

RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP (LESSON 5)

The church has been around long enough to undergo many changes. Some are good; some are not. Changes come through various sources and influences. Changes in the church began as soon as the apostles died. Changes continue today. Unfortunately when changes impinge on doctrines and morals, the church drifts from its original purpose. Before the Apostle John ended his earthly sojourn, somewhere near the beginning of the second century, new winds of doctrine began to appear. Changes in church government, incorporating Greek philosophy, interpreting the Scriptures allegorically, novel views on prophecy, unmarried priests taking the place of married pastors, indulgences, unbiblical teachings on Mary, are but a few. In the midst of changes the church lost its mission. It wasn't until the 16th century, after the Reformation, that the church began to once again rely on Scripture alone to define faith and practice. In the 500 years since Martin Luther, the church has rediscovered Biblical truths that had been long forgotten. One of those truths is the Great Commission of Jesus to make disciples of all nations. Several years ago there was a new movement called the "Discipleship Movement." There was nothing new about it. It was a rediscovery of what was lost. Nevertheless, it is good that somebody found it. It has taken centuries for the church to get back to what it is called to do. The church, as Jesus defined it, is a discipleship movement – nothing else.