

# Equipping Opportunities

**9-12-17 Grace Leaders Network  
via Mike Sciarra Equipping Advocate**

## Connect with Fellow Servants of Christ

Get contact info and encourage, pray, share ideas.

## Connect with People in Your Sphere of Influence

Spend time with people and encourage them in their giftedness.

## Benefit from the FGBC Equipping Church Network

Churches committed to connecting members with ministries - September, 2017

This is a very encouraging time for the equipping ministries of many churches. They are experiencing new vitality from the involvement of an increasing number of their members in ministries. Because every church has its unique culture, equipping does not always follow the same path. But the underlying principles of Ephesians 4:11-16 never change. And as we have said many times, equipping is a journey, not a destination.

Most of the churches that are seeing success involving members in ministries have someone who is an equipping coordinator. In some churches this is the pastor; in many churches this is someone that the pastor chooses. An equipping coordinator is not necessarily a part of the organizational structure of the church. He does not direct, but operates relationally. His or her role is to seek to instill and implement an equipping culture in the church, based on Ephesians 4:11-16, seeing each member of the church rise to his full potential for Christ by serving in his area of giftedness.

An effective coordinator will focus on the elements we have emphasized in several of our documents:

*Intercession.* Prayer is the indispensable element for being an equipping church—not just through lip-service or routine prayers at the beginning of meetings, but prayers of genuine faith. Ministry is not what we do for the Lord, but what He chooses to do through us.

*Identification.* Every church must be able to identify its ministry needs. When ministry needs are identified, equipping churches are able to focus on the development of open-ended ministry teams focusing on these needs.

*Involvement.* An Equipping Church believes that every member is gifted for ministry. Therefore an Equipping Church will be focused on involving every member into a specific ministry. This will enable the members to discover their gifts, and will create a thirst for further training.

*Instruction.* In addition to the personal mentoring and coaching provided by the ministry teams, specialized training should be offered. This training should be related to felt needs and should be holistic, targeting both the head, heart and hands.

*Inspiration.* The success or failure of infusing an equipping culture is directly related to the ability of the church to give value to those in ministry through positive affirmation. Nothing is more motivational than a spontaneous word of sincere appreciation for ministry well-done.

Effective equipping is based on some basic values. Here are a few:

1. People are to be trained *in* ministry, rather than *for* ministry. The root meaning of equip is to connect.
2. People must be valued above programs, potential above position, and purpose above process.
3. Committees must be replaced by ministry teams in which all have a responsibility.
4. The laity must be unleashed by breaking down the distinction between vocational and non-vocational leaders. Ownership of the ministry must be shared on all levels.

In our next letter we'll spell out some of the practical ways that an equipping coordinator can put these principles into practice.

Here are some encouraging words from Steve Kern, serving in the Wooster, Ohio, church:  
*For the last two years, we have been very intentional about recruiting and equipping volunteers for our ministries. Both years, a sermon series on serving has pointed people towards a Saturday morning conference for those already serving and those interested in serving. Hundreds of people have attended the conferences. As a result, many new volunteers have been added and people serve with greater passion and competence.*

Let us hear about some of your experiences in equipping, as well as your questions.

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### THURSDAY MARCH 8

- Session 5 • Phil Johnson / Seminar Session / Session 6 • Art Azurdia / Session 7 • Ligon Duncan

### FRIDAY MARCH 9

- Session 8 • Tom Pennington / Session 9 • Mark Dever / Session 10 • Steve Lawson / Session 11 • John MacArthur

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