

THE LEADER'S EDGE

“Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.”
(Proverbs 9:9)

<p>Category: Growing Churches Disciplemaking Process</p> <p>Rating: Content: A- Style: B</p> <p>Memorable Quotes:</p> <p>“Out of complexity, find simplicity.” (Albert Einstein)</p> <p>“To be simple is to be great.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)</p> <p>“The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak.” (Hans Hofmann)</p> <p>“If anyone knows simple, it is Jesus. He is the original simple revolutionary. “</p> <p>“Simple church leaders are designers. They design opportunities for spiritual growth. Complex church leaders are programmers. They run ministry programs.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>BOOK SUMMARY</u></p> <p><i>Simple Church</i> by Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006.</p> <p>Core Content: Insightful student of the North American church, Thom Rainer, discovered from a recent research project that the healthiest congregations tend to have a simple process for making disciples. Rather than another program, method or model, Rainer sets forth a transferable process that any church can apply for increased ministry effectiveness.</p> <p>After establishing the need for simplicity in the midst of ecclesiastical clutter, the authors provide an overview of this four-fold disciple making process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. CLARITY: Design a simple process2. MOVEMENT: Place your programs in an sequential order3. ALIGNMENT: Integrate all ministries around the process4. FOCUS: Eliminate things outside the process <p>The following definition is offered: <i>A simple church is a congregation designed around a straight-forward and strategic process that moves people through the stages of spiritual growth.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <i>Designed</i> = not haphazard, but intentional➤ <i>Around</i> = centered on something➤ <i>Straight-forward</i> = easy to grasp, kept simple➤ <i>Strategic</i> = tied to the church’s purpose➤ <i>Moves people</i> = sequential flow➤ <i>Through stages of spiritual growth</i> = changed lives the goal <p>The book describes how three churches of different sizes and geographical contexts, flesh out the process in reality. It then, goes into greater detail in explaining each of the four components of the process.</p> <p>CLARITY: Starting with a Ministry Blueprint</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Define the process<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Determine what kind of disciple you wish to produce➤ Describe your church’s purpose in terms of a process➤ Decide how each program is part of the process2. Illustrate the process<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The illustration must fit the process➤ The illustration should show progression➤ The illustration should help simplify3. Measure the process
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View your numbers horizontally ➤ Measure at each level/stage of the process <p>4. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View everything through the lens of your process ➤ Surface the process in meetings ➤ Test your leaders on it ➤ Brainstorm new ways to communicate it <p>5. Increase Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Articulate the process corporately ➤ Share the process interpersonally ➤ Live the process personally <p>MOVEMENT: Removing Congestion</p> <p>1. Strategic Programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Begin with your clearly defined process ➤ Choose one primary program for each aspect of the process ➤ Design each program for a specific aspect of the process ➤ Place the programs in sequential order <p>2. Sequential Programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Order the sequence of your programs to reflect your process ➤ Designate a clear entry-point to your process ➤ Identify the next levels of programming <p>3. Intentional Movement</p> <p>4. Identify Clear Next Steps</p> <p>5. Offer a New Members Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teach the simple process to new members ➤ Ask for commitment to the process <p>ALIGNMENT: Maximizing the Energy of Everyone</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruit on the basis of the process 2. Offer Accountability 3. Implement the same process everywhere 4. Unite around the process 5. Make sure all new ministries contribute to the process <p>FOCUS: Saying No to Almost Everything</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eliminate in order to Concentrate 2. Limit the adding of New Ministries (Less is More) 3. Reduce Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funnel the event into an existing program ➤ Combine the event with an existing program <p>At the end of each chapter you will find a list of discussion questions. At the end of the book, a list of frequently asked questions are answered.</p>
	<p>Discussion Starters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What process do you currently use to stair-step people toward spiritual growth? What are its strengths? Its weaknesses? 2. Which aspect of the disciple making process presented in this book would be most helpful in increasing your church's disciple making effectiveness? What steps could you take in applying it

	<p>to your unique context?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. How simple and functional is your church's purpose statement? How could it be communicated even more effectively? What percentage of your congregation could articulate your purpose and describe the essentials of your disciple making process?4. How do you communicate "next steps" in spiritual growth? How do you challenge people to transition into their next step?5. How would you rate the level of "program alignment" in your church? How well do individual ministries understand how they contribute to your congregation's overall purpose?6. In order to better steward your people/time/money resources, which programs need to be sustained? Eliminated? Added?
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