

Disciplemaking is About Moving Your Feet

By

George Bullard

Executive Director

Columbia Metro Baptist Association

GeorgeBullard@ColumbiaMetro.org

St. Andrews Baptist Church – not unlike many churches in our association – is striving to define and act on the difference between in-depth knowledge about discipleship and proactive efforts to engage in disciplemaking.

Sound familiar? It should. It is the number one struggle mentioned by pastors when considering the spiritual maturity of their congregation.

Dee Vaughan, St. Andrew's pastor, clearly illustrated the difference through this story he recently told. It is shared here with his permission.

“One day I came home from work and was greeted by Andrew with big news: *‘Daddy, I know how to swing!’* When I asked how he had learned such a big-boy skill, he gave due credit, *‘Elizabeth and Josh taught me.’* He took my hand, led me out to the swing set, got on board and asked me to give him a push to get him started. When I got the swing moving, Andrew called out the words his siblings had taught him about the secret of swinging, *‘Out! Back! Out! Back!’*

That's what you do with your feet to keep the swing going. You kick them out, then swing them back. But after just a moment, his swing lost speed and stopped. He asked me to push him again, so I did, and again he called out the secret of independent elevation, *‘Out! Back! Out! Back!’* but again, his swing lost speed and height and ground to a halt.

By this time, I saw his problem. He was saying the right words, just as his brother and sister had taught him, but he wasn't moving his feet. He was saying what you need to say but wasn't doing what you must do to make the swing move. He didn't know how to swing. He knew how to talk about it.

We haven't fulfilled the Great Commission when we merely say the right words or if we teach others only what to say. Neither we nor those we serve have answered Christ's call unless we are moving our feet in an obedient Christian lifestyle.

We fall short when we merely help people learn and repeat the right words. Christ has called us to teach people to live a new kind of life. His plan is for us to obey and to teach others to do the same.”

Questions For You to Consider

Are the people in your congregation moving their feet or are they just saying the right words?

Are you teaching them to repeat the right words or to live a new kind of life?

Are the people in your congregation sitting in worship and small groups or walking out into your community context and engaging people in conversation about the joy of life as a disciple?

Who are the people in your congregation who “get it” about moving their feet and living a Christ-like type of life?

How can you help their numbers to increase?

How can our association help you with this?