

News and Current Events :: Every single person in the church involved**Every single person in the church involved - posted by ArthurRosh (), on: 2015/8/26 12:36**

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Discipleship—the heartbeat of the East Asian church—its phenomenal growth

Training believers how to effectively disciple new Christians is the heartbeat of Jeremiah and Joy Farmer’s* ministry. The IMB couple champion intentional discipleship and provide the training and resources for U.S. and East Asian church networks to ensure their churches are healthy.

October 1-3, the Farmers are coming to Orlando, Florida, to train U.S. churches. They are inviting Southern Baptist churches to attend and learn how their church can employ wildly successful tools for church health and growth.

“In five years time, we’ve had 500 new churches with 1.5 million who heard the gospel and 30,000 believe. The statistics are overwhelming and incomprehensible,” Jeremiah says.

He says that one reason they’ve seen these numbers is, “because every single person virtually, in all of these groups are all involved” in church affairs, ministry and in outreach.

“How do you share the gospel with 700,000 people in a year in a closed country? We’re not doing stadium stuff. It’s because everyone’s doing it,” the IMB worker declares. “How do you get everyone doing it? It’s the process of reproducibility that’s beat into the whole system and idea.”

Jeremiah says the situation in East Asia isn’t entirely different from the U.S.

“It’s not substantially different than Baptist churches in America. When we first met many of our national partners, we found that, just as many churches in the USA, the pastor does almost everything, the ‘staff’ does almost everything, and everyone else watches them do it. The staff gets frustrated because people aren’t growing,” Jeremiah says.

“They’re not growing primarily because we’re not intentionally equipping the congregation the opportunity to be involved in significant ministry. There’s no intentional process or plan to develop disciples.”

He says that in many in American churches, “there are programs, not plans; there’s a difference.”

In conversations Jeremiah has had with pastors in Asia as well as in the U.S., he’s asked what happens when someone walks down the aisle and commits their life to Christ. Pastors respond that the believers are baptized. Some churches have a new believer’s class and other churches incorporate new believers into existing Sunday School classes.

“With this model, disciples are grown by accident, they are not grown with purpose at all,” Jeremiah explains. “Disciples are not grown by accident. We don’t want it by accident, it must be done with intentionality. In fact, we aim for healthy, sustainable, reproducibility that is all directed by God-driven intentionality.”

The training materials and curriculum that Jeremiah wrote and assembled meets the above criterion. It’s available in both English and the local language.

“To top it all off, it’s free,” he adds.

Jeremiah emphasizes it’s really following God’s model, honestly, of equipping the saints to do the ministry to build the body of Christ, he says.

The Farmers trained a number of churches in the U.S., and a number of churches are “all in.” Several churches in the Mississippi Baptist Convention have adopted the training.

“We are seeing a hunger from some churches in the states,” Jeremiah says. “With each team that comes out, they get really excited about what’s happening and they would like to try to do it themselves. Our desire is to be a blessing to our sending churches, and we hope that our sending churches in the USA will thrive and grow!”

Many pastors and churches take the concepts and philosophies and translate it back to their churches in the U.S.

A Baptist church in North Augusta, South Carolina, embraced a tight-knit model of house groups where leadership is shared. The pastor isn’t the only one doing ministry. The pastor came to East Asia in 2015 to teach seminary classes in house church networks.

The Farmers visited the church during their last visit to the U.S. When the pastor heard the Farmer’s strategy, he was all on board.

A deacon and small group leader from the church was once a back-row Baptist. Now, he’s a deacon who is teaching seminary classes.

This North Augusta church isn’t the only church that employs the Farmer’s discipleship model. Some churches in the Mississippi Baptist Convention and churches in Indiana, Texas and Georgia are using it as well.

Here’s what to expect at the training Farmer is hosting this October:

Training modules that are used in East Asia to effectively partner with churches and strategically plan for growing God’s Kingdom in a healthy, sustainable manner according to His leading, ways and purposes. These training modules include “Strategic Planning” and the “Healthy Disciple.”

Register for the training and discover how you can be a part at:

<http://eastasianpeoples.imb.org/stories/view/east-asia-training-events>

<http://eastasianpeoples.imb.org/stories/view/discipleship-the-heartbeat-of-the-east-asian-churchs-phenomenal-growth?cid=95916>