

## RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP (LESSON 60)

THE OPERATION OF THE TYRANNUS PLAN (EPHESIANS 4). The Book of Ephesians explains how the Tyrannus plan works in the church. The first three chapters are the doctrinal section. Chapters 4-6 is the practical section explaining the principles of training radical disciples. We are told that when Paul was in Ephesus he taught publicly and from house to house (Acts 20:20). When we see the church today, there is little resemblance to the Ephesian church (or any of the early churches). The dominant idea of the church today is an auditorium where preachers talk and people listen. The church is not primarily viewed as a training center, which it was ordained to be. In Ephesus, as well as other churches of the first century, the primary meeting places were houses. By meeting in homes the church functioned as an organism rather than as an organization. The church is revealed in Ephesians as the body of Christ (3:6). Much of Paul's teaching is more easily understood if it is considered in a context of cell groups. In order for the church to experience body life, small groups are necessary. The lecture model alone is inadequate for producing radical disciples. Homes provided needed opportunities for those with the gift of hospitality to share their gifts, and settings for believers to discover their gifts. Halley discusses how the New Testament church met. "Houses for Christian worship did not begin...until 200 years after the days of Paul, and church buildings do not come into general use until Constantine put an end to the persecutions of Christians. In Paul's day there were no church buildings. Churches met mostly in the homes of Christians. The thousands of Christians in and around Ephesus met, therefore, not as one megachurch, or even in a few larger congregations, but in hundreds of small groups in various homes, each congregation under its own pastoral leadership." Disciples can't be produced in masse, let alone radical disciples. Discipleship requires supervision and accountability which is impossible in large lecture settings. In short, the way believers were disciplined in the Ephesian church is impossible the way we experience church today.