

“Holistic Theological Training in, through, and for the Local Church”

Prepared by Patrick J. Griffiths © 2009 - pastorpat@waukeshabile.org
July 5, 2009

As a local church we exist to make, mature, and assemble disciples of Jesus Christ for the strengthening and building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-13). Our intent is to do this holistically. This means it should be age appropriate, culturally relevant, and intellectually progressive. By definition we mean . . .

- Age Appropriate means it meets the spiritual needs of the age addressed.
- Culturally Relevant means it filters the instruction through age appropriate cultural grids.
- Intellectually Progressive means it intentionally moves the student from
 - passive listening,
 - through active participation,
 - to aggressive search and desired reduplication.

Why must we see this as our objective for existing, and why must we fully engage ourselves in this undertaking?

First, the Bible places discipleship at the heart of generational continuity (Deut. 6:1-25; Matt. 28:18-20). In the absence of discipleship, every individual is infertile. Christianity is built for community. The procreative process is not only about physical descendents, but for spiritual proliferation. Not everyone will have a physical progeny, but no one is to be spiritually barren. Everyone must duplicate themselves in the life of another individual. Theological and ministry training are the biblical expressions of discipleship.

Second, this discipleship is two-fold: theological and ministerial. The church universal and local has driven an unnecessary wedge between these two aspects of a singular idea. A discipleship that is without theology is cosmetically appealing, but empty and powerless. A discipleship that is without ministry is foundationally strong, but expressionless and unseen. The two must go together.

What is meant by theology and ministry? Theology is a study of who God is in His tri-unity. What this Triune God has done and who His people are for Him in this world and in the world to come. Theology understands who God is through the objectivity of His Word.

What is ministry? Ministry is the fleshing out of theology in life. Ministry is the overflow of theology. Ministry is a fruit of biblically correct thinking. Again, you cannot have one without the other without damage and detriment.

Why is this responsibility the local churches? Why not let institutions and agencies do this? Can they not do this better than a local church? Institutions and agencies exist because local churches failed to shoulder their biblical responsibility to train people in theology and ministry. Some of this happened by delegation, but most was by default. The local church simply failed to shoulder its responsibility to be what it was designed to be, a place where

Continued on the other side...

people were trained in theology and for ministry. Waukesha Bible Church is not overlooking the contributions such institutions and agencies make to the process, but neither can she turn a blind eye to her responsibilities to train her people in theology and ministry. Waukesha Bible Church also maintains that the best place to learn theology and ministry for the local church is in the local church. If the local church exists to duplicate itself through the planting of local churches, then there is no better place where and how to learn this than in the context of a local church under the tutelage of its people and leadership. Waukesha Bible Church is an ideal place for such training to exist.

We believe that our individuals, families, and all they represent should have a discipleship that is age appropriate, theologically sound, and ministry expressed. Our theology is plain and open: Christ-exalting, Word-centered, Global-impacting, and Grace-celebrating. It is a theology where grace reigns. Our ministry expression is the establishing and strengthening of local churches through a “one another” family.

We fully recognize that this one area is foundational to all areas, but it is still only one area. Waukesha Bible Church is more than this, but she is no less than this. The Elders of Waukesha Bible Church fully believe that we must lead and provide a context whereby each disciple progressively attains spiritual maturity whereby they perpetuate the faith to the next generation. May God so enable us to see clearly this objective and then to put in place the means whereby the end can be achieved.

Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.