshing break that we needed after a long day of learning. Her singing, puppets, and comedy contributed in a very special way that day. What can we say about Rev. Mark Beeson? He had many of us laughing one minute and the very next hitting us with dynamic challenge. You never knew what to expect from him. At the close of the day came one of the most challenging addresses that I have ever heard. Rev. Robert Cline challenged us with a great scriptural and emotional appeal to renew our commitment to making evangelism a part of everything we say, everything we do, and every way we live.

We had participation from only 45 Churches of Christ in Christian Union and 11 churches outside our denomination. I want to thank all of the churches that participated and especially those who came from outside the denomination. With close to 200 CCCU churches within a 2 hour drive of this convention each year and only 25% participating, this means we have potential for great growth in the coming years. I challenge all of you to be a part of this great ministry tool each year because I believe that in our sincere commitment to aid Christian educators, you will be the benefactor of the Convention.

Again, I want to say thank you to all who made that day such a success and especially to Rev. Tim Dotson and Rev. Ralph Hux. Thank you!

Yours for Christ,
Kevin P. Behrer (Convention Coordinator)



Don't Forget!!

The C. E. Office has a video tape of the General Sessions and sets of cassette tapes for sale from the Convention. The videos are \$15.00 and the set of 30 cassette tapes is \$30.00 + \$3.00 for shipping. If you are interested in any of these items, please call the C. E. office at (513) 695-0025 and ask for Cindy. These are a great way to bring the convention back to those who were unable to attend that day.

1995 Christian Education Convention

September 16, 1995

at

**Brookside C. C. C. U.
Chillicothe, Ohio**

Developing

Dynamic

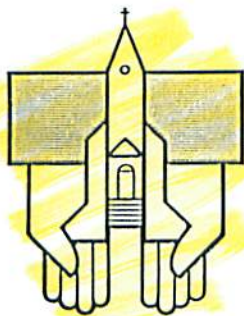
Disciples

General Session Speakers:

Dr. Charles Lake - is the founding Pastor of Community Church of Greenwood, Indiana, an inter-denominational church, and a unique 17 year old congregation. All members of Community Church are encouraged to complete at least Discipleship Training Levels 1-4, which Dr. Lake personally developed.

Sheryl Fleisher - is Pastor of Personal Growth at Skyline Wesleyan Church in Lemon Grove, California. Her duties include Director of Discipleship, Women's Ministries, and New Christians

Plan Now To Attend!!



Model Church Is For You

On September 19-21 church leaders and pastors met in the Campus Center at Circleville Bible College to participate in the Model Church training seminar.

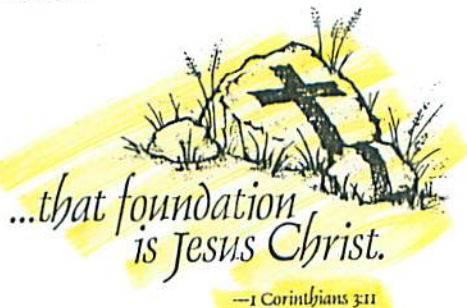
Dr. Stan Toler presented the material in a very practical and helpful manner. Of the many areas that he covered, two are of great importance to the church: Accountability and Discipleship. Most of us struggle with accountability. We, as leaders, both clergy and laity, must accept a high degree of accountability if we want the church to grow and reach people.

Accountability includes literally every area of the church ministry. From the time we begin to see the vision of God for our church, the setting of goals and the strategy for reaching them, there must be a high degree of accountability. If there is not, we will have a tendency to start well but soon revert back to the same old way that we have always conducted our ministry and not reach the fulfillment of the vision that God has for our church.

Discipleship flows into many of the key areas of the church. Leadership, lay ministry, assimilation, pastoral care, evangelism and stewardship all involve the church having a discipleship ministry that prepares a person for the area of ministry that God has gifted that person in. Without a well thought out ministry of discipleship our converts will never become the Christians that God intended them to be. Usually, if a new Christian is not involved, he will be gone in six months.

Model Church will help your church to develop proper accountability and discipleship. They are a must if we are to be effective in this day in which we live.

Jack Norman
SCD Superintendent



Thank You For Model Church



The West Central District participated in the Model Church Conference with several of our pastors and wives along with church leaders. We were well pleased that we could take advantage of this needed program. Stan did an outstanding job in a very simplistic way. He presented a workable initiative that would have profited any of our churches. I have little doubt that those who implement what they learned will find that it produces results. The materials, instruction, and manner of presentation all complimented the intentions of this worthy effort. We can only applaud that this program was made available to us. Our thanks to the General Department.

Ron Reese
WCD Superintendent



1995 Spring Promotion

"50 Day Spiritual Adventure"

Theme: Facing Down Our Fears

The Christian Education Department is recommending for our 1995 Spring Promotion the "50 Day Spiritual Adventure", which is a complete and thorough program based from Chapel of the Air Ministries. Our recommendation is to help establish our people in their everyday walk with Christ. The program includes a schedule of a week by week preparation agenda and also sample sermons, skits, and small group booklets for each age group. Several of our churches have already tried this program and we believe it will benefit your church immensely.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Rev. Bruce Morrison at (419)589-7928. To get a head start on purchasing materials, just call Chapel of the Air Ministries at 1-800-224-2735 and ask for their price list.

Rev. Bruce Morrison
Promotion Coordinator



C. E. Lending Library **Your Place for Resources**

This issue we will be focusing in on some of the resources available to you concerning Discipleship and Accountability. All of these can be found in the C. E. Lending Library and can be sent to you as you request them. Simply drop us a note, or give us a call at (513) 695-0025 and ask for Cindy.

New Life Study - (Enjoy)

These thirteen messages and outlines teach the new believer how to successfully walk with Christ. Excellent material for a new Christian class or one on one discipleship.

Developing Disciples - (Enjoy)

A committed disciple of Jesus Christ will exhibit certain characteristics and fruit as he walks with Him. This series of 7 cassette tapes will teach you using New Testament scriptures and excellent illustrations.

Developing an Outreach-Focused Church - (Charles Fuller Institute)

In this video series, Doug Murren addresses these issues head-on: Outreach and Evangelism. He takes you beyond the popular methodologies for evangelism. He provides you with a new understanding about the nature of the church and it's mission for today. This 5 session video series is designed to be a catalyst for change for church leaders and laymen who have a vision for outreach.

Discipleship Video Seminar - (Charles Fuller Institute)

In this seminar, Daniel Brown will give you a new perspective on the process of discipleship. You will learn how to make disciples from a proven disciplemaker who shares frankly about his experiences in leading people into deeper spiritual maturity. This resource is an excellent training tool for lay people and professional church leaders alike.

Discipleship Training..A Venture in Learning and Accountability - (Dr. Charles Lake)

Discipleship Training is a systematic way for Christians to develop biblical, God-seeking habits that help

them grow closer to Christ and bear much fruit for His kingdom. It is a study set in four nine-week increments for adults and teens; disciples (students) only commit to nine weeks at a time. Discipleship Training helps Christians move on toward spiritual maturity in order to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to make disciples of all nations. Resource includes a Discippler's Guide and a Discippler's Manual.

Timothy Discipleship Ministry - (Enjoy) **(Grade Training System)**

Timothy Discipleship Ministry is a personal commitment to disciple new believers. Reaching out to Christians and helping them become established in their faith is the Ministry of the Timothys (1 video)

Building Believers - (The Wesleyan Church)

A discipleship training manual covering 12 different topics that could be used for individual study or in a classroom setting. Each session is in workbook form with scripture references, questions and thoughts pertaining to the individual lesson topic. Titles include; Disciple-Making, The Uniqueness of Jesus, Christian Assurance, Holy Living & Affirming God's Will to name just a few.



Discipleship at Circleville Jefferson Church

by Wes Humble
Discipleship Team Leader

Realizing the need for a close walk with God, the Jefferson Church Discipleship Team targeted 1994 as a year for the leaders of the church to experience discipleship and accountability firsthand. Thirty-eight people responded by signing up for once a week discipleship classes over the next 18 weeks. We are using discipleship ministry material produced by Charles Lake Ministries of Greenwood, IN.

These studies include lessons on spiritual gifts, Bible study, prayer, witnessing, discipline and many other relevant topics. Each week the participants are required to hand in accountability sheets outlining their study and prayer life over the last seven days. I would highly recommend this material as an aid to discipleship in our churches. It is designed for newer Christians but due to the serious lack of spiritual discipline among many Christians it is a very excellent tool to strengthen those who have been a part of the church for years.

