Good morning Fil-Am Church. Today we are taking you on a journey thru the scriptures to see what kind of a church we are…. And to show you what our mission is in light of how we instruct the many people who enter our doors; This is a continuance of the series “What Kind of Church Is This?” Many of you have been probably wondering what church we are for a long time…..Especially those of you in my Impact Class………

[Slide 2]

Well the word for the day is “Discipleship”. Everyone say – Discipleship! And, if you will note on the slide, the word comes from the root word in Greek which is … mathetes;

So what is the Church called to do? As noted here, it is to reach out and bring people into a relationship with Jesus; What we are talking about is the what that happens after one is saved.

And our Mission - as a New Testament Church is first “to reach out and bring people into a relationship with Jesus, but…… once those people are reached, we are called to train them in the things of God.” [Isaiah 50:4]; Note; What Isaiah stated here in Isaiah 50:……Who gives him attentiveness? GOD DOES!

Yes, Jesus when He left the Disciples on the Mount of Ascension in Jerusalem He told them – “Go and make Disciples within the world; Spread my Gospel”; And
part of that Mission Statement is to do whatever we can as a church to TRAIN PEOPLE UP IN THE THINGS OF GOD.

So - We are a Church that instructs because it is vastly important that we do whatever we can to get people prepared to take their place in the mission of Christ and allow All men and Women of God to become Disciples of Christ. So what does a Disciple do? What is their calling? How do they conduct themselves?

Disciples are followers – They are the ones who are at the feet of Jesus; Learning – YES; But also preparing themselves for the day when Jesus turns to you and says… “You already know how to do this; I taught you well; Go, make it happen.”

Why do I know this? Because this was the exact same model that Christ gave us in the scriptures when He came down to make and train His own Disciples; He taught them; He showed them by “modeling his own nature and actions for them”; and then he took them on trips where they were allowed to see how he dealt with the Pharisees, the unruly mobs, the people attempting to “catch him” in error of not obeying the law, and the accusers of His reign and authority.

Slide 3:

- How do we train people in this Church? [Slide 4] Thru the Sermon Series in the preaching of the Word; Impact Class (where we study the word and dissect it to see what it has in store for us and how we can apply it to our daily lives); Special Training (Life Coaching, Discovery Classes [101;201;301;401], Home Cell Group Training, & Men’s and Women’s Ministries)

- And what DO ALL THESE TRAINING areas have in common? They all deal with THE WORD OF GOD - Its’ application to our lives; and how it
confronts us, instructs us, encourages us, and (most importantly) convict us!

Now some of you are saying; “That is a lot of Word; and a lot of instruction”….But I assure you it is not. When I was preparing this message I went back and was amazed at how many years I have spent in a Classroom either Learning, Studying, or Teaching Students in Universities, Churches, the Military or wherever. It amounts to half of my entire life – 32 years [and that is all year.] For 32 solid years I have been in Classrooms across the nation training myself or teaching others numerous & varied subjects - from the Word of God to how to assemble Nuclear Warheads, from Cost Accounting to Metrics, and from Statistics and how to find the break-even point of a Business Venture to how to test and evaluate Littoral Gunships and M1A1 Abrams Tanks.

Slide 4:
So…….Let’s break it down…. A Disciple is One who is Disciplined – in the thing or item to which He/She is devoted. With respect to the Church, that thing is Jesus…. And His Word. And you need to ask yourself: Are you Disciplined? The concept is this; We surrender ourselves to something or someone, similar to an athlete surrendering his will to a coach or a trainer. For instance, In conflict, our surrender is to God and His wisdom. And why is that? Because it is in Conflict situations where God gets ahold of us and shows us He is there with us. Proverbs is written for us to “gain discipline for wise conflict management” (Prov. 1:3). Solomon said that “we should love discipline” (Prov. 12:1).

Let’s look at the BUSINESS MODEL FOR HOW JESUS TAUGHT: VERY INTERESTING PROGRESSION OF EVENTS;

First, we must teach discipline (Prov. 16:20; 1:8). This is defined as “I do. You watch.” Jesus modeled this with His disciples. He first taught His Disciples His
disciplines by modeling the behavior to them. We should do the same with our children, employees, and teams.

**Second, we must train in discipline (Prov. 29:19; 6:20-23).** This can be stated as, “I do. You help.” Jesus trained his disciples by allowing them to help Him live out His disciplines. We must provide opportunities for our children, employees, and teams to help us.

**Third, we must test for the discipline (Prov. 8:10).** Translated, this is “You do. I help.” Jesus tested His disciples for discipline by giving them a controlled environment to apply His disciplines. The intensity of the experience brought the imperfections of His disciples to the surface, much like heat that refines precious metals draws impurities to the surface (Prov. 17:3; 27:21). Testing our children, employees, and teams helps us discover the areas that need corrected. An example of this was when Jesus told Peter that He would deny Him three times before the Rooster crowed…. Peter denied this, but Jesus was only telling him, “Hey, the heat is being turned up on you; Do you not understand that Satan is sifting you to see what you are made of?” This sifting process is the Pressure Cooker of Life - Athletes go thru this when training for a major event; You have to perform under pressure – not fall away and fold like a lawn chair.

**Fourth, we must transform, or correct, the imperfections (Prov. 13:18).** This results in “You do. I watch.” Jesus corrected His disciples when they were missing the mark. And you teachers out there know…. Correcting misbehavior is priceless for children, employees, and teams to instill discipline.

So, How do you become Disciplined? Well, first **you must have a goal;** I will accomplish this in that time frame and you then begin to set intermediate goals and means by which you can measure how well you are attaining that goal.
Life Coaches: You already know this – **so take a bow!**

**Second:** You must strengthen your body and your mind - Activities, such as exercise [good for the body and the mind], reading the bible, studying the scriptures, digging deeper than you ever thought possible…. Continuous activity in a patterned behavior; Every morning – Every Morning - Every Morning….. I tend to set aside time for Prayer; Exercise; and Studying the Word of God; Every Morning Church this must be your target!

There is No, I didn’t get to it today so I’ll make sure I get to it tomorrow. – An interesting sidebar to this is the Nike Commercial that you probably have seen where Tiger Woods is shown hitting golf balls in the early morning out into a field or golf net from his Lanai – backyard enclosed patio. It is pouring out and he is diligently getting it done…. Hitting ball after ball; And the Take-away is “There are no rainy days!” And there are none if you are entering in to be a Disciple for Christ….. You do whatever you need to do that day, and the next, and the next to get to where you need to be.

Slide 5:
Remember the words of Paul in first Timothy; “Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.” – [1 Timothy 4:7-8 (ESV)](https://bible.com/bible/59/tim.1.7-8.ESV) Think about it… We are not just training for next week’s Marine Corps marathon; or for our Bible School Pageant presentation; We are training for ETERNITY! And that is A LONG, LONG, TIME!

**So Here is A Word of caution:** Do not always believe what a man tells you! Not me; not your Pastor; not your Impact Class Instructor; Noone!!!!! Now **this is not**
the time when ALL the women here are supposed to say - AMEN! No, your Husband is okay… on most things, I guess. Unless he is a golfer - Never – Never – Never trust a Golfer.

If you have been in my Impact Class you will first note something….. Pastor Dave and I do not just tell you “This is the way it is. [Especially in the Book of Revelations]” No, we present many varied and diverse interpretations of the same scripture and INTERJECT what it could mean…. Why do we do this? Because we do not want you to just believe whatever you hear… Part of the process of becoming a devout believer and a Disciple is searching the scriptures for YOURSELF!! Know what you believe and why! Let the Holy Spirit take you on a journey…… Thru Revelation Brother Barry?…. No! Thru Life!!!!!! The Holy Spirit wants you to trust Him… He wants you to learn from Him…. He want you to listen to His Voice and Reply; “Now I’ve Got It!” Yes - Yes – Yes Lord Yes! (As the song goes)

Slide 6:

Our job as a Christ Centered Church is to conduct Orderly Worship: Using the talents that God has bestowed upon us and to fulfill the words of Paul in First Corinthians 14:26; NOTE THE SLIDE: “When you meet together, one will sing, another will teach, another will tell some special revelation God has given, one will speak in tongues, and another will interpret what is said. But everything [Everyone say EVERYTHING] [EVERYTHING] that is done must “strengthen all of you.”

Slide 7:

And “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until WHEN - UNTIL WE ALL GET TIRED OF DOING THIS? NO;
UNTIL WE ALL CAN BREAK PAR AT THE GOLF COURSE? NO; UNTIL JESUS RETURNS? NOOOOOOOO! Now watch this: Until “we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.” – Ephesians 4:11-13 (NLT)

This does not happen necessarily when Jesus comes! It is a long systematic process whereby we are changed into the Likeness – a Copy [if you will] of our Lord and Savior – Jesus!

Note: Next Bullet on Personal Responsibility

• Personal Responsibility  [Go to Slide 8:] We must be personally responsible and to be personally responsible we must have a heart that is WILLING, LISTENING, AND OBEDIENT!

• For discipleship to be effective we have to have disciples who want to be instructed and a place for them to receive the instruction they need. In other words, **both you as an individual and the church as a whole have the responsibility to see that you grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ.**

This is a shared venture; You have to want it….. Remember what the word Discipleship means - I AM A DISCIPLE; I AM DISCIPLINED!

Many had Disciples in Jesus DAY….. That was the WAY OF THE OLD WORLD! The Bible tells us there were many Disciples:

The Pharisees had their own disciples and they too claimed to be disciples of Moses (John 9:28-29).

John the Baptist also had disciples who lived with him and followed him, practiced his ascetic lifestyle, and promoted (to some extent) his teachings (Mark 2:18; Luke 11:1; John 3:25; Acts 19:1-7).
In fact, the cultural pattern of that day was as follows: A boy became thirteen years of age; At that time no more formal education as such would take place - He was done. We do not want our children to hear this as they will tell us, “Hey, I am done.” IF the boy wanted further training in preparing to be a judge, a teacher, a scribe, or a head of a synagogue, he might continue his study of the Torah in a small group or seek to study as a disciple under a certain scholar. The Apostle Paul was such an example of a Jewish boy who had left home (i.e., Tarsus) to study the Law under Gamaliel, a famous Rabbi in Jerusalem (Acts 5:34; 22:3).

So when we speak of Discipleship this was what Jesus was talking about; IMITATE ME; INTERNALIZE MY VALUES; BECOME MORE LIKE ME UNTIL YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND SEE – ME LOOKING BACK AT YOU! Discipleship is a call to follow Jesus but it is also a Summons to follow Him - (No easy matter) – where at times, He demands exclusive, complete, and unflinching obedience to Himself.

Look at Slide 10; Here it shows how Plato, a Greek scholar, who had Disciples, acted; He [PLATO] stressed freedom of the student from the teacher; The student followed the teacher and learned separate from the teacher those things the teacher wanted him to know. Next we have the Jewish Religious Leaders; They focused more on the Torah and steered their disciples away from themselves.

JESUS, however, was unique: He pointed people to HIMSELF (and still does) and calls people to a Radical Commitment to himself. Jesus’ call to discipleship is a call to Christlikeness.

Was Jesus radical? Look at the things He states here in the Scriptures; [Luke 14:25] “Now large crowds were accompanying Jesus, and turning to them he said,” [14:26] “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my
“Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.” [14:27]

“For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn’t sit down first and Compute the Cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?”

And [14:33] “In the same way therefore not one of you can be my disciple if he does not renounce all his own possessions.”

SLIDE 12:

Let’s make this a bit more personal and look at our own Fil-Am Mission Statement; This comes straight from our Website at Fil-Am.

Our Purpose: TO MAKE DISCIPLES AND TURN THEM INTO FULLY DEVOTED FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST.

How will we do this?

We will bring the lost to Jesus and attain membership in His family of believers;

[CONNECT]

We will Develop them to Christlike maturity; [GROW]

We will Equip them for ministry in the church and life mission in the world;

[SERVE]

So; We will Bring the lost to Jesus thru Connection; Develop people thru Spiritual Growth; and Equip people for ministry in Church/Life Mission by allowing them to Serve.

So Brother Barry; What else is this Church that Instructs? What else does it provide me?

I am glad you asked that question: It provides you a ……. [SLIDE 13]

• A PLACE TO GROW

This church has to be the kind of place where you know that you can come and experience the type of growth that you need whether you are a brand new believer or have been a Christian for years. We want to help you fulfill the following verse in your daily lives:
“Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.” – [Colossians 2:7] (NLT)

There are three specific areas of growth that we offer.

- **IN KNOWLEDGE**

It is impossible to live out my belief system - if I do not have a good grasp on just what it is that I believe. The more that I know about God, the more I love God, and the more dedicated to God I become. When I am talking about knowledge here, I’m talking about learning the facts that have to do with God and the Bible. It is being able to answer questions like, “Who is God? What is He like? Where did the Bible come from? Who wrote the books of the Bible? Who is Jesus? Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? What is Heaven and Hell? How can I be in a right relationship with God? What is the function of the Church?” And many, many, more questions that are foundational to our understanding.

Our job as a church that instructs is to make sure these facts are being taught, from the pulpit, in Sunday School, in small groups, and through other outlets/classes. In other words, it is the church leadership’s job to make sure you have the opportunity to learn; it is your individual responsibility to make sure you take advantage of the opportunities that are offered.

So if you come to me and say, “This church just isn’t feeding me,” and I were to ask you, “Are you involved in Sunday School? Do you take notes during the sermon? Are you listening to what is being said and are you studying the Bible on your own?” If you can answer “Yes, I’m doing all those things” then it is the
church’s problem, but, if you answer “No, I’m not doing those things” it is your problem.

[SLIDE 14] By increasing knowledge in things of GOD it Leads to a change of character where we become more like God, and in turn become CLOSER TO GOD!

• IN CHARACTER

My favorite subject: Knowledge by itself can actually be more of a problem than it is a help. Many of you know people who may know a great many facts about the Bible, but they have not allowed that knowledge to get into their hearts and change their character.

Fil-Am wants to help you grow in such a way that you take the knowledge we give you and apply it to your everyday life. What we want to do is show you that what God has to say is relevant, and that if you follow His direction you will grow in character as well as knowledge.

THIS IS A BUILDING BLOCK APPROACH -

“For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” – 2 Peter 1:5-8 (ESV)
As you can see from this verse it is describing what? A building block process.... You take it one day at a time and build continually until your Character elicits the virtues of FAITH; KNOWLEDGE; SELF-CONTROL; STEADFASTNESS; GODLINESS; BROTHERLY AFFECTION; and LOVE!

The GOAL is to help you become a productive person; one that knows Jesus Christ and is becoming like Jesus Christ. This happens when you take what you have learned and ask YOURSELF the question, “What do I need to change in my life as a result of what I’ve learned?”

If you're like me, you'll find many things that need changing, and with each change that we make we find ourselves becoming more like Christ.

The third area of growth we offer is; [SLIDE 15]

- IN RELATIONSHIP

By increasing our knowledge in the things of God – and properly applying this to our lives, it will allow us to become more like God. The more we become like God in the way we think, the way we feel, and the way we act and react to life’s circumstances, the closer to God we become.

And that is what ALL THIS IS ABOUT - WHILE YOU ARE HERE ON THIS EARTH – THAT IS YOUR AND MY LIFE MISSION STATEMENT OR VISION –IF YOU WILL – TO BECOME MORE LIKE GOD AND HIS SON JESUS.

LOOK AT WHAT THE PSALMIST SAYS:

- “And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.” – Psalm 9:10 (ESV)
“I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.” – Psalm 16:8 (ESV)

Now where does the Psalmist find this type of confidence in His relationship with God? He finds it in the same place THAT YOU WILL FIND IT IF – You go on a journey to learn more about God; Living more like God; and; spending more time with God. Fil-Am wants to help you grow in your relationship with God.

[SLIDE 16]
How then can you know that the beliefs of your church are correct, what God intended them to be?

What is the answer? In a world where there is so much confusion and difference of opinion, can we know for sure? The answer is yes, a resounding yes! We have a way, a sure and absolute way and that way is the Bible: God's Word. The problem is not that we cannot know what is correct. The problem is: some have declined to accept the Bible as the absolute authority, ignored what the New Testament teaches, and others have confused what it says because they did not, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

Let me give you an example: You do not find the practice of infant baptism mentioned in the Bible. Yet, Catholics and many Protestant denominations practice infant baptism. Why? In their past some of their church leaders established it based on their misunderstanding of Bible passages such as Acts 16:33. In Acts 16:33, the verse says the jailer (who had received Christ) was baptized, "he and all his, straightway." They concluded this would mean adults and children alike or all his
household including children. But the verse does not say infants were baptized. In fact, we do not even know if the jailer had children. Do we find other places in the Bible that says infants were baptized? The answer is no, as there is no reference in the Bible of infants being baptized. So is it correct to practice infant baptism based on assumptions that are not supported by Scripture?

[SLIDE 17]
In order for a church to call itself a church in the true Biblical sense it must base its faith and practice solely on God's Word the Bible. No mortal man founded the New Testament church; it was Christ who instituted the church.

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I [Jesus pointing to HIMSELF!] will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18)

Christ says He built the church and Ephesians 5:25 clearly states that Jesus died for the local church, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

Here are 3 ways you can give back to the church that will help you tremendously in your spiritual walk.

[SLIDE 18]
1) SERVICE

- “Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.” – Ephesians 4:12 (NLT)

Somewhere along the way many churches forgot this passage of Scripture. They taught that the leaders of the church were put into place to do all the
work of the church, but nothing could be further from the truth. The leaders of the church are put in place to equip the members of the church to do the work of the church.

We need to stop Beating the Leaders of the Church and demanding things from them.... Let’s get everyone in the “Game” and train people to “Give of their talents to promote the church mission of training Disciples.”

When you are equipped to serve and you begin to serve in whatever capacity, you are the one that will receive the blessing for it. There is at least one area of service for each and every one of us. We need each of us doing our part to fulfill the task that God has set before us.

And if you will note on the Slide, this is a Precious Revelation; YOU WILL RECEIVE THE BLESSING WHEN YOU SERVE TO THE BEST OF YOUR CAPACITY!

[SLIDE 19]

2) SACRIFICE
Sacrificing – Specifically financial sacrifice - is a “Bad Word” these days; What it means is obeying the model set before us and giving unto God a token - 10% - of what He has given you. And, He even states that you can TRY ME IN THIS AND SEE IF I DO NOT BLESS YOU FOR TAKING THIS STEP OF FAITH IN TITHING.

I can tell you unequivocally that God has blessed me for faithful giving and will testify freely that God has many Blessings that He will pass out to you if you
simply trust Him in your giving and tithe. You really **CANNOT AFFORD NOT TO GIVE!**

“Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.”
– Malachi 3:10 (ESV)

[SLIDE 20]

3) **SUPPORT**

*For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.* – Galatians 5:13 (ESV)

Our church is a place where we support each other – if I fall, I don't need you to hold me down, I need you to lift me up. **This is a place where we encourage, bring healing, and love to each other.** This is a place where you can be prayed for, cared about, and know that we are all pulling for you in both good times and bad. This is something we can all give to one another.

[SLIDE 21]

**Conclusion:**
Summary: Today many of the fundamental areas of instruction are being forgotten by many churches. Often there is an emphasis on one of the areas I’ve mentioned today but, the other areas are neglected. Many Churches do not seek others to do their part in coming alongside the leadership and taking part in instruction, using their talents, and giving to God their best in those things with which he has blessed them. Having been in many different churches teaching, singing, and preaching across the country, I can unequivocally tell you Fil-Am is not that kind of church. Fil-Am is excellent in allowing the members to use their talents to perform God’s work and grow within the church body.

So, we will close now in prayer and then I will ask the Prayer Team/Life Coaches to come forward and position themselves on the sides. I offer this as an opportunity to each of you where you can choose to go to whatever person you desire, to receive from them their comfort, their prayer for your needs. Now, as I have mentioned before, some of you may need to come for salvation; Others may simply need to rededicate your lives to God; Others may have a need for emotional healing, financial needs, or you may want to stand in the gap for a loved one who is hurt or struggling; Whatever the need, the altar is open for you to come and receive prayer. LET US PRAY: