



IMPACT



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Zephaniah ~ Haggai ~ Zechariah ~ Malachi ~ **Matthew** ~ Mark ~ Luke ~ John ~ Acts

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." **Matthew 9:36-38 (NIV)**



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Jim's Journal

I am so grateful for people who speak into my life directly and indirectly. One of those people is Dan Reiland, who is on the staff at 12 Stones Church in Atlanta. In a recent blog he reminded me of some of the basics of growing a church, no matter whether the church is large or small. "Growing a local church always involves risks and trades; there is no perfect plan. To reach more people risks depth and community. To maintain closeness and intimacy risks reaching more people."



In my 40 years of serving in the local church I have seen and pastored small churches that are shallow and served at large churches that had depth. Just as I have seen large churches that are stuck and no longer reach new people (but do a lot of sheep shifting from one church to another), and small churches that are growing like crazy by reaching new people. When that is true, the small church becomes larger! Thus, the constant tension between evangelism (reaching new/lost/unchurched people) and discipleship (growing a deeper intimacy with God as a follower).

Here are some things I am sure of...

1. The church will **NEVER HAVE MORE DEPTH THAN IT'S LEADERS!** Programs don't produce depth of spiritual maturity, leaders do.
2. **TO STOP REACHING MORE PEOPLE IS TO BECOME SHALLOW.** Friends, we don't have a choice, the Great Commission is clear; **MAKE DISCIPLES!** "Discipleship by definition and logic must begin with evangelism." To put this into our context, "if we have the same people in the same Bible study for years on end and nothing changes (the church or the people), **THAT IS SHALLOW.** The NT is filled with stories of life-change, miracles, and reaching people." It is also filled with imperfect churches, imperfect people, "but reaching people was the purpose of the Gospel." It still is...our **MESSAGE** is the same, our **METHODS** may change.
3. **DON'T CONFUSE DEPTH WITH COMPLEXITY.** I believe every church needs to focus on two basics: **A) SMALL GROUPS** (whether Sunday School or home groups) where people are systematically taught the Word of God and challenged to live it out in Biblical community. **B) SERVING.** People need to be engaged in serving others from day one (conversion) and never stops.
4. **MATURITY IS DIFFICULT TO MEASURE.** Maturity should be thoroughly based on scriptural principles, but I do not believe it is designed to be a long list of do's and dont's. Here is where I would start: 1) A vibrant prayer life and, 2) Tell your story of life-change and help others develop their faith story. If you want to flesh that out, go to Galatians 5 and look at the fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control). Again, keep it simple, but even though difficult, it is possible to measure.

None of us ever fully arrive on this side of eternity, but scripture gives us a clear picture that maturity can be achieved. Living things grow. SO, whether you are in a larger church or smaller church, the need to "make disciples" remains the same.

Following Him,

Jim

<p align="center">First Baptist Church Covington 14 Brent Spence Square</p> <p align="center">Pianist Needed</p> <p>FBC Covington is in need of a pianist for the Sunday morning worship service at 11:00 a.m. If you are available to help, please contact Janis Tomlinson by email at Janis4100@yahoo.com.</p>	<p align="center">FBC Walton 150th Anniversary Service August 7th at 10:30 am Dr. Paul Chitwood will be the Guest Speaker</p> <p align="center">Plan to Join Us as We Celebrate August 6 - 7, 2016</p>  <p>First Baptist Church Walton Celebrating 150 Years Of God's Faithfulness And Committed to Continue Until Our Lord's Return</p>
 <p align="center">Adopt-A-School Workshop Thursday, August 4th, 10:00 a.m. at the NKBA office</p> <p>All church leaders interested in building partnerships with local public schools are invited. Our speakers will include Mike Worley of Child Evangelism Fellowship, Chad Caddell, the developer of a mentorship program at Stevens Elementary school in Boone County, and others from our churches currently serving the community in their local schools. Please join us as we discuss ways to engage with our communities, just in time for the start of the new school year.</p>	<div>   </div> <p align="center">September 15-16 First Baptist Church of Richmond</p> <p>Training topics include Assessment, CPR, Evangelism in Crisis, First Aid, Flood Recovery, Chainsaw Safety and more. Contact the KBC to register at 866-489-3527 or www.kybaptist.org/drtraining.</p>
 <p align="center">And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-12</p> <p align="center">powered by </p>	<p>August 25th First Baptist Church of Walton 6:30—9:00 p.m. Check in begins at 6:00 p.m. \$10.00 per person Maximum of \$50.00 per church To find out more and to register: www.kybaptist.org/equip or 866-489-3571</p>

Northern Kentucky Baptist Association

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**Mark Your Calendars
Upcoming Events**

- August 1 and/or August 2—Prayer Boot Camp, 6 p.m., NKBA office**
- August 4—Adopt-A-School Workshop, 10 a.m., NKBA office**
- August 8—"Whose Sermon Is It Anyway?" 7 p.m., NKBA office**
- August 25—EQUIP: NKY, 6:30 p.m., FBC Walton**
- August 29—Leadership IQ, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington**

