

Show Colin Kaepernick video clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcnEicVARWY>. Does that bother you? Make you angry? Remember when the most noteworthy part of the national anthem before a NFL game was a great singing performance or a military flyover?

Colin Kaepernick changed that. All eyes during the anthem are now on the San Francisco 49ers quarterback and other NFL players who've joined him in sitting or kneeling during the anthem.

As I've followed this story, something bigger and much more important crossed my mind. How many times do I fail to stand up for my Heavenly Citizenship? How many times do I fail to stand up for King Jesus?

The core issue with Colin Kaepernick is that he's a citizen of the United States. Most of us believe there are certain responsibilities that go with being a citizen, like standing and respecting our flag. As Christians, the core issue for us is we're citizens of Heaven. Our Sword Challenge this week states: "*But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*" (Philippians 3:20).

Believers are citizens of heaven. Another common word used in the New Testament for believers is "disciples." Each week we state our church's purpose statement together: *Grace Church exists to glorify our Heavenly Father by continually making more disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

If we believe we're to stand up as disciples and our purpose for being here is to make more disciples, then obviously we need to know what a disciple is. It's vital we also understand the process of how we go about *making more disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Next Sunday we'll be returning to our study of Luke's Gospel and picking up with Luke 9. Periodically, though, we like to talk about why we're here. We want to make sure everyone at Grace is on the same page. Turn in your Bible to Ephesians 4:11-16 (p. 977).

This passage unpacks a local church's purpose and the responsibilities of godly leadership. Pastor-teachers must be centered on the Word of God. If a pastor doesn't concentrate on preaching and teaching the Word, he may be a nice guy...even a godly man, but he's not fulfilling his calling, he's not doing the main work of a shepherd. Church leaders are to *equip* believers in the church for works of service. The primary responsibility of leaders is not to do the work of the church, but to help equip you to become fully committed disciples of Jesus Christ.

The word *equip* carries the idea of "making someone adequate or sufficient for something" or some purpose. It's the same word used for James and John mending their nets (Matt. 4:21). In classical Greek, it's used to describe restoring a dislocated limb or setting a broken bone. It was used of furnishing a guest room, preparing it for guests. The idea is pastor-teachers are to teach the Word to help the rest of the church prepare so they serve the Lord in accordance with their gifts, so they'll be mature disciples.

We're quickly moving toward the construction of our new building. Today I want to use our new building, what we're building as an analogy of what it means to be a disciple and the process of how we seek to accomplish this here at Grace Church. Most of us know we should be and should be making disciples. What we don't understand is there is a process. It's like baseball, you have to go to first base before you can go to second.

Today we want to focus on the process of making disciples. We want to do that by describing **five vital spaces** we need in our new building to represent what we're trying to do spiritually, to make disciples and the process on how we seek to accomplish that. If you're taking notes...

1. What is a biblical church? Most people when they hear the term "church," think of some structure with stained glass windows and a tall steeple. They think of a church as a *building*, "The church is on the corner." Others when they think of church, it's thought of in terms of its services or various meetings. Church is something that meets at a specific time on Sunday morning. "We go to church on Sundays." The church is sometimes seen as activity-oriented or a group with certain functions. It's a social organization or a religious educational institute. "We've always been very active in our church." Probably most often, the term church is conceived as a denomination. "We belong to the Lutheran Church." All of these concepts have grown up around the word *church*, yet they're without any reference to what Scripture means when it uses the word "church."

The word for *church* in the New Testament comes from a Greek word *ecclesia*. It simply means "called-out ones." It's literally a "*called out company*" or gathering. We, the church, *have been called out* by God from the darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). We're called into the Kingdom of God's dear Son (Colossians 1:13). The word *ecclesia* then, as it applies to believers, refers to Christ-followers or disciples – not buildings, services, organizations or denominations.

God has commanded us to make disciples of Jesus Christ. The Greek term for "disciple" in the New Testament is *mathetes*. It means more than just a "student" or "learner." A disciple is a "follower," someone who adheres

completely to the teachings of another, making them his/her rule of life and conduct. Every Christian is to be a disciple of Christ. A disciple is someone who's placed his/her faith in the Lord Jesus (John 1:12), been born again by the power of the Spirit, belongs to Christ and is being transformed into the likeness of Christ. It's our responsibility as a local church to aid in the discipling process.

There are two key questions for every believer: "*Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ?*" Hopefully, that one is easy. If you answered, "Yes," the second, more intimidating, question is, "*Are you discipling others?*" The second isn't optional. It's normative for the believer. It's obeying the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20.

So to disciple others is to simply help them follow Jesus. Mark Dever (**picture**) defines it as, "*Discipling is deliberately doing spiritual good to someone so that he or she will be more like Christ.*" The command to make disciples applies to all who follow Jesus, not just pastors or missionaries. Every Christian has received a spiritual gift which he/she is to use in serving Jesus Christ. Part of the command to love one another involves helping others be what God wants them to be. That's discipleship.

So discipleship isn't some program at church you sign up for. It's to be the *culture* of the church, where every member focuses on helping others become more like Jesus. It should ripple through the entire church, where we all are helping one another grow in godliness.

Most Christians think disciples are some super saints. They're not. If you're not discipling others, you're disobeying Jesus and missing out on what the Christian life is truly about. Too many Christians repent of their sins and accept God's forgiveness through Jesus' death and resurrection but stop there. They're like the man who saved all his life so he could go on a week-long cruise on the Caribbean (**picture**). Finally, he'd scrimped and saved just enough to purchase his ticket. He boarded the ship, found his cabin, and opened his suitcase which he'd filled with crackers and peanut butter. Each day he'd go out on deck enjoy the sun and spectacular views. But when it came time for meals, instead of following the other passengers to dining halls with world class chefs, he'd head back to his room for a meal of crackers and peanut butter. He hungered for so much more. His mouth watered as he smelled the sumptuous banquets prepared for each meal; steak, lobster, soups, salads, pastries. But he turned down all invitations to dine because he didn't know that his ticket included meals. He's probably the only passenger who lost weight on the cruise.

Too many Christians are like that misinformed vacationer. They don't realize God offers us much more than a ticket to Heaven. He offers us a deep, fulfilling relationship now. We're to be disciples and disciple-makers. Our purpose is to make more disciples. So are you a disciple or just a "peanut butter and crackers" Christian?

But what's our process? What does a disciple-making church look like?

2. A disciple-making church must have a foyer (3 pictures). When's the last time you walked into a building and thought, "Wow! Nice foyer!" But you can't usually get into the building without one. The foyer is critical. We're spending a lot of time designing and working on our new foyer.

The Christian life begins with the **foyer**, with discipleship. We don't want a church of attendees. Our goal is a church of disciples. Discipleship always begins with the Gospel. It's founded on the faithful proclamation of the Gospel of God. The New Testament continually talks about the Gospel because the Gospel is everything. It's the foundation for the Christian life. In 1 Thessalonians 2:9 Paul writes: "*For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil...while we proclaimed to you the Gospel of God.*"

"*Proclaimed*" means to announce as a herald. The job of a herald was to go from city to city with the king's message, telling everyone exactly what the king wanted them to know. He wasn't free to modify the message or add to it. If it was an unpopular message, he might get attacked, even though he didn't originate the message. But he couldn't soften the king's message. He had to proclaim it just as the king had given it to him.

By calling it "*the Gospel of God,*" Paul is emphasizing the Gospel comes from God. It's not a message Paul thought up. It's from God Himself. It's the good news that God has provided a way for us to be reconciled to Him, to know Him, and spend eternity with Him after we die.

Yet, this good news invariably stirs up opposition wherever it goes. Because to accept the good news, you also must accept the bad news. The bad news is we all have sinned and fall short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23). We all love darkness rather than the light, because our deeds are evil (John 3:19-20). We all like to think our good deeds qualify us for heaven (Luke 18:11-12), but God has to open our eyes to see that all our "*righteousness*" is worthless in His sight. We need perfect righteousness to live in God's holy presence. Perfect righteousness can only come to us when we put our trust in Jesus Christ as the One who died and rose again in our place.

The **foyer** is the entry point. It's not getting them to attend. It's leading them to Jesus, helping them become disciples. Our goal isn't to just get them in the *foyer*; it's to get them in the *family*, God's Forever Family. It's not about a crowd; it's about Christ-followers. **A disciple-making church must have a foyer.**

3. A disciple-making church must have a worship center (picture). After someone comes to Christ, this is the first step for most new believers. It's the place to begin. It's no accident the longest book in the Bible, Psalms, is all about praising and worshipping God. When we get to the end of the Bible, we see believers from the ages and angels in heaven falling on their faces and worshipping God. Worship will be our ceaseless activity and greatest joy in heaven, and we must be practicing it now.

John MacArthur (picture) was correct to title his book on worship, *The Ultimate Priority*. God created us for the ultimate priority of worshipping Him. The Westminster Shorter Catechism says, "*The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.*" John Piper (picture) modified that to our chief end is "*to glorify God by enjoying Him forever.*"

Read the book of Acts. The early church began with corporate worship. It was vital. Most don't understand worship, particularly corporate worship. We don't believe it's vital to discipleship or the Christian life, BUT it is.

Worship is not just a big building, like Joel Olsteen's (picture) which seats 16,000. Or some building that feels "sacred" (picture). In our entertainment saturated culture, most evangelicals think worship is an amazing AV system with multi-million dollar smart screens and a band so talented, they could almost go on tour.

Corporate worship plays an indispensable part in our discipleship and sanctification...our progressive growth in being conformed to the image of Jesus (Romans 8:29). Christian growth isn't just something we take away as sermon application and then work into our lives that week. Sanctification can and should happen "on the spot" as we sit under Bible preaching and engage in corporate worship. There are times — may God make them many — when the Holy Spirit takes the Scripture read, the prayer spoken, the songs sung, or the truth preached and then presses it right to the point of our need. When we join in corporate worship, God loves not only to change our minds, but to change our hearts "on the spot."

Corporate worship isn't some luxury, a pleasant experience we can take or leave. It's an absolute necessity for our faith to thrive. If you've ever gone camping, you know when a stick falls out of the campfire, it loses its glow, and soon becoming a blackened, charred piece of wood. But if the stick is placed back in the fire in close association with other burning sticks, it soon burns and glows again. In the same way, our individual faith as Christians is nourished as we worship together with others with whom we share a kindred faith. Worship is essential. This lost world constantly pulls us away from God, away from things that fan the flame of faith and foster our spiritual growth. The only antidote is consistent renewal of our relationship with God by communing with Him through worship.

Many Christians are like Lightning McQueen (picture) from *Cars*. Remember, how he refused to take pit stops? What happened? He's way ahead of the pack and his tires wear out. Instead of winning, the race is a three way tie. We need the "pit stop" of corporate worship. We need time with other disciples to *refuel*, time to nourish and strengthen our faith together. **A disciple-making church must have a worship center.**

4. A disciple-making church must have a Christian education wing (picture). I couldn't think of a better label for this. Please hear me. It's not about education. It's about life change. Too many believers think Christianity is just learning the facts. It's not.

Who wants a surgeon who can win *Jeopardy* because he knows all the parts of the body but has never done surgery? One of the most foolish American beliefs is that if we just educate, we'll solve our social problems.

Discipleship is not about *education*; it's about *edification*. Edification only happens in a group. But if there is anything American Christians are most resistant to, it's being part of a group. You can't be a healthy, growing Christian without being part of a small group.

What did Jesus say? "*By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another*" (John 13:35). You can't love people unless you know them. We come together to build each other up in the Faith. God designed us to need a supporting community.

Do you know a good musician who wasn't trained, nurtured and sustained by the music community? Show me an athlete who achieves excellence alone, apart from an athletic community. Excellence requires participation and support of a community of like-minded people. That's the way it is in the church. Believers don't achieve spiritual maturity by themselves. God wants to help connect us with other believers through fellowship. God wants you to connect with Him, then He wants you to connect with other members of His forever family and learn to love them.

Fellowship happens as we learn to love other folk in God's family. 1 Peter says, "*God has given us the privilege of being born again so that we are now members of God's very own family*" (1:3, Living Bible).

Acts 2 gives us the model for connecting with other believers. "*Those who believed were baptized and added to the church. They joined with the other believers and committed themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship. They worshipped together regularly at the temple courts and they met together for communion in homes and they shared their*

meals with great joy and thankfulness.” That’s what our church must be like. They met in small groups. Everyone had a circle of intimacy. Each of us needs a circle of spiritual intimacy in this church.

If you want to be a healthy, balanced believer, you need both large group worship (“*in the temple courts*”) and smaller group fellowship (*they met together for communion in homes*). You need both in your Christian life.

If all you do is come to church, listen to the truth and worship, you’re stunting your spiritual growth. You need fellowship and you can’t fellowship with 100 people. You can only fellowship with 6 or 10. It’s why we drive you crazy encouraging you to be part of a small group here at Grace. It’s an essential part of discipleship. **A disciple-making church must have a Christian education wing.**

5. A disciple-making church must have a maintenance closet (picture). “It’s clean-up on aisle 9” if you’re going to be a growing disciple. Paul tells Timothy, “*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you...*” (2 Timothy 1:9). In other words, if you’re saved, you must serve Jesus Christ. He’s gifted you to serve Him, but you’ve got to discover, develop and exercise your gifts. This isn’t volunteering to do some job in the church, though it may include that. It’s an attitude where you realize because God loves you so much, because He rescued you from a life of sin, you’re not your own. You belong to Him. He has you on this planet to serve Him. You don’t just dabble at serving when it’s convenient. You’re committed to serving because Jesus gave His life for you.

A pastor was trying to persuade a woman to teach a Sunday school class, but she kept giving him the same excuse, “I don’t want to be tied down.” Finally, the pastor responded, “The Savior was nailed down on the cross for you. Shouldn’t you be willing to be tied down for Him for a few hours each week?” Now that pastor’s words may convey the wrong idea, that you fulfill your ministry by serving a few hours each week. If Christ saved you, then you serve Him out of love, not out of guilt. But, you serve Him 24/7, always being aware of His great gift of salvation and that He’s gifted you to help fulfill His purpose in His church and in the world.

We need a maintenance closet not because we need help, but because each of us needs to grow in our Christian walk. Our default setting is selfishness. Serving helps beat down our own selfishness.

In Romans 12:11, Paul says we’re to be “*not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*” We’re to be passionate about serving the Lord. So please ask yourself, “Does that describe me?” Am I fervent in spirit in my service for Jesus? **A disciple-making church must have a maintenance closet.**

6. A disciple-making church must have a nursery (picture). This, though isn’t a physical nursery, it’s a spiritual one. It’s leading others to Jesus Christ. Discipleship comes full circle. Spiritual maturity isn’t just attending a worship service, small group, or serving. Spiritual maturity is when you reproduce yourself. It’s evangelism.

Unfortunately just the mention of the “E” word (evangelism) makes most Christians uncomfortable. It makes them feel like they do when they hear terms like “root canal” or “IRS audit.” *Evangelism* conjures up feelings of guilt, fear or inadequacy. It brings to mind awkward conversations and strained relationships. Sadly, most Christians never share their faith or reproduce themselves spiritually. They never lead anyone to faith in Jesus.

Now sharing our faith the way Jesus would share it means letting our actions speak first – then engaging people in real conversations. Sooner or later we must get to the Message, what we call the Gospel.

The Gospel in a nutshell is John 3:16: “*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*” Jesus says **four things** He wants us to say when we share His story. **First**, we must tell them about God’s love: “*For God so loved the world...*” **Second**, tell them about Jesus: “*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son.*” It’s great to know God loves us, but without Jesus, we’d be forever separated from that love. Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins and remove the barrier between sinful man and holy God. There is no Gospel without Jesus. **Third**, tell them about life: “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*” Eternal life isn’t just life after death. It’s that, but much more than that. It’s about life that begins today. It’s not just *limitless* life; it’s *better* life in spite of the problems that come our way. Tell them it’s life the way it was meant to be lived—a life of meaning, purpose and joy. **Finally**, tell them about belief: “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*” It’s not about good works or going to church or being baptized or knowing the right answers. It’s about saying “Yes” to God’s love and life. It’s committing your life to Christ and inviting Jesus to forgive you of your sins. It’s about asking Jesus to be the Master of your life so He can make you into the person you were meant to be.

Jesus didn’t launch His kingdom through a mass mailing or by tweeting to large groups. There was no corporate headquarters or organization. No, it all began quietly with two of John the Baptist’s disciples. Andrew told his brother. Probably, John also later told his brother, James. Philip told Nathanael. All of them recognized in Jesus the Savior they needed. They all got excited about who Jesus was and that excitement spilled over into telling their relatives and friends.

That's how Jesus wants the good news to spread out from us. If you're excited about Jesus, you'll tell your family and friends about Him. Let me encourage you to make a list of 8-15 people with whom you have regular contact and they don't yet know Jesus. Begin praying for opportunities to talk to them about their need for Jesus. As sinners, we're all alienated from God. Jesus is the only One who bridges the chasm between us and God. That's why friends want to bring their friends to Him. **A disciple-making church must have a nursery.**

Conclusion: A good teacher will often say something like this: "*Class, I'm going to tell you what I told you yesterday. Then, I'll tell you what I'm going to tell you today. Then, I'll tell you. Then, I'll tell you what I told you. Then, I'll review.*"

Repetition is the key to learning. So she will go over and over the same content until it's drilled into her students' heads.

Every Christian is a disciple, a follower of Christ. Every Christian is to be involved in the process of making other disciples, which means, deliberately helping others to be more like Christ. But this isn't new.

Some of you are thinking, "Scott, I've heard all of this before. Are you almost done?" It's not enough to hear the Word, we must do it. "*But be doers of the word, and not hearers only...*" (James 1:22).

How many of you, when you go to the dentist, they tell you to floss? Let me see your hands. Now please don't raise your hands on this one – *How many of you actually do it?*

In your bulletin this morning, you'll find a piece dental floss. It's not enough to know you should floss...if you don't do it.

This piece of floss is a physical reminder of today's message. It's not enough to know what makes a disciple making church, if we don't do it.

A disciple-making church must have a foyer. We want to see people come to Christ. **A disciple-making church must have a worship center.** We want people to worship Christ together. **A disciple-making church must have a Christian education wing.** We want people to learn to love Jesus and learn to love each other. **A disciple-making church must have a maintenance closet.** We want people to serve Jesus. **A disciple-making church must have a nursery.** We want people to lead family and friends to Jesus. To be a disciple-making church we must have a foyer, worship center, education wing, maintenance closet and a nursery.

Grace Church exists to glorify our Heavenly Father by continually making more disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.