



## Christian Education Leadership: Making Disciples in the 21st Century Church

*By Bernard M. Spooner Ph.D., Judy Morris D.Min., Barbara Newman M.A., Doug Powell Ph.D., Walter H. Norvell Ph.D., Bayne B. Pounds Ph.D., Royce A. Rose Ph.D., Thomas Sanders Ph.D., Dwayne C. Ulmer Ed.D., Robby Barrett D.Min., Jeter Basden Ed.D., Jeremy Dutschke Ph.D., James C. Denison Ph.D., Scott Floyd Ph.D., Daryl Eldridge Ph.D., Norma S. Hedin Ph.D., Bob Garrett Ph.D., Rick Gregory Ed.D., Margaret Lawson Ph.D., Jim Lemons Ph.D., Sandy Martin-Wisdom MSW*

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**Book Description:** The collective work of twenty Christian leaders known for their expertise in Christian education, this book is an up-to-date, comprehensive resource on Christian education, with the emphasis on making disciples as Jesus instructed. This volume addresses spiritual formation for all age groups and gives guidance on how to develop an effective church discipleship ministry. The book shows church leaders how to provide for the spiritual formation of all age groups, including people with special needs, who are often neglected. The aim of the book is to forge a strong connection between what happens on Sunday and how people live every day. The goal is discipleship, stressing how to develop a congregation that is on mission rather than merely a group of people who convene on Sundays. The book contains a strong emphasis on missions as an integral part of church identity and activity. Church leadership must provide ways for growing and encouraging disciples in being on a mission for Christ. At the core of the book is Jesus' command to his disciples, including church leaders today, "Go . . . and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20, NASB). As we enter the third millennia of the Christian church, church leaders must learn and practice ways to truly obey Jesus' command. This comprehensive book provides guidance and inspiration for doing that. The Christian leaders who authored this resource also point to the urgent need to equip and involve lay people in all the work of the church. The authors call for church leaders to involve church members in planning, decision-

making, and action rather than to promote, on purpose or by default, a spectator mentality. Citing Ephesians 4:11-12, the authors emphasize that a church's staff members exist to equip and deploy all believers in the mission and ministry of Christ. The book stresses guiding Christian leaders to move their church from a school-with-pews mentality to a place that heeds the biblical call to develop disciples. Instead of just maintaining members, church leaders must focus on making disciples in order for their congregation to be on a mission as a vibrant force for change in their community and around the world. WHO NEEDS THIS BOOK? University and seminary professors will find this volume a good choice for a textbook for preparing ministers for church ministry. It will also be a valuable tool for pastors, general staff leaders, and practitioners for the various age group staff and key volunteer leaders in the local churches.

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- Sales Rank: #1264460 in Books
- Brand: Brand: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
- Published on: 2012-07-25
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .91" w x 6.00" l, 1.17 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 400 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

### About the Author

As editor, Bernard M. Spooner shepherded this book into being by identifying areas of needed emphasis and finding qualified people to write its twenty-three chapters. He has a lifetime of experience in Christian education, including fifteen years as a local church minister and more than two decades as a seminary professor and denominational leader helping pastors, Christian education leaders, and lay leaders. He also served as the first dean of what is now the Cook Graduate School of Leadership of Dallas Baptist University. For the Baptist World Alliance, he has served as chair of a commission that addresses theological education and leadership formation.

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