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## The Church's Function in Making Disciples

*All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.*  
– Acts 2:42-43 (NLT)

**There's a tremendous interest in discipleship, as shown by the large and ever-growing number of seminars, books, conferences, and articles about the subject.** Church members and leaders are genuinely interested in it and evidently recognize its importance. Unfortunately, there's often more talk than action because discipleship means complete transformation. It calls for undivided attention and total commitment from church leaders and members.

**Discipleship is a demanding discipline; it's not an option.** Paul discusses it in detail in Ephesians, describing those who labor “for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12). **Jesus mandates it in the Great Commission, “teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20). He also reminded those who would be His disciples that they must be willing to sacrifice.**

*If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me will save it (Luke 9:23-24).*

**In a culture where some people tend to gloss over serious matters, discipleship requires a dedication and intensity many people don't understand.** To understand that discipleship is not an option for believers and that it involves taking up your cross daily to follow Christ is the beginning of understanding the work of every believer and every congregation.

**Discipleship is a necessary function of the kingdom-focused church. Church members and leaders draw closer to Christ as they immerse themselves in His service.** As believers become more like Christ, their lives move closer to the uncompromised perfection of Christ's example. **Amen.**

Dr. Gene Mims

*“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:18 – 20*

