

Session 2: What is the Church's Mission?

Making Disciples

Key Scriptures:

- **Revelation 2:2-5**
- **2 Timothy 2:1-6**

Part 1: The lifecycle of local churches:

- **Birth:**
- **Early years:**
- **Adolescence:**
- **Early Adulthood:**
- **Middle Age:**
- **Later Years:**

Part 2: A fresh, biblical perspective: Revelation 2:2-5

- **Actual health is tied to core issues:** "I know thy..."
 - **Work:** Active service that impacts the Kingdom.
 - **Patience:** Not getting ahead of what God is doing.
 - **Discernment:** Sound doctrine
 - **Conviction:** an unwavering commitment to hold fast to what is true.
 - **Endurance:** Not quitting when we encounter difficult seasons.
- **Actual health goes deeper than those core issues:** "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee..."
 - **"You have left:"** This indicates that all these good things were empty at their core.
 - **"Your first love:"**
 - We must love Him supremely.
 - Our church cannot be about numbers or influence.
 - It must always be about a deep-rooted love for Christ.
 - If we fail to keep things right at the foundation, we are in danger of eventual death as a church.
 - **"Remember...Repent...do the first works"**
 - Think back.
 - Let the truth sink in and change how you think.
 - Start back over again.
- **The church is always God's church:** "Or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick..."

Part 3: Making disciples in the church is a non-negotiable part of healthy church life: 2:1, 3, 6

- **God gives us a simple pattern for making disciples: Matthew 28:18-20**

- **The Pastoral Epistles give structure to that pattern:**
- **Pastors must teach and pattern sound doctrine to everyone:**
 - **2 Timothy 4:1-2**
 - **1 Timothy 4:11-13**
- **Mature believers must teach and pattern sound doctrine: Titus 2:1-7**
 - Older men must be...so that they can teach younger men to be...
 - Older women must be...so that they can teach younger women to be...
- **Current church leadership must develop future church leadership from within the church: 2 Timothy 2:22**
 - **Learn from those who have maturity and experience:** "The things thou hast heard of me..."
 - **Invest in those who are serious about the Christian life:** "Commit thou to faithful men..."
 - **Use your time wisely to multiply your efforts:** "Who shall be able to teach others also..."

Part 3: God uses ordinary relationships to give these opportunities: Act 18:1-3

- Aquilla and Priscilla were refugees/migrant workers in Corinth who had been deported from Rome due to anti-Jewish sentiment in the city.
- Paul and this couple became friends because they had similar skills and Corinth provided the perfect place to do their work.
- Paul's interaction with this couple was clearly one of the NT's greatest examples of relational discipling.
- When Paul left Corinth, he traveled with them to Ephesus and after a short period left Ephesus and this couple in the early stages of a church plant.
- During this time, they were able to help Apollos come to a clear understanding of the gospel and were influential in the church plant at Ephesus which would later become a strong local church.
- We later see evidence of this couple being present in Paul's absence in the church at Rome (**Romans 16:3**), Corinth (**1 Corinthians 16:19**), and Ephesus (**2 Timothy 4:19**).

Part 4: Final Thoughts:

- Discipleship starts with the way Scripture is handled in preaching.
- New Christians need a good foundation.
- As they grow, they still need a more personal focus.
- Mature men must mentor younger men.
- Mature women must mentor younger women.
- The church must consider its future, not just its present situation.