

TRAINING BELIEVERS IN JESUS

Dear Friend:

This *In Touch* edition is about the second line of Franklin Church's mission statement: TRAIN BELIEVERS IN JESUS. What does "Train Believers In Jesus" mean? A good definition is: "The process of teaching believers to become Christ-like in character and help him/her discover and deploy the use of their spiritual gifts". Train believers in Jesus has two aspects: First, Christ-like character growth and second, discovery of and use of spiritual gifts.

Another word for Training believers in Jesus is *discipleship*. According to the Greek, discipleship means *learner*. So, training believers in Jesus and discipleship can be used interchangeably, they truly are the same thing.

Let me illustrate what the full picture of training believers in Jesus is...think of a baseball diamond. (You may need to write this down to understand it). Start at **Home Plate, labeled: New Believer**. The path from home to first base should say: "Know Christ", a new believer begins knowing Christ. **First base, labeled: Church**. The new believer must find a church to attend. The path from first base to second base should say: Grow in Christ (they start their growth journey). **Second base, labeled: Discipleship**. things like church attendance patterns, prayer patterns, Bible reading patterns, fruit of the Spirit maturity, etc. should be established. The base path from second base to third should say: Serve Christ. Having begun the discipleship journey (second base) they should be serving Christ in and outside of the church. **Third base, labeled: Share Christ**. They should have developed by this point an ability to verbalize their faith. Third base to home plate should say: Sent Out. Witnessing becomes a part of spiritual life.

Training believes in Jesus does not come naturally. It is a planned process in the church. It is not just connecting people to a Bible study and giving them a place to serve in the church. May God put a desire in your heart and in the heart of Franklin Church to Train Believers In Jesus!

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Prayer Requests: Rev. Les Smith (kidney transplant infection), Gabe Smith (son of Rev. Les Smith) recovering from cancer surgery, Bob Bieber (recovering from spine surgery).

Events: February 2: Scout Sunday and After church congregational meeting (very important to be there as we look at the future).