

## 58. RUNNING A DISCIPLESHIP SEMINAR (Hints for church growth and strengthening).

Two problems in church work are:

1. How to **get people to come** to church, and
2. How to **keep them growing** in sound doctrine.

People come to church from **two sources**:

1. Those that **your church members lead to Christ**. These new converts are babes in Christ and generally know very little about the Bible or what fundamental doctrines your church holds to.
2. People who join your church **from other churches**. These people may already be saved and believe *some* of the things that a fundamental church stands for. They may also bring with them some false doctrines. If you don't quickly re-teach these people, they will quickly re-teach your people and your church will **drift from sound doctrine** and you will lose some members.

A Pastor will not have the time to re-teach all these people everything he wants to on a one to one basis.

Often, **new Christians will drift away** if they are not quickly taught in Bible doctrine to the point where they can really begin to grow.

Also, **children of your members** need to be grounded in the doctrines of your church. Sometimes, them just coming to one or two meetings a week will not be enough to quickly ground them.

How do we solve this problem of the need to rapidly teach these new members in the key doctrines?

A **DISCIPLESHIP SEMINAR** can be a very helpful thing. What does this involve?

**1. Type up a pamphlet/flyer** stating some subjects to be taught, the date, time and place of the seminar. It is good to make it on a Saturday from 10 a m to 6 p m, at the church, a hall, or the pastor's house.

**2. Provide lunch** from 12 - 1 pm, and **afternoon tea** from 3 pm - 3.30 pm. Session 1 is from 10 a m - 12 noon; session 2 is from 1 p m - 3 p m; session 3 is from 3.30 p m - 6 p m. During these 3 sessions you can cover perhaps 15 - 20 different subjects.

**3.** You should **invite all those new attendees at your church** who need to know what you stand for. You may door knock to invite people to a BIBLE UNDERSTANDING SEMINAR.

**4. What is to be taught?** As a pastor you are **very busy** and may not have the time to prepare all the notes for all the subjects that should be taught. Even if you have prepared the notes, they need typing and you must photocopy a set of notes for each person who attends. You may have 20 or more people attending. This means a lot of photocopying cost.

**A solution to this problem is the studies in "ANSWERS" by Keith Piper.** This book has been put together over 28 years of pastoral work in personal discipleship in local independent Baptist churches. It contains most of the subjects that you would want to teach your people in a local church setting.

What do you teach? You will find simple, comprehensive Bible studies on each subject in this book.

**Select what chapter topics** you think you need to teach to your people on the Saturday seminar. You may have 2 or 3 seminars on consecutive Saturdays or over a Christmas holiday period on a longer list of subjects if you wish. The chapters that you may select studies from are in the Table of Contents.

**5. Provide a copy of the "ANSWERS" book to each person who attends** the seminar so that they can follow along with you as you teach. They will want a permanent record of the studies that you teach. Set them chapters to read in their own time. Who do they know that want to read some chapters?

**An added benefit to your church is that you can get more people in your church doing discipleship and follow up as they learn to run seminars in their own homes using this material. Having these studies will stop them from teaching false doctrines of their own.**

**6. Pass a sheet of paper around during your church services** to see who wishes to attend the seminar. This will allow you to order the right amount of food and books.

**7. Make a list of people to invite.** Phone them 2 weeks before the seminar to invite them and remind them to come. You will have great fun & fellowship as your people spend a day studying God's Word.

**8. Have a seminar every 3 months.** "ANSWERS" books may be obtained by phoning **Keith Piper** on 61-2-9875-4321 or writing to him at **PO Box 188, Cherrybrook, NSW, 2126, AUSTRALIA.**

Please attempt one of these seminars. You will find that your church will grow in understanding God's Word, in unity and in fellowship as you set a lot of these doctrines straight in your people's minds. **They will then be able to teach others also and multiply a network of disciples all over the world.**