

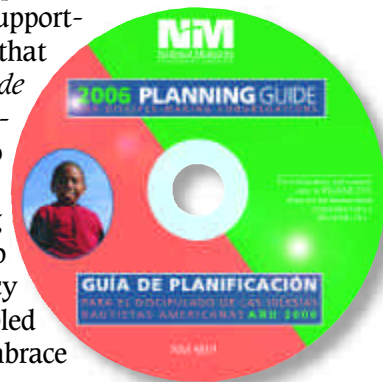
## Being Disciples and Making Disciples

Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus Christ patiently nurtured a rough-hewn group of followers, forming them into mature disciples of the Living God who themselves would become teachers of the Word, preparing others to grow in the truth of God's grace. The Great Commission that sent forth the first disciples was intended to challenge every succeeding generation to personal growth and service.

National Ministries, American Baptist Churches USA is committed to helping believers grow in Christ-likeness so that they might both glorify God and lead others to "live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them." (2 Cor. 5:15).

Discipleship is a process ignited and fueled by transformation—from "who we were before Jesus Christ to who we are to become in our relationship with Jesus Christ," says the Rev. Chuck Armstrong, National Ministries' associate executive director for Strategic Relationships.

As a resource for helping grow disciples, National Ministries is proactively reaching and supporting our churches and their leaders in that vital ministry. The annual *Planning Guide for Disciple-Making Congregations* in CD-ROM format is provided free of charge to all American Baptist congregations. Through its intergenerational teaching tips, suggested themes for small group studies, and education and advocacy resources, the *Planning Guide* has enabled many church families to visualize and embrace discipleship opportunities.



National Ministries also supports hands-on discipleship training, and has partnered with regions and churches to sponsor events that offer the sharing of expertise and experience. A recent such gathering, *Equipping Disciples for the 21st Century*, held at First Baptist Church of Muncie, Ind. earlier this year, involved leaders from five regions and 22 churches in three days of creative dialogue and learning.

Other resources, as well as information about networking opportunities and speakers/leaders, are available from National Ministries' Discipleship and Education Ministries and Judson Press. Call 800-ABC-3USA, ext. 2432.

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2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-15

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