



DENNIS ALLEN

CEO, AUTHOR, SPEAKER

WASHINGTON, DC

Dennis Allen has served as a Chief Executive Officer in national and international enterprises across the electronics, software, building materials, environmental services and oil & gas industries. He has been a member of, and served in leadership roles in mega, mid-sized and startup churches as an elder, deacon, teacher, board member and speaker, with an emphasis on strategy and planning. A combat-rated US Air Force F-15 fighter pilot, mission commander and instructor pilot prior to his business career, he has a B.S. in Industrial Management from the University of Alabama, an MBA from Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH, and is an alumnus of the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics in Oxford, United Kingdom.

CREDENTIALS

- Alumnus - the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics, Oxford, UK
- MBA, Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH
- Six-time turnaround CEO - Private Equity Backed Middle Market Industrials & Pharma Companies
- Elder, Teacher, Speaker in in Asia, Alabama, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia as a member of mega, mid-sized and small churches over 30 years
- United States Air Force F-15 Fighter Pilot, Mission Commander and Instructor Pilot

ONLINE

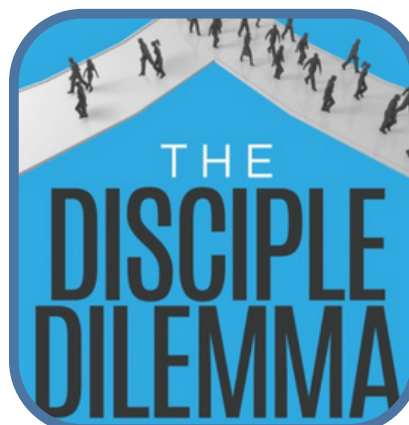
- [Website](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Rumble](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Facebook](#)

AVAILABILITY

- Widely available, M - F and at select times Sat, Sun.
- On Eastern time (Washington, DC)
- Avail via Skype, Zoom, phone and to travel upon request

MEDIA:

Top: Dennis introduces the Disciple Dilemma on the 'Follower of One' podcast. Click to watch/listen. **Bottom:** Click to listen to an episode of Dennis' podcast, 'The Disciple Dilemma'.



PODCAST



How does modern Christianity stack up against biblical discipleship? There are some big gaps. Click to listen.

THE DISCIPLE DILEMMA

RETHINKING AND REFORMING HOW THE CHURCH DOES DISCIPLESHIP

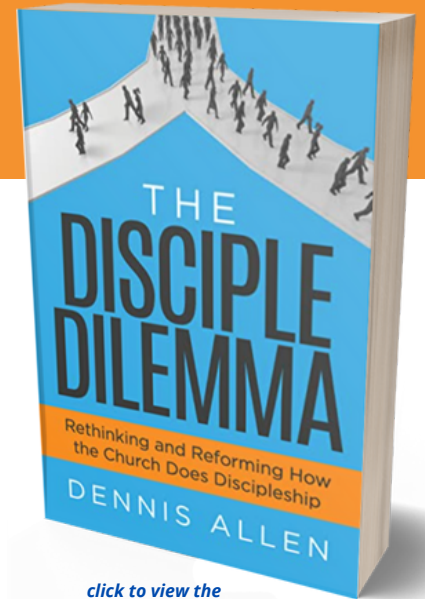
Why is discipleship on the decline? The Disciple Dilemma explains how people have been derailed from biblical discipleship for centuries, and likewise, derailed the development of making more disciples. Unless leaders understand the dilemma and act, the replication of passive disciples will grind on, producing spectators and disillusioned Nones and Dones.

What it is:

- An attempt to return to Christ's one-on-few model, deep relationships, personal life together, through the culture of Christian community, rather than systems of mass-production.
- A compelling leadership case that leaders must reform contemporary Christian culture from mass-gathered, member-based systems into relational one-on-few, intentional relationships. Sermons, mission trips and membership are all nice, helpful even, but not the model Christ gave us for discipleship.

What it is NOT:

- This is not a book about discipleship. It's a book about the things that cripple discipleship and what must be done by leadership first, in order to restore Christ's model.



[click to view the book and read reviews](#)

BY THE NUMBERS

- 60% of Protestants do not believe Jesus Christ is the exclusive way to God
- 80% of church attending Protestants have no spiritual development outside of worship service
- 65% of Protestants believe their discipleship is 'going well'
- 59% of Protestant adults born after 1975 will leave the church and not return
- >80% of Christians are on mute publicly about who they are and what they believe
- Over 90% have no confidence/willingness to talk about their faith

WHO IS IT FOR?

- Pastors of course, but lay leaders of all stripes, from small group leaders to Sunday School teachers to Elders, Deacons, Trustees, Committee leaders. And especially mature believers in Christ, who are to be out there inviting, living alongside, coaching discipleship.

SEGMENT/ → STORY IDEAS

WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

Because modern discipleship has been hacked. Research by the credible study houses tell us we're losing over 50% of the Millennial and Gen Z Christians who grew up in the church. More than three-quarters of church-attending protestants have no spiritual life at all outside an occasional sermon. More than 90% of believers today say they are either unwilling or simply unable to talk about who they are in Christ with anyone outside their church.

How is this book unique? There are thousands of great books about how to be a better disciple and how to run groups and manage a process of discipling. But there are really few or even no books at all for Christian leaders that lay out how modern local Christian communities have lost the biblical mission and culture Christ bequeathed us to develop biblical disciples. And interestingly, this biblical process drives passion, purpose and capability just as Christ intended.

KEY MESSAGES

- **What have we done?** Western Christianity has attempted to 'upgrade' Jesus' model of discipleship by implementing programs that mass produce fragile, brittle, mute disciples.
- **Why?** Key reasons are discussed in the book. Among them: **Persecution.** Persecution has caused us to 'downgrade' discipleship into an optional activity, as believers sought to avoid persecution/hardship. **Popularity.** We moved from making disciples to making 'members'. **Power. Clericalism. Herd community mentality.** Gathering a large number of people and calling them 'disciples'. **Distraction.** Leaders forgetting their mission.
- **What has it all wrought?** It has created a mass exodus (the 'Nones' and the 'Dones') from the church, a mass 'muting' (not willing to talk about my faith outside of the church) and a majority of inert believers.
- **What is the answer?** Discipleship 1.0. Return to the original mission of the church as Christ intended, where pastors and leadership build a culture that serves that mission.
- **What will happen if we don't?** We'll continue the cycle of creating fragile disciples, resulting in timid believers, an exodus from the church and an alienated culture.

- Discipleship 'then' vs. discipleship 'now' ... Discipleship 1.0 vs. Discipleship 2.0 ... newer isn't always better. How discipleship has been hacked
- What six church 'traditions' have derailed how we do discipleship?
- How are businesses and the church similarly failing and why do those parallels exist?
- Millennials are walking away from the church. What has discipleship had to do with that?
- What is 'concierge Christianity' and why is it a huge problem?
- Why 'mass production discipleship' doesn't work and never will

WANT TO INTERVIEW DENNIS? JASON@JONESLITERARY.COM / 512.720.2996

Q & A



Does the book determine for readers how to solve the discipleship dilemma?

The answer is a definitive "It depends." If someone wants a recipe or three step fix, this is not going to be a satisfying read. On the other hand, if the premise in the book makes sense, the journey to begin a culture change suggested in the book will likely seem quite practical – in many ways not unlike strategic planning (counting the cost before you go all in). But it is not an overnight thing. TDD's timeline and process is more like growing an oak tree, not so much like a microwave dinner.

Where does conversionism end and discipleship begin?

Well, we have to be sure we understand each other when we use terms like conversion and discipling. Some people, like John Piper, use the term conversion to mean the whole nine yards - regeneration, sanctification, vigorous continual pursuit. Piper speaks of that deeper meaning, his definition of conversion being very comprehensive. But that's the exception. Most people think about conversion as the endgame. Getting saved. Then it's done, back to the regular stuff. If that's the meaning, conversion is spiritual orphaning. And it often takes up all the air in the room in a church discussion about Christianity – that we're all supposed to be evangelists, which Biblically we are not, and that we're all to go to foreign lands as missionaries and save people, which is romantic, but not Biblical and that saving people is what you do. But the concept of simply getting people saved is far afield from Christ's discipling. You can even see examples of that kind of shallow discipleship across not only the modern age, but in the New Testament when John the Baptist's followers had no idea what they were doing as believers until the Apostle Paul confronted them, to show them the fuller way of disciples (Acts 18 & 19).

Are you saying that churches do a poor job of making disciples?

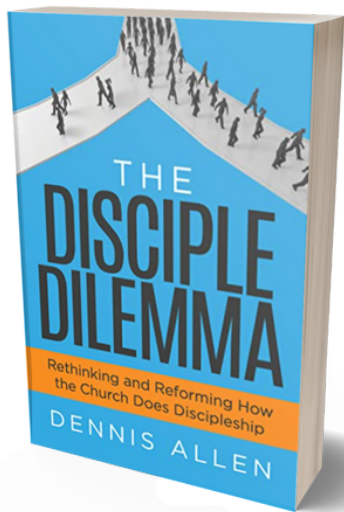
What the data tells me is the same kinds of trends we see in the corporate world – hiring (making disciples) gets a lot of attention, a lot of capital investment, a lot of professional staffing to work on recruiting people. Developing and sustaining new people does not get much investment – take a look at statistics in both corporate and church environments. People usually come to work to meet needs - they want compensation or status or gratification or community. People often come to Christianity because of needs too – whether life trauma, or seeking something larger than themselves or for its community. I am suggesting these institutions, commercial and Christian usually have high investment costs in attracting and recruiting, but very little relational connectivity with these new people to anchor commitment and development – in a word, discipleship. Education, yes, lots of new member and new employee training, yes. But life-on-life discipleship (or employee relational development) is rare.

What can I expect when I open up the book?

Well, the book is organized into three sections: defining the dilemma from a leadership perspective, unearthing causes and effects and a leadership path forward. The book begins by describing the decline of Western discipleship. Not universally, but demonstrably in decline. The first half of the book argues that the decline in discipleship is the result of old and now-beloved traditions (reactionary, or ill-conceived or malevolent practices) emerging in the Second and Third Centuries that wrecked discipleship. The second half of the book looks at the Biblical model to flourishing and strong discipling, and how a leadership team might approach that kind of discipling culture. So the objective of the book is to totally demoralize pastors by invoking shame and blame about their screwups. Oh, wait a minute, that's not it. The purpose of the book is to ask how leaders (pastors as well as lay leaders) should think about the culture of our churches based on the purposive directive of Christ. The purpose of the book is to suggest that until we get our "community" culture set right to Christ, untangled from these traditions, discipleship will continue to entropy – to burn out. And the back end of the book is a journey starter if the front end of the book makes sense. It used to be that societies were scornful of Christianity's contrast against the rest of humanity. But something happened among the believers. So much so that the scoffing today is much more about the conformity of Christ's people to the rest of the world than differences.

FOR MORE INFO AND/OR AVAILABILITY, CONTACT: [JASON@JONESLITERARY.COM](mailto:jason@jonesliterary.com)

ENDORSEMENTS



***The Disciple Dilemma* makes the audacious claim that since the second century, the Christian community has been attempting to clone, instead of reproduce, disciples. What's the problem with that? Just as biological embryo cloning is fraught with high failure rates and subtle, life-threatening risks, discipleship cloning—which is another way to say mass-producing disciples—is not Jesus' way and a low-yield endeavor. Bluntly, it is not working well for the disciples, nor Jesus' church. Leaders, ranging from Pastors to teachers to personal disciplers, need to read **The Disciple Dilemma**!**

Dr. Tim Bertram
CEO, inRegen

*"I'm known for books, lectures and debates focusing on Intelligent Design, and its antithesis - naturalistic Darwinism. So it caught my eye that **The Disciple Dilemma** claims discipleship is being diverted away from its Designer's intent, devolving downward, into a morass of spiritual entropy. Could this be true? Dennis Allen argues that Christianity's altered discipling DNA brings in an ominous dilemma. Get ready for a few jolts as Allen shows us how the historical Church, corporate America and today's Christian culture struggle with the discipleship mandate. You might find yourself laughing, recoiling or pushing back as you read **The Disciple Dilemma**, but I am quite sure it will change the way you think about your role in the quest to recover Christ's discipling for us all."*

Professor Tom Woodward
Executive Director of the C.S. Lewis Society
Trinity College Florida

"With candid insight that is as unapologetic as it is refreshing, Allen locates the Western church in a place of spiritual anemia and exposes the ancient path of fast-held traditions that brought us here. Allen doesn't pave an easy road of sanitized solutions or cookie-cutter fixes, but instead calls us to seek out the wilder, messier, costlier road that Christ Himself journeyed on His mission to make disciples. As a leader in ministry and business, I encourage Christians to take the iconoclastic challenges found in these pages seriously... and then summon the audacity to do something about it."

Kara Kennedy, entrepreneur, author, Christian apologist
Executive Director, ClearTrust LLC
Board Member, C. S. Lewis Society and Securities Transfer Association

"One of the greatest challenges for me serving as a senior executive has always been people. Specifically, finding, recruiting, motivating and retaining great people to do what they are called to do. As a leader in the Christian community, you're facing that same problem, serving and coaching your people in discipleship. Allen takes us on a challenging walk through Biblical, corporate and church history to show us the divergence of Western discipling from Christ's way of doing things. If you are a leader in Christian community, and I am not only speaking to Pastors, the responsibility is on you to get discipleship with your people fully aligned with Christ's ways. This book is a strategic and Biblical workout that Christian leadership needs to consider with all our hearts, minds and strength."

Dave Engelhardt
Former President ThyssenKrupp Elevator

*"My life work for Christ is dedicated to missions and developing people to serve in missions. Christ's building block for that mission is the disciple. Whether taking the Gospel to the nations or next door, Christ expects his people to surrender, follow and serve him as his disciples. Biblically, the development of disciples depends on leaders that can and will promote Christ's way in the making and flourishing of his followers. **The Disciple Dilemma** makes the point that over the centuries, discipleship has been compromised by some traditions in the Christian community that function on power, size, comfort and corporate tactics to foster Church relevance and influence. Some of it for very understandable reasons. Most of it at the expense of disciples. This is a book for leaders in the Christian community – of all types, whether pastors, small group leaders or individual mentors. Fasten your seat belt. It will pique and provoke you, and it may even persuade you."*

Professor Tom Harvey
Academic Dean of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, UK;
Author of *Acquainted With Grief: Wang Mingdao's Stand for the Persecuted Church in China*

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