

## ON TO THE NEXT 25 YEARS

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In GCF South Metro's 25th Anniversary last week, Pastor Edmund Chan graced our celebration with a day-long Intentional Disciple Making Church (IDMC) Conference, a leadership forum with our church leaders in the evening, and by preaching in our morning Worship Service. With the numerous challenges besetting us in different arenas of life, the discipleship lessons and principles he shared were made especially poignant as we contend for the faith as they are crucial in achieving victory over the many crises that we deal with.

Let me share with you some highlights from the conference that will help us strengthen our convictions about discipleship that would keep us in the path that Jesus has set for us to walk in -

1) There is a crisis in discipleship. And the crisis is that we do not see that there is a crisis! The discipleship crisis is seen in these issues that continually persist and pervade in the church - loving the world, failure to love God, busyness, illiteracy in Scripture, lordship of Christ, powerlessness, etc.

2) The discipleship crisis is brought about by the problems of -

a. spiritual consumerism which is manifested in the "What's in it for me?" attitude of the heart

b. spiritual compartmentalization where there are areas of our lives that are accessible to God and there are areas which are not

c. spiritual compromise where we presume we can have the best of both worlds (heaven and earth), that we cannot walk with God consistently

d. spiritual complacency, where we either lock God out of our lives or we do not want too much of Him because He might mess up our lives by ruining our plans

3) The aforementioned problems are rooted in the following issues

a. We don't really want God. We want His blessings, but in our heart of hearts, we really do not want Him to mess up our lives.

b. We don't really know God. We only have a superficial knowledge of God, not a passionate pursuit of an intimate, dynamic and personal relationship with Him.

c. We don't really seek God. It's not the issue of not having time for God but of not making time for God, which is an issue of the heart. We make time for what we see as important.

d. We don't really trust God. We are constantly in despair but we do not have desperation for God. And this is the crux of discipleship today.

4) We aim for spiritual maturity but we mistake it for church attendance, spiritual zeal, Bible knowledge, spiritual giftedness, and ministry success. Based on Colossians 2:6-8, spiritual maturity is evidenced by

a. Our walk - not just lip service. If we do not live it out, we are

only playing games with God.  
b. Our foundation - rootedness in the Word, not readiness to serve. The mandate of knowing and following Jesus precedes the mission of serving Jesus.

c. Our gratitude - grateful rather than grumbling. The joy of the Lord is one of the marks of a follower of Jesus. We lose our joy when we lose our spirit of gratitude.

d. Our stability - not easily swept by our circumstances, the influence of our peers, and the world system.

5) Spiritual maturity is a journey, not a destination. There are no shortcuts to it, rather, it is rooted in obedience to God's Word. It is not a one-man show, we need community. And it cannot afford to ignore spiritual warfare.

As we press on together to another 25 years with God and for His glory, the key to success is that we must constantly look to Jesus, our Great Shepherd, fully surrendered to Him and ever trusting Him. After all, He made Himself the supreme example of how we are to please God and live as His children. By His example, we are to obey the Father and submit to His will. By His example, we are to be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. By His example, we are to take up our cross daily and follow Him. May this be the mark of our discipleship in the next 25 years and beyond! ✠