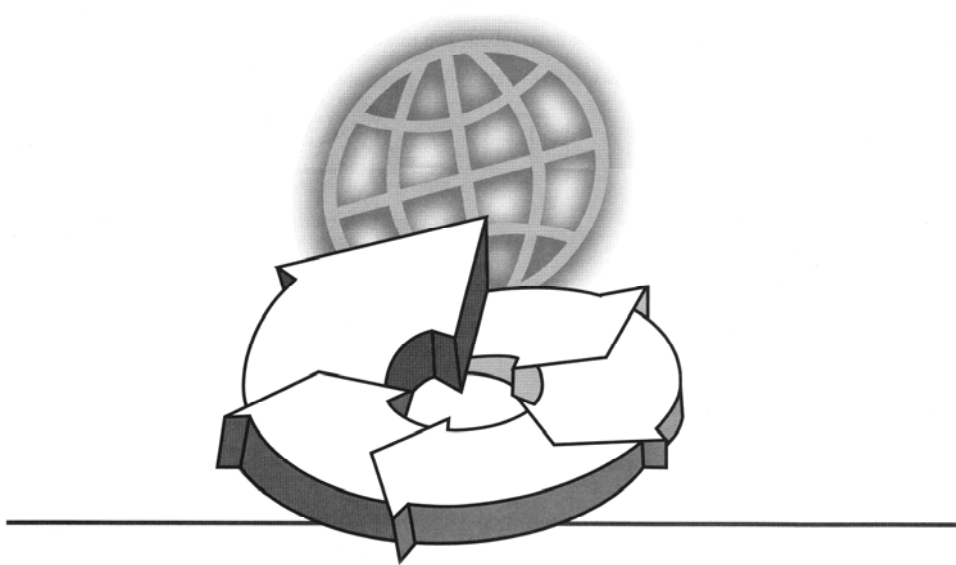


Manual Five

Omega Course



Practical Church Planter Training

**Omega Course:
Practical Church Planter Training
Manual Five**

Original printed version published by
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MANUAL FIVE

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PREFACE

THE PURPOSE OF THIS MATERIAL

Church planters are often recruited and sent out with little or no training for the task that is before them. Church leaders who are overwhelmed with ministry difficulties often lack a clear vision of what God desires to accomplish through them. Both church planters and church leaders need training and vision, but Bible schools and seminaries are not realistic options for many.

This material is designed to provide not only vision for the church planter and church leader, but also the biblical foundation and practical ministry skills in order to see that vision become reality. It is not an educational "program." Rather, it provides necessary biblical and educational foundations, as well as practical ministry skills, which are required for church planting. Although the *Omega Course* was designed for Central/Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, we've been encouraged by reports that it is already being found useful when adapted for use in other contexts.

This curriculum has been designed to accomplish two goals:

1. To provide the necessary training for churches to be planted.
2. To encourage mobilization in the whole Body of Christ toward a church planting movement.

Today we see church planting movements taking place in many countries throughout the world, including Brazil, Romania, the Philippines, Nigeria, and others. We believe that the local church is God's primary instrument for world evangelization, and that church planting based upon multiplication principles is the most effective means of working towards the completion of the Great Commission. New churches must be planted with a vision for multiplication and the ability to plant other new churches. When this happens, there is potential for a movement of churches which is able to sweep across a nation and transform the lives of people throughout the land.

A church planting movement needs people involved in all levels of the church planting task, from young believers who are excited about their new faith, to leaders of denominations. Church planters by themselves can never be the catalysts for a church planting movement. This material is applicable and has much benefit for all levels of church workers and church leaders who can directly and indirectly support the efforts of church planters as they strive to fulfill the ministry to which God has called them.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This manual is one of five manuals, each of which contains approximately 26 one-hour lessons. In order to accomplish the goals stated above, the curriculum covers a wide range of subjects that are necessary for the church planting task. These include SCP vision, cell group ministry, discipleship, Church, evangelism, inductive Bible study, leadership, prayer, spiritual character and more.

The curriculum was divided into five manuals in order to provide an ever-expanding approach to the learning process. As each participant completes a manual, he or she spends time before the next manual putting into practice the principles that have been learned. Therefore many of the later sessions build upon principles and skills which have been learned and practiced in earlier lessons.

In other words, the curriculum has been designed to be learned and used in parallel with the actual planting of churches. As the participant actively works towards starting a new church, he or she will need certain skills and knowledge, and will encounter various problems along the way. The skills and knowledge needed at the beginning of the church plant are provided in the first manuals, while the activities and principles needed at a later stage in a church plant are presented in the later manuals. Each manual has been designed to provide skills, answer questions, and discuss potential problems that relate to the corresponding phase of church planting in which the participant is actively working. After this Preface you will find a list of key development activities or "thresholds" that trainees are prepared for and expected to apply between training seminars.

The lessons are grouped by subject, and each of the five manuals includes lessons from some subjects. Some of the themes, such as "vision" and "church" are included in all five of the manuals. Others, such as "discipleship" occur later in the curriculum, when the participant is at the point in his or her ministry when these themes are necessary. A curriculum overview containing a list of the lesson titles for each of the five manuals is included later in this section.

USING THE MATERIAL

Advice for the Participant

Much time, prayer and effort has been put into the preparation of all five of the manuals in this curriculum. Each manual is designed to address specific ministry skills and knowledge that are required during the process of starting a new church. Therefore it is highly recommended that you begin with the first manual, and not with one of the later manuals. In the same respect, each lesson has been carefully chosen and crafted to be useful, applicable and indispensable for the church planting task. It is to your benefit not to skip lessons.

Be aware that real learning takes place when you apply the concepts presented in these lessons to your personal life and ministry. Most lessons include an action plan at the end. These action plans are designed to help you apply the ideas in the lesson and should be completed before you begin working with the next manual. It can be extremely helpful to have a mentor to encourage and advise you as you apply yourself to church planting. A mentor can also serve your need for accountability as you apply the concepts being learned to your life and ministry. Having someone to come alongside you is not only effective pedagogy, but many church planters testify to the help this provides in their life and ministry. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to prayerfully seek some form of mentoring to enhance and strengthen your church planting ministry.

Advice for the Trainer

This material can be used in a variety of settings such as a Bible school, seminary or a church-based seminar. However this is not primarily educational material. It is training material. Education focuses on knowledge and information. The intent of the material is not merely to impart knowledge, but to motivate toward action employing biblically sound ministry skills. This manual is for 'doers.'

Although the method you choose to teach the lessons for each manual will depend on your particular context, each manual can be taught in a weeklong seminar. From this ideal, many training locations have successfully used other arrangements that fit better with the flow of life and existing ministries. They have sometimes opted for two intensive weekends or regular weekly sessions. It is recommended that the action plans at the end of each lesson be emphasized so that they are completed before the next seminar. Four to six months is a reasonable time to expect between seminars. The advantage of this type of training method is that it combines principles learned in the seminar with hands-on practice between seminars.

During seminars it is not necessary to teach every point of every lesson since participants can read the material on their own. Sometimes having trainees read the lesson and interact on how it relates to their own experience is a good method. At other times, a lecture from someone who is an expert in the subject being covered may be the best way to impart the concepts. But **DO NOT DWELL ON THE LECTURE APPROACH**. Be creative as you try various methods to convey the principles and skills contained in the lessons. Other trainers have found variations such as discussion groups, workshops and role playing to be helpful and interesting.

You have a sacred trust. The Lord of the Church wishes to disciple the nations, and leaders are needed. You have the awesome potential of helping to equip many who could foster church planting movements and to facilitate others in ministries of church multiplication.

Further help

Do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance to you in spreading the vision of saturation church planting or practically equipping church planters.

Jay Weaver, General Editor
Budapest, Hungary, January 2000
omega_course@alliancescp.org

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

This curriculum has been prepared by *The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting* in cooperation with Project 250 of Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries. *The Alliance* is a partnership of churches and mission agencies committed to mobilizing believers to saturate each country in Central/Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union with evangelical churches. Saturation Church Planting is a strategy that seeks to establish local churches in every town, village and neighborhood so that those who accept Christ will have a local fellowship in which to grow in Christ and be equipped for ministry. *The Alliance* is built on the premise that joining forces will increase effectiveness, reduce duplication, and demonstrate unity within the body of Christ.

WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- The local church is God's primary tool for evangelism and discipleship.
- Partnership with churches and mission organizations is crucial for the multiplication of local churches and the development of saturation church planting movements.
- Training leaders is essential to church planting and church growth.
- The Lausanne Covenant is the statement of faith for *The Alliance*.

WHAT WE DO:

Church Planter Training and Mentoring

The Alliance provides skill-based training in seminar fashion with practical ministry assignments geared towards starting reproducing churches.

Information Gathering

Accurate information leads to good decisions in the church planting task. *The Alliance* can help with training and consultation for your information gathering needs in the areas of church planting and church growth.

Prayer Movement Consulting

A church planting movement starts with vision, which is discovered and refined through seeking God's heart in prayer. *The Alliance* can help you better understand the role of prayer movements in the church planting task, and how you can facilitate a prayer movement in your region.

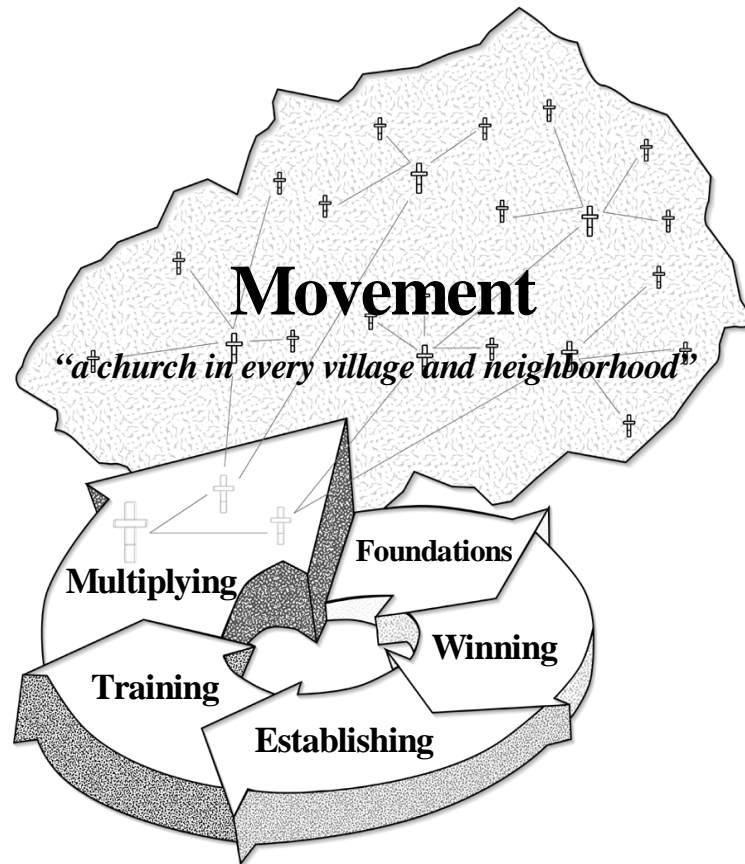
Vision Casting

What does God want for your country? He wants churches everywhere! *The Alliance* can help foster a vision for new churches with conceptual seminars on the principles of saturation church planting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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E-mail: omega_course@alliancescp.org

THE CHURCH PLANTING CYCLE



Church planting is not a randomly connected series of events and activities; it is a goal-driven process. This process requires the coordination of activity, the combination of skills, a commonality of philosophy, and competence in leadership. Development in these critical areas is the goal of church planter training. The "Church Planting Cycle" is a diagram of the church planting process that visualizes, from a particular point of view, the interrelationship of the key principles and practices at work within that process. This represents a kind of 'roadmap' for the church planter, allowing one to always determine from where they've come and where they are headed.

THRESHOLDS

For the *Omega Course* Church Planting Curriculum

Thresholds are concrete ministry activities which have been incorporated into this curriculum. Each threshold can be thought of as an individual stepping stone within the larger process of starting new congregations. The thresholds provide concrete action points which help the trainee to practically apply the concepts contained in the *Omega Course*. They are both milestones that indicate progress, as well as signposts which help give further direction. Following is a list of thresholds and emphases in the *Omega Course*.

MANUAL ONE: Emphasis On SCP Vision, Purpose Of The Church, Inductive Bible Study, and Research

Specific action items:

- Examining the purpose of the Church in light of the Great Commission
- Developing an overall ministry strategy based on "Z-thinking" vision
- Investigating "form and function" in the early Church and in today's Church
- Learning and practicing inductive Bible study
- Writing and sharing a personal testimony
- Initiating prayer support groups for evangelism and church planting
- Completing a comprehensive research project for the target area

MANUAL TWO: Emphasis On Evangelism and Cell Groups

Specific action items:

- Sharing of findings from the research project with others in the target area
- Writing a church purpose statement
- Developing a philosophy of church planting ministry
- Developing a personal evangelism strategy, including one-on-one evangelism
- Beginning cell groups with an emphasis on evangelism
- Using inductive Bible study personally and in the cell groups

MANUAL THREE: Emphasis On Discipleship, Spiritual Warfare, Teams and Teamwork

Specific action items:

- Identifying and training potential leaders for cell groups
- Spending time in prayer and fasting
- Evaluating the worldview of the church planter as compared to the biblical worldview
- Using scriptural truths to withstand spiritual attack in the life and ministry of the church planter
- Creating individual disciple making plans for the people involved in the church planting ministry
- Performing team development and evaluation activities
- Analyzing the spiritual gifts of the church planter and the church planting team

MANUAL FOUR: Emphasis On Leadership and Stewardship

Specific action items:

- Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the church planter's leadership style, with an emphasis on methods of personal interaction with others
- Incorporating principles of servant leadership into the life and ministry of the church planter
- Tracking the use of time in the life and ministry of the church planter, setting priorities, making schedules
- Evaluating the financial giving of the church planter, as well as that of the church plant itself
- Reviewing the biblical roles of a husband and wife and the responsibilities that church planters have to their families
- Leading existing cell groups through the process of multiplication
- Preparing a strategic plan for working towards saturation in the church planting ministry

MANUAL FIVE: Emphasis On Multiplication, Mobilizing Others, and Promoting SCP Movements

Specific action items:

- Initiating ministry cooperation with other evangelical groups in the target area
- Planning and implementing a supervisory structure for cell groups that will promote ongoing growth and multiplication
- Teaching people to pray for saturation church planting; mobilizing prayer at a city, regional, and national levels
- Developing and implementing a plan for the church planter to train and mentor new church planters
- Empowering and releasing new leaders for church planting ministry
- Promoting a vision in new churches for missionary involvement not only in their target area, but also to "the ends of the earth"

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MANUAL ONE OVERVIEW

Addresses primarily the FOUNDATIONS phase of the Church Planting Cycle

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Bible Study Methods (BS)	Evangelism (EV)
<p>Lesson 1: "Z" Thinking</p> <p>Lesson 2: The Great Commission and Church Planting</p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): Church Planting Cycle 3A: <i>Church Planting Models</i></p> <p>Lesson 4 (4A,4B): Principles of Research 4A: <i>Understanding Your Target Area</i> 4B: <i>Sample Questionnaires</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Biblical Foundations for the Church</p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): The Purpose Of The Church 2A: <i>Great Commission Worksheet</i></p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): Form And Function 3A: <i>Form & Function Applied</i></p> <p>Lesson 4: Defining The Local Church</p>	<p>Lesson 1 (1A): Justification by Faith</p> <p>Lesson 2: Living by the Gospel</p> <p>Lesson 3: Christian Growth</p> <p>Lesson 4: The Transforming Power of the Gospel</p> <p>Lesson 5: Keeping a Spiritual Journal</p>	<p>Lesson 1, 2: Concert of Prayer: Praying for Revival</p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): How To Facilitate Prayer 3A: <i>Prayer Triplets</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1 (1A): Intro to the Inductive Bible Study Method 1A: <i>How We Got The Bible</i></p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): Observing God's Word 2A: <i>The Language of the Bible</i></p> <p>Lesson 3: Observation Workshop</p> <p>Lesson 4 (4A): Interpreting God's Word 4A: <i>Bible Charts</i></p> <p>Lesson 5: Interpretation Workshop</p> <p>Lesson 6: Applying God's Word</p> <p>Lesson 7 (7A): Application Workshop 7A: <i>Ephesus - an I.B.S.</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Introduction to Evangelism</p> <p>Lesson 2, 3: Developing Your Personal Testimony</p>
4	4	5	3	7	3

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

Addresses primarily the **WINNING** phase of the Church Planting Cycle

MANUAL TWO Overview

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Bible Study Methods (BS)	Evangelism (EV)
<p>Lesson 5: Biblical Foundations of Saturation Church Planting</p> <p>Lesson 6: Research Workshop</p> <p>Lesson 7: Mobilizing Resources through Research</p>	<p>Lesson 5: The Nature of the Church</p> <p>Lesson 6 (6A): Corporate Functions of the Church</p> <p>6A: <i>Baptism in the New Testament</i></p> <p>Lesson 7: Developing A Church Purpose Statement</p> <p>Lesson 8 (8A): Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry</p> <p>8A: <i>Developing a Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry</i></p>	<p>Lesson 6: Living Like Sons Instead of Orphans</p> <p>Lesson 7 (7A): Learning to be Sons</p> <p>7A: <i>Orphans vs. Sons</i></p>	<p>Lesson 4: Concert of Prayer: Worship and Meditation</p>	<p>Lesson 1 (1A): Biblical Principles of Leadership</p> <p>1A: <i>Leadership Case Studies</i></p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): Profile of a Leader</p> <p>2A: <i>The Leader</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Functions and Benefits of Cell Groups</p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A, 2B): Principles of Cell Group Leadership</p> <p>2A: <i>Cell Grp Ice Breakers</i></p> <p>2B: <i>Sample Activities</i></p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): Starting a Cell Group</p> <p>3A: <i>Planning Worksheet</i></p> <p>Lesson 4 (4A): Cell Group Evangelism</p> <p>4A: <i>About "Oikos"</i></p> <p>Lesson 5: Cell Group Demonstration</p> <p>Lesson 6: Philosophy of Cell Group Ministry</p>	<p>Lesson 8 (8A): Various Ways to Use Inductive Bible Studies</p> <p>8A: <i>Biographical Study - Barnabas</i></p> <p>Lesson 9 (9A, 9B): Leading Inductive Bible Studies</p> <p>9A: <i>Study of Mt 20:17-28</i></p> <p>9B: <i>Study of Lk 15: 1-7</i></p> <p>Lesson 10,11 (10A): Workshop Leading Inductive Bible Studies</p> <p>10A: <i>Passages for IBS</i></p>	<p>Lesson 4 (4A): Evangelism and Church Planting</p> <p>4A: <i>Evaluating Evang Strategies</i></p> <p>Lesson 5 (5A, 5B): Barriers to effective Evangelism</p> <p>5A: <i>"A Church in Every People"</i></p> <p>5B: <i>Answering Common Objections</i></p> <p>Lesson 6, 7 (6A, 6B, 6C): The Process of Conversion</p> <p>6A: <i>Profile of persons to Evang</i></p> <p>6B: <i>Three Principles</i></p> <p>6C: <i>Examining Jesus' Approach</i></p>
3	4	2	1	2	6	4	4

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

Addresses primarily the **ESTABLISHING** phase of the Church Planting Cycle
MANUAL THREE OVERVIEW

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Evangelism (EV)	Disciple Making (DI)	Spiritual Warfare(SW)
<p>Lesson 8: The First Advance</p> <p>Lesson 9: Elements of Church Planting Movements</p>	<p>Lesson 9, 10: The Church and Spiritual Gifts</p> <p>Lesson 11: Social Dynamics of the Church</p>	<p>Lesson 8,9: The Law and The Gospel</p> <p>Lesson 10 (10A): Repentance as a Way of Life</p> <p>10A: <i>The Sinner's Place</i></p>	<p>Lesson 5: Prayer and Fasting</p> <p>Lesson 6, 7: Concert of Prayer: Praying to Spread the Gospel</p>	<p>Lesson 3: Spheres of Leadership</p> <p>Lesson 4: Introduction to Team Work</p> <p>Lesson 5: Team Development</p>	<p>Lesson 7 (7A): Cell Group Discussion Dynamics</p> <p>7A: <i>Discussion Questions</i></p> <p>Lesson 8: Caring for People in a Cell Group</p> <p>Lesson 9: Training New Cell Group Leaders</p>	<p>Lesson 8: Relational Evangelism</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Introduction to Disciple Making</p> <p>Lesson 2(2A): Your Role in Making Disciples</p> <p>2A: <i>Characteristics of Christian Love</i></p> <p>Lesson 3(3A): Know Your Goal, Know Your People</p> <p>3A: <i>Faith, Hope & Love</i></p> <p>Lesson 4(4A): Helping Disciples Grow Spiritually</p> <p>4A: <i>Spir Grth Need Evaltn</i></p> <p>Lesson 5(5A): Forms for Disciple Making</p> <p>5A: <i>Disciple Making Plan</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Understanding Worldview</p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): Dynamics of Spiritual Warfare</p> <p>2A: <i>Study of Eph. 4:17-5:21</i></p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A, 3B): Spiritual Battles</p> <p>3A: <i>Bible Study</i></p> <p>3B: <i>Case Studies from Around the World</i></p>
2	3	3	3	3	3	1	5	3

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

Addresses primarily the **TRAINING** phase of the Church Planting Cycle

MANUAL FOUR OVERVIEW

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Disciple Making (DI)	Stewardship (ST)	The Family (FA)
<p>Lesson 10 (10A,10B): Strategy Components for a Church Planting Movement <i>10A: Faith and Obedience Vs Fear and Unbelief</i> <i>10B: Things that Promote Natural Growth</i></p> <p>Lesson 11: Signs of a Movement</p> <p>Lesson 12: Shepherding within a Movement</p>	<p>Lesson 12: Dynamics of the Emerging Church</p> <p>Lesson 13: Characteristics of Growing Churches</p> <p>Lesson 14: Church Government And Church Offices</p>	<p>Lesson 11: Love as the Foundation for Ministry</p> <p>Lesson 12: Understanding the Father's Heart</p> <p>Lesson 13: Grace is for the Humble</p>	<p>Lesson 8,9: Concert of Prayer: Praying Biblically</p>	<p>Lesson 6 (6A): Servant Leadership <i>6A: The Leaders Checklist</i></p> <p>Lesson 7: Leadership Dynamics</p> <p>Lesson 8: Styles of Interaction</p> <p>Lesson 9: Leadership Needs</p> <p>Lesson 10 (10A): Training New Leaders <i>10A: Qualities to Encourage in a New Leader</i></p>	<p>Lesson 10: Discussion of Cell Group Questions and Problems</p> <p>Lesson 11: Cell Group Multiplication</p>	<p>Lesson 6: Disciple-making Workshop</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Introduction to Stewardship</p> <p>Lesson 2: Financial Stewardship</p> <p>Lesson 3: Time Management</p> <p>Lesson 4: Strategic Planning Process</p> <p>Lesson 5: Strategic Planning Process Workshop</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Biblical Roles in the Family</p> <p>Lesson 2: Parenting</p>
3	3	3	2	5	2	1	5	2

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

Addresses primarily the **MULTIPLICATION & MOVEMENT** phases of the Church Planting Cycle
MANUAL FIVE OVERVIEW

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Preaching (PR)	The Family (FA)
<p>Lesson 13: Vision and Telescoping</p> <p>Lesson 14: Mobilization</p> <p>Lesson 15: Next Steps</p> <p>Lesson 16: Training As Part Of A Church Planting Movement</p> <p>Lesson 17: Mobilizing Leaders Through National Initiatives</p>	<p>Lesson 15: Church Discipline</p> <p>Lesson 16: Corporate Worship In The Local Church</p> <p>Lesson 17: How To Lead Corporate Worship</p> <p>Lesson 18: The Local Church and the Bigger Body of Christ</p> <p>Lesson 19: The Historical Impact of the Church in _____ (History of the Church in country context)</p>	<p>Lesson 14: Reconciliation Ministry</p> <p>Lesson 15: Moral Integrity of Church Planters</p>	<p>Lesson 10: Facilitating Prayer for a Church Planting Movement</p> <p>Lesson 11, 12: Concert of Prayer: Thanking God for His Faithfulness</p>	<p>Lesson 11: Releasing Leaders</p> <p>Lesson 12: Movement Leadership 12A: <i>Movement Leaders</i></p>	<p>Lesson 12: Cells That Saturate Through Local Churches</p> <p>Lesson 13 (13A): Supervising Cells 13A: <i>Final Step</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Biblical Preaching I: Understanding the Message</p> <p>Lesson 2: Biblical Preaching II: Understanding the Audience</p> <p>Lesson 3: Biblical Preaching III: Understanding Yourself</p>	<p>Lesson 3: Ministry to the Family</p>
5	5	2	3	2	2	3	1

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

TOTAL CURRICULUM HOURS: 127

SCP VISION



Vision And Telescoping

TAKING THE GOSPEL INTO THE WORLD

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to motivate local churches to reach out in local, regional, cross-cultural and worldwide ministry.

☞ Main Points

- Christians must look at the world with a vision for God's harvest.
- Churches should be involved in ministry locally, regionally, cross-culturally and internationally.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand how to have a biblical vision for advancing the Gospel beginning locally and going to the "ends of the earth."
- Know the principle of using telescoping to maximize church resources in world evangelization.
- Participate in implementing a biblical vision locally, regionally, cross-culturally and worldwide.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Have trainees take time to think through and fill out the telescope in Figure 13.3 at the end of this lesson. This will help them to see their "Judea, Samaria and ends of the earth." The Lord might use this lesson to challenge some of the trainees for cross-cultural mission work themselves or to pray for cross-cultural workers to be sent from their emerging churches.

INTRODUCTION

The church must obey the great commission by making disciples *of its own and all the nations*. This specific lesson will work from Acts 1:8 which compels the church to be Jesus' witnesses in Jerusalem (locally), Judea (regionally), Samaria (cross-culturally), and to the ends of the earth (new cultures, languages, and places).

I. DEFINITIONS OF VISION AND TELESCOPING

For local churches to effectively participate in the Great Commission, they need **vision**. Vision is the ability to see beyond what is to what could be. Spiritual vision for reaching the world for Jesus Christ is the ability to see nations, regions, and peoples of the world as places and peoples where the Gospel will advance by means of evangelism and church planting.

A vision is only a nice idea unless it becomes a reality. **Telescoping** is a metaphor which describes the various types of penetration into the world (geographic and cultural) which the church must make in order to fulfill the Great Commission. The church extending and reaching out is like a telescope that extends and increases, bringing objects further and further away into sharper focus. Each type of penetration will require local churches to take concrete steps of sacrifice and commitment to advance the Gospel. Local churches need to be taking the Gospel to people in their communities, nations and overseas.

The church extending out is like a telescope ... bringing objects further and further away into sharper focus.

II. LOOKING WITH A VISION FOR GOD’S HARVEST

Jesus calls the church to have vision for His harvest of men’s souls. Jesus also used the harvest metaphor in Matthew 9:38 commanding his disciples to pray that there will be enough workers for this great harvest. On Pentecost, Israel celebrated the wheat harvest. With the coming of the Holy Spirit on that day, the harvest vision transformed when the church was born. Instead of rejoicing over the wheat harvest, the church proclaimed the glory of God to the nations in their own languages, harvesting men’s souls- three thousand the first day! These people coming to Christ, the new meaning of God’s harvest, made them a part of the new church.

Could we use *church planting* terminology and say Pentecost was the first New Testament Church plant? The church that started on Pentecost has reproduced itself over a million times throughout every inhabited continent on earth! The harvest must still go on however, as several million more churches must be planted. Jim Montgomery, in his book, *DAWN 2000*, says that about seven million more churches need to be planted to reach the whole world. The vision we have is to preach the Gospel, plant churches, and bring people into the church as followers of Jesus Christ. The church obtains vision for God’s harvest by "opening her eyes" and "looking at the fields" of the world. Vision is the beginning of the church’s adventure to fulfill the Great Commission.

...about seven million more churches need to be planted to reach the whole world for Jesus.

III. TELESCOPING FOR GOD’S HARVEST

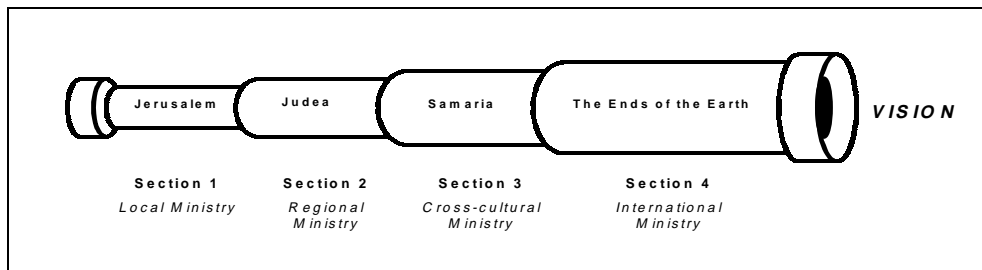
Acts 1:8 describes the progressive growth of the church from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth and even provides an outline for the book of Acts (see Table 13.1).

Table 13.1 Acts 1:8

ACTS 1:8:	"Jerusalem"	"Judea"	"and Samaria"	Ends of the earth
Meaning	the local city	the region	the neighboring region	the world
Outline of Acts	Acts 1-8 (Ac 5:28)	Acts 8-12 (Ac 8:5)		Acts 13-28 (Ro 15:19)
Biblical example	"Thessalonica" 1 Th1:6	"Macedonia" 1 Th1:7	"and Achaia" 1 Th1:7	"everywhere" 1 Th1:8

In the old days of shipping, an able navigator could extend his vision further by using his telescope. As he extended his telescope, far away places that he could remotely see with the naked eye became nearer and clearer to him. Applying this analogy to the fulfillment of the Great Commission, picture a telescope with four extending sections (Figure 13.2). Notice in the figure that each section of the telescope relates to Jesus’ command to his disciples in Acts 1:8: "...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Figure 13.2 Penetrating The World With The Gospel (Telescoping)



A. Section 1: Local Ministry

Opening the telescope to the first section, we can look at the local ministry of the church. The disciples who first heard this command obeyed it locally by filling Jerusalem with teaching about Jesus (Acts 5:28).

As one of the first assignments of this training program, you identified a "target area" where you are now seeking to plant a church (Manual One, Vision Appendix 4A "Understanding Your Target Area"). Your church planting ministry has focused on a village, a town or a neighborhood of a city within that target area. Once your church is established, it will continue to minister to the people of that local geographic area. This is that local church's "Jerusalem."

The nature of your Jerusalem will determine how you reach out to them. Very few cities are homogeneous. Most cities are comprised of people of varied age, education, culture, ethnic background, language, etc. It is unlikely that one single church can respond to the wide range of needs that this situation presents. Also, many cities are so large that travel to and from a central location hinders attendance. Our task is a local church within access of everyone. The presence of one local church in a city seldom means the task is complete. The multiplication of the church to reach others is the best method to complete the task.

The presence of one local church in a city seldom means the task is complete.

Our mandate is clear. We are to reach out to the lost. It is not the responsibility of the lost to come to us. With God's help, a growing local church will begin to pray about the lost in their city that have no witness, and actively be a witness for them.

B. Section 2: Regional Ministry

Opening the telescope further to the second section allows for the church to see beyond its own local context into a wider geographic area. This principle corresponds to being a witness in Judea as described in Acts 1:8. This kind of outreach mobilizes the body of Christ to plant a new church in another nearby geographical area, where the culture and language are likely to be the same as that of the members of the local church. This kind of outreach would result in a "daughter" church of the first one.

In a sense the true 'fruit' of a church is not a new convert, but a new church.

Every church from its beginning should already consider that its purpose is to reproduce. In nature all living things sooner or later plateau, and even die, while their fruit or offspring lives on. The principles are similar in church ministry. In a sense the true 'fruit' of a church is not a new convert, but a new church. The most effective way for a church to have a regional impact is through reproducing itself, planting daughter churches.

Example

In Brazil, over a twenty year period one church filled a geographical area with 200 congregations. A missionary that these churches sent to Albania was teaching on multiplying churches to church planters there and he said, "Our church growth was slow compared to others, but even so, when we plant a new church immediately that new daughter church plans to plant other daughter churches as soon as possible. Our churches know their purpose is to plant new churches from the very beginning." It is this kind of thinking and purpose that can mobilize churches from their beginning to be ministry minded within their own congregation and beyond.

When the church has the desire and the faith to fulfill the vision for telescoping by planting daughter churches it will have to take some necessary steps. It takes a greater commitment and sacrifice among the members of an existing church to plant a daughter church. These steps would include training workers, sending them, raising funds, and most importantly, continuing in prayer toward completing the vision through telescoping.

C. Section 3: Cross-Cultural Ministry

The opening of the telescope to its third section can be compared to witnessing in Samaria. This describes advancing the Gospel cross-culturally. Although the Samaritans were not geographically far from the Jewish believers in Jerusalem and Judea they were a different culture and ethnic group. They had many different customs and traditions as well as their different religious practices. Although Jews were antagonistic to the Samaritans, Jesus loved them both! The early disciples, Philip in particular, in fulfilling the Great Commission took the Gospel to Samaria (Ac 8:4-25).

The church is responsible to reach out cross-culturally to different people groups. We can reach out to nearby ethnic groups for Jesus, even when political and ethnic tensions may exist. This will often require that those whom the church sends out take cross-cultural training, learn the language, and study the people's culture where they will plant the church. It is this extra effort that will often cause the new work to grow and reproduce.

D. Section 4: International Ministry

Opening the telescope to its complete length refers to the ends of the earth mentioned in Acts 1:8. This is extending the ministry of the church to people who are distant geographically, culturally and linguistically. The best early church example of obedience to this command is found in Acts 13 and following when Paul and Barnabas (later others) were sent out to have a cross-cultural and international church planting ministry.

By praying, giving, and sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, a local church completes the entire telescoping process. It has ministry happening at all levels—"Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth."

Our task is not completed until the Gospel has penetrated the whole earth, presenting the message of salvation to every person. It is not "natural" to be concerned for the lost condition of strangers. However, this is God's desire, and our responsibility. As the new group is transformed into a church, it is not finished with its work. Rather, it has just taken the first step in an exciting and rewarding journey for the Lord.

It is important and biblical to pray for people groups (Ro 10:1; 1Ti 2:1-2; Eph 6:19) and churches should be praying from the beginning for the Gospel to advance to "all the nations" (Mt 28:18-20) and for workers for the harvest. Do people in your church have this vision? Are there people praying for the nations?

From this missions vision it is also possible to telescope through financial giving to missions. The Philippian church gave financially to Paul's missionary and church planting outreach (Php 4:17-19). In this way a church can telescope through financial support of missionaries who are working in a faraway place even if they are not from that congregation.

EXAMPLE

Luis Bush (who led a movement in Latin America for churches to send missionaries), and others traveled all of Latin America proclaiming the vision for missions as part of the COMIBAM (the acronym stands for, Ibero American Cooperation in Missions) movement. The cry rang out, "Latin America, from a mission field to a mission force!" At this time, Latin American countries were going through economic hardship and many could not see how it was possible to send missionaries to other countries if they were struggling financially. Luis used the example of Abraham, whose body was good as dead but his faith was alive. It was his faith that brought the promise of a son. In this way he compared the financial powerlessness to Abraham's body saying, "In Latin America, we don't have the money- BUT WE HAVE THE FAITH!" Church after church accepted the missionary call and since COMIBAM in 1987, thousands of missionaries have been sent by churches in Latin America. They have had the faith and God has provided the money!

It is a great and joyful experience when a church sends missionaries to the world from its own and its best. A congregation more deeply owns and identifies with God's love for the nations when sending someone out who is dear to them. Not every church may be able to support a missionary on its own. However, it is possible to partner with other local churches to send out missionaries

from your own congregations. By sending out its own missionaries, the members of the local church are able to feel both the joys and the hardships of advancing the Gospel among an unreached people.

IV. SPIRITUAL POWER AND AUTHORITY

From planting a church in a local target area to planting one at the ends of the earth, the church does so under the authority of Christ and with the power of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus gave the Great Commission to His followers, He began by saying, "All *authority* in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Mt 28:18). He ended by assuring them that, "I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Mt 28:19). Sandwiched in between these promises is the disciples' task—to make disciples of all nations.

Shortly before returning to heaven, Jesus promised His disciples, "But you will receive *power* when the Holy Spirit comes on you" (Ac 1:8). The result of receiving this power was that the disciples would be witnesses of Christ to the ends of the earth. Both the authority and the power of God are given to His children to enable them to make disciples to the very ends of the earth. The rest of the book of Acts shows how the believers went out under this authority in spite of being warned not to do so by earthly authorities. They were determined to obey God rather than man. As they did so, under the power of the Holy Spirit, the word of God spread throughout the whole region.

We can confidentially reach out to our neighbors and beyond, knowing that God will give us all we need to disciple the nations.

As believers, we too have the authority of Christ who lives in us. We have the power of the Holy Spirit. We can confidentially reach out to our neighbors and beyond, knowing that God will give us all we need to disciple the nations.

CONCLUSION

Vision and telescoping are characteristics of an obedient church. Vision looks to the future to fulfill the great task the Lord has given His church to expand the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Telescoping is a picture of the obedient church, obediently penetrating the world. It is a picture of the local church taking concrete steps (praying, giving, going) to reach out both geographically and culturally to see the "glory of the God cover the earth" (Is 11:92:14). A local church does not need to completely reach its neighborhood before it should be praying and working towards planting other churches and sending out missionaries to other parts of the world. This should be happening simultaneously in the life of a local church. In addition, it is important that newly planted daughter congregations, as modeled by the mother church, should also have planted in them a desire to penetrate the world with the Gospel. From one location it is possible for a church to make a significant impact and contribute to a movement that will fulfill the promise of Acts 1:8.

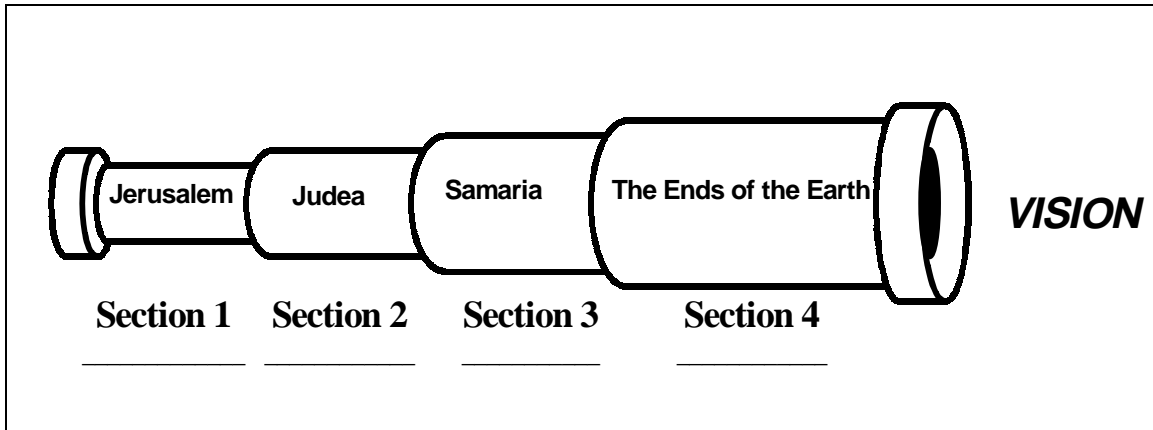
QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are hindrances to vision and how can you overcome them?
- How can you promote vision and telescoping in your new churches?
- Why is one church rarely enough to reach a whole city for Christ?
- How far extended is your own telescope? The telescope of your church?

ACTION PLAN

- Using the telescope shown in Figure 13.2, begin to share vision with your church(es) about reaching out more and more with the Gospel.
- Look at the telescope in Figure 13.3 below. For each section of the telescope, write what is your "Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and ends of the earth." In what sections is your church actively working? If there is a section of the telescope in which your new church is not involved, what can you do to promote this?

Figure 13.3 Telescoping For A Local Church



SOURCES

Montgomery, Jim. *DAWN 2000: 7 Million More Churches To Go*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1989.



Mobilization

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help church planters understand the strategic role of mobilization in a church planting movement.

☛ Main Points

- To "mobilize" simply means to assemble people into readiness to participate where they best contribute in a common cause with a common goal.
- Believers should be mobilized in order to fight at full strength.
- Effective mobilizers are characterized by vision, faith and encouragement, and influence.

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand the importance of mobilization.
- Know the characteristics of effective mobilizers.
- Participate in mobilizing individuals and local churches for church planting.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson may be taught as a discussion. Take time to discuss the definition of mobilization, look at the biblical examples, and discuss how mobilization can be done practically in local churches. Be prepared with stories, ideas, and resources concerning mobilization which can be shared with the trainees.

INTRODUCTION

During a time of war, the sense of urgency and need to survive dominates everything people say and do. Whether people are on the front lines in the heat of the battle or at home, far from the battle, the war affects their interpersonal relationships, their thoughts, and the management of their time and resources. The cry during war is to MOBILIZE! To "mobilize" simply means *to assemble people into readiness to participate where they best contribute in a common cause with a common goal*.

As the church strives to grow, the eternal destiny of millions is at stake. Mobilizers see the expansion of the Church as it truly is—a spiritual war. With military-like zeal they cry out for mobilization. In this lesson we will discuss the importance of mobilization as well as some practical ways in which mobilization can encourage churches to be more effective in fulfilling the Great Commission.

I. WHAT IS MOBILIZATION? MOBILIZATION INCLUDES:

A. Common Vision

Mobilization is impossible without common vision. Why should people work together when they are not trying to accomplish the same things? Without vision, what do people mobilize around?

A common vision provides the focus for mobilization. A common vision can only come from God—only a vision from the Lord can hold people united in the spiritual battle. As has been said

repeatedly throughout this track, prayerfully asking "what does God want?" is perhaps the most helpful way to stir up vision toward mobilization.

B. Training

A common vision does not automatically result in mobilization. People must be trained and equipped for the fulfillment of the vision. Training naturally follows vision. How many people do not evangelize because they have never been trained in how to share their faith? When people have not been trained to serve God as they should, then they are not mobilized. Mobilization can only happen when people have been trained.

C. Resources

How many would like to serve God as missionaries but do not have the financial support? How many others would share Christ with their neighbor if they only had the right tool? When people lack the resources to do what God has called them to do, they are not mobilized. Resources come in many forms. A woman gives her bicycle to a church planter so he can travel to a part of the city that has no Gospel witness. This is resourcing. An international mission agency provides a church planting team with the *Jesus* film, a projector and screen. This is also resourcing.

What resources can you think of that are needed to start and further church planting movement? Take a moment and list some of them now.

D. Strategic Positioning

An army is not mobilized when it has its orders (vision), has been trained and supplied (resourced). Rather, mobilization can only take place when trained personnel are in *position* to carry out orders. When people are mobilized they work in a variety of places in different ways but toward the same goal. If all the churches in region are duplicating one another's efforts and channeling resources and workers toward the evangelization of a particular people group to the exclusion of another, then the churches are poorly mobilized. Research can show where the church is, and is not, putting their efforts revealing the most strategic needs.

II. WHY SHOULD BELIEVERS BE MOBILIZED?

Jesus prayed that His followers would be united (John 17). He designed the Church to work together as a body (1Co 12, Ro 12). God has called the whole church to take the Gospel to the whole world. Therefore, God empowers every believer with spiritual gifts for the purpose of mobilization.

Mobilization then is not simply a nice idea, it is essential. No part of the Body can fight the spiritual war alone. The Church works best when every part is mobilized toward the attainment of the goal. Without this kind of mobilization, the Church fights from a position of weakness without making use of all its members as God intends.

No part of the Body can fight the spiritual war alone. Without mobilization Churches fight from a position of weakness.

The Church is God's agent for mobilization. When the whole body of Christ will consciously mobilize around the cause to witness for Christ, God will accelerate the church toward reaching the goal of making disciples, both in their own nation and also out to other nations! Each part of the body must understand their role and each gift must discover its expression. In this all the members of the body join the cause and pursue the goal.

III. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF MOBILIZERS

A. Nehemiah

Nehemiah mobilized the Jewish people after the exile to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He did this by giving vision, providing resources as well as placing people in strategic positions so they could use their giftedness. Nehemiah's vision and goal to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem came to him as a result of information (research), having heard about the conditions in Jerusalem, and through

prayer (Ne. 1:2-4). He secured resources for the project from King Artaxerxes (Ne. 2:7-9). He wisely had people rebuild the part of the wall nearest to their own homes (Ne. 4:22-23).

The mobilization of the Jewish people in Jerusalem resulted in synergism so that the results were more than the sum of the parts. The wall was completed in 52 days, amazingly fast, instilling fear in those of the surrounding nations (Ne. 6:15-16). When God's people unite and work strategically to accomplish God's plan, God blesses in amazing ways.

B. Barnabas

Barnabas' name was Joseph, but because he used his gift of encouragement so effectively, the apostles called him "Barnabas", meaning "son of encouragement." He was also generous and gave financially to the Lord's work in Jerusalem (Ac 4:36-7). Barnabas had a desire to see the Gospel advance throughout the world. He served the church in Antioch and then worked as a church planter in Cypress and Asia Minor.

Barnabas' greatest contribution to the advance of the Gospel was his mobilization of the apostle Paul into effective ministry. After Paul's conversion on the Damascus road, Paul went to Jerusalem and tried to join the disciples, who, doubting he was a true disciple, were afraid of him. But Barnabas believed in God's transforming power in Paul's life. Risking his own reputation and potentially, the safety of the believers in Jerusalem, Barnabas brought Paul to the apostles. Barnabas explained how the Lord had appeared to Paul and how Paul had preached the Gospel fearlessly in Damascus (Ac 9:26-31). Based on Barnabas' affirmation, Paul was accepted by the apostles.

After the church was established in Antioch, Barnabas, seeing a great opportunity and need for Paul's gifts, went to Tarsus and brought him back to the church at Antioch. Paul became one of the leaders of that church and from there launched his church planting ministry throughout Cypress and Asia Minor (Ac 13:1-3). In all this, Barnabas mobilized Paul so that Paul would do his part in the advance of the Kingdom. Imagine if Barnabas had not taken the role of mobilizer. Many churches may not have been planted, many New Testament epistles may not have been written. Do you know a Paul who needs to be encouraged and mobilized?

C. Paul

Clearly the apostle Paul had a great commitment to the mobilization of the Church. Paul mobilized many of the churches in Macedonia, and Achaia to give to the Jerusalem Church during her time of need (Ro 15:25-27). In his epistles, Paul often taught on spiritual gifts (Ro 12, 1Co 12, Eph 4) and made the churches aware of the potential they themselves possessed to do what God wants (1Co 1:4-9, Ro 15:14).

Paul mobilized many others in pursuing God's call on him. Paul trained Timothy, challenged him to boldly exercise his spiritual gift and instructed him to mobilize still others (2Ti 2:2). Timothy, is by no means, the only one to have been mobilized by Paul. The last missionary journey of Paul seems to have been a training/discipleship/ mobilization trip during which we read of seven people traveling with Paul, most of them learning from him (Ac 20:4). In his epistles, Paul mentions Epaphras, Demas, Archippus, Titus, Phoebe and many others. In Romans 16, Paul greets 27 people, many of whom he had influenced or some way facilitated in ministry, giving more evidence for the vast network of people Paul had mobilized in his travels.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE MOBILIZERS

Mobilization does not happen by accident. It takes people who are especially good at mobilizing others. These people, mobilizers, create conditions so that the church will naturally accept the vision, pray for it to happen, train and release leaders and workers to carry out the task. They have the following characteristics:

A. Vision

Mobilizers have a vision for the world. They help others who may find it difficult to look beyond the local visible needs, to encourage them to believe that God has bigger plans than they could ever conceive. Some regions are not mobilized because the local churches lack vision. In such a situation, once God's vision is proclaimed it can be a rally cry, or a call to action leading to mobilization.

B. Faith and Encouragement

Mobilizers are people of faith. Faith means looking past present reality to what God can and wants to do. If faith moves mountains, can it not also wake up the body of Christ to join the cause of Acts 1:8 and pursue the goal of Matthew 28:18-20? Faith believes Jesus when He said that He would build His church. A person of faith will have a passion for the church.

A mobilizer's faith affects the way in which he or she treats others. Like Barnabas, the "son of encouragement", many mobilizers have the gift of encouragement. They are able to see through setbacks and discouragements and focus on positive things. Mobilizers help Christians to realize that they are special because they belong to God, that God has gifted them for ministry to others, and they can, by God's grace and through His power make a difference in the world.

C. Influence

Mobilizers are people of influence and they invest this influence to see God's purposes advanced. People listen and respond to them because they have credibility—they have a good reputation in the church, a servant's heart, and ministry experience. Many mobilizers are people oriented and have the unique ability to remember names, faces and the abilities of people they have met only briefly. They are then able to link people to resources and opportunities that can help to advance God's Kingdom.

Mobilizers are people of influence and they invest this influence to see God's purposes advanced.

V. EXAMPLES OF MOBILIZATION

A local church is mobilized when the people in that church catch a vision for evangelizing the lost and then act on that vision. Mobilization aims at people's hearts—helping them to see the world through God's eyes. Most mobilization happens at a grass-roots level, among the members of a congregation.

Below are some simple ideas for mobilizing members of local congregations to help them catch a vision for reaching the world with the Gospel. These are not exhaustive, but rather, are listed to encourage your thinking. You will likely come up with other ideas of your own.

A. Corporate Prayer

One of the most important ways in which to mobilize people for world evangelization is to have them pray together. Maps and research data can encourage specific prayer for unreached peoples and areas in your own nation and around the world. As people begin to pray and learn about the lost, they will want to become involved in reaching lost people. As mentioned in other lessons, prayer walking and concerts of prayer can also be invaluable tools for allowing God's spirit to touch people's hearts and give them a burden for the lost.

Example

Each week at a prayer group meeting, one person would share a small report about a particular country or people group and they would spend time praying for the Gospel to penetrate the hearts and minds of that particular people. They would pray for missionaries to be sent to these unreached people and for churches to be planted among them. This prayer group also prayed that the Lord would send out from the members of their church a church planting team to work among an unreached people group. As they prayed for different unreached people groups, the Lord gave this group a special burden for the Kazak people of Central Asia. Within a two-year time period,

three members of that prayer group became missionaries to the Kazaks. The members of the congregation then adopted the Kazak people as a special focus of outreach and began to send short-term teams of medical workers, construction workers, children's workers, musicians and business people to Kazakhstan. Eventually, the church sent a long-term church planting team to work in western Kazakhstan. The original prayer group has dissolved and a larger group of people now meets monthly to pray for the Kazak people.

B. Children's/Youth Programs/Sunday School

If we want our children to have a heart for the world and to be involved in God's Kingdom work, we need to give them opportunities and experiences of that while they are children. Children are an important element of mobilizing churches for world evangelization. They are often links into unsaved families. Children who grow up strongly committed to the Lord are often used by Him in significant ways as adults.

Music, drama, visiting missionaries, role play, and community service can all be used to teach children about the world and God's love for and desire to reach lost people. Mobilizers and church leaders should send their Sunday school teachers and children's workers to conferences and seminars where they can get resources and training for teaching children about world evangelization. Often, adopting a missionary family to pray for, corresponding with them, and raising money for special projects can help children be involved in world evangelization as well as get a glimpse into missionary life.

One of the best ways to give youth a heart for the world is to get them involved in practical ministry. Church leaders can provide opportunities for them to get involved in community service, such as working at an orphanage, helping the elderly, the disabled, local refugees, or other types of community service. These opportunities give young people a chance to look beyond their own needs and concerns and to develop a heart for other people. Youth teams can potentially help church planting teams through music, drama and just spending time sharing the Gospel with unsaved youth in an area where your church is trying to plant a daughter church. Youth meeting to pray for their schools and unsaved classmates is also an effective means for helping them to see that God can use them as His ambassadors at school.

Example

An example of this happened in 1992. A drama team of youth from Holland came to Hungary to help a short term evangelism team who were helping a Baptist church with evangelism. On the evangelism team were two students from the Reformed teachers college who caught the vision of starting their own drama team. They recruited seven others and started performing in the area churches. Through their ministry several people were saved and joined the group. In the next three years, 20 were trained and participated in the drama group. All of those 20 are now active members in local churches and five are involved in full-time mission work.

C. Mobilizing Adults

In 1722 the Moravian Brethren, on the verge of extinction due to severe persecution, found freedom to worship and grow on the property of a German Count named Nicolaus Zinzendorf. On the foundation of an agreement emphasizing unity, prayer, the necessity of acceptance and forgiveness among believers and the priority of evangelism, God's Spirit energized the group in 1727 into the first missionary movement of modern times. By 1800 this movement had sent almost 1000 missionaries to every continent of the world forming new congregations everywhere they went. It was their example that infused William Carey in 1791 with his vision to carry the message of the Gospel to the Far East, launching the mighty movement of missions in the nineteenth century.

Remember that to mobilize means *to assemble and prepare people into readiness to participate where they can best contribute in a common cause with a common goal*. Adults must be convinced of the importance of world evangelization (the common goal) and they must see how they fit into that picture. Mobilization needs to happen through biblical teaching on the nature and purpose of the church, the Great Commission, and the role of the believer in world evangelization. In addition,

biographies of missionaries and stories of the advance of the Gospel in the world can motivate and inspire people to participate in evangelism and church planting.

Finally, giving people hands-on opportunities to participate in evangelism and church planting activities can help them to find their place in God's harvest.

Example

One local church helped Cambodian refugees find homes, furniture, and work. When the Cambodians asked to repay the kindness, the church said, "come to our services." The Cambodians came, but there was a problem—not knowing the language, they politely sat in the pews, understanding nothing. In response to this problem, the church arranged simultaneous translation so that the Cambodians could participate in the service. Vietnamese, Chinese, and Spanish speakers also asked for and received translation. When deaf people attended services the church arranged for sign language translation. Through interaction with peoples of various cultures, the members of the congregation gained a heart for the world. Today, this church has sent over twenty families to the mission fields of the world and contributes substantially to their financial support!

CONCLUSION

Mobilization is a spiritual work. Effective mobilizers have vision, faith, influence. They are encouragers who help people realize their God-given potential. They desire to see God's glory fill the earth. They advance the cause of Christ in the world and not their own agendas.

A church planting movement will not succeed without effective mobilization. It helps to focus and release existing resources to the task of world evangelization—the establishing of new churches among unreached peoples within a nation and also out to other nations. When the body of Christ is not mobilized—it cannot fight at full strength.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Why is mobilization important?
- Do you practice your spiritual gifts with enthusiasm as Barnabas did?
- Do you know someone who wants to serve the Lord that can be mobilized?
- Do you know someone who could be an effective mobilizer?
- What are some specific ways in which you can help mobilize the people in your church for evangelism and church planting?
- Which qualities of a mobilizer do you best fulfill? Which is the most difficult for you?
- How can you help your church mobilize to advance the Gospel, reproducing by planting new churches?

ACTION PLAN

- Begin serving God in your spiritual giftedness toward advancing the Gospel.
- Ask God to put someone in your heart who wants to serve the Lord and begin to befriend and mobilize them.
- List three steps you can take toward mobilizing your church for evangelism and church planting.

SCP VISION

LESSON **15**

Next Steps

PLANTING MORE CHURCHES

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the church planter think through the decisions concerning future ministry that face himself, the church planting team and the newly planted church.

☞ Main Points

- When a church has been planted the leaders should rethink their role in the church planting movement
- Newly formed churches should understand their role in the church planting movement.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand the options for future ministry for himself, the church planting team, and the newly planted church.
- Work with the church planting team to move into the next steps of ministry.
- Participate in helping the newly planted church realize its responsibility to send out church planters to plant daughter churches.
- Consider involvement to facilitate others toward a church planting movement in his city or region.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson is best taught as a discussion session. Share from your own experience how you handed ministry over in a church plant. Allow trainees to ask questions and share concerns which they are facing in their own ministry situations.

INTRODUCTION

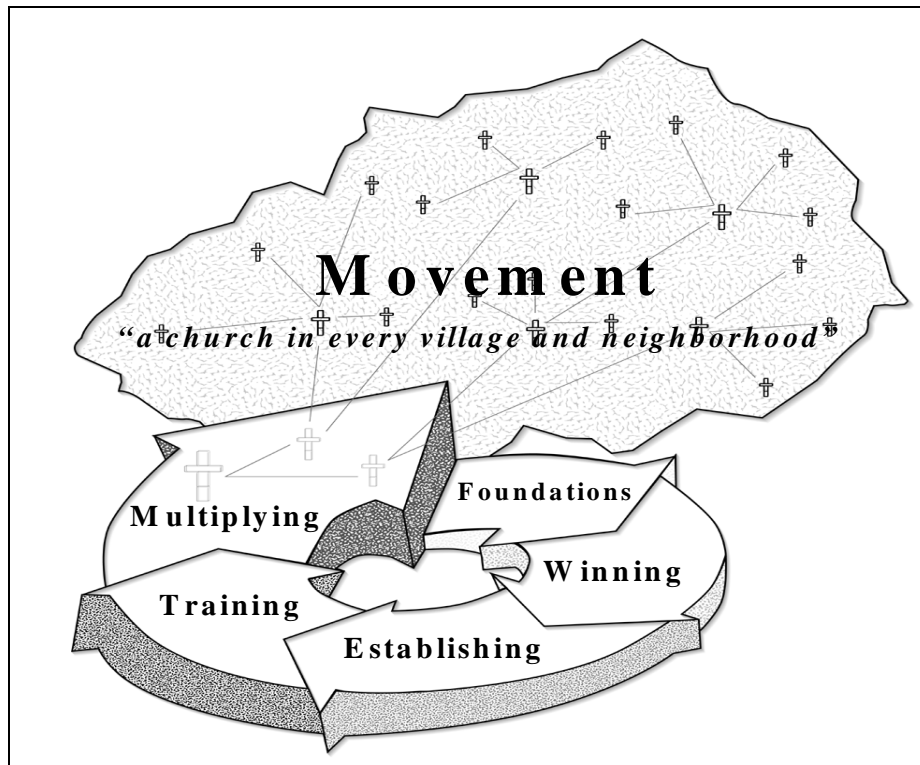
You have now come to the end of church planter training. Perhaps by now a church has been or will soon be established. This means an important goal has been achieved. However, this is only one step in the process. The goal of the Great Commission is not the planting of *one church*, but rather the *multiplication of churches* throughout the world, with each of them making disciples who are wholly obedient to the Lord.

This lesson discusses both the role of the newly planted church in a church planting movement and also ministry options which the church planting team needs to consider as part of the next step of ministry in working towards a church planting movement within that team's city or region.

I. THE CHURCH PLANTING CYCLE

The Church Planting Cycle (Figure 15.1) demonstrates the progressive nature of our task. When an individual believes in Christ, he or she is expected to win others to the Lord. As a church is planted, it is also expected to begin planting other new churches. The task will not be finished until all are reached.

Figure 15.1 The Church Planting Cycle



II. THE ROLE OF THE NEW CHURCH: MULTIPLICATION—PLANTING DAUGHTER CHURCHES

As a church reaches its initial goal of establishment, it has some serious decisions to make. The first concerns how the new church will reach out and begin *one or more other churches*. Hopefully, through your work, the newly planted church is a "pregnant" one—ready to work toward planting other churches. As we understand God's purpose, the vision should be for a movement of Church planting extending to geographic areas and/or entire people group(s).

The newly planted church has a role to play in helping to fulfill the Great Commission in its local community, nearby unreached communities, and in other parts of the world (see SCP Vision Lesson 13, "Vision And Telescoping"). This requires the leadership of the newly planted church to prepare the congregation for church planting, raise up and send out church planters and missionaries from its own membership, and to work with other local churches to help them to fulfill their God-given mandate of evangelizing the lost.

A. Keep The Vision Alive

The vision that inspired the newly planted church may die with it once the new church has been planted if people become satisfied. But re-asking that question "What does God want to do among this people group or in this region?" can rekindle desire for more churches. We know that God wants all to hear the Gospel. Churches who know their call are committed to planting churches among entire regions, nations, and people groups.

When you look beyond the local church you see the larger picture. Paul's vision to reach the province of Asia was geographic (Acts 19:10). You can also have vision for reaching a people or ethnic group. In Galatians 2:7-8, we see that Peter worked with the Jews and Paul the Gentiles. In Romans 11:13 Paul boldly declares, "I am an apostle to the Gentiles." What area has God called you to reach? What people groups living in that area must be reached with the Gospel?

The leadership of the church needs to constantly keep before the people the purpose of the church, and the role and responsibility of that church in fulfilling the Great Commission. As the leadership

of the church equips believers for the work of ministry they will grow spiritually and practically, developing ministry skills and vision. This should lead to ministries of outreach among the unevangelized.

The Gospel will have a greater impact, in the long run, when the whole body moves forward together. Some people catch a vision more quickly than others. Those with vision need to keep encouraging others to move ahead. Those who move slower can add stability to the movement. As they understand the importance of church planting in seeing the Great Commission fulfilled, these "process thinkers" can help make sure that every step forward is a serious and sound one. It takes both kinds of people working together in order for a church to continue reaching out into new areas with the Gospel.

Work with your congregation to think through the responsibility of your church in the world. Define your Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and ends of the earth (see SCP Vision Lesson 13, "Vision And Telescoping"). Encourage members of the congregation to learn about different parts of the world, the need for evangelism and church planting, and the work of missionaries. If you have a Sunday school, encourage the teachers to incorporate lessons about the world and missionary life as part of the curriculum.

B. Send Out Church Planting Teams

The church planting model you use to plant other churches will determine how you will train workers, fund projects, recruit outside help, etc. The SCP Vision appendix 3A, "Church Planting Models" in Manual One summarizes several ways in which your congregation can plant other churches.

If you have been using the cell group model, then planting daughter churches is quite simple. As cell groups multiply, they can send out a strong new group which can, under the guidance of the leadership, transition to a new church which reaches people in a different target area. Some churches maintain about 15 active cell groups and whenever five new cell groups develop they send them off under the cell group leadership (including the zone leader) as a new church.

The following recommendations can help with most any model:

1. Pray for and look for those whom God is calling to church planting.

Prayer is one of the most powerful tools God will use to stir up vision among His people for ministry to the world. A new church should pray for world evangelization and specifically that God would raise up laborers for the harvest for church planting work.

The Church is God's primary instrument for world evangelization and church planting is a task which belongs to the whole church. Therefore, we can expect that God will want to set apart members from our own congregations for the work of church planting just as in the early church (Acts 13:1-3). Look for people in your church who sense that God wants them to be involved in church planting. The apostle Paul often spoke about his calling (Ro 1:1, 1Co 1:1, 2Co 1:1, Gal 1:1,15-16). This awareness of "being called" by God keeps a person serving when there are no objective reasons to continue or when the feelings say, "I quit!"

This "call" to ministry includes:

- a growing vision for ministry;
- a testing of one's character, vision and ministry;
- affirmation by one's local church, one's elders, one's ministry team, and other church planters;
- the empowering of the Holy Spirit for putting the calling into effect (1Ti 4:15, Eph 3:7, Col 1:28-29).

In addition to the above qualities, look for a willingness to sacrifice for the sake of the Gospel. Church planting is work on the front lines of the battle for the Kingdom of God. Most of the original apostles died as martyrs for the faith. Church planters will make sacrifices. This does not always mean dying a martyr's death, being shipwrecked or imprisoned, but it could mean

being misunderstood, giving up personal comforts, etc. The apostle Paul spoke about the willingness to relinquish personal rights in order to reach people for Jesus (1Co 9).

2. *Determine where to send out the church planting team.*

Pray and seek the Lord's guidance as to where you should send out church planters and church planting teams. Research both the geographic area and the people groups living in the target area. (See SCP Vision Lesson 4, "Principles Of Research" in Manual One.) Use your research results to determine the training needs of the members of the church planting team, mobilizing the congregation for prayer, financial support, and for developing evangelism and church planting strategies for that target area.

3. *Mobilize the resources of the church for involvement in church planting.*

Planting churches happens best when the resources of the church are mobilized for that cause. These resources include the people who will be on the church planting team, finances to support the church planting team, materials, and transportation necessary for the church planting ministry, and short-term helpers. Get as many people active in the actual church plant as possible, even for short time periods. Members of the congregation can serve the church planting team by prayer walks, music, evangelistic activities, and social ministries. This will not only help carry the burden of the church planting team, but will help to increase the vision for church planting and reaching the lost among the members of the sending church.

4. *Train, care for and mentor the church planting team.*

Determine the training needs of the church planting team. Do they need church planter training, cross-cultural training, or vocational training? Most of the required training can be gotten informally, but some formal training may also be required depending on the needs of the people in the target area. Once the team has been fielded, it is important that they have regular visits by someone in church leadership with pastoral gifts. This will help to keep the church and church planting team stay accountable to each other. This will provide the team with spiritual and practical help in working through interpersonal issues and concerns which will arise as the team serves and works together. In addition to pastoral care, it is important that the church planting team have a mentor or several mentors who can help the team work through the different phases of the church planting process.

III. THE ROLE OF THE ORIGINAL CHURCH PLANTING TEAM: STARTING OVER—PLANTING NEW CHURCHES

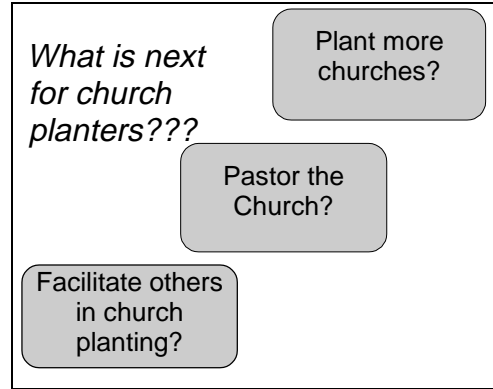
Should a church planter continue to work as an "apostolic" or "pioneer" church planter by moving on to start another church, or should he stay and pastor the new church? The answer will depend partly on his gifts. Is he called to be a pastor or an apostolic/pioneer church planter? Pastoral ministry occupies itself chiefly with the work and people of one local church. Apostolic/pioneer church planters are front line evangelists who move from place to place and may establish several churches during their life time. This decision concerning future ministry also depends on his sense of the Lord's will for him. This is determined through prayer.

Consider the following possibilities:

A. The Church Planting Team Moves On

The church planter(s) turns the church leadership over to others and then returns to the sending church or moves on to plant a church in another location.

When church planters have apostolic gifts they will want to plant more churches. They should be encouraged to do so if the Lord wills. Pioneer church planters, as spiritual parents, share in the responsibility for the spiritual lives of those who are part of the new church and therefore should take departure very seriously. To start the church and leave it prematurely is like a parent abandoning a young infant. The apostle Paul had an on-going relationship with the churches he had planted—writing letters, and giving advice when problems arose. He also initially appointed the elders who led those newly planted churches ensuring that there was ongoing care of the church. This must be one of the considerations when deciding the next ministry step for the team.



The significant question in this option is, "To whom will the leadership of the church be given?" Church planters must prepare the church for the future leadership. Leadership may be found right in the new congregation. It is wise for the newly established church to develop and recruit leadership from those who have had some part in the church's life from the beginning. Or, if a pastor or leader is chosen from outside the church, he should have good pastoral gifts, as well as the same kind of vision and faith that you have instilled in the church.

People do not shift allegiance easily or quickly. There should be bonding between the appointed church leadership and the people. It is good to have a gradual plan to walk the new leadership into a close relationship rather than cause an abrupt change which may be like throwing them into ice cold water.

B. The Church Planting Team Remains To Pastor The New Church Plant

The church planter(s) stays in the new church and becomes the pastor of the new church.

The primary consideration here is, "Does the church planter have pastoral gifts?" If a pioneer type of leader stays on as pastor not having pastoral gifts, the members of the church may fail to receive the nourishment and nurture that they need.

In any case once a shepherd is found the pioneer leader might stay on in the church to organize, train and lead new church planting teams to go out from the church. If the new pioneer leader is also able to ably pastor the new church as well, great opportunities exist to advance the Gospel through further church planting. This kind of pastor will usually not only pastor the new church but will develop other church planters and a church planting ministry from within the new church.

C. The Church Planting Team Becomes A Facilitation Team

The church planter(s) facilitate others for church planting in the region.

Facilitation means helping people see their role in filling towns, cities and nations with churches, and showing them that *they can do it* as God shows them how. Facilitating others is a necessary strategy for advancing the Gospel in an entire region. This includes giving vision for church planting and then training, equipping and mobilizing those who are envisioned. A facilitation team is a group of people who work together to give people a vision of what God wants to do through them and then to help those envisioned in the fulfillment of that vision.

Facilitation means helping people see their role in filling towns, cities and nations with churches, and showing them that *they can do it* as God shows them how.

1. Promote the Vision

The role of a facilitation team is to continuously share the vision of

"What Does God Want for this region, city, nation or people group?" Promoting the vision (or vision casting) includes preaching and teaching on the purpose of the Church, the role of leadership in the church, and the nature of the Great Commission task. Churches and believers need to constantly be reminded about God's priorities, desires and passion to reconcile lost people to Himself. As people respond to this vision, the facilitation team then needs to be able to help them to act on that vision.

2. *Begin Organized Prayer Efforts*

Prayer links our efforts to God's efforts. Church planting is spiritual work and requires spiritual labor. As people respond to the vision of seeing their nation, region or city filled with churches, the facilitation team can begin to call these people together to pray for the fulfillment of this vision. This may be two or three individuals or a group within the church, people from different churches who have the same vision or whole churches praying together. The goal is to have an ever-enlarging circle of people praying for church planting.

3. *Train and Mentor People for Church Planting Ministry*

One of the best ways to facilitate church planting among other churches is for the newly planted church to become a training center for the region. By hosting training, the church leadership has the opportunity to influence others toward a church planting movement. (See SCP Vision lesson 16, "Training as Part of a Church Planting Movement.") The church planters being trained are sent out by the churches and denominations from which they come.

4. *Develop Church Planting Partnerships*

Often, local churches feel they do not have the resources to fully train and support church planters themselves. But they still have a responsibility and need to participate in the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The facilitation team can help churches to form partnerships and together support and send out missionaries and church planter to work among a particular people group or in a particular region. This allows for especially smaller churches to participate more fully in the Great Commission than they might be able to on their own.

CONCLUSION

As the newly planted church is established, it must understand its role in a church planting movement. It should have a desire to reproduce itself through the training and sending out of church planters from its midst, through prayer for world evangelization. The church planting team has to make decisions concerning its future role and the transition of leadership in the newly planted church. The growth and multiplication of the new church and the teams involvement in a church planting movement are important considerations in the church planting team deciding their next steps of ministry.

Facilitation is a key means for helping to encourage church planting movements. A facilitation team is a group of people who work together to give people a vision of what God wants to do through them and then to help those envisioned in the fulfillment of that vision. Its role is to cast vision, resource, train and encourage believers in every way to become involved in a church planting movement. Facilitation is necessary for region-wide or nationwide church planting movements to occur.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What role in the church planting task should you now assume?
- Does the church you are planting have a vision for a daughter church? If not, what steps will you take to pass on that vision?
- Describe the differences between an apostolic/pioneer church planter and a pastor in terms of calling and giftedness.
- What sacrifices will you have to make to see churches multiplied?

- How can you help facilitate others in either your sending church or in the new church to be church planters?

ACTION PLAN

- With your church planting team and mentor, pray and consider what should be your next step in ministry.
- Identify one or two potential church planters in your newly planted church. Spend time talking with them about their vision and mentoring them in preparation for church planting work as part of a church planting team.



Training As Part of a Church Planting Movement

PASSING IT ON

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to give trainees practical ideas and guidelines on how to continue to train additional church planters as part of fueling a church planting movement.

☛ Main Points

- Training As Part Of A Movement
- The Process of Training Church Planters
- Additional Types Of Training

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand how to get started in training church planters.
- Know the principle of training toward a movement.
- Participate in giving vision to, training, and multiplying a church planting movement.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

Share a case study of how this church planter training site or other church planter training sites were established in this country or a similar context. Highlight the various activities of this lesson (prayer, sharing vision, talking with leaders, etc.) and how they worked out in the establishment of the site in the case study.

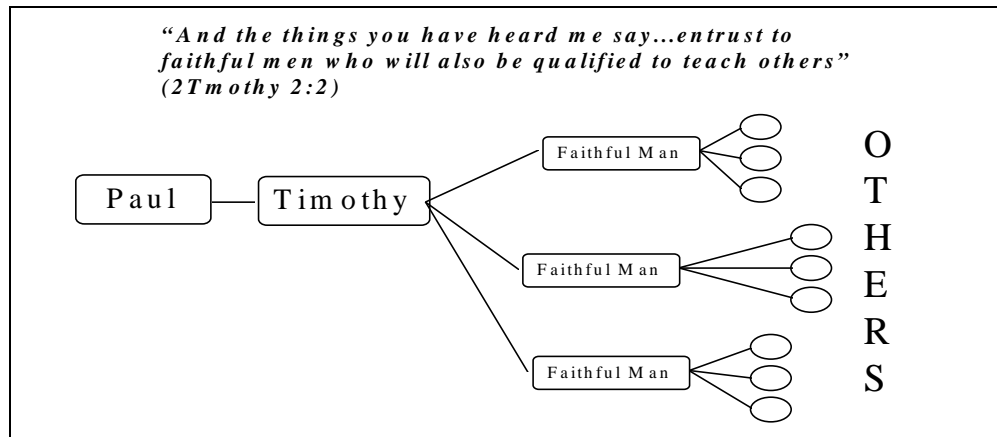
Ask God to give you the faith to believe that this training can reproduce itself.

I. TRAINING AS PART OF A MOVEMENT

For saturation church planting to happen new churches have to be planted everywhere! Someone must plant those churches, and therefore there must be enough church planters to do this task.

According to 2 Timothy 2:2 what Paul taught Timothy was not only for Timothy, but for him to pass on to others. Timothy was responsible to find and teach faithful men. These faithful men were responsible to find and teach others. Paul, Timothy, faithful men, others...four generations of teaching! (See Figure 16.1). This is how multiplication takes place.

Figure 16.1 Training As Part Of A Movement



This means that it is not only important to train all believers, but that each one of them should then begin to train and disciple someone themselves. This training seems to be more in the context of personal relationships rather than a formal institution.

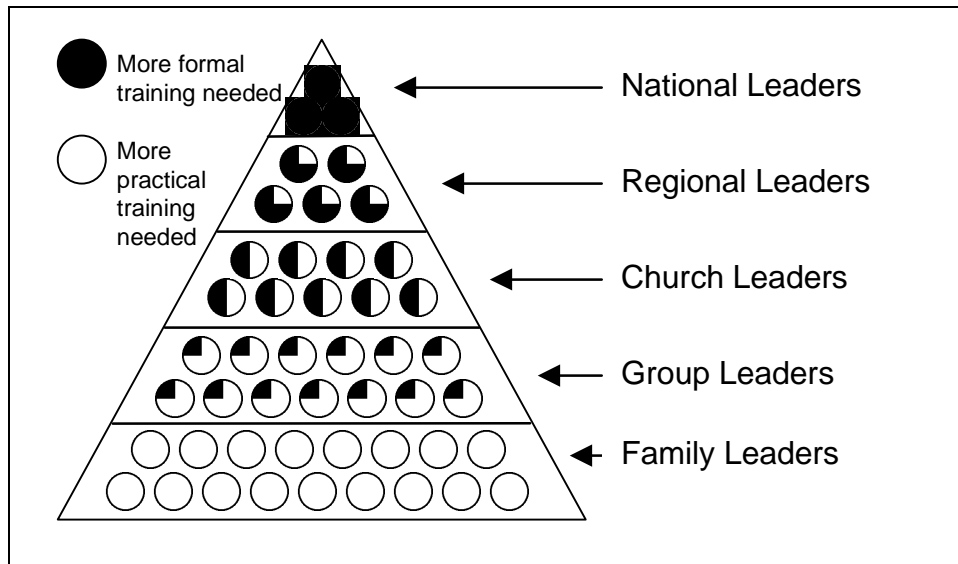
Similarly, in order for a church planting movement to develop and continue into succeeding generations, church planters must continuously be training others. Just as the apostles became leaders and teachers of others, some church planters will also need to train others—able to train and mentor other church planters.

How do you know if you should be involved in training church planters?

- Has God used you in touching people's lives?
- Is one or more of the subjects in the training interesting to you?
- Do you want others to learn what you have learned in your training?
- Are you completely convinced that God wants new churches to spring up?
- Are you willing to try with the Lord by your side?

While formal theological education has an important role in the Church, it is not for everyone. However, the process of a more mature believer training a less mature one *is* a process for everyone. The amount of formal training needed for every level of leadership rises, even as the number of leaders decreases. Figure 16.2 shows this relationship. The Church needs many family leaders, but these need little formal or theological education. Rather, they need helpful practical training that they can use right away in their family relationships. The family leadership role is informal but very real. This leadership influence is strong, even by youth (1Ti 4:12). National church leaders at the other extreme, however, should have a considerable amount of formal training in the areas of theology, ministry, administration, finance, etc. Fortunately, fewer national church leaders are required so that the Church is not excessively burdened with their training.

Figure 16.2 Training for Church Leaders



It becomes increasingly difficult to provide training as we move to higher levels of leadership. In many parts of the world, the Church is simply not able to provide the training needed for leaders at regional and national levels, so leaders may need to travel abroad. In any case it is important to at least be aware of the needs for leaders at these levels so that provision can be made as the needs arise.

Every church planter is also a trainer, always equipping others to learn and minister in their many roles from evangelism through local church leadership. To further the potential of church multiplication it is always important to be identifying and training others in the important role of starting new congregations. Others need to be getting the training you are getting in this curriculum regardless of the form of the training process

II. FOUNDATIONS FOR TRAINING CHURCH PLANTERS

Church planter training does not "just happen." It takes hard work and prayer to challenge local churches to send people for training, prepare materials for the training, and then actually train and mentor these new church planters. The following describes some of the foundations required for seeing church planter training continued and passed onto others as part of a church planting movement.

A. Motivate Prayer

A church planting movement is an act of God. Prayer shows that we expect God to work and wait for Him to do His part in making unbelievers receptive and getting believers to participate in the task. Rally prayer support within and outside the nation. Pray and encourage other to pray for workers for the harvest, conditions for the harvest, and people groups who would turn to Christ as commanded in Matthew 9:38, 1Timothy 2:1-5, and Romans 10:1.

B Raise Vision

Give people a vision concerning God's will for their nation, region, city or town. Help them to embrace a vision that everyone hear and see the Gospel in a culturally relevant way through the witness of a living church in their community. Help them work toward planting churches that will multiply, grow, and saturate the nation in God's time as He gives conditions, freedom, and workers for the harvest.

Sharing vision with others can be done in a variety of forms: one-on-one through personal networks of influence, in small group settings, or in large group settings, as God gives you opportunity.

C. Meet With Leaders And Pastors

Visit leaders and pastors. They are the ones with the authority and influence to sponsor and encourage people to get involved in church planting. Also, they are the ones who will know which members in their churches or organizations have the potential to be effective church planters.

When you meet with pastors and leaders, tell them boldly, "We train church planters" and ask them, "Do you know someone in your group with an interest in church planting?" Discuss with them the benefits of church planter training and how they can be involved in and oversee the expansion of the church!

D. Produce And Disseminate Literature

Produce literature that deals with topics related to church planting movements and church planter training. Literature brings legitimacy to what you are doing and carries your work beyond your presence. It also speeds up multiplication of leaders. The church planter training manuals you have received during the church planter training sessions will begin to serve this purpose. Media, such as newsletters, magazines, radio, e-mail, and video, will also help to serve this purpose. The production quality of your literature or media does not need to be "state of the art", but it should be of similar quality to the existing media and literature in the country.

E. Find Leaders

Find other like-minded leaders who will embrace the saturation church planting vision. These are usually leaders with a youthful vision, unencumbered by a great many on-going responsibilities, and rising in their leadership skills and role.

F. Network with other training programs

In addition to church planter training, other types of training are essential in order for a church planting movement to continue to advance. Training on such topics as saturation church planting, prayer movements, evangelism, how to train and send out missionaries from your local church, spiritual warfare, youth ministry, outreach to children, etc., are all important for the growth and development of a church planting movement in a country. One of your roles in church planter training might be helping to connect the church planters which you are training with other training resources they might need in order to help their church planting ministry succeed.

Many types of training are important.

G. Expect Results

Church planter training should produce churches. From the beginning it is important to expect nothing less than that those who are involved are confident that the Lord will build His Church through them. Make sure that the clear objective of planting new cell groups and churches is the foundation for organizing church planter training. When there is an expectation of new churches and cell groups, those who begin to participate will find their place as prayer warriors, organizers, financial backers, encouragers, helpers, and church planters. They are all necessary components of a church planting movement and the training should help them find their place and work toward planting churches.

III. THE PROCESS OF TRAINING CHURCH PLANTERS

A. Begin Training

You can train church planters by responding to an invitation or by setting up and organizing training sessions with your team. When you are invited to do the church planter training, it is better to let the host dictate the approach, protocol, and logistics. If you are hosting the training, you can experiment with different forms. However, make sure that you determine the content of the training material to be taught and who will be the trainers.

Do not be discouraged by the results of your first round of training. It takes time to find the best trainers and environment for training. Learn from your mistakes and continue to press on with the training. God may surprise you with the results of a "difficult" training session.

B. Discover New Trainers

Use the training sessions to discover new trainers from among your trainees. Get *them* to do training as soon as possible. Those who become trainers should be able to understand the subject matter and know how to equip others in any aspect of the specific material they would teach.

C. Decentralize Training Sites

Develop a geographic strategy for the training. Find strategic zones in the country or region where there is receptivity to church planter training. Those in the zone can carry out the training for church planting there. To do this, you must find leaders from the training who are active in church planting and want to mobilize others in their own zones. Help them to establish training in their zone. Encourage them to find and equip leaders from the local region. This will help the training multiply and will be a positive step towards a movement.

D. Pass On Leadership

Walk others into leadership and oversight of the church planter training movement. Keep finding other people with a vision to fill the land with churches and give them opportunities to lead in church planter training. Try to back out of your leadership and develop gradual but definite steps to pass it on to others. Be a mentor to them, helping them lead as they grow in their vision and capability to implement that vision through training other church planters. Encourage them to reproduce your mentoring with others they train, multiplying towards a movement.

E. Develop Funding Structures

Develop a funding structure for the work. As the movement grows you will need to fund the production of materials, travel costs, and at times support leaders to work full time. A healthy mix of local giving and outside funds should work together to support the needs of this work. Deliberately foster internal giving. It is very important to raise local and in-country funds. Church planting movements around the world are sustained by local giving. This includes teaching on the subject of stewardship. (See the lessons in the Stewardship Track of Manual 4).

IV. MENTORING CHURCH PLANTERS

Training church planters is not just a matter of seminars. Mentoring is a valuable and necessary supplement to seminars. Mentoring is fundamentally a purposeful relationship when someone with more life experience guides and directs another to accomplish his or her goals and objectives with greater personal effectiveness. A mentor, then, is a person who affects and influences the development and growth of another person toward certain ends. The mentoree, the person being helped, is guided so as to reach his potential, to maximize his gifts, talents and abilities, and to do his best. The Christian mentor strives to help the Christian mentoree reach his God-given potential and to accomplish God's goals for his life, for the glory of God!

Training church planters is more than seminars.

The mentoring of church planters is strategic. Reports from those in church planter training seem to indicate that where mentoring takes place, more churches are planted. Conversely, where no mentoring takes place, often there are few resulting churches.

The goal of mentoring is empowerment. Empowerment is the sharing of appropriate God-given resources at the right time, resulting in progress or development in the mentoree's life and work. The benefits of having a mentor include:

- Promotes genuine growth and change (2 Timothy 1: 7-8).
- Provides a model to follow (1 Peter 2:21).

- Helps you reach your goals sooner (Romans 16:1-2).
- Plays a key role in the maturity process (Hebrews 13:7).
- Benefits others through you (2 Timothy 2:2).

The mentoring process should be linked to the practical training for church planting and be intentional from the start. It involves a clear agreement on the relationship and includes the following when meeting: review, refocusing, resourcing. Mentors need to constantly develop their own skills of listening, asking questions, taking notes and giving wise counsel.

There is more training available on mentoring. Please inquire of the people who brought you this practical training material for church planting. A Godly life and growth in Christian character is the essential outcome of mentoring for the long term, while the short term should produce local churches planted! Thus a model of training can be 'caught' for the future.

CONCLUSION

One of the most valuable things you can do as you come to the end of this training to pass the training on to others. Do not hesitate to propagate the training you are now completing and be careful to identify and mentor other potential church planters who could benefit from your zeal and growing experiences. Just as Timothy was asked by Paul to pass on what he had learned so it is now your responsibility to pass on what God has taught you.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How does insistence upon *formal* training inhibit the growth and multiplication of churches?
- Why is training such a key part of what a church planter does?
- Why should church planter training be decentralized?
- Why is mentoring an effective part of church planter training?

ACTION PLAN

- Think about the context in which you are church planting. With whom could you begin the training of church planters?
- How can you begin to raise vision in your target area, region, city or nation?
- Prayerfully choose a location where you could begin church planter training. Talk with church leaders there and develop a plan to begin training. Begin training church planters according to your plan.



Mobilizing Leaders Through National Initiatives

THE DAWN STRATEGY

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to inform church planters about the process of mobilizing denominational leaders and leaders of groups of churches toward a systematic plan for saturation church planting in their nation.

☛ Main Points

- Introduction to the DAWN strategy.
- Certain conditions are necessary for a DAWN strategy to be successful.
- The DAWN strategy has 12 components

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand how to begin a national saturation church planting initiative.
- Know the conditions necessary for and the components of the Discipling A Whole Nation (DAWN) strategy.
- Participate in a national initiative for filling a whole country with churches.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

If a translation of *DAWN 2000* is available in your language, have it available for purchase by the trainees.

Keep in mind that God's timing is an element of church planting movement. However, even if your region is not ready for DAWN, this lesson included information that every trainee should be aware of and be working toward.

It is also helpful to have a map of the nation the trainees serve in along with demographic data in order to facilitate discussion on what it would take to see that country disciplined.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this training program, we talked about the idea of "Z" thinking. We talked about the importance of asking the question, "What does God want for my region, city, this people group or this nation?" We know from Scripture that one day, "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord" (Isa 11:9), and that it is God's desire for all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth (1Ti 2:3-4, 2Pe 3:9). We also know from Scripture that God chose the Church, to be His representation on earth, His primary instrument for building His Kingdom, until He returns. Therefore, God's desire is to see regions, cities, people groups and nations filled with vibrant, living churches that proclaim His greatness to those around them.

At the beginning of the training, you were asked to define your "Z"—the area where you felt God calling you to serve Him. Now, we want to expand this thinking and consider the questions:

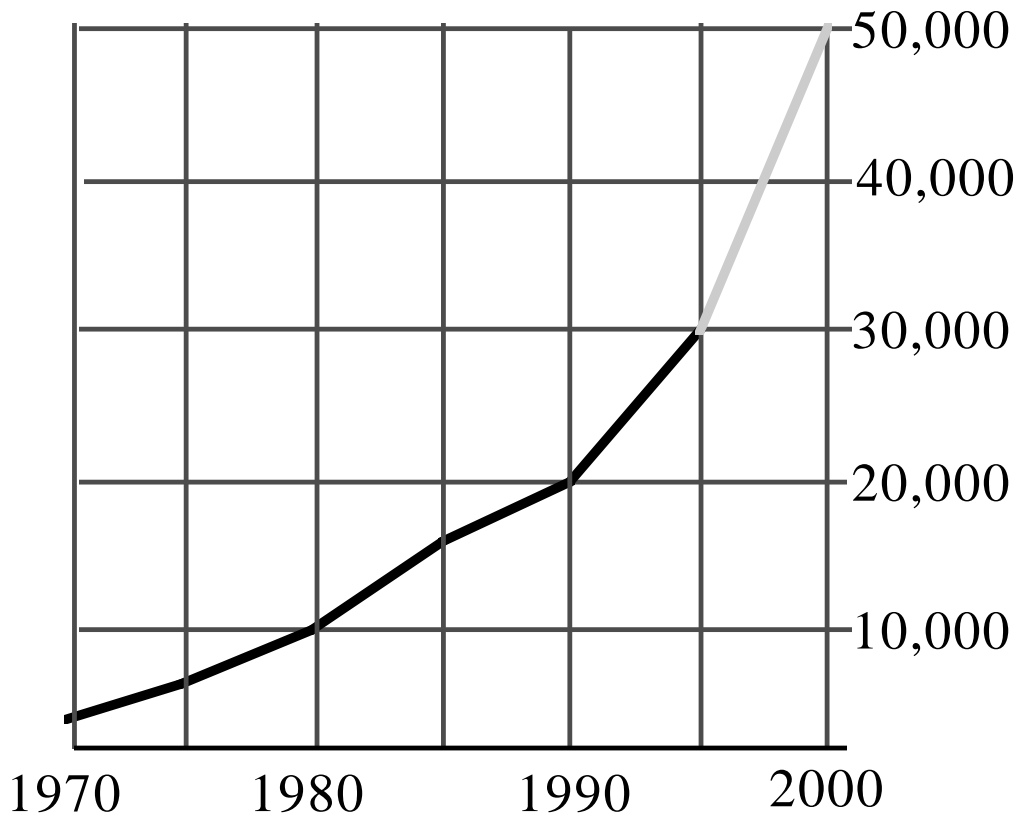
- *What does God want for my nation?*
- What does it mean for the knowledge of the glory of the Lord to fill my nation?

- How can every man, woman and child in my nation have the opportunity to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth?
- How can I be involved in seeing the Gospel penetrate every segment of every society in my nation?

I. THE DAWN STRATEGY

This lesson is adapted from a book By Jim Montgomery entitled, *DAWN 2000: 7 Million Churches To Go*. It is about a simple strategy or plan to fill any geographic area with churches. The book contains practical steps to implement what Montgomery calls, "Discipling a Whole Nation" or, "DAWN." The DAWN strategy helps groups of churches and denominations to advance their own church planting movements through the synergy resulting from interdenominational participation and cooperation as leaders share their own goals and results, and encourage and support one another to advance the Gospel in their nation. Each group maintains its own identity but all are working together for the kingdom of God, filling the nation with churches!

Figure 17.1. Church Growth in the Philippines from AD 1970 to AD 2000.



For example, in the early 1970s denominational leaders in the Philippines set goals together to plant 50,000 churches by AD 2,000. As the graph above indicates growth was steady but not dramatic at first. However, with growth the 'harvest field' becomes part of the 'harvest force' so that more can be accomplished due to the increase in resources and laborers. As of 1998 they were on target, giving every reason to believe that they are still on target as you read this today!

Since its birth in the Philippines, the DAWN strategy has been successfully implemented in a number of other countries, including Guatemala, El Salvador, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and India. In all of these cases the number of churches were dramatically increased. DAWN initiatives are also underway in European countries that are generally considered unresponsive to the Gospel. In spite of this, the DAWN strategy has helped leaders in Norway, England, Denmark, and Belgium increase their church planting efforts.

II. CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR A DAWN STRATEGY

What makes the DAWN strategy so useful is that it takes existing movements that already advance the Gospel, and *take concrete steps to move from vision to reality*. It is a tool for giving direction to already existing spiritual activity. Therefore, in order for the DAWN strategy to be effective, certain conditions of God's activity in that nation must be evident. These conditions are as follows:

The DAWN strategy takes existing movements that already advance the Gospel, and helps them *take concrete steps to move from vision to reality*.

A. Evangelism and Church Planting

Evangelism and church planting needs to be already taking place. This is an indication that the Spirit of God is at work bringing people to Himself and calling His people out into service for Him. Often times these small movements are isolated from one another. By bringing them together as part of a DAWN strategy, synergy takes place, and the potential of these small efforts can be harnessed to reach the nation for Christ. Without these small movements, the task of reaching a nation for Christ is like trying to move a mountain with a shovel.

B. Unity In The Body Of Christ

There must be sufficient unity in the body of Christ for leaders to get together and encourage one another to reach their goals instead of trying to tear each other's work down (John 17:21).

C. A Receptive Harvest Field

The DAWN strategy works best in a ripe harvest field, where the population is receptive to the Gospel. The DAWN strategy aids in the rapid multiplication of churches, so that a ripe harvest will be reaped and not left to rot.

Spiritual movements in a nation can be compared to spirited horses in a field. The DAWN strategy is like the saddles and bridles that bring the horses to follow the direction of their riders. The riders are able to harness all the power and energy of their horses and move in the same direction. Christian leaders can harness the spiritual movements of the body of Christ in their nations and take them in the direction of advancing the Gospel through saturation church planting.

III. TWELVE COMPONENTS OF A DAWN STRATEGY

Christ is building His church through the commitment, prayer and energy of His people. To harness the Church's potential with the saddle and bridle of DAWN, denominational and church group leaders should take use the following 12 components to set and pursue their church planting goals. Each denomination sets its own church planting goals and strategies, which are one piece of a common purpose, shared with other denominations in a spirit of unity, of seeing the nation filled with living churches.

A. Continuously Cast Vision Concerning The Advance Of The Gospel

Believers constantly need to be reminded of God's purposes for His people and for the world. Vision casting involves sharing with others a vision for seeing villages, towns and cities—entire nations—filled with congregations of believers who are on-fire for Christ. Vision casters are people who are gifted by God to share this vision at all levels of church leadership—from local churches to denominations.

Vision casting, however, should be concentrated at the "grass-roots" level—local churches and groups of local churches. As the vision catches on at these levels it will get passed up to denominational leaders. When you dream great dreams and see large visions, you are driven to work persistently towards seeing them accomplished. One denominational leader had a burning desire to see his whole province filled with churches. The result was hundreds of churches planted and thousands of converts being disciplined. In contrast, another denominational leader said, "We are the largest denomination already. We don't have to grow." The result was very slow growth. And, this denomination is no longer the largest denomination.

B. Develop And Use A Good Base Of Information

Part of the DAWN strategy involves researching the harvest field and harvest force in different regions, cities, neighborhoods, and among people groups. The Gospel is advanced by those who not only have great vision, but also understand the realities of seeing that vision fulfilled. They see that the way to accomplish their dreams is not through sentimental, emotional fantasizing but through a concrete understanding of their situation.

Those who study their context see who is responsive to the Gospel and how to best reach them. They study their own resources to see how big they are, how fast they are growing, what their effective and ineffective methods are, and so on. They study other growing churches and denominations to find good ideas for their own programs. Research is a vital tool for the advance of the Gospel.

Adequate research for a DAWN Strategy includes:

- the number of denominations in a country,
- their respective number of local churches and members and/or average attendance,
- the average annual growth rate of each denomination,
- the methodologies being used by various groups that are producing the best growth,
- the ratio of churches to population for the whole nation and every sub-group of the nations, and
- such contextual factors as the history, economy, religion, culture, politics, natural disasters and other societal forces that tend to indicate the relative responsiveness of the population and the methodologies and themes that might best see a response to the Gospel.

The analysis of the research results and what it means for the advance of the Gospel in that nation is usually presented at consultations and at a national Congress (Points G, J and K below).

C. Depend On Prayer

When churches plan for growth, they are sometimes accused of having a greater concern for numbers than a desire to see the Holy Spirit at work. However, *no significant growth* in the church will ever take place unless it is backed by prayer. When the church prays, the Holy Spirit acts. Resulting growth in numbers and new churches is subsequently good and pleases God. For more information, see Prayer Lesson 10, "Developing Prayer In Support Of a Church Planting Movement."

<p><i>No significant growth</i> in the church will ever take place unless it is backed by prayer.</p>

D. Set Challenging, Realistic, And Measurable Goals

Challenging goals stir up and mobilize the people. Laymen and women will want to get involved in a challenge. It is exciting to work together towards a worthwhile and challenging goal. In the DAWN strategy each evangelical denomination, mission agency and other groups sets their own goals for numbers of churches to be planted by a certain date and implements plans to reach that goal. These goals are often shared at a national congress and the collective sum of these goals is the "national goal", which is collectively committed to by delegates at a national Congress.

Realistic goals are set so as not to discourage the people. Goals not based on the present facts in terms of what is possible, can be worse than no goals at all. Make goals large enough to be a challenge, but realistic enough to avoid discouragement.

Measurable goals allow people to rejoice in their achievement. Specific numbers and specific dates get members involved.

It is important to seek God and set *challenging goals*- not just easily attainable ones. Goals set under the guidance of the Spirit are "*Sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see*" (Heb 11:1). In other words, goal setting by the Christian is an act of faith, without which "*... it is impossible to please God*" (Heb 11:6).

In Central America, leaders were setting their Discipling a Whole Nation church planting goals. One leader felt that the goals were too easy. His words were, "We could do that in the flesh!" He requested that higher, more challenging goals be set that would require not only human effort but God's power as well. Make sure that goals are not so fantastic that they will disappoint people if not attained, but equally important you must set goals that only with God's help you can attain, and He gets all the glory!

E. Promote Goal Ownership

In the process of goal setting, it is important to *achieve goal ownership*. In one very large denominational program, the foreign missionaries got together and set a ten-year goal. Then they had a very difficult time getting the church to work towards it.

In a second program, however, everyone had a say in what the goal should be. They argued and wrestled with each other until everyone was satisfied it was the right goal. Since everyone now "owned" the goal, they all worked hard to achieve it. This is a very crucial step in a successful growth program and can be overlooked only at great cost.

F. Train Members

Training is an indispensable part of any significant growth program. The biblical strategy is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11,12). In successful denominations, members are trained for every aspect of church development and outreach. This includes training for planting churches, pastoral care of churches, starting and leading cell groups, how to lead Sunday school classes, youth ministry, evangelism and discipleship training, prayer groups, finances, executive leadership, communications, etc.

Training is given in every type of situation from Bible schools and seminaries, to short-term and Theological Education by Extension (TEE). Church growth and multiplication will not take place without effective training.

G. Hold Regional Consultations

Regional consultations are a means of bringing Christian leaders together, to give them an opportunity to get to know one another, to pray for one another, and to consider the facts of the research results and its implications for the advance of the Gospel in their region. Consultations are also a good place to cast vision, discuss training needs and opportunities, sharing of resources, and church planting models. Consultations are part of the grass-roots vision casting and mobilization which helps to seed and fuel a church planting movement.

When leaders get together, lay aside their church and denominational differences and discuss advancing the Gospel, God does great things as they "stimulate one another to love and good deeds" (Heb 10:25).

H. Form A National Committee

At some point in the implementation of the DAWN strategy it will be necessary to form a national committee to keep the church planting movement alive. The national committee oversees the following:

- continued data gathering by means of a permanent national research team,
- the development of publications on the exciting growth and challenging aspects of each denominational program,
- the seminars and consultations with denominational leaders and pastors in various regions.
- the planning of national congresses where evaluation is made of progress to date and new plans and goals are set for the future.

In countries with successful DAWN strategies, the national committee is composed of representatives of various evangelical denominations and, sometimes, even foreign missionaries.

I. Raise Money

Denominations creating strong, new growth programs are forced to evaluate their whole financial structure. They need to evaluate just how they are spending their money. Frequently, funds can be diverted from lower priority items to the challenging evangelistic thrust before them. Good teaching and creative planning are needed in the area of financial stewardship. (For more information on this important topic, refer to Stewardship Lesson 2, "Financial Stewardship" in Manual Four.) Strong growth requires sacrificial giving to God's work.

J. Hold A DAWN Congress

The critical event of a DAWN strategy is the national congress where the primary leaders of all denominations and other parachurch organizations along with leading pastors gather to consider the discipling of their whole nation and discuss the results and analysis of the research project (point B above). Anywhere from 50 to 1500 delegates from every evangelical denomination gather in unity and commitment to a long-range strategy of working towards a common goal. A large congress must be held to present Discipling a Whole Nation (the DAWN strategy), to motivate a large group toward the project, and to bring about a spirit of excitement and unity.

Note that it is important to have spiritual discernment in determining the timing for a Congress. It is important that delegates from all evangelical streams in a nation attend the Congress. Therefore, it is important to wait until the unity of the Church is such that this will be feasible. In Finland it took eight years before such unity came.

K. Follow-Up The Congress

Follow up work to the congress must develop. Leaders must find what steps, such as training/mentoring, mobilizing churches, recruiting church planters, must be taken and implement them. They must then find those who will devote their ministry toward pursuing saturation church planting.

L. Reevaluate Progress And Make New Plans

Periodic reevaluation of progress toward reaching the goals needs to be done by denominations and parachurch organizations and on a national level through succeeding DAWN Congresses. The national committee can publish progress to date in its regular publication. This helps to keep the goals and vision before the people.

Denominations with successful growth programs behind them are very likely to continue setting new goals. One denomination has been setting goals and carrying out regular growth programs for 20 years. When one program concludes, members and leaders meet for a time of celebration. It is also the time when the new goals are set and the new program launched.

By constantly making new plans for new growth, evangelism and church planting become a regular part of the church life, rather than an activity engaged in only once in a while. Evaluating growth regularly, making necessary changes and equipping new workers becomes a healthy, dynamic aspect of the life of the church.

CONCLUSION

A spiritual movement to advance the Gospel is like a spirited and vibrant horse. The DAWN Strategy is like a saddle and bridle that allows the rider to guide the horse in the right direction. The DAWN strategy requires people to set plans by faith for spiritual things to happen in their nation. Somehow, God has included us as His partners in the great task of advancing the Gospel—*filling nations with churches!* Let us set goals for the glory of God and watch Him work as we serve His cause for the nation!

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Where is there a sign of a spiritual movement like a horse that needs a bridle and saddle?

- In what ways is your region ready for DAWN? What are the strongest (in order) of the conditions and resources in your setting?

ACTION PLAN

- Think about others who would share the vision toward DAWN. Write their names down, pray for them and seek them out. Share the vision for saturation church planting with them and let them read this lesson.
- Study the 12 steps of a Discipling a Whole Nation strategy. Which ones will be the easiest to get into practice in your churches? Study them, pray about them, and develop a program incorporating the ideas.

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THE CHURCH

CHURCH
15
LESSON

Church Discipline

REPENTANCE AND RESTORATION

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to set forth the biblical principles that govern discipline in a local church.

☞ Main Points

- Although the term 'church discipline' is not found in the Bible, the concept is clearly discussed, and the church is expected to follow the scriptural guidelines.
- The goal of church discipline is *always* the repentance and restoration of the sinning believer.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should:

- Understand the biblical principles regarding local church discipline.
- Know how to use a practical tool for implementing church discipline

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Introduce this lesson by having trainees share church discipline policies or procedures with which they are familiar. Avoid discussions of specifically-named illustrations of church discipline and condemnation of denominational or church leaders handling of the discipline issue. Leave time at the end to discuss the case studies.

INTRODUCTION

Although discipline in the church is such an important spiritual concept, it is a subject about which little is known and even less is applied. The following testimony by a Romanian pastor demonstrates this:

"When I first began considering the subject "DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH" it appeared to be a very simple subject to me because the church had much experience in this area. But it was not to be so. I had scarcely taken my Bible and begun a serious study when I noticed several problems in regards to this theme.

I sensed the existence of tension between my religious culture, and the message of Scripture; between the religious culture of my church and a true biblical model. I sensed tension in the establishment of a common vision about the discipline process.

While studying the Scriptures, I gathered much material which was only a tangent of this theme. To my surprise I didn't find any material which exclusively approached church discipline.

I spoke with many pastors and church leaders to know their philosophy in this area but found only one church that had their philosophy written down. Most churches don't feel they are on sure ground when they have to apply principles of discipline and treat the problem with insecurity or superficially."

If, as our brother states, church discipline is not addressed specifically in the Bible, then certain questions must be asked:

- Is church discipline biblical?
- What is church discipline?
- What are the biblical steps the church must take in disciplining a member?

- What are the goals of church discipline?

I. BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Although the term *church discipline* is not used in the Bible, it is mandated in at least three passages in the New Testament; 1Corinthians 5, Matthew 18, and 2 Corinthians 2. These passages teach certain principles concerning church discipline practices that are applicable in current church life.

A. Church Discipline is a Biblical Mandate (1Corinthians 5)

For example, the church in Corinth had a case of a brother who was involved in sexual immorality (v.1). The Apostle Paul wrote to the church, giving instruction on how to deal with this brother:

- Put him out of their fellowship (v.2)
- Hand him over to Satan (v.5)
- Do not associate or eat with him or any other brothers who were sexually immoral, greedy, idolaters, drunkards, or swindlers (v.11)
- Expel the wicked man from among them (v.13)

Paul also tells them the purpose of these disciplinary measures: "...so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord" (v.5).

B. Church Discipline Must Follow Certain Steps (Matthew 18)

Jesus said that when a brother sins, we are to work through the following procedures:

- First, go to him privately and show him his fault. If he listens, the relationship is restored (v.15).
- If he does not listen, take two or three witnesses with you and confront him (v.16).
- If he still will not listen, tell it to the church (v.17).
- If he still will not listen to the church, treat him as an outsider (v.17).

Note: Some translations of the Bible indicate that this is a "sin against you." But whether the sin is against you personally, or is a sin you know about, the same principles would apply.

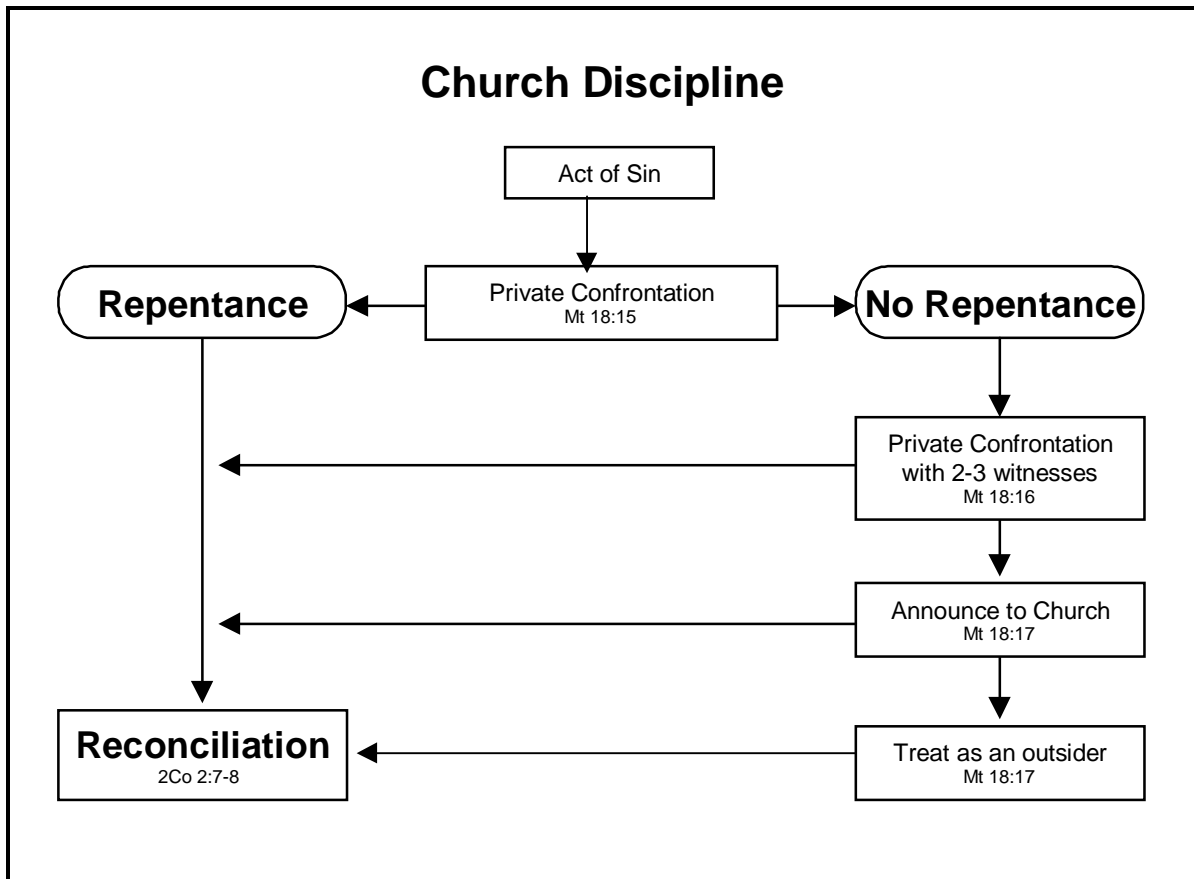
C. Restoration of the Repentant Brother Is the Goal of Church Discipline (2 Corinthians 2)

In his second letter to the church at Corinth, Paul writes about what to do when the sinful person repents after being disciplined:

- Forgive and comfort him (v.7)
- Reaffirm your love for him (v.8)

The reason that Paul gives for this is so that "Satan might not outwit us" (v.11). Forgiveness and restoration are characteristics of God, who reconciled sinful man to Himself through Jesus Christ. When the church refuses to reflect these same character qualities of Christ, Satan gains a victory over the church. We "outwit" Satan by forgiving and restoring repentant sinners.

Figure 15.1 Church Discipline Flow Chart



II. CASE STUDIES

A. Case Study One

George is a young man who loved the Lord and was actively serving Him as youth leader in his church and as leader of an evangelistic Bible study in his neighborhood. His church, once an active witness reaching out to the community, had recently dropped from 200 to 30 members. Concerned about this, he began asking questions.

The elders became offended and asked him to meet with them. Without having an opportunity to express his concerns, he was ordered not to ask any more questions and not to discuss this with anyone. Furthermore, he was told he could no longer lead the young people nor the small group.

Feeling that the elders were unjustified in their demands, George continued his small group. The elders ordered him to meet with the whole church and he was put out of the church. Letters were sent to church leaders in the area accusing him of insubordination and disobedience to authority.

Questions to Consider

- Was George's asking questions a sin?
- Was the elders' response to his questioning correct?
- How might they have handled this in a more biblical way?

B. Case Study Two

Samuel was an elder in his church. He had a habit of making inappropriate advances to women in the church, much to their embarrassment. Although he was not guilty of adultery, the other elders

felt that his action was inappropriate for an elder. When challenged by them, he confessed his sin to the whole church and was removed from leadership. No attempt at restoration was made.

Questions to Consider

- Were the other elders right to challenge Samuel's actions? On what basis?
- Were they right to move him from leadership?
- What plans for restoration might they have had?

C. Case Study Three

James was a pastor who was greatly appreciated by his church. When it was learned that his unmarried daughter was pregnant, the elders were divided about what actions they should take. Some said that it was not his sin; he was already suffering from embarrassment and concern for his daughter and should therefore be treated with grace. Others said that he was not fulfilling the biblical requirement for an elder to control his family and should therefore be disciplined. But because they had no one to take his place and because he was loved by the people, they decided to do nothing.

Questions to Consider

- Were the elders right to ignore the problem?
- How might they have responded to this problem in both grace and truth?

CONCLUSION

Church discipline is not only biblical but is a necessary part of church life. The reason for this is not punitive, but the restoration of spiritual health to the individual and the local church. Every local church should prayerfully and carefully develop a church discipline policy.

ACTION PLAN

- Read 1 Corinthians 11:29-32 and answer these questions:
 1. Why were there weak and sick among the believers?
 2. What was the final punishment?
 3. Why does the Lord discipline His children?
- Read Galatians 6:1-5 and answer these questions:
 1. What are some of the qualifications Paul lists for restoring a brother?
 2. What is the "law of Christ" that Paul mentions?
 3. How should this law be applied in restoring a brother?
- With your team, develop a church discipline policy for your new church.

THE CHURCH

16

LESSON

Corporate Worship in the Local Church

FORM AND FUNCTION IN WORSHIP

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help church planters think through how form and function relate to the local corporate worship service.

☞ Main Points

- Worship must be conducted in spirit (heart) and in truth (mind).
- God is the audience of worship.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should...

- Understand the difference between the functions of worship and forms of worship in the corporate worship service of the local church.
- Understand how to make the worship service of the new church plant culturally relevant.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This session should be presented in such a way that there is plenty of interaction. Begin the lesson by having trainees share various types of worship services in which they have participated. What forms of worship have they experienced and how did they feel about practicing these forms? How much congregational participation was there? The questions at the end of the lesson can be used for discussion as well.

INTRODUCTION

Think about some of the varieties of worship services you have experienced. Consider what took place in these services – the kind of music, prayer, preaching, reading of Scripture, special events, etc. In what ways did those services help or hinder you in worshipping God?

One of the most divisive issues in the Church today is the issue of worship forms in the corporate worship services of local churches. Some churches prefer a quiet contemplative style; others prefer a more enthusiastic style. Some use no instruments; others use only an organ or piano. Still others use a variety of instruments, such as electronic keyboard, guitar, trumpet, violin, flute, drums, cymbals, and other types of musical instruments. Some churches have choirs or praise bands. Others have a single worship leader.

Unfortunately, for many people, public worship is just a ritual or a duty to be performed and endured, rather than an inspiring experience. Throughout the world, churches that are growing and multiplying are those in which people want to come to the worship service because it helps them have a meaningful encounter with God and His people. Little church growth happens when people attend worship services out of a sense of duty or because they are doing God a favor.

The corporate worship service is the time when all of the members of the church come together to worship God. As your newly planted church begins to hold corporate worship services, it is important to understand the function of worship and then be able to choose relevant forms of worship which fulfill those functions and

Throughout the world, churches that are growing and multiplying are those in which people want to come to the worship service because it helps them have a meaningful encounter with God and His people.

draw people into an encounter with the living God. (Refer to Church Lesson 3, "Form and Function" in Manual One).

It is important to develop a philosophy of worship that guides the planning and preparation of your worship services. A philosophy of worship is simply a statement of why and how your church or cell group plans to conduct worship. It should be based on biblical principles and include the important biblical functions that relate to worship. It will serve as a guide to help you prepare truly God-honoring, scriptural, and uplifting times of worship. It will hinder you from simply copying past traditions that can be stale or uninspiring.

A philosophy of worship will help you prepare truly God-honoring, scriptural, and uplifting times of worship.

I. THE FUNCTION OF WORSHIP

Corporate worship celebrates the centrality of God in the life of the church. God is worthy to be worshipped. He is in ultimate control of the universe. He has a pure love for His creation and His creatures. He has also called us to be a part of His family here on earth. All of these things are sufficient cause for great joy and celebration. Worship, then, is our joyful, grateful acknowledgment of God's absolute superiority and moral goodness. In worship we use all of our being—mind, will, emotions, and body—to convey something of that profound joy which is inexpressible in terms of ordinary conversation but can be comprehended by the spiritual part of who we are.

A. To Give God Praise and Thanksgiving

Throughout the Scriptures, God's people are commanded to give praise and thanksgiving to God. We also see many examples of biblical characters paying homage to their Creator, from Abraham in the book of Genesis to the apostle John on the island of Patmos. Several different terms were used in both the Hebrew and Greek languages to describe praise to God. By looking at some of these terms we can get a more detailed picture of the essence, substance and nature of worship.

1. Hebrew Terms

- *halal*¹ and *tehillah*² - *Halal* is the most frequently used word in the Old Testament for praise. It occurs some 88 times. Its primary meaning is "to produce a clear sound." It also means "to boast, to celebrate, to rave about, to glory in...." True praise should have a clear and distinct sound. There should be no confusion as to what is intended. *Tehillah* (derived from *halal*) emphasizes singing. We sing forth a clear song of praise to God. Sometimes worship songs and hymns are obscure and abstract. Worship songs should clearly and unmistakably contain praise to God (2Ch 20:21-22a, Ps 71:8; 107:32).
- *zamar*³ - the meaning is "to touch or play the strings." It also has the sense of "singing praise to the accompaniment of musical instruments" (Ps 9:2; 33:2; 149:3).
- *yadah*⁴ and *todah*⁵ - To revere or worship with outstretched hands. To give praise or thanks. To give adoration with extended hands (1Ch 16:8, Ps 97:12; 99:3).
- *shachah*⁶ - to stoop, to fall down before, to prostrate oneself physically in homage before a person to whom honor is due (Ge 23:12, Is 60:14a, Ps 29:2b).

2. Greek Terms

- *proskuneo*⁷ - to fall down and kiss the feet of one who is worthy of honor (Mt 2:11, 1Co 14:25, Re 19:4).

¹ הלל

² תהלה

³ זמר

⁴ ידה

⁵ תודה

⁶ שחה

- *aineo*⁸ and *epaineo*⁹ – to laud or praise God (Lk 19:37, Ac 2:47, Re 19:5).
- *eucharisteo*¹⁰ – thanks given to God to express gratitude (Lk 17:16, 1Th 5:18; Rev 7:12, 11:17).
- *humneo*¹¹ – to sing a hymn (Mt 26:30).
- *psallo*¹² – to play an instrument and sing (Eph 5:19, Jas 5:13).
- *doxazo*¹³ – to glorify (Jn 17:1b, 1Co 6:20b, Mt 9:8).
- *Eulogeo*¹⁴ – to bless and praise (Mt 5:44, Mk 10:16, Lk 24:53).

These Hebrew and Greek words demonstrate that true worship is honest emotion from the heart and is directed to the Lord for His praise and honor. It is also clear that there is and should be a variety in worship—in music, instruments, and other forms.

B. To Give God Service

True worship is impossible apart from the total surrender of one's life to God and the living out of that surrender in acts of service and ministry. Key terms used to describe this function of worship in the Bible are

- *abad*¹⁵ (Hebrew) – to work for God; to serve God; to be obedient to His commands (Ex 7:16, Dt 10:12, 1Sa 7:3, 2Ch 33:16, Ps 100:2).
- *latreuo*¹⁶ (Greek) – to worship or serve God (Mt 4:10, Ac 27:23, Rev 7:15).
- *latreia*¹⁷ (Greek) – to serve God; to stay before God (Ro 9:4b; 12:1).

C. Jesus' Perspective on Worship

In His discussion with the Samaritan woman (John 4), Jesus revealed another truth about worship of God. He stated that God is not so much concerned about *where* we worship Him (place), but *how* we worship Him (attitude)—*in spirit and in truth*. By *how*, Jesus was not referring to the *forms* of worship. He was indicating the importance of our emotional and intellectual involvement in the process, rather than relying on a place or a ritual as the Samaritans and Jews were doing in that day.

⁷ προσκυνεω

⁸ αινεω

⁹ επαινεω

¹⁰ ευχαριστεω

¹¹ υμνεω

¹² ψαλλω

¹³ δοξαζω

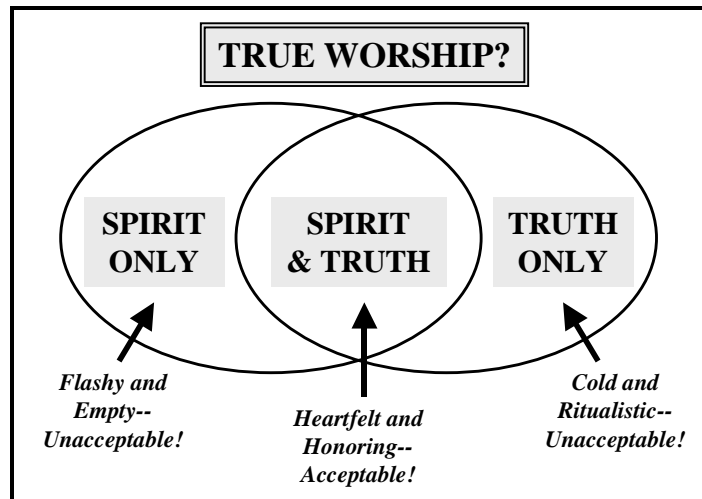
¹⁴ ευλογεω

¹⁵ עבד

¹⁶ λατρευω

¹⁷ λατρεία

Figure 15.1 True Worship



The only acceptable worship must include both components. If we worship in spirit only, we run the risk of worshipping an idol or misrepresentation of the one true God because we know nothing of Him. This does not please God. On the other hand, if we worship in truth only, our worship is cold and lacks a sense of love and intimacy with God. This kind of worship does not please Him either. *Rather, God wants us to understand the truth with our minds and worship Him with feeling from the depths of our heart.*

God wants us to understand the truth with our minds, and worship Him with feeling from the depths of our heart.

D. Components of Corporate Worship Services

Throughout Church history, corporate worship services of local churches have expressed biblical worship through the following components:

- Songs, hymns and music – singing of the Word, and songs of celebration, praise and thanksgiving (focus our emotions and inner being on God).
- Sermon – preaching of the Word (focuses our service on God, by calling us to obey Him).
- Bible reading – public reading of the Word of God (focuses our minds on God by bathing it in the truth).
- Prayer – communication with God (prayers of praise, adoration, confession, intercession).
- Sacraments - The Lord's supper, Baptism
- Tithes and offerings - giving of material possessions to the Lord
- Special events – special music, poetry reading, drama, sharing of testimonies, etc.

The forms of these components vary widely from church to church, according to denominational tradition and local culture. For example, some churches celebrate the Lord's supper weekly; others celebrate it on the first Sunday of the month. Some churches meet on Sunday mornings for corporate worship; others meet every evening or twice a year. Worship music varies widely. Determining appropriate forms for corporate worship is discussed below.

II. HOW TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE FORMS OF WORSHIP

As we discussed at the beginning of this lesson, and have seen throughout the Scriptures, there is a variety of forms of worship. What factors should you consider as you plan your corporate worship services? This is an important issue for you and your emerging church leadership to think through. The forms you choose for worship will vary widely from one geographical area or culture to another. Even in the same city, people from various age, educational, ethnic, cultural and denominational backgrounds will express their corporate worship to God in different ways. The forms of worship should allow people to express both the facts of their faith in God (truth) and the emotions and feelings of their relationship to the Lord (spirit).

Even in the same city, people from various age, educational, ethnic, cultural and denominational backgrounds will express their corporate worship to God in different ways.

The forms should allow people to draw nearer to God. The key to planning a worship service, therefore, is to find out how the people in your target area most naturally express love, joy, confidence, and deep relationship. These are the signs of true worship. Worship must never be stilted, cold, or expressed in a way that is contrary to the nature and feelings of the believer. It should honestly and clearly express our feelings for the Lord, and our thoughts toward Him.

III. CORPORATE WORSHIP AND CHURCH PLANTING

As we have seen earlier in these materials, one of the purposes of the Church is to exalt the Lord. Therefore, corporate worship is an important function of the Church. Public worship is more than just private worship done in a public place. The Old Testament and particularly the Psalms are full of examples of God's people worshipping Him together. In the New Testament, many of the problems addressed in the epistles were related to the practice of corporate worship (e.g. 1 and 2 Corinthians). Believers are exhorted not to forsake the habit of meeting together (Heb 10:25). Corporate worship is not entertainment. *The members of the congregation are not an audience – they are participants.* Some churches make the mistake of treating corporate worship services as if they were theater performances done by specialists. The congregation is the "audience" and the worship leader and pastor are the "actors on the stage." Corporate worship is to be entered into by the entire congregation.

God is the audience of worship.

Corporate worship glorifies God, provides a forum for displaying unity in the Body of Christ (Jn 17, Ac 2), and strengthens the body of Christ through the exercise of spiritual gifts (1Co 12:7ff, Eph 4:12,13). This is a testimony to the world of God's presence in the midst of His people. Though attending worship services is not a primary means for evangelism, God does use corporate worship as one means of drawing sinful people to Himself. However, this worship must be honest, from the heart, and not just a routine or ritual.

The quality of worship services does seem to have an impact on church growth. Between 1994-1996 the Institute of Church Development in Germany performed a worldwide study of characteristics of growing churches (*Natural Church Development*, 1996). They surveyed over 1000 churches in 32 countries on five continents. One of the study results showed that a key characteristic of growing churches was inspiring and joyful worship services. Participants in these churches looked forward to attending the services because they had a meaningful encounter with God and His people and were encouraged and built up in their faith. They came away from the service desiring to be more obedient to God—to love and serve Him more deeply and to share Him with others.

Study results show that a key characteristic of growing churches was inspiring and joyful worship services.

CONCLUSION

Corporate worship of God is one of the primary functions of the Church. God is worthy to be worshipped. Jesus stated that true worshippers worship God in spirit and truth. Throughout church history, as believers have gathered together corporately, certain components of worship services have developed in order to worship God "in spirit and in truth." These components include singing and music, prayer, Bible reading, preaching, sacraments, and special events. These components can be expressed in a wide variety of

appropriate forms, depending on denominational traditions and cultural practices. Empirical evidence shows that inspiring worship services are characteristic of growing churches.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Why is it important for God's people to gather for corporate worship? What is the purpose of corporate worship?
- What are some reasons that "inspiring" worship services contribute to church growth? What are elements of an "inspiring" worship service?
- What does it mean to worship the Lord in the splendor of His holiness? (1Ch 16:29).
- According to your church or denomination, are bowing down and kneeling function or forms of worship? (Ps 95:6). If form, what is the function?
- According to your church or denomination is the lifting of hands in worship function or form? (1Ti 2:8). If form, what is the function?

ACTION PLAN

- Do an inductive study of worship in Revelation 4:8-11 and 5:9-14. Be sure to answer the "Who?", "What?", "When?", "Where?", "Why?" and "How?" questions.
- Make a list of observations of ways the people in your target area most naturally express love, joy, and deep relationship.
- Consider your new church plant. Which of these forms are appropriate to express worship of God in your corporate worship service? What are forms from your denominational tradition which may be appropriate also? Which ones might be inappropriate for your target people group? Discuss your findings with your trainer or mentor.

SOURCES

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- Rowlands, Gerald. *Build My Church! (Volume Two)*. Singapore: I.C.M. Publications, 1995.
- Schwartz, Christian A. *Natural Church Development*. Emmelsbüll, Germany: C&P Verlags-GmbH, 1996. (Note this book is available in Croatian, French, German, English, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. www.CundP.de/international).

THE CHURCH
17
LESSON

How To Lead Corporate Worship

PLANNING AND PREPARING THE WORSHIP SERVICE

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to equip the trainee to facilitate worship in a local church.

☞ Main Points

- Worship is important enough to be planned ahead.
- A worship service should follow a theme.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should:

- Understand the components of a worship service and the role of the worship leader in the local church.
- Know how to lead worship effectively.
- Be able to lead an effective worship service in a newly planted church.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson should be primarily discussion. Have any experienced worship leaders in the training share how they lead worship. If possible, invite experienced worship leaders from outside of the training to come and share with the trainees how they work with pastors in their churches and how they plan and prepare for worship services.

Have trainees break into small groups and actually work through the exercise in planning a worship service. Have the groups share their plans with the whole group.

INTRODUCTION

One of the primary purposes of the local church is to exalt the Lord. Corporate worship is commanded and demonstrated by God's people in the Bible. It is a testimony to the world of God's reality in our midst. The previous lesson discussed the function of worship, components of a corporate worship service and how to determine appropriate forms of worship.

This lessons discusses the role of the worship leader, qualities of a worship leader, guidelines for leading a worship service and how to plan and prepare a worship service.

I. THE ROLE OF THE WORSHIP LEADER

The role of the worship leader is to work with the church leadership in planning the corporate worship services. In addition, the worship leader is responsible for leading the actual worship service. This includes leading or calling upon people to lead the various components of the worship service, e.g. singing/music, prayer, tithes/offerings, sermon, the sacraments, etc.

In some churches the worship leader and the pastor are the same person. In other churches the worship leader is a member of the church leadership team and works closely with the pastor in planning and preparing the corporate worship services. In this case, the pastor usually prepares and leads the sermon and sacrament components of the worship service, and the worship leader often prepares and leads the other components (singing, prayer, offering, special events, etc.). When they are the same

person, the pastor would be responsible for all of the components of the worship service. This works well for small churches, but as the church grows God has likely placed gifted worship leaders within the church and the pastor would do well to share the leadership with these gifted people. This keeps the pastor from becoming overburdened and also provides an opportunity for leadership to develop within the church.

The same principle applies in new church plants. The church planter may choose to lead worship for a time, but as soon as gifted individuals are identified, they should be trained and released into this ministry. In this way, too, the members of the church begin to take ownership in the responsibilities of that newly planted church.

II. QUALITIES OF A WORSHIP LEADER

Worship leaders should meet the minimum spiritual qualifications of any recognized leader in the church (e.g. Sunday school teacher, cell group leader, etc.); in fact, some churches require worship leaders to meet the spiritual qualifications of elder. Worship leaders need to be aware of the dramatic element of what they do. Their purpose is to lead worship in such a way that they do not draw attention to themselves but to God. They should be people who direct the congregation towards God rather than toward themselves.

In addition to the spiritual qualification of a recognized leader in the church, some other qualities of good worship leaders include the following:

A. A Worshiper

A person called to lead others into worship should be skilled and adept in the worship of God. It is impossible to lead others into something unless the leader has already learned the requirements and skills of worship. This person should have a good personal worship life.

B. Musical Ability

Good worship leader must be skilled in the area of music. They especially need to be skilled in leading others using music – leading singing and instrumental playing, use of background music, etc. In the Old Testament, skilled musicians led the people in corporate worship to God (1Ch 15:16-21).

C. Spiritual Sensitivity

A good worship leader has developed a sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Worship should be led by the Holy Spirit. The worship leader needs to be able to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit, and then be able to direct the worship accordingly.

D. Genuine Humility

A good leader will always seek to "hide behind Christ." He should be able to control personal thoughts, feeling and emotions so that they do not intrude into the meeting. Nothing ruins the spiritual atmosphere of a worship service more quickly than an egotistical leader who projects Himself into the meeting. The leader must always seek to focus the attention of the worshipers on God.

E. Ability to Lead Others in Worship.

Good worship leaders should avoid getting "lost in worship." One of the most common examples of this is a worship leader who closes his eyes and seems to forget what is happening around him. The worship leader needs to be aware of what is happening in the congregation and be encouraging the entire congregation to participate in the worship service. It is possible to be fully involved in worship and still be aware of and sensitive to the people. The leader should have a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and at the same time be exercising a gentle influence in the service.

III. GUIDELINES FOR LEADING WORSHIP

Worship of depth and significance requires giftedness, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and experience. The shape of your worship service will no doubt be influenced by your own denominational tradition and your own previous experience. However, there are some basic guidelines which can help any worship service be an experience which draws believers nearer to God and pleases Him.

A. Theme

The service will be greatly helped by choosing a basic theme which will then be reflected in all of the components of the service – music, sermon, prayer, etc. A worship service that happens haphazardly will lack the same power and accomplish less than one that is planned to focus on a particular theme. Often a "let's just let the Spirit lead" attitude is an excuse for not making the effort to prepare ahead of time—and the service suffers as a result.

B. Transitions

The connections between the service components are important. A sensitive sentence or two which aims to guide the congregation's thoughts can help to smooth the transition from participation to active listening, from reflection to action. A worship leader will need to be able to sense what God is doing and possibly make small changes along the way. Using music to help make the transition between various components of a service is helpful to the flow of the service as well.

For example, after singing several upbeat hymns of praise to God the accompanying musicians may play a short interlude of music to help the congregation from a mood of victorious praise to one of quiet reflection in preparation for more quiet singing or transition to prayer or some other component of worship.

The service will be greatly helped by choosing a basic theme which will then be reflected in all of the components of the service – music, sermon, prayer, etc.

C. Sequence of Components

Does the flow of components in the worship service make sense? For example, should the sermon come before or after the prayer time? Should the Lord's Supper be celebrated in the beginning, middle or end of the service? Is there a balance between sitting and standing, between listening and participating, etc.? Note that some denominational traditions have patterns of worship which essentially dictate the order of the worship service.

D. Songs and Music

Music and singing are the main forms of worship which allow people to worship God with their emotions and feelings. There is a wide variety of "sacred" music – both traditional and contemporary. Some things to consider when selecting music for corporate worship are:

1. *Ease of Singing*

Choose songs which are easy to sing and relatively easy to learn. They should be ones which the church planting team knows well. When introducing new songs to the congregation, use them in several succeeding services, so that the congregation has time to learn them well. Also, for a single worship service, introduce no more than one or two new songs. It is difficult for people to enter into worship of God if they are too distracted with unfamiliar music. Have the words of songs available in hymnbooks or photocopied sheets of paper or display them on an overhead projector. This greatly helps people to participate in the worship service.

2. *Variety*

Try to include a mixture of contemporary and traditional songs and music, if at all possible. When one of the major denominations in Estonia revised their hymnbook in the early 1990's, the committee chosen for this work sought to incorporate the best of the traditional hymns as well as add contemporary hymns which had become part of the corporate worship of new

Baptist church plants. This has helped to bridge differences of worship style between older, traditional churches and newer churches.

3. *Mood*

Attempt to have a range of moods in the hymns. A song of celebration to open and a song of triumph to close can be varied with other, more reflective hymns during the rest of the service. Instrumental music can be used quite effectively to transition from celebration to contemplation back to celebration. This can often help the service from feeling "choppy" or broken up.

4. *Musical Instruments*

Musical instruments were frequently used in Scripture to express praise and worship to the Lord. The musical instruments which we see in the Old Testament (harp, trumpet, lyre, etc.) were instruments common to the people of that day. There is nothing sacred about an organ, piano or guitar. One small church in Bosnia-Herzegovina was given six organs by churches in the West, who felt that this church must have an organ in order to "properly" worship the Lord. Unfortunately, no one plays the organ, and so they sit in a basement, gathering dust. The organ is not a common instrument to that area and so is not used by the believers in their worship. Musicians who are involved in worship should "play skillfully" on their instruments (Ps 33:3). Who in your congregation is skilled in music? What instruments are most common for people of your target area?

The musical instruments which we see in the Old Testament were instruments common to the people of that day

The focus of the music should not be on the skill and talent of the musicians themselves, but rather on the greatness and majesty of God. All of the music in the worship service should serve to draw people nearer to God.

E. Equipment

Is the equipment to be used during the worship service properly set up and working? Taking time to come early to the service and see that equipment is properly set up and working is a great help to enhancing the quality of the worship service. Faulty equipment can be a hindrance to allowing people to participate in worship and often distracts people's focus from God.

F. Rehearsal

The idea of holding a rehearsal for worship is something that often produces a sense of distaste. However, worship is an offering to God, and we should be willing to give our best to God in corporate worship. Also, well-rehearsed music, drama, testimonies, etc., actually allow people to worship God more effectively. People's attention is not distracted by stumbling over words and poorly played music. Also, rehearsals help to evaluate the flow of the service and ensure that the various components of the service are fitting together meaningfully. Practice allows the worship leader to focus on the leading of the Holy Spirit during the service rather than having to concentrate on getting the music right.

G. Prayerful Preparation

Before the service, the worship leader, church leader, and others participating in the worship service should meet and pray together. Commit the service to the Lord, ask that it bless Him, and that the Holy Spirit will lead and guide the service. Pray for the salvation of any unbelievers who may attend, that their hearts will be drawn to repentance and faith in Christ. Pray for believers to be drawn closer to Christ. Pray for the Lord to protect the worship time from any attacks of the evil one.

IV. EXERCISE IN PLANNING A WORSHIP SERVICE

The following steps can be used to help you gain experience in planning a worship service with your church planting team. In your training class, divide into small groups. Discuss each of the following steps and use the sample planning worksheet to plan a service. Share your service plan with the other groups.

A. Step 1: Choose a Theme

What will be the theme of the worship service? Oftentimes the main idea of the sermon fits this need. For example, in the preaching lessons in this training you prepared a sermon on the passage of Ephesians 5:15-21. The main idea of this passage is: "God wants us to be filled with the Spirit because it is wise and results in joyful living." The theme then for the worship service could be: "*Be filled with the Spirit.*" If this is a special day, such as Pentecost Sunday, Christmas, or Easter, your theme will probably revolve around that topic.

B. Step 2: Select Songs/Music and Special Events

What songs and hymns will you use in the worship service? Select ones which relate to the theme and which are both contemporary and traditional. Also, be sure the tempo of the music is varied—both reflecting celebration and contemplation. Will you have any special music, such as a voice or instrumental solo? Will there be a drama illustrating an aspect of the sermon? Will you have any testimonies? Be sure the testimonies you select relate to the theme.

C. Step 3: Lay Out the Flow of the Worship Service

Have a definite starting and ending time. Include every aspect of the worship service – songs, sermon, special events, prayer, Bible reading, etc. Figure 17.1 contains a sample worship planning sheet which you can use or modify to lay out the flow of the service. This planning sheet can then be used by the worship leader and pastor as a reference for the actual leading of the service.

D. Step 4: List Needed Equipment

Make a list of all equipment you will need for the worship service, such as overhead projector, overheads of songs, hymn books or song sheets, microphones, any special equipment for drama, etc. Determine who will be responsible for gathering and setting up of the equipment before and during the service.

E. Step 5: Determine Rehearsal Dates and Times

Decide when you will rehearse worship service. Be sure that all participants are notified and able to attend the rehearsals.

F. Step 6: Take Time to Pray for the Worship Service

Ask the Lord to guide and direct the worship service. Pray for people's hearts to be prepared to worship the Lord. Pray for unbelievers who may attend that their hearts would be open to the Lord. Some churches have prayer teams that pray for the worship service while it is happening. Other churches have prayer teams who come to church early and take time to pray for the service and quietly pray for those who are entering the place of worship.

G. Step 7: Evaluate the Worship Service

After the service take time to evaluate it. How were the flow and the atmosphere of worship? What needs to be changed? What should be used again? Did God meet your congregation in a special way? Were any people particularly touched during the worship service? Did anyone get saved? Incorporate what you learn from your evaluation into future worship services.

CONCLUSION

Corporate worship of God is one of the major functions and privileges of the Church. Leading worship is an important task not to be taken lightly. Skilled worship leaders are a gift of God for the Church. They need to be identified, empowered and released into ministry. Proper prayer for and planning of the worship service can increase the effectiveness of the congregation's ability to worship their Creator. Picking a theme, determining the songs/music and special events, and determining the flow of the worship service are all important aspects of creating an effective worship environment.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Are there modes of expression used frequently in your culture that could be incorporated into your worship service (e.g. poetry)? How might you use the modes of expression in a worship service?
- Why is it important to take time to plan a worship service?
- What should be the role of the pastor in planning a worship service? What should be the role of the worship leader?
- Describe the flow of a worship service that was particularly meaningful to you? What elements of the service were most effective? What can you learn from this service to help you in planning worship services for your church plant?

ACTION PLAN

- Plan and prepare a worship service. After the service, evaluate its effectiveness. What worked? What do you need to change? Share these results with your trainer or mentor.
- If possible, visit other churches in or near your target area. Observe the worship service and note forms of worship. What can you learn from your observations to apply in your own church plant?

SOURCES

- Robinson, Martin and David Spriggs. *Church Planting: The Training Manual*. Oxford, England: Lynx Communications, 1995.
- Rowlands, Gerald. *I Will Build My Church! (Volume Two)*. Singapore: I.C.M. Publications, 1995.

THE CHURCH
18
LESSON

The Local Church and the Bigger Body of Christ

WORKING TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help participants learn principles for effective cooperation and partnership with the larger body of Christ, e.g. other churches, denominations, parachurch organizations, etc.

☞ Main Points

- Levels of cooperation vary according to the task at hand and the characteristics of the groups involved.
- There are at least ten qualities of an effective partnership.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand how to develop effective levels of cooperation and partnership for various ministry goals.
- Know the principles of developing effective partnerships.
- Participate in developing partnerships for wider church planting ministries

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Use a mixture of lecture and class discussion. Have the participants discuss the issue of concentric circles of relationship. Do we actually use this approach in our personal lives?

I. THE CASE FOR PARTNERSHIP

There are two compelling reasons for us to partner with other churches and agencies in the region or country which is our circle of responsibility. One is theological and the other is practical.

A. The Theological Case

The theological reason is the essential unity of the Body of Christ. All those who have been born from above have been adopted into the family of God (Jn 1:12,13). That family is also called a body and it is one, not many (Eph 4:3-6). In his high priestly prayer Christ prayed for our unity so that the world might believe that the Father had sent him (Jn 17:20-21). Indeed, the mystery of the Gospel is that God has made all men one in Christ, breaking down the barriers that separated them (Eph 3:2-6; Gal 3:26-28). The divisions and competition among the different members of the Church have been an impediment to the advance of the Gospel, an offense to non-believers, and an affront to the unity of the members of the Godhead.

If we, with all of our diversity and distinctives, are part of the Body of Christ, we should begin to act like it. The world will see our unity and love and be drawn to believe in Jesus Christ.

B. The Practical Case

In countries where the evangelical population is below 2%, it is highly unlikely that any one denomination or agency can fulfill the Great Commission in that nation by itself. The filling of the nation with witnessing fellowships of believers will take the participation of all of God's children in a nation.

Moreover, if we will do careful research, we will find that the different agencies and churches have resources needed by the others. Some churches have published helpful discipleship materials. Others have developed church based training programs, and others have specialized in contemporary worship. Some agencies specialize in media, others in youth work, sports outreach, the Jesus film, etc. Sharing those resources enriches the entire body.

If we pray together, research together and share our resources, we may find that the Lord has made available to us all that we need to complete the task. This is not to say that different denominations need to merge or plant churches for each other. They can retain their distinctives and plant churches that follow their traditions. However, it is possible for them to do that while at the same time cooperating with groups with different distinctives.

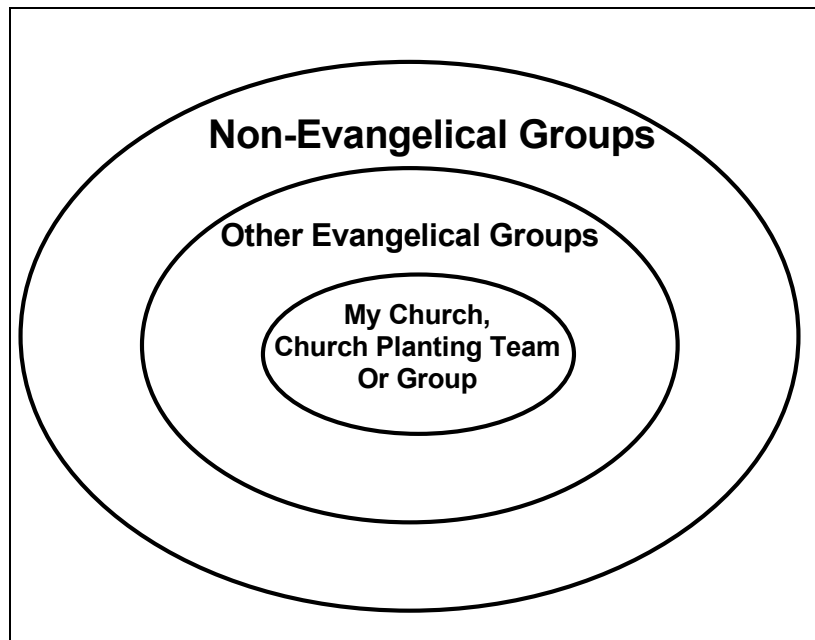
A Practical Model

Many have asked how it is possible to partner with other churches or agencies that have different distinctives without their church or agency losing its identity and compromising doctrines or traditions that they value.

It is helpful to consider the following paradigm of concentric circles shown in figure 18.1. In the center of the circle we have our local church, or church planting team, or agency. To be a part of that group, members need to agree on fundamental or core issues for there to be harmony in life and ministry. However, it is possible to cooperate with other evangelical bodies in our region in the areas of research, prayer, sharing of resources, and training in order to saturate the region with churches. The different groups cooperate at certain levels without sacrificing their own distinctives while allowing the other groups to maintain theirs.

It is also possible to cooperate with non-evangelical groups in initiatives that benefit a nation. An example here would be cooperating with non-evangelical Christian groups urging local governments to pass laws that uphold public morals and biblical values. Another example might be cooperating to provide assistance to disaster victims.

Figure 18.1 Concentric Circles of Relationships



C. Case Study of Partnership

Church planters from different denominations in Romania establish churches for their own denominations. However, they cooperate interdenominationally in the following areas:

- Prayer

- Research
- Church planter training
- District strategies

Each denomination retains its distinctives but benefits from the partnership in sharing of ideas and resources (for training, outreach events, etc.). All of the denominations experience greater growth and multiplication as a result of working in partnership.

II. LEVELS OF COMMITMENT IN PARTNERSHIP

There are different levels of cooperation possible in a saturation church planting initiative, each successive one requiring a greater level of commitment by the participants. There is no good one or bad one. Each level of cooperation is appropriate for a specific situation. In fact it is often better for potential partners to begin at a consultation stage and, as understanding and confidence build, increase the level toward partnership. Since partnerships are based on relationships, if you begin at the partnership level you may or may not have the relationships needed to sustain the movement during the difficult days that will come.

A. Level 1: Ignorance (No Cooperation)

At the first level is ignorance, which far too often is the normal situation. Christian ministries function side by side in some cities, unaware that others with the same faith and vision are serving the same area. Church planting initiatives may overlap in certain communities with others being totally ignored. Unnecessary conflict can occur.

B. Level 2: Awareness

When different churches or agencies in the same area become aware of each other and recognize the other as a legitimate Christian group, a sense of community begins to develop.

C. Level 3: Consultation

Consultation takes place when the different groups in an area meet occasionally to inform each other about their church planting activities and plans and commit to pray for each other.

D. Level 4: Cooperation or Network

This takes place when a permanent organization of information sharing and prayer is established. The participants then agree to cooperate on specific projects with a limited time frame. For example, this could be a city-wide research effort or day of prayer and fasting focusing on an unchurched housing block.

E. Level 5: Collaboration or Partnership

If a group of churches and agencies decide to cooperate in the launching of a church planter training program or an interdenominational Bible school to which each group will contribute, a partnership is underway. By sharing resources each denomination will see more churches established and greater advance for the Kingdom of God.

III. TEN QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

Figure 18.2 contains a table identifying 10 qualities of effective partnerships. Trust among partners is probably the most important quality of effective partnerships. Also, partnerships which do not have a clear vision or goals often do not last. The partnerships we want are those that are committed to seeing whole regions saturated with witnessing fellowships of believers.

In your own experience in working in partnership, which qualities were the most difficult to attain in the partnership? If you experienced a failed partnership, which of the qualities were missing, which contributed to the failure of the partnership?

Figure 18.2 Ten Qualities of Effective Partnerships

TEN QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

- 1 Effective partnerships are built on trust, openness and mutual concern.**
Partnerships are more than coordination, planning, strategies and tactics.
- 2 Lasting partnerships need a facilitator or coordinator.**
This is someone who by consensus, has been given the role of bringing the partnership to life and keeping the fires burning.
- 3 Effective partnerships develop in order to accomplish a specific vision or task.**
Successful partnerships focus on what (objectives) rather than how (structure). Form always follows function.
- 4 Effective partnerships start by identifying needs among the people being reached or served.**
They do not start by writing a common theological statement. From these needs, Kingdom priorities, barriers to spiritual breakthroughs, and the resources available or needed, realistic priorities for action must be distilled and agreed upon.
- 5 Partnerships are a process, not an event.**
The start-up, exploration and formative stages of a partnership often take a long time. Even an exploratory meeting too early will likely kill the possibility of a partnership. Ultimately, personal trust is required and that takes time to build.
- 6 Effective partnerships are even more challenging to maintain than to start.**
Making sure the vision stays alive, the focus clear, communication good, and outcomes fulfilling takes a great concentration and long term commitment.
- 7 Effective partnerships are made up of partner ministries with clear identities and vision.**
All partners must have their own clear mission statement and live by it. Otherwise, they will never understand how they “fit in,” contribute to the overall picture, or benefit from the joint effort.
- 8 Effective partnerships acknowledge, even celebrate, the differences in their partners’ histories, vision and services.** But ultimately, partnerships must concentrate on what they have in common, like vision and values, and ministry objectives, rather than their differences.
- 9 Effective partnerships keep focused on their ultimate goals or vision.**
They are not distracted by day-to-day operational demands. It is often easy to focus on the “means” rather than the “end.”
- 10 Effective partnerships expect problems and plan ahead for them.**
Be sure a process is built into the partnership for dealing with changes, exceptions, disappointments, unfilled commitments, and simply the unexpected.

Note: “Ten Qualities” taken from a message by Phil Butler of Interdev

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION , REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are some ways you can begin establishing relationships and building trust with believers in other groups in your region?
- What are specific ways in which church planters from different denominations in a city can benefit from cooperation in the multiplication of churches?
- What is God’s view of competition between evangelical Christian groups?
- How should evangelicals relate to non-evangelical communities in their region, particularly the established churches such as Orthodox and Roman Catholic?

ACTION PLAN

- Consider what churches or agencies in your region fit in your inner circle, second circle, third circle.
- Review the research on your region and list the churches or ministries active there.
- Make personal contact with leaders of the groups in the first and second circles and begin to establish a relationship with them. Begin by asking them what their vision is for the region.
- Consider launching a consultation, network, or partnership focused on saturating your region with churches.

SOURCES

Butler, Phil. *Effective Partnerships*. Seattle, WA: INTERDEV, 1990.

THE CHURCH
19
LESSON

The Historical Impact of the Church In _____

THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN YOUR COUNTRY

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help participants gain a historical perspective of the role of the Church in their country. To help participants learn from the triumphs and mistakes of the Church in their country.

☞ Main Points

- [Varies with country]

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, participants should

- Understand how to articulate the basic history of the Church in their country and how it has impacted the society at large.
- Know that God has been working in this country for a long time and learn how each generation of believers responded to the mandate of reaching the lost for that generation.
- Participate in church planting ministry with a greater appreciation of the efforts of previous generations of believers.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson is country specific. It is intended to be written by individuals in each country. The material found here is a suggested outline to help guide the research for this lesson. Limit the length of the paper to a maximum of 10 pages.

This lesson should be taught by having the students read the paper and then discuss highlights from the paper and lessons learned which can be applied today.

Have trainees take time at the end of the lesson to praise and thank God for the Christian heritage He has given them. Take time to pray that the Church in this generation will be salt and light to the people living in the country and that the Church will impact the world.

Instructions for writing this lesson

This lesson is to help church planters see that they are part of a historical movement of God in their country and to gain insight and encouragement from past church planting efforts. This lesson is a summation of the history of the Church in a given country. and is intended to be written by believers from that country. A suggested outline for the contents of this lesson is provided below. Visual aids, such as maps showing the current status of Christianity in the country or the historic growth of the Church, would be a wonderful resource to include in this lesson.

INTRODUCTION

State the purpose of the lesson and the scope of the lesson.

I. THE BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY

Describe when Christianity first came to the country—from where, by whom?

- How did it transform the society at large?

- Note whether Christianity took on an institutional form and became a 'state religion.' How did this impact the spread of the Gospel in the country?
- Identify any significant or key Christians or martyrs.
- What were obstacles which the Christians faced? How did they overcome them?

II. THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY

Describe the basic growth of Christianity from the beginnings to the present.

- After the initial entry of the Gospel into the country, what other Christian movements came into the country—when?, by whom?, how?
- What impact did they have on the society at large and on the growth of Christianity?
- Discuss significant periods of history in which the Church suffered persecution, great growth or times when the Church had a great impact on social reform or seemingly no impact at all.
- Note any emphasis the Church had on sending missionaries to other lands, burden for particular people groups, or social ministries. How were these done?

III. THE PRESENT STATE OF CHRISTIANITY

Describe the current state of the Church.

- What is happening in terms of growth, new denominations, etc.?
- How does the present impact of Christianity in the country compare with the impact of non-Christian or traditional religions in the country?
- What kind of impact is the Church having on society?
- What are the major issues it faces in terms of the spread of the Gospel?

CONCLUSION

Identify some key lessons learned by the Church over its history.

- How can these be applied to the Church's mandate for fulfilling the Great Commission in this generation?
- What are some encouragements and warnings for church planters today?

BIBLIOGRAPHY / REFERENCES

List the sources used in writing this paper. In addition, list any other reference material which may be useful for further information or study the history of Christianity in this country.

SPIRITUAL CHARACTER

SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER

14

LESSON

Reconciliation Ministry

RESOLVING CONFLICT

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to equip Christians for their job of entering conflict with grace and confidence so that they can work it through without offending others or destroying relationships.

☛ Main Points

- Conflict is normal and does not have to be divisive.
- Conflict resolution is a Gospel issue.
- Love is the main quality that is necessary to resolve conflict.

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand how the Gospel impacts our conflict situations.
- Know how to love people in conflict situations.
- Participate in resolving conflict in a biblical and healthy way.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

During this session, we will view conflict in the context of the Gospel so that we see a new way to approach it. This may generate lots of discussion and questions. The participants may want to discuss how and when you should cut people off due to unresolved conflict. This lesson does not speak to that issue; rather it deals with things to do to resolve the conflict.

The concepts in this lesson are best illustrated by real examples. It will be best to share some of your own experiences, if possible.

INTRODUCTION

We live in an imperfect world as redeemed sinners. The Scriptures tell us that "...no one living is righteous before you (God)" (Ps 143:2). At our best, we are imperfect, going through the process of being transformed little by little into the image of Jesus Christ (2Co 3:18). In this process, we say and do things—most of the time unintentionally—that offend others. Feelings are hurt and conflicts arise. While conflicts are expected in a fallen world, the truth is that if we don't work at resolving them we will end up destroying each other. As Paul says to the Galatians, *"If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other"* (Gal 5:15).

This session deals with handling conflicts that arise between individuals, usually because of personal preferences, and not because of some obvious sin. Should the conflict be as a result of sin, or should it not be resolved by the individuals involved, it might be necessary for the church to intervene. (See Church lesson 15, Church Discipline.)

As a church planter, it is necessary for you to maintain good relationships. Although this session deals with resolving conflicts, it is obviously better if conflicts can be prevented. The first part of the 'covenant' in Figure 15.1 gives some practical steps for avoiding conflict.

How do we go about bringing others into harmony with one another and with God? As we will see in this session, God has given us the responsibility and the method for dealing with conflict. Be sure to make

personal application of these teachings. Then you will be able to help others in the "ministry of reconciliation" (2Co 5:18).

I. INITIAL THOUGHTS ABOUT CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. Conflicts Are Inevitable Because of Our Imperfection

Only a perfect person could get by in this life without conflict of some type (Jas 3:2). Each one of us could probably tell stories of conflicts we have had with others. While we agree *theologically* with Galatians 5:24—*"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires,"—experientially* we know that we fall far short of a sinless life. So, we should not be taken by surprise when a conflict arises. At the same time, we shouldn't fatalistically accept conflicts as a necessary part of our lifestyle as Christians. We will study how Christ would have us resolve conflicts and be reconciled to each other.

B. The Difficulties of Confrontation

Some conflicts can be easily resolved by confessing the error, asking forgiveness of the other person(s), and making appropriate changes. Other conflicts may require confrontation. What comes to your mind when you hear the word 'confrontation?' Normally, we think of something 'negative.' The following common assumptions about confrontation are not really true, but they keep people from dealing with others openly:

1. Confrontation is always destructive.
2. When involved in confrontation, the most important thing is to win.
3. Power wins out at the end of the conflict and confrontation.
4. Confrontation and conflict destroy relationships.

None of the above statements is true. But because we often think they are true, they keep us from dealing with relationship problems from time to time.

When we as Christians talk of confrontation in a conflict resolution context, we are talking about approaching another person with whom we are in conflict with a spirit of love and a desire for reconciliation. This doesn't mean that we should skirt around the truth and avoid the root issues. We are to speak truthfully to each other because we are all members of one body (Eph 4:25). We are to "not let any unwholesome talk come out of (our) mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs..." (Eph 4:29).

C. The Results of Avoiding Resolving Conflicts

Refusal to engage in conflict resolution at church, home, work, or with friends can actually be harmful. Maybe you have been taught that it is best to keep silent, but when that happens, anger builds up inside and begins to eat away like cancer. Ephesians 4:26-27 advises us to "not let the sun go down while you are still angry." If we do, we "...give the devil a foothold."

Example #1

A person in your newly-planted church has some habits that are not easy to live with. He makes his way through the whole church trying to make friends and build relationships without success. Eventually, he knows he is not wanted and either stops participating in the church or moves on to another.

Example #2

A woman in a church had a hygiene problem. She needed someone to talk with her about this. When those in her church finally approached her, it was tough and there was risk involved in doing it. The woman could have been very angry and terribly embarrassed. But it was done in love and she was able to take it. Love meant approaching this woman in order to help her, not pulling away.

Take a few minutes to explain how you would confront the person in each of the above illustrations.

II. CONFLICT RESOLUTION IS A GOSPEL ISSUE

A. The Gospel Sets Us Free to Deal with Conflict

The Gospel sets us free to approach other people about issues that have affected us. To fully experience that freedom, we must first understand our own weaknesses and fears. When we understand the issues that have affected us, we can face confrontation without threat.

The following are common reasons people avoid conflict situations. As our fears concerning conflict are seen, it becomes clear how the Gospel really is the issue.

- Fear of being wrong
- Fear of losing the fight
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of what others will think
- Fear of being confronted in return

Can you relate to any of these fears? If so, then perhaps the problem is what you think of yourself. The person with the above fears might love to minister... but he or she has a greater concern about his or her reputation or personal feelings. If, however, a person thinks about the Gospel, then he or she understands that Jesus is the one who gives righteousness and reputation. In such a case, the fears above are not really issues. Our security and reputations are in Christ. We are driven by the desire to minister and love, not by fear, punishment, or looking good. People feel a lot safer with other people who are not overly concerned about their own reputations. Understanding your position in Christ can give you confidence to confront others openly.

Understanding your position in Christ can give you confidence to confront others openly.

B. The Gospel Provides the Pattern for Resolving Conflict

In writing to the church he planted in Ephesus, Paul describes the conflict that had existed between the Jews and the Gentiles as well as the reconciliation that is available by the cross (Eph 2:11-16). The very nature of the Gospel itself shows us how to love one another even in conflict.

When in conflict with another person we naturally think, "I am right and you are wrong." When we do this we cling to our own righteousness and demonstrate our blindness to our own shortcomings and sin. We simply don't want to admit our own inadequacies or our need for forgiveness.

In contrast to the "I am right and you are wrong" attitude, the Gospel message provides an example of a very different approach to conflict. In resolving the ultimate conflict between mankind and his Creator, Jesus gave up His rights, took a very humble attitude (Phil 2:5-8) and suffered (1 Pet 3:18), making resolution possible.

What would it be like if we took this attitude with others? Would not conflict be easier to resolve if we were more willing to take the humble position instead of protecting our own pride? This is the attitude Jesus has for us. His example leads us to life in which we can give up our "right to be right" and consider the needs of others above our own (Phil 2:2-3).

III. NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. Matthew 18:15-17

Jesus gives a very clear picture of what He expects of His followers concerning resolving conflicts. Read this passage and note the principles Christ gives for resolving conflicts.

- List the principles found in this passage.
- Note that the parable of the lost sheep precedes this passage and the parable of the unmerciful servant follows these instructions on conflict. What do you think this context has to say about verses 15-17?

One Christian group working in Eastern Europe has written the following relationship covenant based on this passage. It is a model that could be used in your church.

Figure 15.1 Sample Covenant for Conflict Resolution

We, the members of _____, taking seriously the instruction of Scripture to live in harmony as brothers and sisters and show to the world the love of Christ through our love for each other, do hereby covenant with each other the following:

1. I will be careful to protect the integrity and honor of other team members by not accepting or participating in gossip about other team members.
2. I will encourage and pass on positive comments about other team members.
3. I will practice the biblical teaching about conflict resolution (Mt 18:15-17a) and forgiveness (Mt 6:12; Eph 4:32).
4. I will remind and encourage the bearer of any negative comment to go to the person in question and seek to resolve the conflict among themselves.
5. I will actively seek the reconciliation and restoration of any who might transgress this covenant, and will expect that the same would be done for me if I should fail.

Biblical principles for conflict resolution as presented in Matthew 18:15-17a for sin committed by one team member against another:

1. All conflicts should be dealt with on a one-to-one basis. No one, including the team leader, will listen to a complaint until that person has prayerfully attempted to resolve the conflict with the other person.
2. Only those within the 'circle of offense' need to be included in the resolution process.
3. If the conflict is not resolved at the one-to-one basis, then the team leader should be consulted. (If the leader is part of the circle of offense, then another team member, but not a spouse of those involved, will be chosen by those involved to arbitrate.)
4. If the conflict is still unresolved, it will then be brought before the team leader and two other witnesses (but not the spouses).
5. If resolution is still not attained, the matter will then be brought before the entire team for a decision.

B. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

We are to approach conflict in a way that is radically different from the world. As we said earlier in this lesson, Jesus took on our sin so that we could have His righteousness (2Co 5:21). Note Paul's words to the Corinthians in that context:

All this is from God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God was making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God" (2Co 5:18-20).

It is interesting to note that right after Paul describes the reconciliation we have in Christ with God, he makes it known that Christ has given us the *ministry of reconciliation* and that we are *Christ's ambassadors*. By using this terminology, Paul implies that we do for others what Christ has done for us.

IV. LOVING OTHERS

When looking at conflict situations, it is important to work toward restoration of the relationship. Confrontation is an opportunity to help people. The intent is never to punish or destroy. An attitude of love towards the people we work with is crucial.

Matthew 5:40-41 is a wonderful place to see what Jesus says to do with people who oppose you. We love enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Mt 5:44). We are told to do things that surprise people, like walking two miles instead of one (Mt 5:41), or giving people more than they ask for (Mt 5:40). This is the love offensive that Jesus tells us to engage in. These are the weapons that He gives us to do battle with.

In Romans 12:14-21, we see the same thoughts being expressed by Paul as we just saw in the words of Christ. The attitude the Christian is to express in facing a hostile environment is one of blessing, identification with those around him, living in harmony with others, not taking revenge, overcoming evil with good.

Example

A young Christian doctor was doing a year of social service in a government hospital. All her supervisors were non-Christians and gave her a very difficult time. After several months, she was ready to quit and return home. When counseled about how to resolve the conflict, she was told to overcome evil by doing good to those who were persecuting her. Her simple solution was to bake a cake and take it to her supervisor as a gift. That simple gesture, plus plenty of prayer, broke the resistance of her supervisor. The remaining months of her social service were quite different from the previous ones. Not all situations will be resolved so easily. But we must believe that there is a solution to every situation, because Jesus Christ is sovereign over this world.

V. PRACTICAL HELP FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. How to Approach Conflict

1. *Discern your personal motives.*

It is crucial to look at what you are thinking when you are in conflict with another. Is this motivated by pride or by a loving desire to minister? You will never have perfectly pure motives, but it is very important that you know this problem and ask God to expose it in your life before you go and talk to someone else about this problem. Remember the log and the speck (Mt 7:3-5).

2. *Do not assume you understand the entire situation.*

Assumptions are deadly in conflict. Never assume you know it all and never listen to just one side. Assume only that you really do not know the whole story and it is important that you find out. Listening and asking questions are crucial here.

Example

One Sunday morning at a new church plant in Europe the overhead projector was missing. Everyone thought it was stolen. All the music had to be changed and the service was delayed. Finally, one of the members came in with the projector. The leaders naturally assumed that he had borrowed it and were furious with him for not returning it on time. Later, they learned that another ministry that used the same building had borrowed it and handed it to him as he was walking into the building so they would not have to face the embarrassing situation!

3. *Begin with yourself.*

If the problem is between you and another person, it is good to assume you have done something to hurt the other person. If you understand the Gospel and what Christ has done for you, then you are not above doing this. It would be helpful to find out how you have hurt them so that you can correct it. Discern the root cause of the conflict. The normal tendency is to look at the obvious, visible parts of the conflict. For example, let us suppose that we have

gossiped behind someone's back, and word has gotten back to the person...and the person is now angry with us. The obvious thing is that we have gossiped, maybe repeating some things that were not true. But the real issue, the root issue, is a lack of loyalty to that person to protect his integrity. That disloyalty is what we need to deal with. Maybe we became entangled in the gossiping because we were jealous of that person and wanted to see him knocked down from his privileged place. Again, the jealousy is what needs to be dealt with, confessed, and repented of.

4. *Begin with encouragement.*

It is best to begin with encouragement when bringing criticism to another person. There must be things that are good about them, and you need to temper what you are saying with some good things as well. Encouragement is good for the heart (Pr 15:30; 25:11).

B. Taking Criticism from Others

1. *Look at it objectively.*

Some criticism is good and some is bad. Some is helpful and some is harmful. Do not take criticism at face value. Hold it in front of you and examine it for truth. There are usually nuggets of truth in all criticism. Take the bits that are helpful and apply them to your life and throw out the rest.

2. *Do not take it to heart until it has been confirmed.*

Check criticism with others before you take it seriously. Ask trusted people if they agree with this assessment of you.

3. *Listen with the view, "I am just glad they don't know it all."*

Understanding the Gospel makes it easier to live with criticism. We know our life is in Christ and we know we are 'sinners.' Seeing sin is no big surprise to us. Sometimes it is painful to see how our sin hurts others, but seeing it and repenting of it brings more glory for Jesus, and that's what we want. The Gospel means that criticism is not lethal, nor is it unexpected. It is a means of growth in the grace Christ provides.

CONCLUSION

Unresolved conflict can be one of the most damaging things to personal and interpersonal life. If you have unresolved conflict with another believer, co-worker or family member, take the steps now to seek reconciliation. May we find the courage to love others as Jesus loves us.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Why do people hesitate to confront others?
- When has someone's confrontation with you been a real blessing?
- In what ways can it be harmful to avoid confronting a brother or sister in Christ about an offense?
- What are some things you can do to make confrontation easier to take?

ACTION PLAN

The following exercise will help you to practice conflict resolution in your personal relationships:

- Review your relationships and see if there are people whom you have offended—or who have been offended by you.
- Discern the root causes of the conflict—and deal with the root issues.
- Talk with the person(s) and seek reconciliation and resolution to your conflicts.

SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER

LESSON 15

Moral Integrity of Church Planters

DEALING WITH MONEY, SEX & POWER

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to encourage church planters to enjoy the good things God has given them, while being wary of the snares that Satan is setting for our abuse of money, sex and power.

☛ Main Points

- Honest believers should acknowledge their own propensity to fail in moral integrity.
- Satan usually attacks in the areas of money, sex, and power.
- Without the supernatural virtues, available by God's grace, we cannot be good.

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each church planter should . . .

- Understand some of the schemes of Satan that keep him from enjoying the good provisions of our Creator.
- Know basic principles for proactively pursuing moral integrity in areas of popular compromise.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

It could be easy to fall into the pattern of telling the tantalizing details of known failures in the nation or of ranting against the evil of our day. Doing so would miss the point. We already know too much of the scandal; solutions are needed. Chose rather to lift up the positive illustrations of Scripture AND from your life and ministry experience.

INTRODUCTION

Satan is not very creative. Think of the moral failures in Christian ministry; the vast majority revolve around money, sex or power. God has given good gifts to His children, but our propensity for sin, for selfish gain or pleasure, leads very often to abusive use of His provision. We can so easily be bankrupt of moral integrity. Yet, when focused on God's glory, our resources, human sexuality and influence can all be of good service for the Kingdom.

Lucifer is likely tormented to think that we, a little lower than the angels (Heb 2:6,7) will participate in his judgment. The deceiver of our souls wants us to doubt the importance of moral integrity. He who wanted to rob God of His glory is still stalking to steal the majesty and awe that will rise up to God from the worshipping communities that we will help to start. Leadership is always a choice target. The enemy of our faith will seek to dent our influence or derail us from leadership by offering the sweet temptations of money, sex and power. His ways are not new.

Leadership is always a choice target. The enemy of our faith will seek to dent our influence or derail us from leadership by offering the sweet temptations of money, sex and power.

The moral integrity of church planters profoundly affects ministry width and depth. People are being attracted to the Gospel and are being disciplined to maturity and service—what models will they imitate? The character of church planters will invariably make a mark, both in local church plants and in the reputation of wider regional or national efforts. We are weak, but greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world (1Jn 4:4).

I. THE POPULAR TRIO; MONEY, SEX AND POWER

A. Possessions

When we talk about possessions, we are referring not only to money but also to all possessions or resources, whether they be ours personally, or those of the Church. (See also Stewardship Lessons in Manual Four.)

1. *The Warnings*

From the beginning, mankind was instructed to possess and govern the earth. All was given by the Creator to humans, the highest of all created beings (Ge 1:28-30). We are to have possessions and to handle them as stewards for God. Money, possessions and resources, in general, are available and we are expected to use them wisely. The problem is that we seldom think we have enough; we doubt the wisdom of God. The love of money is called the root of all evil (1Ti 6:10). Covetousness, envy, greed and other sins are fueled by a seemingly unquenchable lust of the eyes. Hence, Jesus' teaching in the Bible includes more references to money than any other subject—far more than even salvation. Our Savior understands mankind's struggle and has given us ample warning about the dangers inherent in the pursuit of possessions. God meant this provision to be good (and it CAN be) but we have often opened the door for Satan to use it for harm.

2. *The Habits*

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, satisfying the desires of the flesh was the first trial (Mt 4:1-11). Challenged to turn stones into bread, the Lord replied that it was not by goods alone that man lived, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Pursuing food, money and possessions are not to be our priority. The antidote against this tendency is pursuing the knowledge and practice of God's ways. Each of these things is important. The disciples went fishing for food and income. Jesus encouraged followers to pay their taxes, and possessions were shared in the early church. But the question is priority; where our hearts are is where our treasure will be. Need we wonder why some of our hearts are as cold as the touch of precious metals?

... where our hearts are is where our treasure will be. Need we wonder why some of our hearts are as cold as the touch of precious metals?

The worker is worthy of his hire (Lk 10:7), and the one who does not provide for his family is worse than an infidel (1Ti 5:8). The rich young ruler may have believed and thought he was practicing those principles (Lk 18:18-30). However, Jesus, responding to his questions about eternal life, told the rich young ruler to sell all that he had and distribute it to the poor. The rich young ruler would not do it—his priorities were wrong.

Our priority must be founded upon the truth that all we have belongs to the Lord. We have been bought with a price and are not our own. Tithes and offerings are means of giving back a portion to corporate Christian functions. Yet all of us, especially leaders who are models, are to be God's custodians of all money, possessions, and resources in hand. Switching the use of designated funds in Christian ministry is a common opportunity for leaders; being a wise steward includes consulting those who gave the resources or others who share responsibility for their use. Good stewardship habits are to be applied whether the amount is big or small. Hence, a good measuring stick when looking for emerging leaders is; "You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things" (Mt 25:21).

B. Sexual Purity

We refer to human sexuality and celebrate the fact that God has made us as male and female. We are different and we are intended for each other. The triune Godhead Himself features the beauty of ordered relationships. Because we were created for fellowship, it is logical that we expect divine patterns for our relationships in Christ, whether they are between husband and wife, daughter and father, women and men. We expect attractions in relationships; this is part of God's creation. And

we are expected to be custodians of all of creation. We will consider human sexuality as the entire spectrum—from simple recognition of differences to the most intimate of physical relationships.

1. *The Warnings*

The Garden of Eden witnessed Adam and Eve strolling unclothed with each other and their Creator; their sexuality was a beautifully accepted part of God's plan. By the Creator's design, woman was from man and she was a partner whose beauty was much appreciated by man. But when sin entered the world by disobedience, an ensuing fear and shame resulted in Adam and Eve covering up their human sexuality.

God expects and encourages the many levels of relationships ... but He also ... restricts the most intimate of communion to the highest levels of commitment.

God expects and encourages the many levels of relationships between humans, but He also gives principles for those relationships and restricts the most intimate of communion to the highest levels of commitment. Christian leaders are not exempt from the rampant lust of the flesh. Humanity, in rebellious insistence that we, not God, know best, blatantly tears away at those fig leaves, seeking to uncover and indulge in what is not our own. God is not mocked; His ways are perfect.

2. *The Habits*

If Jesus had yielded to Satan's temptation to accept all the treasure of the world, then He could be held accountable for hedonism—the sin of pleasure alone as life's ultimate purpose. Christ rejected doing "what feels good" and reiterated Scripture, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only'" (Mt 4:10).

As church planters, we are leaders with a vision—we know where we are heading. So it is with developing and maintaining moral character. Consider the example of this Old Testament hero—Joseph accepted God's standards. He was faithful, whether treated as favored son or imprisoned slave (Ge 37). He avoided tempting situations (Ge 39). Joseph refused to give in to sin.

A major part of putting human sexuality in its proper, noble place is to deal with those of the opposite sex in Christ-like fashion; with honor. Proper relationships have everything to do with attitudes that result in deliberate choices. Honor is a gift of grace. It reveals, through us, the value God gives the person. It shows the other person that you value him or her. Honor is something we give a person without their having to earn it and it is not dependent on our feelings or their giving honor to us. Ephesians 5 instructs us to deal with spouses the way Christ deals with the Church—with honor. Indeed, such expressions of high value that we should show to all those of the opposite gender are, in fact, virtues that help to guard our human propensity to take advantage. By blessing women or men in this way, we can safeguard against abusing the gift of sexuality that God has given us.

Indeed, most people evaluate others on the basis of their character. Marital fidelity is the most sacred test of character for any man or any woman. The best defense of our marriage is a good offense—cultivating a loving relationship. But, the instructions are not only for those who are married, because the temptations are real for both the married and the single church planter.

C. **Authority and Position**

As leaders at some level, with authority and/or position, we have influence somewhere and somehow. The exertion of this influence is power. But it is pride that will usually determine for whose good—mine or others—that this power will be used. Power can be a force for evil or strength for good. As church planters, we desire that our influence be powerful and useful for the divine enabling of others to be all that God intended for them.

1. *The Warnings*

In 1986, when Duvalier, the dictator of Haiti, fled the Caribbean island, a military and civil trio agreed to serve in the interim and to organize democratic elections. A more graphic illustration of the corruption of power can scarcely be found. In the ensuing months, a simply attired and soft-spoken army general became a booming autocrat. Each public appearance included more medals and braids on the uniform and his face became distorted with the clenching of jaws. The corruption of power was invading; an opportunity to influence for justice and liberty was being sacrificed at the altar of pride and personal gain.

No church planter doing evangelism, discipleship or equipping for ministry hopes for anything less than the opportunity to influence their charges for good, for our Lord. We exert a kind of power, for we are taking a lead. But power is a two-edged sword; it can open paths for the work of Christ or, corrupted, it can cut a swath for selfish gain. It is always dangerous for a leader who oversteps boundaries and who uses power to fuel the pride of life.

... power is a two-edged sword; it can open paths for the work of Christ or, corrupted, it can cut a swath for selfish gain.

2. *The Habits*

The devil took several ploys with our Lord, alone at the beginning of His ministry. Tempting Him to throw Himself off the steeple and test whether the Father would send rescuing angels, the devil wanted Jesus to be completely pragmatic, and not to exercise His faith. If Jesus had yielded to the sin of pragmatism, there would have been no cross or salvation. Pragmatism, which only serves the moment, is destructive in the long run. Christ replied with Scripture, scolding Satan for putting God to the test. We church planters are tempted regularly to harness our power, to do whatever seems best in the short run; to practice pragmatism. Yet our concept of leadership is very different from the world's pattern of ruling. Godly handling of power will relate directly to our understanding and practice of Christ-like leadership (cf. Leadership Lesson 6, "Servant Leadership" in manual 4).

A God-sized vision for the future and a focus on desired outcomes should make church planters very dependent upon God. It is only His power that can equip us for the journey. And whereas we, as leaders, may collect allegiance from numerous followers, it is very important for us to direct their, and our, loyalty to Christ. Human beings were not created to support the attention and power now frequently given to individual human leaders. To insure that we do not use power improperly, we must share ministry and establish accountability in our church planting efforts.

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR MORAL INTEGRITY

We are to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mt 6:33). Unless we put first things first, second things will not follow. Without the supernatural virtues, the natural virtues fail. Without God's *grace*, we cannot be good. Without *love*, justice turns to cruelty. Without *hope*, courage turns to blind despair. Without *faith*, worldly wisdom is foolishness to God. The two levels, natural and supernatural, hang together (Kreeft, pp. 72,73).

Temptation is inevitable, but we need not be discouraged; victory is available. We have truth to depend on and our victory over temptation is a strong testimony to both Christians and non-Christians. Let us be imitators of Christ, who "being tempted in every manner like unto man ...did not sin" (Heb 4.15).

Accountability to others has proven a helpful deterrent to failure and a source of encouragement for many. Such accountability might be between one or more close friends or co-workers. Sometimes, a small group that focuses on this, along with prayer, fellowship or Bible study, is also helpful. Some prefer a formal accountability structure and others use a less structured approach, but the principle remains; "two are better than one" (Ecc 4:9,10). With accountability, we are reinforced in our battle for moral integrity.

Races are won by those who cross the finish line. Endurance is so very important as many leaders run well but few finish well. The Bible itself provides ample illustrations of this. Let us run the race to win. We consider the life of Job and decide to look beyond our circumstances to the future. "But He knows

the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). Such endurance comes from:

- looking ***inward for integrity***; "let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us" (Heb 12:1).
- looking ***upward for stability***; "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (Heb 12:2).
- looking ***outward for service***; "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; ... See to it that no one misses the grace of God" (Heb 12:14,15).
- looking ***forward with hope***; "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe" (Heb 12:28).

III. BENEFITS OF MORAL INTEGRITY

A. A Peaceful Life

When your actions back up your beliefs, you experience internal peace. Sleepless nights and a gnawing feeling deep inside can be the results of compromising one's integrity.

B. A Disciplined Life

There has never been an effective leader who lacked self-discipline. Integrity is the keystone on which all other areas of life rest. The church planter who is disciplined enough to master the BIG issue of moral integrity will find that the discipline needed to conquer all other areas of life is more easily obtained.

The church planter who is disciplined enough to master the BIG issue of moral integrity will find that the discipline needed to conquer all other areas of life is more easily obtained.

C. A Respected Following

Effective church planters understand that respect and influence grow out of a life of integrity. Integrity is the key to sustaining leadership over the long journey.

D. A Positive Legacy

The church planter who leaves a legacy of moral integrity may leave a gift far greater than the sum of their other accomplishments during the birthing of local congregations.

IV. MORAL INTEGRITY CAN BE COSTLY

Church planters, single or married, alone or in teams, will not necessarily find the road of moral integrity well-paved. Some of the strongest battles may be the very vehicles that Christ uses to transport us to a more deeply embedded character or a more visible witness for Him and His ways. We are guaranteed His presence and His power while we walk in communion. But we are not guaranteed outward success. We do not know that Zacchaeus ever regained his former wealth (Lk 19:8). Joseph served prison time, falsely accused, after he ran rather than lie with Potiphar's wife (Ge 39:12-20). And David continued to be a fugitive after refusing to take power and "touch the Lord's anointed" when he had easy opportunity to kill King Saul in a cave (1Sa 24).

Perhaps you are haunted by your sin, from the times that you have violated moral integrity. Honesty is a precious and productive virtue. Let us confess the sin that so easily entangles us (Heb 12:1) and take God at His word. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins (1Jn 1:9). But we may have debts to pay, illnesses to treat, or relationships to mend. Let us be responsible for our past, but not allow yesterday to determine our obedience today and tomorrow. From now on, moral integrity can be a mark of our spiritual leadership and our church planting efforts can reap the benefits of upright character.

CONCLUSION

Church planters, let us not be deluded. We may not be Noah, but the world is laughing at believers. Non-Christians continue to flaunt sinful behavior. The world's morals today are like a ship that has lost its rudder (moral integrity is gone) and what's worse, they would not know the route if they did find the rudder (absolute truth is denied). We have a life-saving mission to perform that will require every bit of our Christ-like character and moral integrity. God's word, the Bible, shows us the route. Local churches are the rudders to steer society with salt and light—to beckon back to moral integrity and to be a forum for godly fellowship. Individual followers of Christ, doing the work of evangelists, call sinners to be reconciled to God, and thus to each other.

Church planter, you are strategic to God's mission on earth. Remember to whom you belong, and act like it. Moral integrity for church planters is a fundamental necessity.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How does private failure in moral integrity affect public ministry? How about private knowledge of another servant's sin?
- If people fail in one area are they more likely to fail in another? How might Godly patterns in one area help ensure integrity in other areas?
- Does maintaining moral integrity become easier the longer you are in ministry?
- How can concrete accountability to other believers help develop and maintain moral integrity?
- While society insists on changing the rules about appropriate moral behavior, what can we do to make the continued compromise of Christian values less likely?
- We have primarily addressed the problems of money, sex and power. Consider and discuss possible relatedness between these and other areas of moral integrity: honesty, faithfulness, balance, compassion, self-control, wisdom, joy, trust, endurance.

ACTION PLAN

- Ask your spouse and/or one or two close friends, "What one area of moral integrity do others less frequently observe in my life?"
- According to what you learn, (OR according to God's prompting after earnest inquiry on your part) pray and plan for a brief strategy that includes particular discipline(s) to strengthen that less-recognized element of your character. Perhaps this is an area of failure, but it need not be; rather it may be one where your private practice has not yet influenced others.
- Execute the strategy during at least two weeks. This need not be complex, but must be concrete.
- Report to your spouse (if married) and at least one or two friends what you have done and what you have learned in the process.
- Do all the above within three months of originally having studied this lesson.

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PRAYER

PRAYER
10
LESSON

Facilitating Prayer for A Church Planting Movement

HELPING OTHERS PRAY FOR SATURATION CHURCH PLANTING

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to give church planters ideas on how to mobilize prayer in support of a church planting movement.

☞ Main Points

- A church planting movement requires that prayer resources be organized toward the "Z."
- Prayer leaders must be identified and developed to coordinate prayer movements.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Know how to mobilize others for prayer in support of church planting efforts.
- Participate in prayer events that are foundational to a citywide, region-wide or nation-wide church planting movement.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Use this as a practical guide for discussing how to facilitate prayer that leads to saturation church planting. Have trainees or others share any experiences they have had with concerts of prayer, or mobilizing prayer for a city or region. Have trainees discuss what steps they can each take to help mobilize prayer in their denominations, for their city, region or nation.

Share with the trainees any resources or contact information concerning prayer movements already happening in their city, region or country..

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this training, in Prayer lesson 3, "How To Facilitate Prayer" (Manual One), we discussed how the apostle Paul saw prayer as a vital aspect of evangelism and church planting. We discussed various strategies for mobilizing prayer in support of your own church planting ministries. In order for a region-wide, city-wide or nation-wide church planting movement to happen, prayer must be mobilized to focus on evangelism and church planting on a large scale. A prayer strategy for saturation church planting must be focused at the point where it matters—each village and neighborhood of every town and city of your nation and among every unreached people group.

There is a wide variety of ways in which people can organize concerted prayer for a city or nation. In Korea, it is not uncommon for churches to spend whole nights in prayer, to go to prayer mountains for periods of fasting and prayer, or to rise at 5 a.m. every morning for prayer. In America, Christians will gather for special days of prayer, such as a national day of prayer. People might set aside an hour during that day to pray specifically for the nation. In Europe, teams of people have walked the same routes as the Crusaders—from England to Istanbul—and prayed for reconciliation and conversions to Christ in cities and villages along the way.

Strategic prayer on a large scale requires certain key elements: research, vision casting, training, and finding and networking prayer leaders. In this lesson we will discuss these elements required for mobilizing prayer for city, regional or national church planting movements.

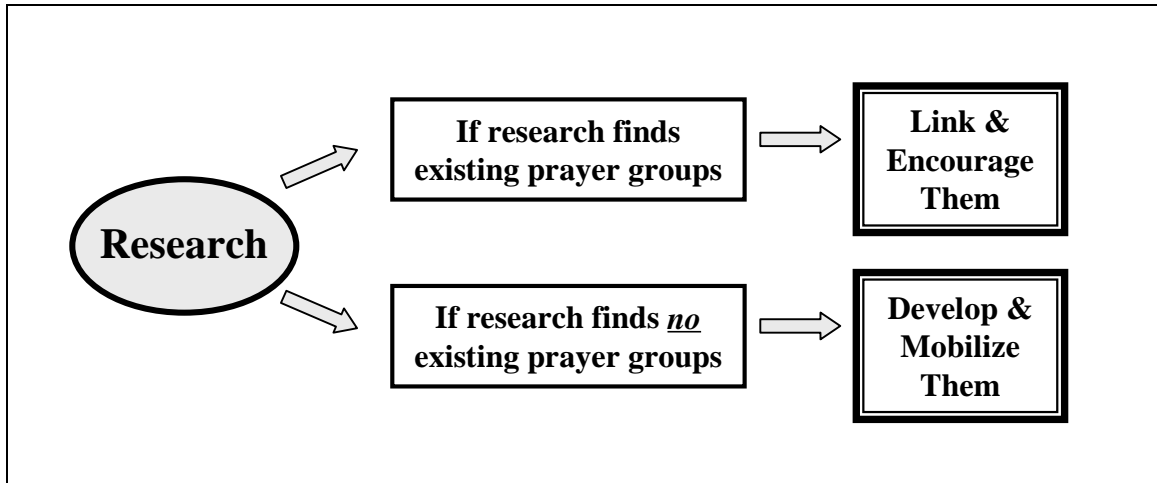
I. RESEARCH

Because it is God's desire to reconcile people to Himself and declare His glory among the nations, it is likely that the Holy Spirit has been already giving people a burden to pray for their neighborhood, region, city or nation. The first step in mobilizing prayer on a wider scale is to seek out people who have a burden for prayer. In some nations these are highly organized groups of men or women, such as the Lydia fellowship. In other places you may come across scattered individuals who are praying by themselves for the advance of the Gospel.

The strategy you develop and implement for mobilizing prayer will depend upon what your research reveals. If you find a number of prayer groups and networks, your work may focus on linking those prayer groups with evangelism and church planting ministries so that prayer can be focused on specific advances of the Gospel. Often, the prayer groups or networks are isolated from evangelism and church planting efforts and so are a lost resource to those efforts. Your strategy will primarily focus on organizing information sharing between the prayer efforts and the evangelism and church planting efforts. Your strategy could also include encouraging and mentoring these prayer groups or network leaders into mobilizing prayer in other parts of your city, region or nation. Another part of your strategy could include bringing these prayer groups and their churches together periodically for larger concerts of prayer. Because concerts of prayer are focused on the praise and worship of God and on the advance of the Gospel, they are good for helping to promote unity among Christians, rejoice in the diversity of the body, and can be a springboard for future cooperative efforts.

On the other hand, if your research reveals very little activity in the way of organized prayer, your strategy will focus on asking the Lord to lead you to potential prayer leaders. You may also focus on vision casting and mobilizing strategic prayer at a grass roots level among believers in local churches.

Figure 10.1 Research Results



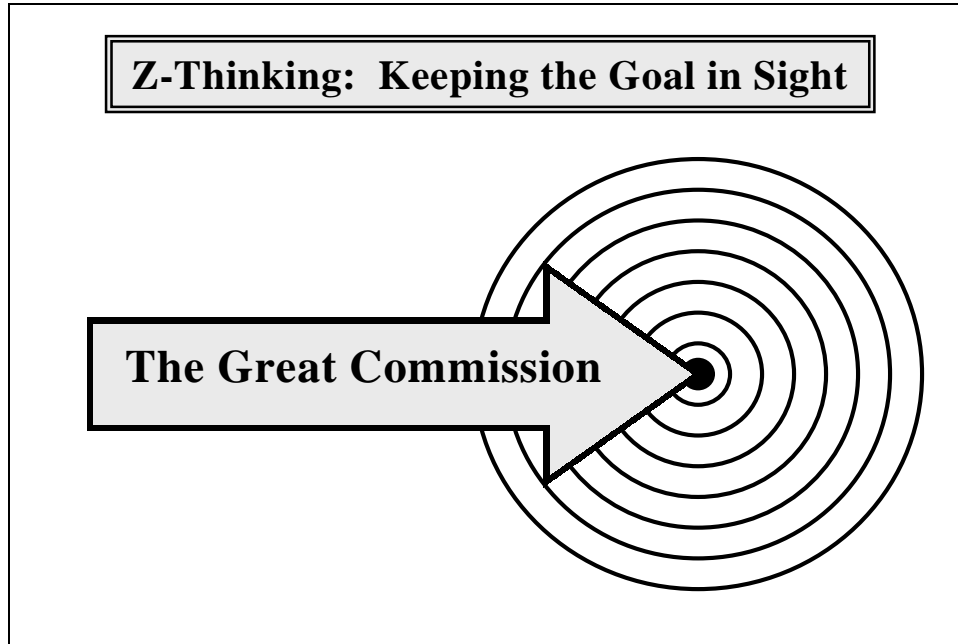
II. VISION CASTING—WHAT DOES GOD WANT FOR THIS PLACE?

Lack of prayer often stems from lack of vision. People dedicate time and effort to things that they believe are important or for which they have a deep passion. A key element for mobilizing prayer for saturation church planting is to give people a vision for what God wants to see happen in this city, region or nation. People must have rekindled within them a passion for the heart of God—that is, His desire to reconcile sinful man to Himself, to redeem mankind from the bondage of sin and restore man to fellowship with Himself through Jesus Christ. God has chosen the people of God to be ambassadors of that good news of reconciliation to a lost and dying world (2Co 5:18-20). As Christians regain a sense of their calling as ambassadors for Christ, they will naturally want to become involved in God's purposes.

Another part of vision casting is to give people a picture of "Z"—what will their city, region or nation look like when it is disciplined? How many churches will that be? What percentage of the population would be Christian? Compare "Z" to the reality of their situation today. *How many churches currently exist?*

About what percentage of the population are active Christians? Then pose the challenge, *How many churches need to be planted in order to see this city, region or nation disciplined? How many people need to believe in Christ?* (Refer to the SCP Vision lesson, "Z" Thinking, and the Church lessons, "The Purpose of the Church").

Figure 10.2 "Z"-Thinking



A third element of vision casting is to help people see the strategic role of prayer in evangelism and church planting. By having them discover the prayers of the apostle Paul and the things for which he asked prayer, they will catch a vision of how important their prayers are to the advance of the Gospel in their area. (Refer to Prayer Lesson 3, "How To Facilitate Prayer.")

III. TRAIN AND EQUIP PEOPLE TO PRAY FOR SATURATION CHURCH PLANTING

Once people catch a vision for what God wants for their neighborhood, city, region or nation, and the role of prayer in the advance of the Gospel, they will need to be given practical ideas and helps on how to participate prayerfully in the advance of the Gospel. You should be able to provide practical training in various methods of encouraging prayer, including:

- Prayer Triplets
- Prayer Walking
- Developing a prayer support team for a church planting effort
- Spiritual Warfare
- Sharing information between prayer groups and evangelism and church planting efforts
- Concerts of Prayer
- National Days of Prayer
- Prayer and Fasting

Most of this type of training will be born out of your personal experience of prayer in your church planting ministry. These topics have all been covered in the training manuals. Remember that prayer is more caught than taught. As people actually spend time in prayer, God will show them how to organize themselves and give them creative ways of mobilizing prayer in their own spheres of influence.

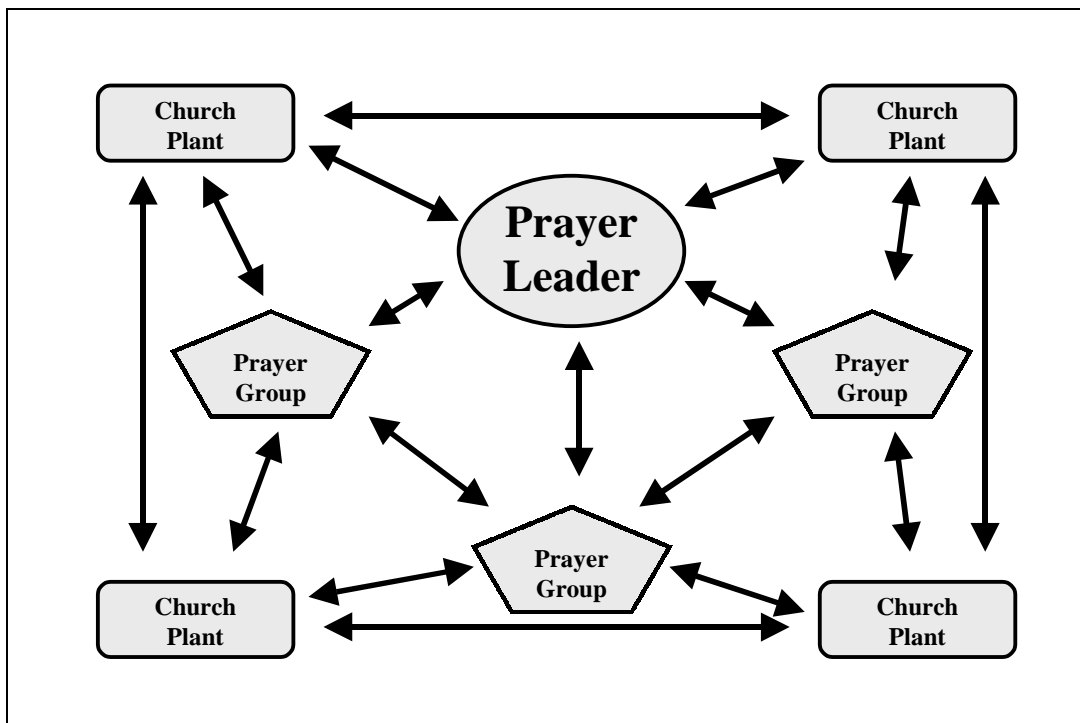
IV. FIND AND NETWORK PRAYER LEADERS

In order for any movement to be effective, it needs leaders. As you do research and vision cast, ask God to lead you to men and women who have a particular burden for prayer and leadership skills. These intercessors cast vision, provide training and focus prayer on issues related to the advance of the Gospel in a city, region or nation. They need to be kept informed of evangelism and church planting efforts so that they can mobilize prayer in support of those efforts. Below are some characteristics you should look for in prayer leaders:

- Have submissive and humble attitudes toward church leadership. They should not consider themselves more important than their church leaders.
- Be good facilitators of prayer meetings. They are able to keep the prayer meeting focused and able to restrain any inappropriate or unhelpful praying.
- Have a strong commitment to Christ and be faithful in spiritual disciplines, such as Bible reading, personal prayer, fellowship, etc.
- Have good relationships with people and a good reputation among the believers in their church.
- Emotionally well-balanced. Prayer leaders have learned to control their emotional swings and do not let their emotions rule their praying.
- Not prone to gossip; able to keep confidences.
- Have an understanding of and vision for saturation church planting. They are able to communicate this vision with others.
- Able to coordinate information flow between prayer groups and evangelism and church planting efforts.

Prayer leaders will function at different levels in a prayer movement. Some will be leaders of specific prayer groups—maybe in a local church, or with members from several local churches in a community. Others will be leaders of prayer networks—small groups or individuals throughout a region, city or nation, who are linked by a burden to pray for the advance of the Gospel in that area or among a particular people group. Denominations might be challenged to appoint prayer coordinators who would be responsible for helping churches in that denomination develop and implement prayer strategies.

Figure 10.3 Prayer Leaders Facilitate Prayer



National prayer leaders rally prayer for issues and concerns that affect an entire country. They also promote prayer for those serving in government, the military, etc. They rally prayer networks throughout the nation for specific prayer efforts and might coordinate activities, such as a national day of prayer. These national prayer leaders may be networked to national prayer leaders from other countries around the world.

EXAMPLE:

In Romania, the beginning signs of a prayer movement can be seen. From Alba Iulia, Romania, a group of three women began praying for each other and their husbands. They progressed to pray for their churches, their region, for the nation and for new churches to be planted. This fellowship grew to over 30 groups with approximately 150 women involved in prayer. It spread to Bucharest where a prayer brochure for Romania was produced and used all over the nation and outside the country. In Sibiu two churches which are not of the same denomination pray together. In Cluj there is a monthly women's prayer gathering open to all churches, and often unconverted women attend and some have become believers through this fellowship.

CONCLUSION

Encouraging prayer and prayer initiatives is not a new idea. Rather, we are joining God in His work. From the time of the early Christians, prayer was considered a vital part of evangelism and church planting. Regardless of whether prayer is at a local, city, regional or national level, the goal of facilitating prayer and prayer movements is to see Christ-centered, growing churches accessible throughout each nation so that every person can hear and see the Gospel in a way which is relevant to them and their situation.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What personal experience have you had in mobilizing prayer for saturation church planting?
- Do you know of any national or regional or city prayer networks?
- What are ways in which you have kept good communication between your prayer team and your church planting ministry?
- In class take time to discuss how you as church planters can share vision for saturation church planting and prayer with other churches and within your denomination.
- Have you ever attended a prayer rally or concert of prayer? What was it like? How would you organize a concert of prayer in your city or town?
- What is God's will regarding prayer in your life? Is prayer, as a priority, a non-negotiable issue for leaders?
- Why is prayer not a more vital part of our lives and ministries?

ACTION PLAN

Review the different aspects for mobilizing prayer for saturation church planting. Decide on what steps you can take to help mobilize prayer for your city, region or country.

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PRAYER

LESSON

11,12

Concert of Prayer

THANKING GOD FOR HIS FAITHFULNESS

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to celebrate the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord throughout the training program.

☞ Main Points

- Thanking God for His faithfulness.
- Asking His blessing on our future ministry.

☞ Desired Outcomes

At the end of this lesson, each participant should . . .

- Be encouraged as they recall some of the Lord's blessings during the months of training.
- Be challenged to trust God for even greater things in their own lives and ministries.
- Be challenged to form or participate in a church planter's fellowship for on-going help and encouragement after the completion of these training materials.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This two-hour concert of prayer should follow the prayer lesson and should be the final closing of the Church Planter Training. Plan carefully to make it a time of encouragement, blessing and celebration. Choose three or four people to share how the Lord has blessed their church planting efforts. Then divide into small groups to give more people time to share. Finally, come back together for a time of praise and worship.

Have a map of the country and a list of unreached people groups to use during the concert of prayer. Also, Church Lesson 18 on the history of Christianity in the country can be used as a source of praise topics on God's faithfulness to the people of this country and His desire to fill the nation with His glory.

Note: Psalm 67 is an excellent Psalm to use as a theme for this concert of prayer.

I. PRAISE GOD FOR BEING A FAITHFUL GOD

Sing together a number of songs or choruses that focus on thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness.

Ask trainees to think of any short portions of Scripture that relate to God's faithfulness, and to read them to the group as they come to mind.

II. RECALL THE LORD'S PAST BLESSINGS

A. To Each of Us Personally

Share brief testimonies of how the Lord has worked in your personal salvation and growth.

B. To Our Families

Share testimonies of God's work in your family.

C. In Your Church Planting Ministries

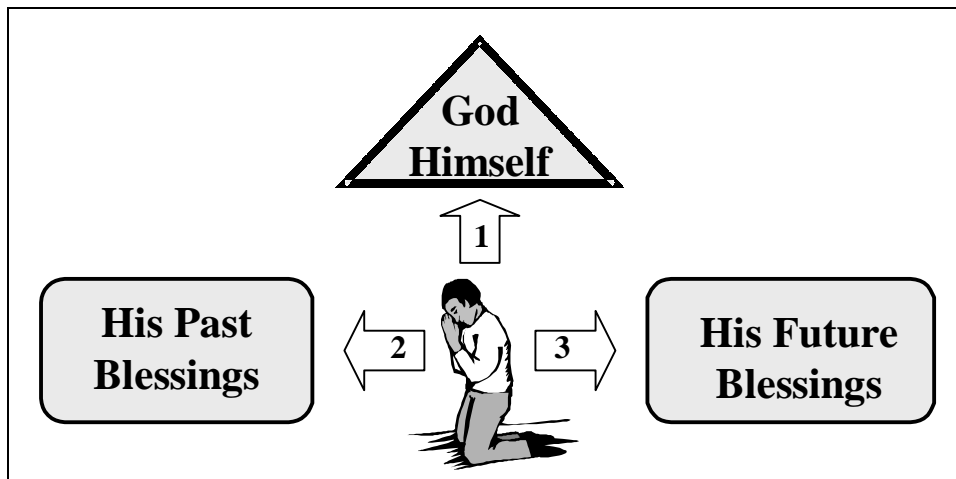
- Have three or four individuals share with the whole group ways in which they saw the Lord bless their church planting ministry or lessons which the Lord taught them during this cycle of training.
- In small groups, allow everyone who wishes to share blessings from the Lord.

D. To the Church In Your Nation

Church Lesson 18, "The History Of Christianity In _____," discusses a basic history of Christianity in your country. Use this as a guide for prayer.

- Thank God for the first missionaries who brought the Gospel to your country.
- Thank God for preparing the hearts of the first believers to receive the Gospel.
- Praise God for Christian martyrs—those who died for their faith in your country.
- Thank Him for the missionaries that have been sent out from your country to other parts of the world.
- Praise God for His preservation of the church through history.

Figure 12.1 Thanking God for . . .



III. PRAY FOR THE ONGOING WORK OF CHURCH PLANTING

In small groups, have trainees pray for each other's ministries. Pray for the advancement of God's Kingdom in the cities and regions where the church planters are working. Pray for freedom and boldness to proclaim the Gospel.

In a large group, pray for the entire nation. Ask God for the continued growth and expansion of His Kingdom to penetrate all parts of the nation. Pray that the Gospel will penetrate the unreached people groups. Use a map of the country and a list of unreached people groups to assist this prayer time.

IV. CELEBRATE THE LORD'S GOODNESS IN SONG AND WORSHIP

Note: In closing, you might want to make plans for an on-going church planter's fellowship which could meet regionally on a regular basis (monthly or quarterly) for prayer, sharing, continuing education and encouragement of the church planters in their ministry.

LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP
11
LESSON

Releasing Leaders

Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to emphasize the importance of releasing leaders to fully function in ministry, rather than simply delegating tasks to them.

Main Points

- Releasing goes beyond delegating—it means allowing new leaders to carry on their own ministry.
- We need to keep in contact with the new leaders we have released for ministry.

Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Know the difference between delegating and releasing.
- Be committed to a ministry of empowering and releasing others.

INTRODUCTION

This material has already discussed the importance of delegating tasks to other capable people, so that the leader is not doing all the work. Many leaders have learned that they can indeed increase their effectiveness as they spend more time training and equipping others for ministry, rather than trying to do it all themselves. However, there is another important step in the training process that goes beyond simply delegating work. This is the step of *releasing*. When we *release* new leaders for ministry, we allow them to function fully as leaders *without our control*. They make their own decisions and plan their own activities. In other words, releasing leaders means that we allow them to *carry on their own ministry* instead of simply helping us do *ours*. This is a vital distinction.

Releasing leaders means that we allow them to *carry on their own ministry*.

I. CHURCH PLANTERS MUST RELEASE OTHERS FOR MINISTRY

The leaders of a church plant multiply themselves through the identification and development of others. Many leaders try to build their ministries around themselves, but God calls us to disciple and train others (2Ti 2:2). However, the goal should be to see those new leaders leading ministry of their own.

A. The Example of John the Baptist

Perhaps the best example of a 'releasing leader' is John the Baptist. He appeared before Jesus, and gained a large following (Mk 1:5). He had the privilege of pointing the first disciples to Jesus (Jn 1:35-36). With this background in mind, consider John's response when the ministry of Jesus began to surpass that of John. Read John 3:22-30 and answer the following questions:

- What problem bothered John's disciples in verse 26?
- Why do you think they were concerned?
- How do you think they expected John to respond? Why?
- What word does John use in verse 29 to describe his attitude about this situation?

- What do you think about John's summary in verse 30? Was he sincere? What kind of emotion do you think he felt when he made that statement?
- How is John's response the same or different from the normal attitude of Christian leaders that you have known when someone else's ministry begins to surpass their own?

It is true that John the Baptist was excited about seeing Jesus prosper. Certainly Jesus can do nothing wrong in ministry. But what about the risk of releasing someone who might not minister as 'perfectly' as we do?

B. The Example of Paul

Paul was perhaps the best example of a leader who trained and released others for ministry. The New Testament contains a long list of people who traveled with or learned from Paul, and then continued the work of the church. In addition to the more well-known leaders such as Timothy, Titus, Silas, Priscilla and Aquilla, we can find lists of others at the close of most of Paul's letters. Paul normally spent very short times at each of the churches he founded—anywhere from a week to a maximum of around two years.

How could Paul spend such a short time training leaders, and then move on and leave them in charge? Wasn't he worried that they might do something wrong? Certainly Paul was concerned about this possibility. And indeed, there were problems. The Corinthian church, for example, was a mess. But there appear to be two factors that helped Paul deal with his concerns:

1. The Priority of Reaching the Nations with the Gospel

The Great Commission commands us to make disciples of all nations. This is an awesome task, but it is not optional. We must do it. Understanding this, Paul considered it more important to reach the world with the Gospel of Christ than to worry about the fact that other leaders will not do things the way he might prefer. They might even make mistakes, or other blunders. Read Philippians 1:15-18 and answer the following questions:

- Describe the two kinds of preaching that others were doing while Paul was in prison, according to verses 15-17. How do you feel about these kinds of ministries? Why?
- What was the most important thing to Paul, according to verse 18?
- What was Paul's reaction to preaching from true motives?
- What was Paul's reaction to preaching from false motives?
- Do you think motives were important to Paul?
- How do you think Paul was able to respond this way?
- What is your reaction when someone else preaches the Gospel in a way you do not agree with, or when you question their motives?

It is more important to reach the world with the Gospel of Christ than to worry about the fact that other leaders will not do things the way he might prefer.

Please understand that we are not advocating preaching from false motives. Neither was Paul. Furthermore, Paul was rejoicing that the Gospel was preached by whatever means, the book of Galatians makes it clear that it must be the Gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Christ—not a false Gospel. For Paul, other issues were secondary to the importance of preaching the Gospel.

2. The Church Belongs to the Lord

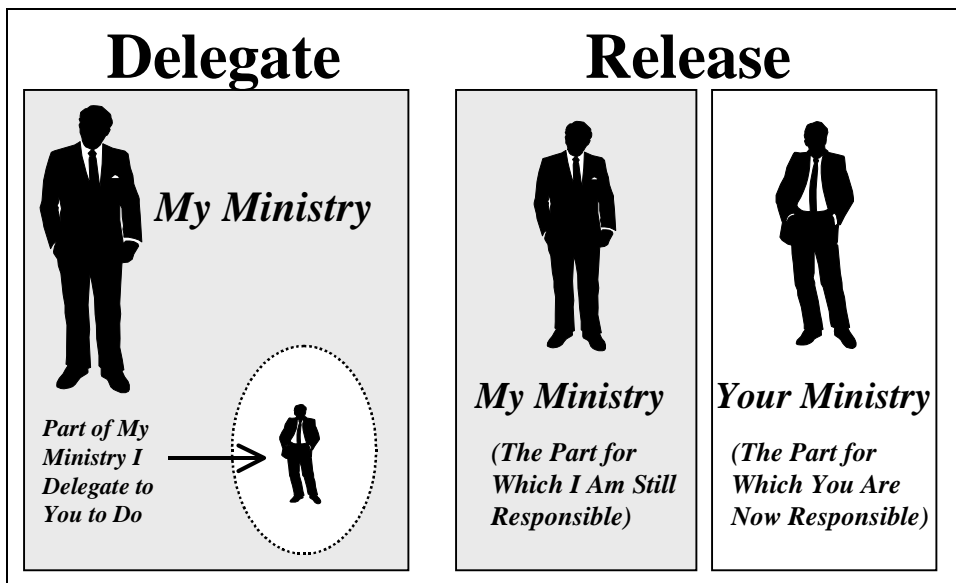
The second factor that seems to have helped Paul release leaders quickly into ministry was his confidence that the Church belongs to the Lord, and that He has promised to build it (Mt 16:18). As church planters or church leaders, we are not ultimately responsible for the growth of the church. Paul makes this point very clearly in 1 Corinthians 3:5-7. God might use a number of people to bring the church to maturity, just as He used Paul and Apollos.

This confidence does not excuse us from doing our best to be faithful leaders. It does, however, eliminate any responsibility to judge the ministry of others. God Himself will judge their motives and actions (1Co 4:5). This fact should allow us to release those we have trained for ministry, and then relax and let the Lord guide and use them as He wills.

II. PROBLEMS OF RELEASING

Releasing leaders for ministry means taking our hands off them and allowing the Lord to guide the way that they serve Him. During the delegation stage of training, you allowed the new leader to have responsibility of a limited area of your ministry while you evaluated and guided him. However, you retained control of most areas, and were ultimately responsible for the ministry that you delegated to him. Releasing is the next step up from delegating, and assumes that the new leader has already proved his faithfulness and ability. Now it is time to help him find his own ministry, and release him to do it. Figure 11.1 contrasts delegating and releasing.

Figure 11.1 Releasing vs. Delegating



When you release the new leader, you may simply turn over to him some of the ministry that you used to do. However, in contrast to delegation, he is now responsible for that ministry before the Lord—not before you. An example of this kind of releasing would be a church planter turning the new church over to his apprentice leader, and moving on to start another church. This is the kind of releasing that is shown in Figure 11.1. In other cases, the new leader might begin an entirely new ministry. For instance, a church planter might remain at the new church as pastor, but train a new church planter who would go out to start another church—ideally with financial support of the 'mother' church.

The process of releasing is not as easy as it sounds. Trusting God to work in the lives of the people one leads goes against human nature and poses two serious challenges for any leader.

A. Fear That the Leader Will do a Good Job

As people are trained and released into ministry, some of them are likely to exhibit greater gifts and talents than the leader. They also may begin to have a deeper understanding of the leader's vision and want to make changes. This loss of control can be threatening to the leader who fears for his own reputation or position. The spiritual leader must remove this carnal stumbling block for his own spiritual growth and for the growth of the church.

Loss of control can be threatening to the leader who fears for his own reputation or position.

This stumbling block can be overcome only through faith and trust in God. A leader who is secure in His identity in Christ can trust that just as God is at work in His own life, He is at work in the lives of the people he leads. Therefore, if God is calling His people to service, it is really His work and reputation that are at stake and not the leader's. The leader needs to be confident that he is walking in obedience to the Lord in empowering and releasing his people for service and then turn over all of his anxieties and fears about his own reputation and position to the Lord (Php 4:6-7, 1Pe 5:7).

As Christians, our desire should not be for our own reputation and glory, but rather that God would be glorified in our lives, our ministry, and in the world. Rather than be envious of the gifts and talents of others, Christian leaders should rejoice in seeing God raise up others who can advance the cause of Christ further and farther than themselves.

Christian leaders should rejoice in seeing God raise up others who can advance the cause of Christ further and farther than themselves.

As we have seen on numerous occasions, the apostle Barnabas is an excellent example of a secure leader. When he was in Antioch, he realized that Paul's gifts would be of use to the church there. Barnabas could have kept quiet and done nothing. Instead, Barnabas went to great lengths to travel to Tarsus, find Paul and bring him back to Antioch (Ac 11:25-26). Rather than try and protect his "own territory" in Antioch, Barnabas took a risk and brought Paul into service with him. We see that eventually, Paul did surpass Barnabas in ministry renown, to the greater glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom.

B. Fear That the Leader Will do a Bad Job

On the other hand, people released into ministry may not be as competent as the leader and may not do things the way in which the leader expects them to be done. A secure leader believes that God is powerfully at work in and for and through the people he leads, and is free to appropriately encourage risks.

A secure leader also understands that *failure is a necessary part of learning and growing*. An illustration from parenting: A child learning to walk will fall several times before he at last can walk by himself. When the child falls, the parent picks him up, gives him an encouraging word, and lets him try again. He does not yell, "You failed! You really embarrassed me! No more walking for you!"

When Jesus trained the disciples, He often used failure as an occasion for teaching. Peter's denial is a spectacular example. Jesus allowed the failure, and promised that it would result in Peter being able to strengthen the brethren (Lk 22:31-32). During the training process, God used you to correct and encourage your apprentice leader. The Lord will continue to work with him—although it might or might not involve your participation. Trust the Lord to complete the work that He has begun (Php 1:6).

III. PRINCIPLES FOR RELEASING

There are a number of principles that apply to most releasing situations. The general idea is that you must have a continued good relationship with the new leader, but that you will refrain from controlling or smothering him.

A. Develop and Maintain Deep Relationships

Close relationships are a natural way to minister to others. Releasing is natural when people have established a bond of trust. Jesus traveled, worked, ate, laughed and prayed with his disciples. In the process, he built close relationships with them. He released his disciples with confidence that they would carry on properly. After all, they had been "with Him" (Mk 3:14-15).

Releasing is natural when people have established a bond of trust.

Paul as well shares how among the Thessalonians he shared the Gospel as well as his *life* with the Thessalonians (1Th 2:8). Paul also describes Timothy as his 'son' and says that Timothy knew "*all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance*" (2Ti 3:10). It must

be the goal of the church planter to build the same kinds of close relationships with those he wants to release.

B. Make Sure Future Leaders Continue to Own the Vision

Many leaders mistakenly assume that others around them have vision they have. But taking this for granted can be a big mistake. Even though the vision may be articulated many times, and even be repeated by future leaders it may not be enough. Keep the vision before the new leader. If the vision burns in their hearts just as it does in yours, you will be excited by the results they will achieve.

C. Don't Wait Too Long to Release

People learn by doing. The sooner you can put new leaders in ministry, the sooner they will reach their full potential. The Bible warns us about ordaining leaders too early (1Ti 3:6), but the opposite is also true. In the Old Testament, King Saul brought disaster on himself and his family by trying to prevent David from assuming the role God had given him.

D. Expect Mistakes

When people take risks, they often fail. If there is room for failure, people are more likely to try new things. When those you have trained make mistakes, they must be reassured that you have confidence in them. Be gracious and patient using every mistake as a teaching opportunity. When the disciples were unable to cast out demons, Jesus took the opportunity to teach the importance of faith in deliverance ministry (Mt 17:19-21). A lesson on giving or obedience probably would have fallen on deaf ears at that moment. But, there can be no doubt that the disciples listened intently to this lesson since it was the remedy to the failure they had just experienced.

If there is room for failure, people are more likely to try new things.

E. Trust God to Work through Others

God can work through others just as he has through you. You must communicate this to those you are training. If people do not understand that you believe in them they will never take risks and therefore never grow. Jesus had such confidence in his disciples that He stated that they would do greater works than He did (Jn 14:12). Expect ministry to increase under the leadership of others.

F. Avoid Dependence

"Train and release", so that others do not constantly depend on you as the leader. How could Paul spend such short amounts of time planting these churches? He knew when he needed to get out of the way. He knew that there was something about his presence as a great 'leader' that prevented the development of 'good' leaders. Imagine if he stayed in Lystra for a long time. Who would preach when Paul was around? Probably no one but Paul, because he was so good at it. In such a case, however, others would not have an opportunity to develop their preaching skills. Paul spent little time in each place so that others would realize that they could not depend upon him for everything. They had to do things for themselves (Allen 1962:93).

The presence of a great 'leader' can prevent the development of 'good' leaders.

When a particular church planter in Europe was at this stage he would announce that he could not be at church the following week because of a meeting in another city. Sometimes he would deliberately plan meetings so that he would not be available. During these kinds of times the trainees are stretched and they grow. If you do not do plan to turn over ministry, then the trainees will depend on you too long.

IV. MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH THOSE YOU HAVE RELEASED

Though Jesus left his followers physically, he assured them beforehand that he would send his Spirit—they would not be without his influence (Jn 14:16-18). As Jesus did not completely leave those he released, so for us, contact with the leaders we have released should be maintained for inspiration and accountability.

Meaningful meetings are the heart of the ongoing relationship with new leaders. For example, if the new leaders are planting a daughter church, you might meet with them monthly or weekly. During these meetings take time to do the following:

- Discuss skills, knowledge and character issues with which they are personally dealing.
- Review all the important relationships in their lives (family, ministry).
- Discuss what has happened with regard to the ministry since you last met.
- Ask where the ministry is going—what is their vision?
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help them reach their vision.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Why is releasing so important?
- How many people in your church have ministry responsibility?
- How long did the Apostle Paul usually work with believers before he moved on and trusted them to carry on the work of the new church?
- What happens if your mother church refuses to release new leaders to new ministries?

ACTION PLAN

When and how are you planning on releasing your apprentice leader? Do you see him or her taking over some of your former responsibilities, or developing their own ministry? Make a plan, and begin to work toward releasing them to reach their full potential.

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LEADERSHIP
12
LESSON

Movement Leadership

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this workshop is to reflect on the kinds of leadership needed to lead a church planting movement.

☞ Main Points

- Movement leaders deeply desire God's vision for the Church and effectively communicate it to others.
- Movement leaders motivate and facilitate others in order to promote church planting movements.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this workshop has been mastered participants should...

- Know the kind of leadership that is necessary to start and sustain a church planting movement in their context.
- Be committed to pray that God would provide the necessary leadership in order to bring about a church planting movement in their country.

☞ Appendix

12A Movement Leaders

☞ Note to Trainers

This is a workshop. After a brief introduction divide into small groups and have each group begin to consider the questions given.

INTRODUCTION

Jesus, our Leader, once said, "I will build My Church." Having made His intentions known, Jesus then continued to model servant-leadership by serving, teaching, and proclaiming His Father's will to others. In doing this, Jesus ignited the movement of the Church to the ends of the earth. It is this movement that brings us to the point we are now. The question we must ask ourselves is, "What kind of leadership most effectively promotes the movement of the Church?"

A church planting movement requires many types of leaders, for example visionaries, administrators, trainers, mentors, encouragers, etc. Though they operate in different ways and at different levels, they have this in common: they are all instruments of God who use their God ordained influence to mobilize the Body of Christ toward the completion of the Great Commission.

Divide into small groups. In each group, consider the following:

1. Try to envision a church planting movement in your country. What would that movement look like?
2. As you think of the different types of leadership needed for a church planting movement, list the skills and qualities necessary for leaders at different levels.
3. Name leaders in your country who best exemplify these.

4. As you read the following examples from around the world, try to identify the kinds of leaders necessary to see such a movement in your country.

Example from Uruguay:

Jason Carlisle, a missionary kid who remained in Uruguay as a missionary, is the founder of the Spiritual Warfare Network. This network attempts to unite the entire Body of Christ in strategic prayer. Participants come from most evangelical denominations. Some initiatives of the Network include publishing a prayer guide notebook with daily prayer for the nation, prayer in support of major events and prayer workshops in churches.

List some areas of leaders that would be necessary at different levels if this kind of prayer movement were to happen in your country.

Example from Zimbabwe:

A vision to plant 10,000 churches and train 10,000 leaders began in 1984-85 with Jim Montgomery and Ted Olson (missionaries from the outside who came in to do vision casting). In 1986 the people caught the vision; national research was started in 1989 and completed in 1991. In 1992 they held a congress with more than 500 leaders from different churches. Up until this time, there had been no unity among the leaders (report from Xolisani Dlamini at the Ibero American DAWN Congress '98).

From this example, list some of the things you learn about leadership necessary for a national movement:

- What kind of leadership would be necessary for this to happen in your country?
- Do you know of people who might be encouraged to assume some of this leadership?
- What part can you play in this?

Example from Romania:

In Romania, an SCP team of expatriate missionaries traveled throughout the country to find those God had similarly burdened for the whole country. Roughly one of every 10 leaders shared such a burden. The expats asked them to train church planters in their area of expertise in SCP thinking. Had they fully bought into the SCP vision? No, not 100 percent. But they often did articulate one aspect of the vision very well, and were asked to particularly train on that point.

As the expat missionaries shared ministry in training and vision casting with these men, the men themselves more fully embraced the vision of SCP. God sovereignly kept the men experiencing SCP concepts as they also continued to move to new levels of leadership within the movement. They went from being church planters, to trainers of church planters, to trainers of trainers, to coordinators of the SCP work in the nation.

At that time, the expatriates felt they should leave the country so as not to impinge what God was doing through these men. Today, these men lead their aspect of the movement that God had intended and begun in Romania.

- Discuss how the expatriate missionaries and national leaders worked together to begin a movement in Romania?
- How can these two communities work together more closely in your country?
- Who are the leaders in your country with some aspect of the SCP vision?
- How they can they be encouraged to participate in the training?

ACTION PLAN

In your workshop, you identified some leadership needs. Commit yourself to begin to pray that God would raise up the facilitative movement leaders that are necessary to cause and maintain a church planting movement in your country. At the same time, ask the Lord to show you how you should fit into his plan to fulfill the Great Commission.



Movement Leaders

I. MOVEMENTS REQUIRE SPECIAL KINDS OF LEADERS

According to God's sovereign timing, He raises up leaders to initiate and advance movements of church planting. These leaders are qualitatively different from others. They are driven by the question "what does God want?" Leaders like John Knox of Scotland who prayed to the Lord, "Give me Scotland or I die!" is an excellent example. These leaders do not simply begin programs or establish institutions, but as we will see, they inspire movements which mobilize believers toward the goal of increased church planting activity.

In short, leaders who promote church planting movements are instruments of God who use their God ordained influence to mobilize the Body of Christ toward the completion of the Great Commission through the planting of churches. Church planting movements normally include a constellation of leaders influencing several levels of Church life. Some of these leaders, like John Knox, the example given above, motivate denominations and nations for Kingdom expansion. Others (more numerous) directly influence congregations for regional impact. Lastly and most common, 'grass roots' local leaders facilitate fellow believers toward greater evangelization and church planting. These grass roots leaders may be cell group leaders, church planters, deacon-pastors, or evangelists/disciplers.

Church planting movements normally include a constellation of leaders influencing several levels of Church life.

II. MOVEMENT LEADERS COMMUNICATE VISION

Leadership that promotes movement is visionary. A person of vision can be described as having an attitude of expectation and hope, and as one who sees beyond the present into the future from God's perspective. Church planting movement leaders do not invent their vision, although it may sound that way to others. The vision is really God's vision. Movement leaders simply discover it having asked, "What does God want?"

Church planting movement leaders carry a compelling conviction that God wants to see His church established in such a way that every man women and child has an accessible Gospel witness. Movement leaders recognize the importance of persuasively communicating this vision to other believers. He solicits commitment to the vision in such a way that others feel responsible for the achievement of it.

Church planting movement leaders carry a compelling conviction that God wants to see His church established.

Every accomplishment starts with an idea. When someone builds a home they first have a blueprint. When someone wants to start a business, they first have a clearly defined plan for what the business will provide and how it will operate. When an artist paints a picture he first has a thought or feeling he wishes to express. In all these examples there are two creations, first the picture in the mind and then the tangible object.

Some regions lack movements because the Body of Christ lacks a vision for it. How can people strive toward that which they do not conceptualize? Movement leaders paint the picture of God's desires. They proclaim the 'Z,' revealing the cause to mobilize around.

III. MOVEMENT LEADERS ARE MOBILIZERS

Church planting movement leaders see the expansion of the Church as it truly is, as a spiritual war. Realizing that they cannot fight this spiritual war alone, they cry out for mobilization. Just as in time of war, when the sense of urgency and need to survive dominates everything people say and do, so the mobilized church works together to achieve what God wants. To 'Mobilize' simply means to assemble people into readiness according to their abilities for participation in a common cause. Movement leaders understand that when the whole body of Christ will consciously mobilize around the cause to witness for Christ, God will accelerate the Church toward reaching the goal of making disciples.

Church planting movement leaders see the expansion of the Church as it truly is, as a spiritual war.

It takes a spiritual person to mobilize churches in this spiritual war. It takes one who knows God to know what he wants. Movement leaders are able to discern the times and sense the Spirit's leading to know what the Church should do. To develop this spiritual depth, movement leaders spend time in God's Word, in prayer and fasting, communing with the builder of the Church, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the original Movement Leader.

IV. MOVEMENT LEADERS ARE FACILITATORS

Traditionally Christian leaders have been thought of as the ones who "do" the ministry. Ephesians 4:11-12 teaches that the job of leadership should be primarily to envision and equip others to be sure that the ministry is done. Movement leaders are facilitators, ones who encourage and enable others to use their gifts. While movement leaders may be very active people, always doing something, it is most accurate to describe them not as 'doers' but as ones who 'cause things to be done'. They are noted for strategically inspiring others to work. When movement leaders are at work others who desire to serve God will want to join in. One of the marks of success of facilitators is the increased ministry effectiveness of others.

The movement leader is like a farmer who plants the seed, tills the soil and waters it, but has no power to make the seed actually grow (1Co 3:6-7). The job of the farmer is to nurture what he has planted, to remove obstacles to its growth and to provide the best possible environment for its development. The situation is similar for a movement leader. Like a farmer he is a 'doer' who 'causes things to be done.'

Figure 12.1 Two Kinds of Leaders



CONCLUSION

As He concluded His earthly ministry, Jesus gave his followers the mandate to lead on as he had done (Jn 20:21). He had sufficiently prepared them so that if they applied what they had learned from him, they would have a similar (even greater) impact (Jn 14:12).

Those who follow the leader today are commanded to lead on as he did. Remember the unique approach of Jesus. He lived as a servant, deeply loved his followers who he trained to carry on the vision—this is leadership at its best. This is The Great Movement Leader who touches lives and transforms the world.

CELL GROUPS

CELL GROUPS

LESSON 12

Cells That Saturate Through Local Churches

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain how to plan for and implement a ministry of cell groups in an existing church.

☛ Main Points

- Cell groups can be used in any church that wants to grow and fulfill the Great Commission.

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand that cell groups can be used to strengthen an existing church in the areas of fellowship, discipleship, evangelism and leadership development.
- Think about the positive and negative impact that cell groups can have on the existing ministries of a church.
- Understand the steps which must be taken in order to plan for and implement the use of cell groups in an existing church.
- Be able to develop a basic plan to begin using cell groups in an existing church.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of starting a movement of new churches is to fulfill the Great Commission and ultimately to reach "the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) with the good news of Christ. The fellowship, discipleship and evangelism in cell groups provides the building blocks that an existing church needs in order to start many new churches through these groups. Churches which have a vision for multiplication can use cell groups not only to start new daughter churches but also to bring renewal and growth to their own church. Cell groups are certainly not the only way in which this can happen, but they are an effective method for bringing new life and focus to the ministry of a church. Through the use of cell groups, existing local churches can saturate their "Jerusalem," i.e. their city or town, with a relevant, viable witness for Christ.

When you look at the benefits of ministry in groups, it becomes obvious that there are many reasons why a traditional church would want to make use of cell groups as well. Cell groups in an existing church can make it possible for the members to develop and strengthen their relationships. As they spend time together, they will begin to learn about one another's joys and burdens, and they will be able to fulfill the biblical commands to love one another (Jn 13:34-35) and to carry each other's burdens (Gal 6:2).

Through the use of cell groups, members of a church can learn to identify their spiritual gifts and then develop and use them. Instead of the majority of ministry being done by only a few (often overworked) leaders in the church, more and more of the members would begin to become involved in ministries of discipleship, nurturing and evangelism. The groups would provide for the development of new leaders in the church from among the members. The church would grow as a result of the evangelism in the groups.

At the same time, the use of cell groups in an existing church often changes some of the dynamics of ministry in the church. The leadership of the church must be committed to this type of ministry and have an active role in it. There are several issues which must be discussed and prayed about before a cell group ministry can begin in a church. Once the decision has been made to incorporate cell groups into a church, the church leaders need to create a plan and then, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, implement that plan in the church.

I. EVALUATION

In order to use cell groups in an existing church, there are several issues which must be given careful thought. For purposes of discussion in this lesson, we will assume that a church planter has been working with cell groups and would like to introduce them into his home church. He must spend some time with the pastor(s) and leaders of the church to explain the concepts and advantages of cell groups, as well as to discuss with them some of the issues which will affect the decision whether to use cell groups in the church.

The issues which must be discussed with the leadership of any church that is contemplating the use of cell groups are as follows:

A. Vision

What is the vision that the leaders have for the church? Is it possible that cell groups can be used to support and encourage this vision? Cell groups can be used as a foundation for a larger ministry strategy. Assuming that evangelism and growth take place in the groups, how can the reproducing groups be used in an overall ministry strategy? Does the church want to grow larger, does it want to start new daughter churches, or does it want to send out some of the members on missionary teams to other cities? The church leaders need to decide on a ministry vision and strategy for the cell groups, as it relates to the overall vision of the ministry of the church.

B. Commitment

One of the most important factors which can determine the success or failure of cell groups in an existing church is the level of commitment among the church leaders. They need to understand the benefits, functions and goals of a cell group ministry. They need to understand that a cell group is not simply a small group where people will get together to study the Bible. Of course, Bible study will be a part of the groups, but it is not the main purpose. The main purpose is to experience the body of Christ in action: worshipping the Lord, edifying believers, and evangelizing the lost. Are the leaders willing to be committed to this emphasis in the ministry of the groups? There will need to be some flexibility on the part of the existing church leadership in order to accommodate some of the changes which the cell groups will introduce into the church.

One of the most important factors in the success or failure of cell groups in an existing church is the level of commitment among the church leaders.

C. Existing Ministries

The use of cell groups in a church will support and encourage ministries of evangelism, discipleship and leadership development. Careful consideration must be given to the effect that the cell groups may have on the existing ministries in the church. In some churches, the ministry of the cell groups might complement the ministries which already exist. However, the cell groups might also "compete" or interfere with existing ministries in the church. Sometimes the cell group ministries turn out to be more effective than already existing ministries. For example, if the church has been doing evangelism by holding outdoor campaigns, the number of people who usually respond might be very few. If the relational evangelism which happens in the groups works very well, the existing evangelism ministry leader may feel "threatened" by the cell groups. This can lead to problems between those who are doing ministry "the way it has always been done" and those who are doing ministry in cell groups.

Discuss the use of cell groups with each ministry leader in the church, and see how he feels about it. Are there areas of potential conflict? Would some of the existing ministries (e.g. discipleship) need to be changed or eliminated if groups are used? These questions must be asked before cell groups can be used in a church.

D. Tradition vs. New Ideas

For some of the people in an existing church, the concept of cell groups might be strange and somewhat frightening. They may resist the use of groups, especially if they have never been in a

group ministry. Sometimes people resist cell group ministry because they have been part of a group at some point in the past, and the group did not work out well. Sufficient time and energy must be spent in order to help the church members understand the groups and see the benefits of using them in the church.

Depending on the church, the underlying principle of doing relational evangelism in the groups might be a hard thing for some of the church members to accept. If they have never done much evangelism, if they have done it differently, or if they are uncomfortable with the idea of making friends with unbelievers, they may have a hard time agreeing with the need for cell groups in which relational evangelism is a top priority.

E. Location

No matter how many groups are started initially, each group will need to have a place where they will meet together weekly. In some cultures, meeting in homes or apartments is acceptable and this will not be a problem. In other cultures, the problem of where to meet might be more difficult to resolve. The leaders must consider where the first groups meet, especially in light of potentially many more groups being started over the course of several years. Assuming that the groups grow and multiply, where will the new groups meet? This should be discussed before cell groups are started so that it does not become a problem later, when the groups are ready to multiply.

F. Leadership

Initially, the church leadership needs to decide who is qualified and available to become leaders of the first cell groups (see Manual 3, Cell Group lesson, "Training New Cell Group Leaders"). These people must be given training and preparation in order to successfully lead their groups. This training should include the lessons from these manuals on Cell Groups, Leadership, and Bible Study Methods. Other lessons from these manuals can be taught based on the needs and experience of the future leaders.

A supervisory structure should be planned and put into place from the time that the first cell groups are started (this will be discussed in detail in lesson 13, "Supervising Cells"). Someone must be appointed as the mentor of these cell group leaders and must be willing to meet with the leaders at least once a month, as well as provide for ongoing training and encouragement. The mentor may choose to form a cell group of leaders to provide them with continued support, teaching and encouragement.

Remember that you cannot have more groups initially than you have leaders for those groups. Some churches decide to divide the entire congregation into groups, while others start just with the people who are interested in this type of ministry. If church leaders give an open invitation to anyone who wants to be involved, they might find themselves in trouble if more people respond than there are leaders available.

Remember that you cannot have more groups initially than you have leaders for those groups.

All of the above issues must be taken into account when a church is considering the use of cell groups. After the church leaders have discussed the use of groups in their church, time should be devoted to prayer about whether or not to go ahead with this type of ministry. This decision will have a profound impact on the lives of the church members and should not be taken lightly. If the Holy Spirit confirms the use of groups in the church, then the church leadership must plan for how the groups will be started and implemented.

II. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Every plan which is developed for cell group ministry in a church will be unique and will reflect the distinctives and characteristics of that church. Although the details will vary from plan to plan, there are certain steps which must be planned for and then implemented in order to introduce a ministry of cell groups in an existing church.

A. Step 1 – Develop a Ministry Vision Which Includes Cell Groups

The pastor(s) and church leadership must understand the goal of cell group ministry. They should also understand the functions of a cell group, as well as how ministry happens in a cell group. They should be able to explain the benefits of cell groups to someone who is not familiar with them. They must approve of and encourage the cell groups in the church.

An overall ministry strategy should be prayerfully thought out. How will cell groups fit into the vision and goals of the church? Will the groups be used simply to help with growth and discipleship in the church? Does the church want to start one or more new daughter churches? Does the church want to send out teams of missionaries to start cell group ministries in other areas? The overall strategy will guide and direct the ministry of the groups in the way that they will develop and interact one with another.

B. Step 2 – Begin to Share the Vision with the Congregation

The pastor(s) and church leaders need to begin to share the vision and benefits of using cell groups with the congregation. They need to show how the groups fit into the goals of the church, and how the groups will strengthen the church and its ministries. They should also explain the benefits to each of the church members.

C. Step 3 – Choose Leaders and Train Them

Determine those in the church who would be available and qualified to lead a cell group. Spend time with them to explain the goals, benefits, concepts, etc., of cell groups. Ask them to prayerfully consider leading one of the groups.

Decide on a supervisory structure for the cell group leaders. At least one person must be responsible to mentor the leaders, hold them accountable, and provide ongoing help with problems and questions. One way to mentor leaders is to form an initial cell group with the future cell group leaders as the members. This group should meet for several months before any other cell groups are started in the church. This will give the leaders both training and experience in cell group ministry. The person who leads this "leadership" cell group should be the same person who will mentor the new leaders. This leadership cell should continue to meet on a regular basis (perhaps once a month) after the new groups are started. This should be a time for fellowship, teaching, and discussing problems and questions in the groups.

A "leadership" cell group can be used to prepare future cell group leaders.

Train the future cell group leaders in all aspects of cell group ministry. At a minimum, they should receive the training from the Cell Group lessons, the Bible Study lessons, and the Leadership lessons in these manuals.

D. Step 4 – Start the New Cell Groups

After several months of meeting in the "leadership" cell group, the leaders should begin to plan for the start of their cell groups. When will each group meet (i.e. which day and at what time)? Where will each group meet? Assuming that some people in the congregation have expressed an interest in being part of a group, how will it be decided which group they will join?

There is a large amount of initial preparation which must take place before the very first new cell group meeting (in manual 2, see Cell Group lesson 2, "Principles of Cell Group Leadership" and lesson 3, "Starting a Cell Group"). The mentor of the cell group leaders should help and encourage each leader to prepare for this first, important meeting.

It can be helpful to set a beginning date for the new cell groups and share this with the congregation, so that they can be praying for this new ministry, as well as looking forward to the time when it will start. This will help to generate enthusiasm and excitement about the new groups.

E. Step 5 – Provide Ongoing Evaluation and Adjustment to Cell Group Ministries

The church leadership should, from time to time, evaluate the progress of the cell groups. As with any type of ministry, adjustments might need to be made to initial plans and ideas. Be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and continually pray for the groups and their leaders, that God will use them to build up the church and to help it fulfill its goals and purposes.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Considering all of the benefits of cell groups in the areas of fellowship, discipleship, evangelism and leadership development, why shouldn't every church use cell groups?
- Let's assume that a church has decided to start using cell groups. How can you avoid "competition" between existing ministries of discipleship and evangelism with these same ministries in the cell groups?
- Why is it important to have a mentor for the cell group leaders in the church? What is his role and responsibilities?
- Why should a "leadership" cell group be started among the future cell group leaders in the church before any new cell groups are started? What is the benefit of having the church leadership involved in this "leadership" cell?
- What is the overall goal of using cell groups in an existing church structure?

ACTION PLAN

- Think about the church which you consider to be your "home" church. What is the vision of the church? What goals does it have? Would it be possible to use cell groups to help reach these goals?
- In this same church, what problems or difficulties would there be if cell groups were to be used?
- Develop a brief, written plan for using cell groups in this church (or in any church that you are very familiar with). How would you implement this plan?
- Think about the churches you know which could benefit from cell group ministry. How would you approach them about using cell groups to strengthen the church and to help it reach its goals? Would you be willing to help them start a cell group ministry in the church? Give this some careful thought and prayer.

CELL GROUPS

LESSON **13**

Supervising Cells

CARE AND COORDINATION FOR CELL GROUP LEADERS

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to motivate each trainee to develop a supervisory structure in order to promote and sustain growth in his cell group ministry.

☛ Main Points

- The roles of Cell Coordinators and Overseers.
- There must be a structured approach to supervising cell group ministry.

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Understand the advantages of and the need for some type of supervisory structure in cell group ministry.
- Know the roles and responsibilities of each person in a supervisory structure and how they contribute to the growth and success of the cells.
- Develop a basic plan to implement some type of supervisory structure in his own cell group ministry if one does not already exist.

☛ Appendix

13A Cell Groups: The Final Step

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

In the "Action Plan" section, the trainees are asked to read Appendix 13A "Cell Groups: The Final Step" and create a basic plan for a supervisory structure in their cell group ministries. Since this is the final cell group lesson, be sure that this plan is reviewed either by you or by another mentor/trainer.

INTRODUCTION

A team of three missionaries (Peter, Sandra and Michael) has been working in a city of about 35,000 people for the past three years. They have each begun several cell groups, and some of these groups have multiplied several times over. If one were to look at the number of groups meeting and the numbers of people who have been saved, it would seem that their ministry has been successful so far.

However, as the groups continue to grow and multiply, Peter, Sandra and Michael are becoming more and more frustrated. Each of them has had problems and questions trying to develop new apprentice leaders, and there is no one for them to turn to for advice. They are all so busy that they rarely even see each other, and it seems that they have all drifted into their own separate ministries. When Peter, Sandra and Michael first started working in the city, Peter had a vision for starting several new churches using the cells. Lately, though, everyone is so busy with his or her own groups that no one talks about that anymore.

What Peter, Sandra and Michael don't know is that several of the newest groups are experiencing problems that some of the more experienced leaders could help with, but no one has told them or asked them for help. Two of the groups are both planning to hold evangelistic outreaches in the same exact area of the city, while large areas of town remain without any kind of witness for Christ. Peter is glad that the cells are continuing to grow and multiply, but it seems to him that somehow they could accomplish more if they could find a way to work in harmony one with another.

What Peter doesn't realize in this scenario is that there is an administrative aspect which is missing from his cell group ministry. Someone needs to provide supervision for the cells in order to organize and coordinate their efforts as they reach out to their city.

Unfortunately, for many people involved in ministry, the word "administration" brings to mind images of boring paperwork and unnecessary interruptions. Sometimes "administration" even means authority, hierarchy and control, and therefore is something that people want to avoid in their ministries. However, administration that is properly developed and applied can help to make the best possible use of God's resources and can enable ministries to be very fruitful.

Administration is **absolutely necessary** in order to bring about a church planting movement through the use of cell groups.

Administration is an essential aspect of cell group ministry, and it is **absolutely necessary** in order to bring about a church planting movement through the use of cell groups. Administration in the form of a supervisory structure is a necessary component of a larger ministry vision, especially as the cell groups begin to grow and multiply.

I. SUPERVISION OF CELL GROUPS

In a general sense, a "supervisor" is someone who oversees the work of another person. He or she is responsible to make sure that the work is done well and on time. In a ministry of cell groups, there is a need for "supervisors" to help the cell group leaders with the "work" that happens in a cell group. These supervisors do not "control" and force cell group leaders to do things their way; instead, they provide insight, wisdom and practical advice to the leaders, so that the cell groups are effective in their ministries.

A. Importance of Supervision

No matter how cell groups are used in ministry, consideration must be given to how the cells will be supervised in that particular ministry context. There are several reasons why some type of supervision is needed in cell group ministry:

Coordination: Groups which are supervised have a leadership structure which is able to coordinate the efforts of individual groups in light of an overall ministry strategy. As the cells minister individually, there is coordination so that the efforts of each group contribute towards the accomplishment of a larger ministry task. Coordination is the result of being able to see the "big picture" of what is (or could be) happening outside the individual cell groups.

For example, let's say that the overall goal of a particular cell group ministry is to evangelize a whole town or village and start three new churches. If the efforts of the cells are coordinated, the groups are able to spread throughout the town and not "overlap" each another. Research will be done to determine different target areas in town, and each cell group will draw a "circle of accountability" around the area to which it will reach out. In this way the cells are able to be an effective witness throughout the entire town. As the time comes to start the new churches, coordination between the cells provides a balanced and reasonable approach to grouping the cells into churches.

Guidance: When some type of supervisory structure is in place, each cell group leader has someone to whom he can turn with questions, problems and difficulties. There is a structured environment in which the cell group leaders can learn from each other, as well as learning from more experienced leaders. Instead of cell group leaders struggling with problems or questions by themselves, they have someone to turn to for help and advice.

One of the most important aspects of supervision is that it provides care and nurture for leaders of cell groups.

Cell group leaders find themselves constantly ministering to the needs of the people in their groups, but no one ministers to them. One of the most important aspects of supervision is that it provides care and nurture for leaders of cell groups. One practical way that this can happen is to create a "leadership" cell group, in which the cell group leaders come together to be ministered to and to learn from one another.

Accountability: Each cell group will have its own goals that contribute towards an overall ministry focus. The leaders of the cell groups need someone to whom they are accountable to meet those goals. The goals of each group can be periodically evaluated and adjusted, if necessary. This is especially helpful with new groups and leaders, to help them pray and think about God's will for their group and to help them set realistic goals for the group. Rather than "waiting for things to happen," a cell group leader who is held accountable will strive to help his group accomplish that which God has set before them as a goal.

Integrity: One of the advantages to ministry in groups is that new believers are discipled and new leaders are developed within the cells. However, a lack of maturity mixed with excessive zeal can sometimes be a dangerous combination. It is possible for a cell group to get off track and begin to misinterpret and/or misapply the Scriptures. A supervisory structure can provide the "checking" which needs to happen in any cell group so that exaggeration, extremes and even heresy do not become a problem. A group which is left to itself can end up with faulty interpretation and teaching of God's word.

B. Supervisory Structure

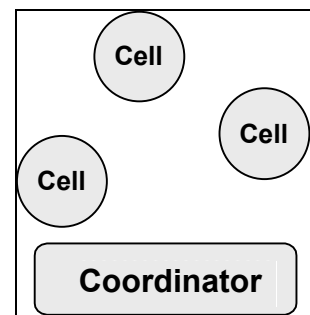
No matter how cell groups are supervised, the basic concept remains the same: there must be a structured approach to coordinate and help the cell group leaders as they strive to develop the people and ministries in their cells. The supervisors hold the cell group leader accountable to tasks and goals in the group, and observe the teaching and spiritual development of both the leader and the members in the group.

A typical supervisory structure for cell groups usually consists of two levels: We will call the first level *Coordinators*, who work directly with cell group leaders. We will call the second level *Overseers*, who work primarily with the Coordinators. Both Coordinators and Overseers have specific roles and responsibilities to help to develop the cell group leaders and the ministries within cell groups:

1. Coordinator

Since the role of a Coordinator is primarily to guide and teach cell group leaders, a Coordinator should spend time as a cell group leader before being appointed to this position. Cell group leaders need to have someone who will mentor them if their ministry is to be successful. Following are areas in which a Coordinator needs to be involved in the life and ministry of a cell group leader:

- Problems in the group - The Coordinator meets with the cell group leaders on a regular basis. In some ministries it is as often as once a week, and other times it may be only once a month. This may be an informal meeting, or the Coordinator may choose to create a "leadership" cell group. During these meeting times, the cell group leaders are free to ask questions, discuss problems, and learn from one another in their cell group experiences.
- Personal spiritual growth - The Coordinator should also make it a point to spend time individually with the cell group leaders and their families, to get to know them better and to better understand what is happening in the life of each leader. These should be informal times of sharing and fellowship, such as having a meal together or maybe just tea/coffee in the home of the leader.
- Developing apprentice leaders - One of the most difficult areas of ministry for the cell group leader will be the development of his apprentice leader. Most new cell group leaders have never worked actively to develop another person as a leader, and they will have plenty of questions and problems in this area. The Coordinator can share practical ways in which he or she has developed apprentice leaders in previous cell groups.
- Planning and accountability - The Coordinator is responsible to help the cell group leaders develop goals and plans for ministry and to hold them accountable to achieving those



goals. This includes drawing a "circle of accountability" with each group to help them understand where they will be working (in what geographical area), and to what segment of the population they will reach out. The Coordinator must also help the cell group leaders to develop a plan for multiplication and to carry out that plan. In addition, each cell group leader should have individual plans for the spiritual development of each member of the group, and plans for evangelism and other group activities. Reviewing and adjusting these plans with the cell group leaders is essential to the growth and success of each cell group.

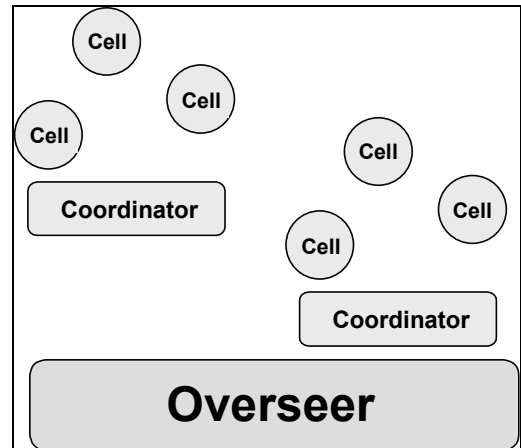
- Practical ministry skills - The Coordinator should also provide ongoing training and teaching for the cell group leaders, to continue to equip them for fruitful ministry. The Coordinator should strive to provide teaching that will meet the needs which currently exist in the lives and ministries of the cell group leaders. The teaching should provide practical ways to help with real life problems and situations that the leaders face.
- Encouragement - It is a good idea for the Coordinator to visit the cell groups from time to time, and he or she should have a clear understanding of what is being studied and taught in the groups. Every ministry context is different, but the Coordinator should keep track of how many members are in each group, how many visitors come to the groups, where the groups are meeting, and any unresolved problems which the leaders are currently facing.
- Prayer - The Coordinator must spend time in prayer with the cell group leaders and should also pray for the cell group leaders in his own personal prayer time. He or she should constantly be looking for ways to help the leaders, so that their ministries are successful and so that they are growing in maturity and Christ-likeness.

Each cell group leader should have individual plans for the spiritual development of each member of the group.

Because of the significant amount of time and energy that a Coordinator must devote to the care and development of each cell group leader, he or she should be responsible for no more than four or five cell groups.

2. *Overseer*

The role of an Overseer differs from a Coordinator mainly by the fact that an Overseer does not interact directly with the cell group leaders – he works primarily with the Coordinators. The Overseer should be well experienced in cell group ministry, having been a cell group leader and Coordinator himself. The Overseer is interested in the life and ministry of each Coordinator, as well as the overall ministry direction of the cell groups. The Overseer is a mentor for the Coordinators in the same way that the Coordinators are mentors for their cell group leaders.



The Overseer should meet with the Coordinators on a regular basis, no less than once per month. During these meeting times, the Coordinators can report on the progress and activities of each of the cell groups for which they are responsible. For purposes of record keeping, the Overseer may choose to develop some type of written form(s) that each of the Coordinators can fill out with information about the cells.

One of the most important functions of the Overseer is to monitor and develop the ongoing coordinated effort among the cell groups. The Overseer must keep the "big picture" of ministry in mind, and he or she should make sure that each Coordinator clearly understands the role of each of the cell groups in that plan. For example, the goal of one particular cell group ministry is to start two new churches in an area of town. Two Coordinators work with independent cell groups, while a third Coordinator has some independent cell groups as well as some cell groups that were started in an existing church. It is the responsibility of the Overseer to help

the Coordinators understand how all of the cell groups can work together to form these two new churches and what steps need to be taken in order to see that happen.

When there are problems in the groups, or in the life of a Coordinator, the Overseer is always available to listen, to pray, and to give counsel. He or she should maintain a time of regular prayer for each Coordinator, as well as for any urgent prayer needs within the groups.

Some cell group ministries choose to physically gather all the cell groups together on a regular basis (perhaps once a month) for worship, fellowship and/or teaching. Sometimes these gatherings are referred to as "celebration" times. If these gatherings take place, an Overseer (or Coordinator, if there is no Overseer) will be responsible for leading the time together, and he may ask one or more Coordinators to help with the worship or teaching.

Some cell group ministries choose to physically gather all the cell groups together on a regular basis (perhaps once a month) for worship, fellowship and/or teaching.

II. SUPERVISORY STRUCTURES FOR DIFFERENT MODELS OF CELL GROUP MINISTRY

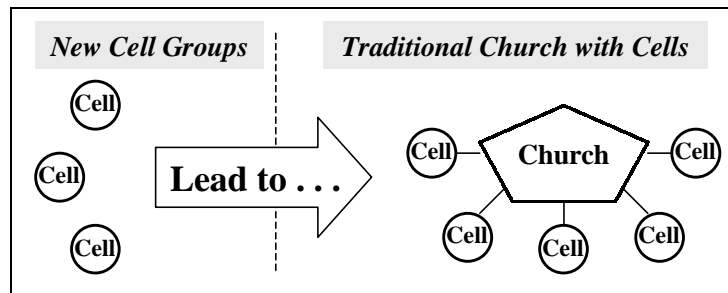
Many times, the physical organization of a cell group ministry will determine the form that the supervisory structure will take. Cell Group lesson 6, "Philosophy Of Cell Group Ministry," presented several different models that can be used in a cell group ministry. Following is a brief review of each of those models, along with the types of supervisory structures that might be used in each situation:

A. Model 1: Cell Groups That Start a Traditional Church with Cells

In this situation, one or more initial cell groups grow and multiply until they are able to start a new traditional church. This church will meet in a central location with a traditional worship service appropriate for the local context and culture. The church will continue to use a ministry of cell groups for evangelism, fellowship, discipleship and continued growth of the church. It may also choose

to develop traditional ministry "programs" such as Sunday School, women's ministry, an outreach to children on the weekends, etc. Figure 13.2 shows this kind of model.

Figure 13.2 Cells Start Church

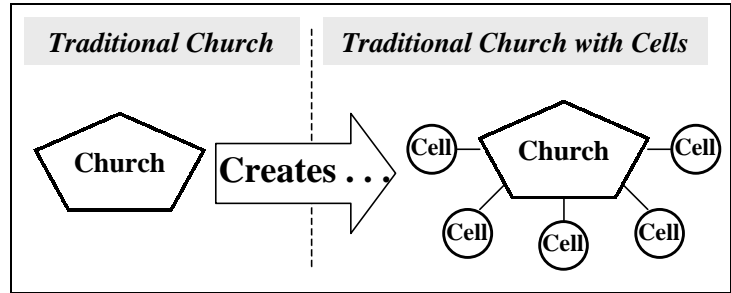


In this case, a supervisory structure will be needed long before the church is started. This model would require at least one Coordinator to oversee the ministries of the individual cells and to help the leaders coordinate the effort of starting the new church. It is interesting to note that after the church is started and the cells continue to grow and multiply, that the Coordinator might be called a "deacon" or "elder" in charge of cell group ministry.

B. Model 2: An Existing Church Begins to Use Cell Groups

It is possible for an existing church to begin using cell groups for fellowship, evangelism and discipleship (see Cell Groups lesson 12). The existing leadership in the church must decide how many groups are needed/possible based on the number of members in the church and the number of people who could be trained to be cell group leaders. In time the church will begin to grow as the cell groups grow and multiply. This arrangement is shown in Figure 13.3.

Figure 13.3 Cells Added to Church

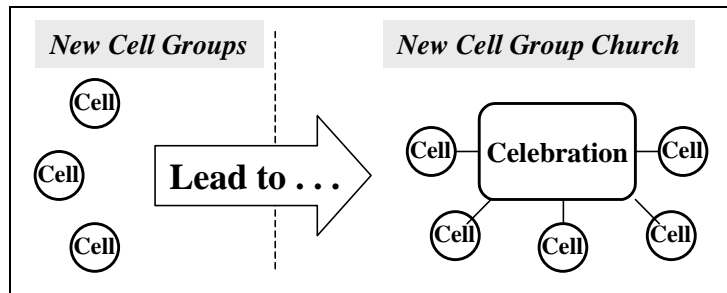


Typically, the supervisory structure in this situation uses existing church leaders to fulfill the roles of Coordinator and Overseer. The deacons or elders might be the Coordinators, and the pastor (or pastoral team) may be the most logical choice to fulfill the role of an Overseer. As the groups grow and multiply, most often cell group leaders will begin to fulfill the role of Coordinators and eventually Overseers.

C. Model 3: Cell Groups That Start a Cell Group Church

A cell group church differs from a traditional church in the sense that there is neither church building nor regular Sunday morning worship service, and the church does not exist to create and maintain "programs" within the church. The church is comprised of the cells themselves, and all the functions of a church happen in each cell, including baptism and communion. The cells come

Figure 13.4 Cells Start a Cell Church



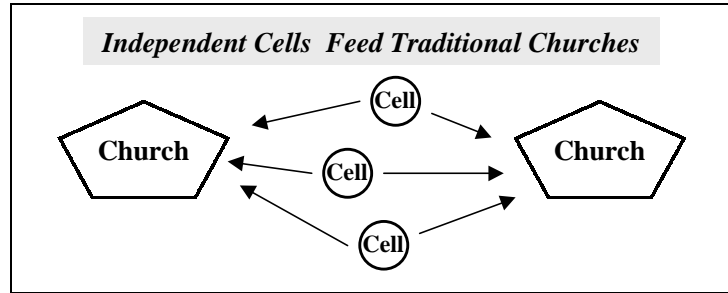
together on a regular basis (e.g. once a month) for a "celebration" meeting. This is a time of encouragement, fellowship, worship and/or teaching. The cells all consider themselves to be part of one, large church. Figure 13.4 demonstrates this model.

Many times, the supervisory structure for a cell group church is simple and hierarchical. Every five cell groups has a Coordinator, and there is an Overseer for every five Coordinators. If the number of groups grows quite large, there is a need for another level of mentors, sometimes called "Cell Pastors" who work with the Overseers.

D. Model 4: Several Cell Groups Grow, Multiply and "Feed" Existing Local Churches

It is not a requirement that cell groups directly start new churches. It may be more strategic to build up and strengthen existing local churches which in time will start new daughter churches. Cell groups are started independently of the existing churches. As new people are brought into the cell groups, they are encouraged to begin attending a local church as well. Often they will continue to be a part of their cell group as well as attend a church. This process is shown in Figure 13.5.

Figure 13.5 Cells Feed Churches



In this situation, one of the cell group leaders can fulfill the role of a Coordinator, in order to help organize the efforts of the groups to build up the churches in that area. If, in time, one or more of the existing churches desire to use cell groups in their church, a different supervisory structure will need to be considered and used.

III. APPLICATION FOR YOUR CELL GROUP MINISTRY

The titles which are chosen for each person in a supervisory structure such as "Coordinator" and "Overseer" are not important. In your particular ministry context, you can choose and use whatever titles you feel are appropriate and understandable. The most important thing is that there are people who are performing the functions of Coordinators and Overseers in any given supervisory structure. These are the people who are needed to help the cell groups accomplish the goals that God has set before them.

Your context will determine who actually fulfills these leadership roles. If new cell groups are being started independent of an existing church, often the cell group leader with the most experience fulfills the role of the Coordinator once the groups begin to grow and multiply.

Perhaps you are using cell groups in a traditional church in order to help the church to grow (and eventually start new, daughter churches). In this situation you need to use wisdom and discretion in deciding who should fill the roles of Coordinator and Overseer. It is always preferable that these people have been leaders of groups themselves and are well-experienced in cell group life. However, in a traditional church, problems can quickly arise if existing church leaders are assigned to these roles but they themselves have never been a part of a cell group ministry. Much prayer and discernment should be used if you are in this type of a situation. If you have no choice but to use "cell-inexperienced" leaders in these positions, do as much as you can to help them understand the concepts, advantages and distinctives of cell group ministry. In time, leaders from within the cell groups can assume these positions of leadership within the supervisory structure.

Unfortunately, one of the first things we think of when we see any kind of hierarchical structure is the element of control. It's important to understand that a supervisory structure is not needed in order to *control* the ministries of the cell groups. Instead of controlling the cell groups, each leader in the hierarchy of the organization should be doing all that he or she can to equip, empower and *release* the cell groups to minister in whatever way the Holy Spirit is leading them. A cell group movement under the direction of the Holy Spirit is actually very "uncontrolled" in terms of human intervention. It is the faithful obedience of God's people to be completely given over to His use of their lives, time and talents as they minister in and through the cell groups.

A supervisory structure is not needed in order to *control* the ministries of the cell groups, but to equip, empower, and release the cell groups to minister.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Explain the need for some type of supervisory structure when working with cell group ministry. Why not let the cells do whatever they want? What are the advantages of having a supervisory structure in place?

- In your own words, briefly state the administrative functions which should happen in any developing cell group ministry.
- If you are currently involved in a ministry of cell groups and there is no one yet fulfilling the role of a Coordinator, whom could you approach about becoming a Coordinator? Would you consider fulfilling this role at some point in the future?
- How is the role of an Overseer different from that of a Coordinator?
- Is it possible for Coordinators and Overseers to continue to be leaders of cell groups?

ACTION PLAN

- Read Appendix 13A "Cell Groups: The Final Step." Prayerfully consider what God desires for your cell group ministry before you begin to plan for some type of supervisory structure in your ministry.
- Next, develop a simple plan for the type of supervisory structure that is necessary in your particular cell group ministry context. Think of the titles you would use for the roles of Coordinator and Overseer. Even if you have only several cell groups at the moment, who could fulfill the role of a Coordinator for these groups? As the Holy Spirit continues to work and your groups grow and multiply, how will you decide who future Coordinators and Overseers will be? Where will they come from, and what types of training or experiences will they need in order to prepare them for this type of ministry? What type of supervisory structure do you need to sustain and promote the growth that God desires to see happen in your cell groups? What kind of supervisory structure would best complement the model of ministry that you are working with? Draw in your plan a diagram of the model you are using and how the supervisory structure which you have chosen fits into this model.
- Review your plan for a supervisory structure with your mentor or with the trainer of this lesson.

CELL GROUPS
APPENDIX
13A

Cell Groups: The Final Step

I. A HEART FOR THE NATIONS

As we study the Bible, it is very clear that God desires to make Himself known among all the nations of the earth. In Exodus 19:5 God instructs Moses to tell the people of Israel that "*if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*" Up until the coming of Christ, the nation of Israel was God's chosen instrument to be a witness to His sovereignty and glory. Psalm 96:2-3 says, "*Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.*"

When Jesus came, He fulfilled the Old Testament Law (Ro 10:4), He established the Church (Mt 16:18) and He commanded His disciples to be His witnesses (Ac 1:8) to the "ends of the earth." The Church became the instrument through which God desires to make His love and grace known to all people.

Our motivation for starting new churches is to fulfill the command which Christ gave us in the Great Commission. We have discovered that cell groups are one way in which to help establish growing, healthy, reproducing churches. We have spent much time discussing the details and workings of cell group ministry.

We have discovered that cell groups are one way in which to help establish growing, healthy, reproducing churches.

It is important to know and understand the specifics of cell group ministry. The functions in a cell group are seen in the example of the early church in Jerusalem (Acts 2:42-47). Cell groups are one way to imitate and provide a means for these same functions to happen in our churches and ministries today.

However, it is important to keep in mind the overall goal, the "big picture" of what God desires from our individual ministry efforts. What role do cell groups play in the fulfilling of the Great Commission? What should be happening in your cell group(s) in order to move closer and closer toward that goal? Is it enough to start several groups and see them begin to multiply, or does God desire more? What is the "final" step for cell groups to take in helping to fulfill the command that Christ gave almost 2000 years ago?

II. MULTIPLICATION BY FAITH

One of the main distinguishing characteristics of cell groups is that they multiply. Multiplication must happen if groups are to stay "alive" – without it, they will eventually grow stagnant and die. Multiplication is not the motivation for evangelism in cell groups, but it allows active and ongoing evangelism to take place. There is always "room" for more unbelievers and new converts in multiplying cell groups.

Each of us understands and agrees with the need for multiplication in a cell group ministry. However, how often do we "limit" the power and sovereignty of God by our own limits of faith and vision? Are we seeing our cell group ministries with the same eyes that God sees them? If we could see our ministries as God sees them, what limitations and restrictions would be removed? What would be different? How would we understand the importance and potential impact of our cell groups?

When we first start working with cell groups, it is difficult to think about much more than getting those initial groups going, training apprentice leaders and working towards making multiplication happen. We learn much about groups through the mistakes, problems and joys of being a cell group leader. Soon we realize the need to have separate groups work together in harmony and cooperation one with

another in order to accomplish larger ministry goals. In time we begin to think about some type of organizational structure which is needed to help coordinate the efforts of many cell groups.

Isaiah 40:26 says, "*Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.*" In our own ministries of cell groups, we also need to "lift our eyes and look to the heavens." When we look anywhere but towards God, we consider only what can be done in our own strength. But as we look to God, we begin to understand His might and power, and what He can do through us.

If we had eyes which could see that which God sees, would we be excited, frightened or perhaps both? Does our lack of faith sometimes limit our ability to be used by God in the fullest measure of His will for our lives and ministries? Faith enables us to dream the big dreams and attempt great things for God, when we realize that His strength is available to empower our efforts.

Faith does not concern itself with all of our limitations and inadequacies. Instead, faith focuses on the provision and ability of God Himself to accomplish that which He desires. Faith is seeing a seemingly unattainable, impractical goal, and then being willing to step out and be used by God in achieving that which by human terms was an "impossible" task. Faith is not understanding exactly how to accomplish a particular goal or task, but understanding that God is able to complete that task in and through people who are willing to be used regardless of their situation and circumstances.

We have mentioned that leaders of cell groups should strive to *release* those groups to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit and under His direction. When cell groups contain members which in obedience have completely given over their lives, time and talents to the Lord, then the Holy Spirit has people with whom He can work and through whom He will bring forth much fruit.

Leaders of cell groups should strive to *release* those groups to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit and under His direction.

Being completely given over to God means having faith which will allow us to minister in difficult circumstances, to overcome seemingly impossible barriers, and to stop accepting the limitations who the world would put upon us. We need to pray that God would give us such a faith that we could be used to accomplish through our cell groups the great things that He has upon His heart.

III. CHURCHES FOR THE NATIONS

If one of our goals in ministry is to have multiplying cell groups that develop into churches, how many would be enough? What if we had several groups active in ministry in our town or city? How about 10 groups, or 50 groups, or even 500 groups?

2 Peter 3:9 reflects the heart of God toward the lost: "*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*" Our heart's desire should also be to reach "everyone" with the saving news of Jesus. We need enough groups that would minister not only throughout a particular neighborhood or village, but throughout entire towns and regions of a country. Jesus spoke of faith that can move mountains (Mt. 17:20). Do we have enough faith to see an entire country filled with cell groups which are reaching the lost, edifying believers and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ until He returns?

When our ministries of cell groups stop being limited by our own lack of faith and short-sightedness, then they become useful in the hands of God. When our groups have a vision not only for the immediate future, but for a time when an entire country will be saturated with churches, then God will begin to use them in ways which we would have never dreamed were possible.

This, then, is the "final" step which we need to take if our cell groups are to help fulfill the Great Commission. This final step is the process of encouraging all cell group leaders and cell group members to see their group being used in the way that God desires to use them. It is the process of giving wider and wider vision, of challenging cell group leaders to "lift their eyes" towards the heavens and to see their nation filled with the glory of God. It is the process of actively working toward that goal in and through our cell groups.

Only when our cell group ministries have eyes that can see and faith that will rise to the challenge will we see the Holy Spirit begin to use those groups in a tremendous and miraculous way. Only as we pray fervently for our nations will the Lord begin to work to multiply groups that will have an impact on entire cities, regions and countries.

This final step in our cell group ministry is simply a "Step of Faith." It is the final step which must be taken if our cell group ministries are going to be used by the Holy Spirit of God to help bring about the completion of the Great Commission. We do not need to fear failure. William Carey, pioneer missionary to India, once said, "Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God."

"Attempt great things
for God; expect great
things from God."
-William Carey

The strength is the Lord's – we need to be servants through whom that power will flow. The vision is the Lord's – we simply need eyes that are willing to see it. The completion of the task is also the Lord's – we need to believe in faith that our efforts are leading to the fulfillment of the task which God Himself has promised to complete.

God is waiting for faithful servants to take this "Step of Faith" with Him. Will you be one of them?

PREACHING

PREACHING
1
LESSON

Biblical Preaching I

UNDERSTANDING THE MESSAGE

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain how to compose a message that will be faithful to the intent of the text and communicate the main point of the passage clearly.

☞ Main Points

- A message should identify and communicate the message of the Bible rather than the speaker's own thoughts.
- There are many possible kinds of message structures. The choice is influenced by the text, the audience, and the speaker.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should:

- Understand how to use the *subject* and *complement* in order to simplify and clarify the main point of the passage.
- Know the main structural points of a message.
- Know some of the various kinds of messages that can be presented.

INTRODUCTION

Biblical preaching is a divine and human enterprise. In preaching, God speaks to the minds and hearts of people bringing them to faith and maturity in Christ, but He does so through human communicators. The three primary agents in the process are the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the preacher. *The preacher's responsibility is to make sure that he is communicating God's message in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

The overall purpose of a biblical message is to persuade people to believe the information presented and act on it. For that to happen, the preacher's objectives are to communicate the truth of the Word in a way that will:

- convince the mind
- awake the imagination
- move the will
- prick the conscience
- touch the emotions

There are three main factors that affect whether or not these objectives will be achieved. They are 1) the message, 2) the audience, and 3) the speaker. The message must accurately reflect what God wants to communicate. The audience must see the relevance of the message to their lives. And the speaker must present the message in such a way that makes it clear and does not detract from it. Each of the lessons in this track will focus on one of these three aspects.

As we consider constructing and delivering a biblical message, we are making several assumptions:

- We want the message to be based on the meaning of God's Word, rather than on our own thoughts, or ideas that we may have heard from others.

- We have used the inductive method to discover the meaning of the passage that we will preach to others.
- We are in a situation where a 'one-way' form of communication such as preaching will be more effective than a 'two-way' method such as leading an inductive Bible study or simply having a conversation about the Lord.
- Some, but not all of the trainees will need to deliver sermons in a normal preaching context. However, principles of good biblical preaching are applicable in many settings: church congregations, youth meetings, women's groups, evangelistic meetings etc. Female as well as male communicators will benefit from them.

Some, but not all, of the trainees will need to deliver sermons in a normal preaching context.

I. INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY—A SOLID BASE

Basing the message on an inductive study of a biblical passage is the best way to ensure that we are presenting God's message and not our own thoughts. Therefore, a prayerful disciplined study of the passage is essential if the preacher is to be certain that he is indeed presenting God's message. Remember that we study the Bible inductively in order to discern the original intent of the author.

In as much as we understand and then preach the original intent of Scripture, then we are preaching the Word of God and not our own ideas. Bible Study Methods Lessons 2-7 in Manual One explain how to do an inductive Bible study. Review the principles of observation, interpretation and application from those lessons.

II. THE MAIN IDEA OF THE MESSAGE

One common thread is woven throughout all of the discussions regarding effective public speaking. An effective speaker constructs his message around a single significant idea. This has been true of classical rhetoricians, modern communication theorists and accomplished preachers. Because our minds seek unity and order, it is essential that we preach in such a way that these characteristics are obvious to our listeners.

We build our sermons around one central idea, and everything that is said should directly or indirectly support that theme. Thus it is important to select a passage of Scripture that does have a central idea. If your chosen passage has several central ideas, you probably have material for several sermons instead of just one.

We build our sermons around one central idea, and everything that is said should directly or indirectly support that theme.

A. Clarify the Main Idea (Theme)

It is often helpful to state the central idea of a passage by identifying two essential elements: the *subject*, and the *complement*. This method is similar to stating the biblical principle in the interpretation stage of the inductive method. However, 'biblical principles' that result from inductive study often tend to be somewhat long or complex. By starting with the principle of the passage, and identifying the *subject* and *complement*, we can often make the main idea shorter and easier to handle in a message, while retaining the meaning of the text.

The *subject* defines the topic or object that the passage talks about. This is normally a person, place, thing, or idea. It can be expressed by a simple noun, and as such, does not usually form a complete thought. The *subject* of a particular passage might be love, discipleship, Jesus, the Church, repentance, etc. In some cases, the *subject* might be a phrase that functions like a noun. Examples of these kinds of subjects are: "Loving God," "forgiving others," "being filled with the Holy Spirit," or "a desire to please the Lord in everything."

The *complement* is a phrase which 'completes' the subject by explaining what the passage is saying 'about the subject.' A *complement* also may not make sense by itself, but when added to a *subject*, it forms a complete thought or idea that makes sense and is easily communicated.

Table 1.1 Subject and Complement

Text:	Subject:	Complement:	Main Idea:
Pr 9:10	The fear of the Lord	. . . is the beginning of wisdom.	The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
Ro 8:32	God, Who gave us His Son	. . . will give us everything we need.	God, Who gave us His Son, will give us everything we need.
Heb 10:14	Christ's one sacrifice	. . . has made us perfect forever.	Christ's one sacrifice has made us perfect forever.
Ro 1:16	The Gospel	. . . is the power for God for salvation.	The Gospel is the power for God for salvation.
1Co 15:55	Death	. . . has lost its power over the believer.	Death has lost its power over the believer.

B. Decide the Purpose of the Message

Once you have discovered the main idea that the biblical writer was trying to communicate, you have the core around which you will develop your sermon. The next step is to determine the purpose for the sermon. You want the sermon to cause the hearer to believe the message and act upon it. The specific action that you want the hearer to take is your message purpose. You should not try to create this response through your own efforts—that is the job of the Holy Spirit. However, since you have identified the response that you believe the Lord wants from the passage, you should try to structure the message in such a way that it works toward the Lord's purpose.

Figure 1.2 Three Factors in Preaching

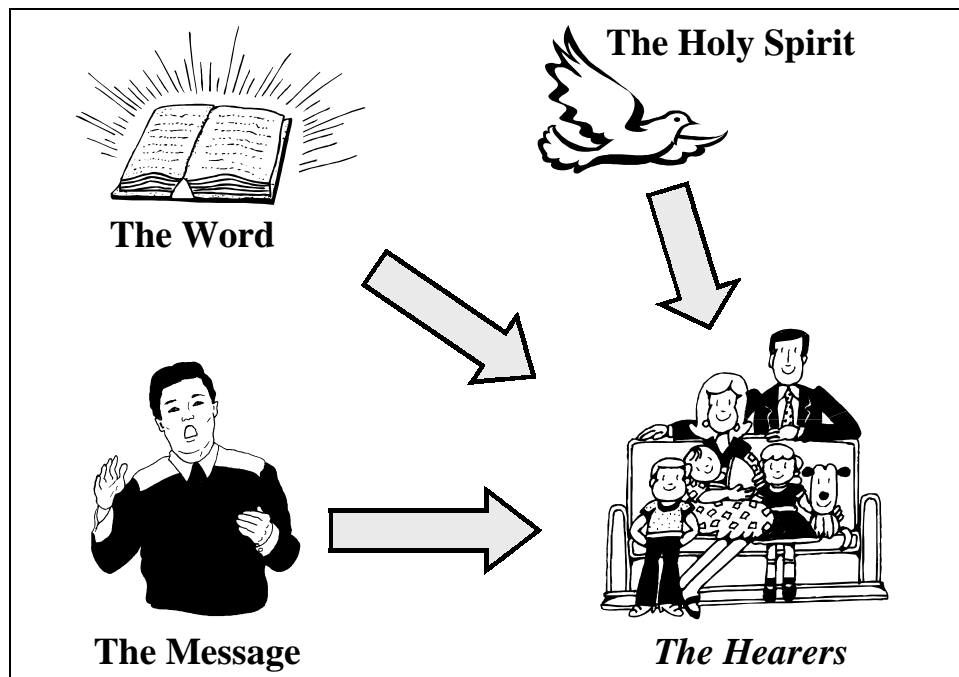


Figure 1.2 illustrates how the Word, the Holy Spirit, and the message should work together to influence the hearer. This is the case only when the preacher is sensitive to both the meaning of the text and to the leading of the Spirit. A speaker that is faithful to prayerfully seek the meaning of the passage should expect that this will happen.

III. STRUCTURE OF THE MESSAGE

A good message, like any public address, will normally be comprised of the several parts. These parts are like building blocks. They are almost always present, although the order or relative importance of each may change. Again, this is closely related to the skill of the preacher. It takes practice to decide how best to arrange them. It is more of an art than a science.

A. The Introduction

A message should have some kind of introduction, whether or not it is labeled as such. If, in the introduction, you don't gain the attention of the audience, and their interest in the message you are presenting, you are really wasting your time preaching. Their bodies may be present with you in the room, but their minds are far away.

The introduction should therefore accomplish three things:

1. *Secure the attention of the audience.*
2. *Present the subject of the sermon.*
3. *Relate the subject of needs felt by the audience.*

The hearers may decide whether to listen to or ignore the speaker in the first few moments of the message. A well thought-out introduction can go a long way toward convincing them that you have something to say, and that it would be worth listening to you. A poor introduction can accomplish the opposite. Good introductions require an understanding of the audience. This will be the subject of the next lesson.

Hearers may decide whether to listen to or ignore the speaker in the first few moments of the message.
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B. The Body

The body of the message is the basic content. During this section, the meaning of the Scripture passage is usually explained, as well as its relevance to the current situation of the hearer. This is where you should help the audience discover the same main point that you found during your inductive study. Since there probably will not be enough time to go through the entire process or to bring out all of your observations, you will need to carefully choose the few that are the most important. Focus on facts that quickly and clearly demonstrate the main point, and that fit the purpose as you understand it.

The body is the heart of the message. It should come from the Word. If the Scriptures are overpowered by illustrations, personal commentary, quoted stories, or anything else, it is not a biblical message. Keep the text central.

C. The Conclusion

The conclusion is the time when you summarize what you have said in the message and call for commitment or response. This does not mean that you will always wait to apply the sermon until the end. You can bring out application at any point. In fact, some preachers feel that an effective message can be structured as follows:

1. Tell them what you are going to tell them = Introduction
2. Tell them = Body
3. Tell them what you have told them = Conclusion

Repetition can be a wonderful learning device if it is presented in an interesting way. However, the message should always end with an explanation of the desired response, whether or not it was introduced earlier in the message. This should be the last thing that they hear, and the most important thing that they take home with them after the message is over.

A conclusion should contain one or more of the following components:

- A summary of the main points.

- An illustration that brings together the main points and the central idea.
- A quotation that accomplishes the same purpose as an illustration.
- A question.
- A prayer.
- Specific directions or an appeal to action

D. The Illustrations

An illustration is designed to shed light or make more understandable an idea, teaching or issue raised in the message. It may be used at any point in the message—the introduction, the body, or the conclusion. It is particularly helpful when you want to give emphasis to a teaching or to explain a difficult passage. But remember: illustrations must contribute to the understanding of the message being presented. Do not include illustrations just for the sake of having an illustration.

There are three main types of illustrations for use in preaching: biblical illustrations, non-biblical illustrations, and object lessons.

1. Biblical Illustrations

The Bible is full of wonderful, clear illustrations. Sometimes we can find a modern illustration that serves as well or better, but often we cannot. Who can improve on the parable of the lost sheep, or the examples of the lilies of the field, or the man who built his house on the sand? When these illustrations speak clearly, we should use them. Examples of biblical illustrations include:

- The lives of persons mentioned in the passage. For example see Philippians 2:19-30.
- Cross-references. A concordance will help you to find other biblical passages that deal with the same subject and may help explain it. The principle here is to use Scripture to interpret Scripture.
- Biblical stories. Many stories from the Old Testament are helpful to explain principles mentioned in the New Testament. For example, the life of Jonah is an excellent illustration of the principle that God requires our complete obedience.
- Maps. A map of an area where the action is taking place is often helpful to understand the biblical passage.
- Information gained from the context. The material just before and after Ephesians 5:15-21 helps us to understand the concept of being filled with the Spirit.

2. Non-Biblical Illustrations

Do not be afraid to use illustrations that do not come from the Scriptures, as long as they effectively make the same point. Many times, these illustrations will connect more deeply with your audience. This is especially true when the audience is not particularly familiar with the Bible. In such cases, the meaning of many passages or examples would be lost on them, and it is better to choose something they understand. Non-biblical illustrations include:

- Current events. Biblical truths are timeless. However, they are often understood better when a current event illustrates them. Often articles in newspapers and magazines are very useful.
- Observations of everyday life.
- Personal experiences. Personal experiences are often the most powerful illustrations; however, be careful not to always make yourself the hero.
- Illustrations from nature. The picture of a seagull at peace, standing on a rock with waves crashing around it, is a beautiful illustration of the Christian standing on his rock, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Historical backgrounds. It is important to know about the immoral life of the city of Ephesus to understand fully the concerns of Paul in the Ephesians chapter 5.

3. *Object Lessons*

Object lessons are an effective tool in communication because they are based on the principle that learning a new concept is made easier when a bridge is made between the known and the unknown. An object that is common to the experience of the learners is shown and described. Then a comparison is made between it and the new concept that is being presented. The object is not exactly like the concept being introduced, rather in some way it is like it. The learner will then understand some aspect of the new truth and be ready to appreciate other aspects.

One great advantage of object lessons is that they are very effective in securing the attention of the learner. Christ often used object lessons in his teaching ministry. All of nature for Him reflected truths about God. Some of the object lessons He used are as follows:

- Physical water and living water (Jn 4:7-15, the woman at the well)
- A child and simplicity of faith (Mt 19:13-15)
- The feeding of the five thousand and "the bread of life" (Jn 6)

Some other ideas for object lessons that we might use are:

- A road map (Jn 14:6)
- A glass of milk (1Pe 2:2, Heb 5:12,13)
- A bar of soap (1Jn 1:9)
- A glass of water and loaf of bread (Jn 4, 6)
- A candle or flashlight (Jn 8:12)
- A door or gate (Jn 10:1-10)
- The picture of a sheep or a real one (Isa 53:6; Ps 23)
- A sword (Heb 4:12)
- A piece of money and a wrapped present (Ro 6:23)
- A cassette player unplugged—unconnected to the source of our spiritual power we can do nothing (Jn 15:5)

IV. TYPES OF MESSAGES

There are many kinds of messages. A good speaker should be able to use several of them as the need arises. They are like tools in the hands of a craftsman. Each is appropriate for a particular situation and task. The preacher, like the craftsman, needs to know when and where each one might be most effectively used. The forms listed below are not exhaustive. The variations are too numerous to list. Also, a message might effectively combine more than one form.

A. **Didactic**

This kind of message basically presents facts. It is typically used to explain doctrine. It is very effective when the main purpose of the message is to *inform*. It can help to bring about a change in *understanding*. Many of the New Testament epistles are didactic in style. They tend to emphasize logic and reason.

B. **Devotional**

A devotional message focuses more on spiritual response than on facts or knowledge. If the didactic message is aimed more for the 'head,' the devotional message is aimed for the 'heart' of the hearer. This kind of message emphasizes the emotions, and often includes very emotional illustrations. Psalms is a good example of a devotional book.

C. Narrative

Narrative messages are built upon one or more stories. These stories might or might not be biblical. The truth of the Word is woven into the story. The story serves as the framework that helps the hearer organize and understand the truth being taught. Such messages can be very memorable. In fact, care must be exercised so that the story does not overwhelm the truth of the Word, and become the authority. The historical books of the Bible are narrative.

D. Interrogative

While many messages focus on providing answers, an interrogative style can also be very effective. Often, preachers answer questions that no one is asking, and the interest is therefore low. If the speaker can clearly articulate relevant questions that are of concern to the audience, they can become more involved in the message. Rather than being passive 'hearers,' they can begin to anticipate and seek answers to the questions raised by the message. When they discover the answers in the Word through the message, the effect can be very positive.

E. Circular or Linear

The majority of sermons in the West are linear in development, and therefore many of the texts on preaching emphasize outlining or systematically developing a sermon. In many countries, however, a circular type of message is better understood. Linear messages deal with one point, and move on to the next. Circular reasoning, by contrast, repeatedly revisits the same point from a different angle or approach. The two types might be compared to viewing art in a museum. Moving progressively from painting to painting would be a linear approach. But walking around an interesting statue and viewing it from several different perspectives would be a circular approach. Both types have value, depending on the subject under consideration and the interest of the audience.

CONCLUSION

God's Word is "living and active" (Heb 4:12). Biblical preaching is clearly communicating the Word of God in such a way that its power will transform all who hear. The preacher has a great responsibility to make sure that he communicates God's message and not his own ideas. Understanding God's Word through careful and prayerful study is the first step in preparing a sermon. Be sure to take the time necessary to study and understand God's Word when you preach it.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Think about one of the best preachers you have heard. What characteristics of their preaching style or content made it effective? How did people respond to their preaching?
- Why should sermons be based on inductive Bible study?
- What is the function of biblical preaching? Are there different forms to accomplish this function?

ACTION PLAN

- Choose one of the Gospels, and as you read through it, make a list of the illustrations or object lessons you see used.
- Pick a room in your apartment or house and look around in it for things that might be object lessons of spiritual truth. Be creative. Examine even simple things might be able to powerfully illustrate difficult biblical concepts.

PREACHING
LESSON **2**

Biblical Preaching II

UNDERSTANDING THE AUDIENCE

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to emphasize the importance of understanding the target audience during the preparation of the message.

☞ Main Points

- Jesus, Peter, and Paul adapted their messages to their audiences.
- When hearers discover truth in the text for themselves, it is more powerful and memorable than when they are simply told.
- A good message will demonstrate the 'common ground' that the biblical characters and the modern audience share.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should:

- Understand how the New Testament preachers varied their messages according to the audience.
- Be committed to helping the audience discover the meaning of the passage being preached to them.

INTRODUCTION

In the Bible study methods section of this material, we emphasized the importance of discovering the meaning of the text, rather than reading our thoughts and ideas into it. However, in the application stage, we stressed that it is important to compare the biblical context with our context in order to understand what we should do. When the inductive method is used for personal study, we can assume that we know our context. When used in a small group Bible study, we also expect each of the participants to be aware of their own context, and to be able to make a reasonable application to their own lives.

When we develop an inductive study into a sermon or message, we should not assume that we understand the audience. Rather, significant time in message preparation should be devoted to thinking about who will be listening to the message, and what their needs might be. In a long-term, stable church situation, this is somewhat easier, as a pastor normally learns about his people over time. In a church planting situation, there should be a constant stream of new contacts who are invited to hear the Word, and about whom we may know little. In a large-group evangelistic meeting, we may know almost nothing about the majority of the audience. It takes effort to research the general needs of the typical person in our target audience, and even more so to learn about the personal needs of each one who attends. The benefit, however, is a much more effective sermon or message.

Significant time in message preparation should be devoted to thinking about who will be listening to the message.

I. NEW TESTAMENT PREACHING

As we look at the preaching in the New Testament, we see that they did not simply preach the same thing on every occasion. Rather, they adjusted their message according to the needs and spiritual level of the audience.

A. The Preaching of Jesus

Jesus is perhaps the best example of a master communicator that the world has ever seen. He, being God, had much deeper insight into the needs of His audience than we can possibly hope to have. But the principle of adjusting the message to meet the need still applies. Consider how differently Jesus spoke to the Pharisees than to His disciples. For the Pharisees who refused to hear, He delivered stern warnings of judgment (Mt 23). For the disciples, His messages were much more inviting and encouraging (Jn 14).

Jesus also delivered His messages at an understandable level. To the woman at the well, He spoke of water (Jn 4). But to Nicodemus the Pharisee, He introduced the topic of the new birth from above (Jn 3). In Matthew 13:10-15, Jesus explained to His disciples that He actually preached to the multitudes in parables *so that they would not understand* truth that they were not willing to obey. However, He fully explained everything to His disciples (Mk 4:33-34).

B. The Preaching of Peter

Peter learned from the Master Preacher—Jesus. He also was careful to adjust the message to the audience. One comparison should help illustrate this fact. Consider the difference in the sermons Peter preached to the Jewish crowd at Pentecost, and to the Gentiles in Cornelius' home. With the Jewish crowd, he immediately began to quote the Old Testament prophet Joel (Acts 2:17-21). They would have been very familiar with that passage, and valued the Old Testament Scriptures. In his brief sermon, he managed to work in two other quotations from the Psalms of David. Clearly, this sermon was understandable to the Jews, and it led to great repentance.

Peter's address to the Gentiles in Cornelius' home was very different. There are no quotations from the Old Testament. Instead, Peter began with an explanation of how God is not partial, but accepts men from every nation (Acts 10:34-35). This would strike a responsive chord with this group who had long been looked down upon by the Jews. Having won their attention, Peter then quickly shifts to the ministry and death of Christ. Again, the results were dramatic.

C. The Preaching of Paul

Table 2.1 compares the sermons that Paul delivered to various groups during his church planting ministry in the Book of Acts.

Table 2.1 Paul's Sermons

Text	Audience	Introduction	Message
Acts 13:16-41	Unbelieving Jews in Pisidian Antioch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old History of Israel with Old Testament quotations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for repentance • Christ
Acts 17:22-31	Unbelieving Gentiles in Athens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their local altars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omnipresence of God • The resurrection of Christ
Acts 20:18-35	Elders of the Ephesian Church in Miletus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul's life among them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul's desire to serve • Their responsibility to the flock
Acts 22:1-21	Unbelieving Jewish Mob in Jerusalem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul's background as Pharisee and persecutor of the Church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul's conversion (testimony) • Paul's mission to the Gentiles
Acts 26:2-23	Unbelieving Jewish King Herod Agrippa at Caesarea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise for Agrippa • Paul's past life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul's past life • Paul's conversion • Forgiveness through Christ

This comparison highlights several facts.

- First, we see a marked difference between Paul's message to the believing elders from Ephesus and everyone else. Paul talked to them about commitment and their responsibility to serve the Lord by caring for the flock. To the other groups, however, Paul focused on the need for repentance and on Christ—that is, on the Gospel.
- Second, Paul often used his personal testimony with both kinds of groups. Sharing his personal spiritual journey was a high priority for Paul no matter to whom he was speaking.
- Third, Paul made every effort to identify with the particular target group and to gain their interest in listening to his message. This extended as far as using the false idols in Athens as a sermon illustration.

II. AIMING FOR YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

All too often, preachers deliver their messages with little thought to their audiences. How often have you heard someone preach a 'hellfire and brimstone' message of repentance for salvation to a church group that does not include a single known unbeliever? At the other extreme, preachers often spend large amounts of time preaching messages on Christian morals and living to unbelievers who are not ready for anything more than the Gospel.

All too often,
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audiences.

If our preaching is to resemble that in the New Testament, we need to pay attention to the characteristics of the audience, and deliver messages that are appropriate to them, and understandable. There are many characteristics that we should consider.

A. Important Characteristics of the Audience

The audience characteristics that might be important vary greatly from group to group. The list below is only partial. Time and experience will help you know what questions to ask.

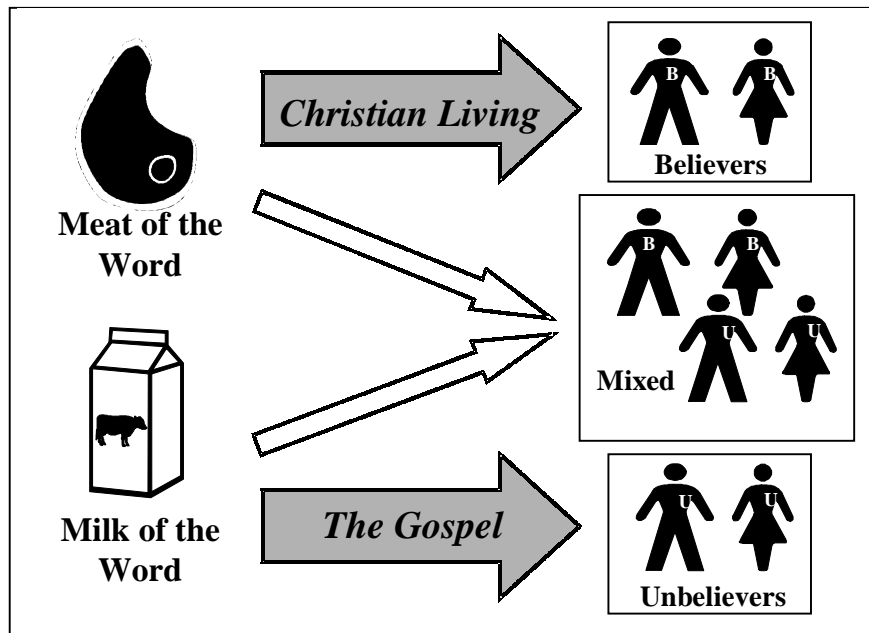
- Age – Older and younger people look at life very differently, and tend to listen to different kinds of messages. It is important to adjust both the content and the delivery of the message accordingly.
- Spiritual Level – People need to have content that matches their level of spiritual maturity, and helps them move on to a higher level. We should not waste complicated truths on unbelievers (Mt 7:6). Nor should we belabor basic truths with those who should be growing (Heb 6:1-3).
- Education – It is important not to speak in either too complex or too simple a manner. Often, the educational level of the audience gives us an idea of the proper level.
- Interests – If you want to get the attention of a group, talk about things that interest them. This is possible only if you know what their interests are.
- Ethnic Background – People of different ethnic backgrounds see things through the eyes of their own worldviews, which might differ from that of the speaker. It is important to know what those differences are.
- Religious Background – Religious tradition runs very deep, and we cannot ignore it. Something that means one thing to us may be taken in an entirely different way by a person looking through the grid of another religion.
- Family Status – Single people, married couples, divorced or widowed people, and grandparents have very different needs that match their family situations. We need to make sure our message meets those needs.
- Employment – Profession or job status also influences our needs and interests.
- Gender – Men and women often look at the same things in very different ways. Who comprises your audience?

B. What the Audience Needs

It can be dangerous to generalize, but we can gain some understanding as we refer back to the example of the sermons of the Apostle Paul. He preached the Gospel to unbelievers, but commitment to believers. This seems simple, but is often overlooked. Some spiritual truths are harder to understand than others. The unsaved person can understand only the Gospel as the Holy Spirit convicts him. The "meat" of the Scripture is wasted on him. In the same way, far too many believers are fed a constant diet of "milk" and therefore remain weak and unprepared for ministry. Figure 2.2 illustrated the fact that each group needs a proper 'diet' of the Word that is right for them.

From the figure, it is clear that the Gospel is for the unbelievers, and the truths of about commitment and Christian living are for the mature believers. When the audience is mixed, the message should also reflect that diversity.

Figure 2.2 A Proper Diet



It might also be noted that when a person trusts Christ, he or she is not immediately and automatically ready for difficult spiritual truth. There is a normal period of growth for the new believer where they continue to need to have the Gospel reinforced and explained, but when they learn and grow, they should begin to include more 'meat' and less 'milk' in their diet. Therefore, when you plan your message, you will also need to consider not only the ratio of believers to unbelievers, but also whether the audience is closer to the 'meat' or 'milk' stage.

III. HELPING THE AUDIENCE TO DISCOVER

No matter where on the scale of growth your audience might be, your preaching will be more powerful and memorable if it opens the Word to them and causes them to discover truth in it. It is not enough for them to simply learn from *you*, or to hear the things that *you* say. They must interact with the Scriptures themselves. In this way, biblical preaching resembles the emphasis on discovery that we saw when we studied the inductive method of Bible study.

Your audience must interact with the Scriptures themselves.

Imagine that someone sends you a letter, and you go to the post office to receive it. However, instead of giving you the letter to read, the postal clerk opens it, reads it silently, and then tells you approximately what it said. Would you be satisfied? Would you not feel a need to read the letter for yourself? This is

essentially what preachers often do. They study the Word privately, and then stand up and summarize for others what they remember from it. It is infinitely better when the preacher opens the Bible for us, and leads us through our own study of the truths contained in it.

Why should we bother to preach? Why not just give them the Bible and let them read it? Because many things in the Scriptures are difficult to understand. (Even Peter thought so in 2Pe 3:15-16.) Someone needs to help explain the complicated issues, and to show how to apply the truths to their lives. Biblical preaching can help to explain the similarities between the biblical context and the modern context of the audience. It takes skill and sensitivity to know when we need to help them discover, without becoming an obstacle between them and the Bible. To accomplish this requires that we take time to get to know the audience well, and adjust our message to meet their needs.

The preacher is to help build a bridge between the audience and the Word so that they can discover it.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What do you think about the way Paul handled the issue of idols in the Acts 17 passage? How would you have presented that message in the same situation?
- What is the best way to 'balance the diet' in a message to a mixed group?
- What things do you think are 'meat' and what things are 'milk'?

ACTION PLAN

- Read back through the list of characteristics in Section II.A. and then evaluate the group to whom you minister. Write a short statement to summarize each point as it relates to your group. Are there any other important characteristics that you need to add to the list to adequately describe you audience? What do you still need to learn about them in order to preach in a way that effectively meets their needs?
- Next, evaluate one of the messages that you have preached recently, or have prepared to preach soon. Does it fit this group? Why or why not? How could you improve it to make it more relevant, interesting, and applicable?

PREACHING
3
LESSON

Biblical Preaching III

UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the trainee improve his personal preparation and presentation in order to increase the effectiveness of the message.

☞ Main Points

- The life, testimony, and style of the preacher can enhance or detract from the message.
- Voice, mannerisms, and dress can be controlled and improved through effort and practice.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should:

- Understand the need for personal spiritual preparation for preaching.
- Be able to better control his or her voice and mannerisms during preaching.
- Be aware of techniques for more effective reading of the Word.

INTRODUCTION

We have discussed the fact that an understanding of the structure of the message and an understanding of the audience are key to effective biblical preaching. The third factor is the speaker. Figure 3.1 illustrates how the words of the speaker can either help to clarify and explain the message of the Word to the hearers, or it can detract from it.

The speaker affects our reception of the message on at least two levels. First, whenever a person speaks to us on any subject, we unconsciously filter their words through our opinion of that person. If we consider the person to be reliable, intelligent, trustworthy, etc., what they say will be more acceptable to us. If, on the other hand, we distrust or dislike the speaker, we will tend to ignore or discount the value of the message. The same happens with a sermon.

There is a second way that the speaker affects the message. Even if a person whom we like and trust is speaking, we might miss the content of the message if they are doing something that is distracting, or if their 'body-language' contradicts what they say. Perhaps they are telling us about something that happened, but they seem distracted. We will naturally wonder what they are really thinking about rather than focusing on what they are saying. Perhaps we notice a bug crawling up their sleeve, and completely miss what they are saying. *What we see* can override *what we hear*. Again, the same is true in preaching.

What we see can
override what we
hear.

In this lesson, we will discuss several of the important areas that concern the speaker. Perhaps the most important issues are the speaker's spiritual state, emotional state, and physical appearance. We will look at each of these in turn.

I. SPIRITUAL ISSUES

Preaching is a spiritual activity. We depend on the Holy Spirit to take the words that we say and apply them to the hearts of the listeners. In order for us to have the confidence that this will happen, we need to take a close look at our spiritual lives.

A. Be Yourself

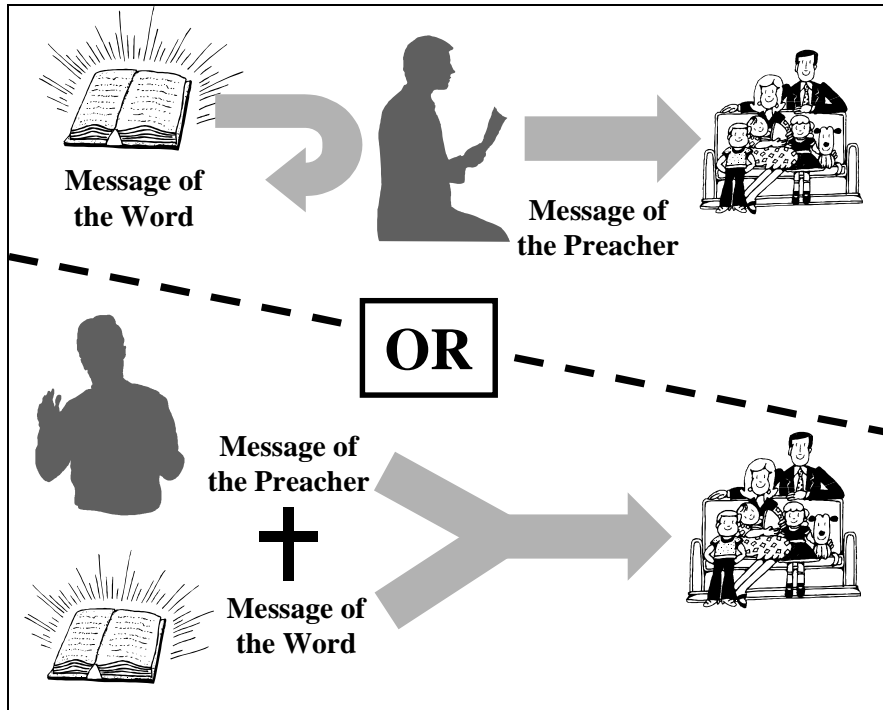
People can often quickly spot a 'fake.' And yet, even well-meaning preachers often have a 'personality change' when they stand before others to speak or preach. Their voice and vocabulary may change drastically. In the worst case, they may take on somewhat of a 'holy air' that is intended to convince others that they should listen, but has the opposite effect if it is not a true reflection of the spiritual life of the speaker.

In reality, God made each of us in unique ways so that we can serve Him as He desires. This was a difficult truth for Moses. In Exodus 4:10-12, he explained how his slow speech would hinder the message to the Israelites in captivity in Egypt. God rebuked Moses. He had formed Moses exactly how He wanted him to be—slow speech included. When we think that we need to be someone else, or act differently than the Lord made us in order to communicate His message, we do Him a serious disservice.

God made each of us in unique ways so that we can serve Him as He desires.

This, of course, does not mean that we should not try to improve our speaking skills or grow in relation to the Lord. We should. What we are saying is that as we continually grow, we should not pretend that we are farther along than we are. It is important that the audience see that we are sinners, saved by grace, as they are. We should be models of spiritual growth, not perfection.

Figure 3.1 Helping or Hindering the Message?



B. Pay Attention to Your Walk with the Lord

Paul counseled Timothy that his own growth and walk would affect his ministry (1Ti 4:16), and it would seem to be a valid principle for everyone who desires to preach the Word of God. One of the most amazing challenges in the New Testament is found in Acts 4:13. In that passage, Peter and John are standing before the highest-ranking and most educated religious authorities of their day. Despite the fact that they are uneducated fishermen, they exuded confidence in their message. Why? Because they had spent time with Jesus. Even the unbelieving members of the Sanhedrin recognized this fact.

The intent of this passage is not to speak against education and training. The Apostle Paul was also mightily used by God, and he had the highest religious training possible. Rather, the point of

the passage is that *even the uneducated* can be used powerfully if they have a vibrant spiritual walk. It does not matter how much background and training you have. God can use you at any level if you focus on staying close to Him. This is the most important factor in true biblical preaching.

II. EMOTIONAL ISSUES

Preachers, or potential speakers, tend to suffer from one of two emotional extremes. Some think that they will not be able to do a good job, and are controlled by fear. This can be so serious that they might refuse to speak, even when they have important things to say. The other extreme is to be so sure of our abilities that we fall into pride.

Preachers, or potential speakers, tend to suffer from one of two emotional extremes

A. Fear of Speaking in Public

Some fear is good. It is a normal emotion that God gave us for a purpose. A proper amount of fear can:

- sharpen our senses
- motivate us to do our best
- make us realize our dependence on God

Even experienced preachers often feel "butterflies" in their stomach, or some uncertainty before they speak. Representing the King of Kings is an awesome task, for which none of us is truly worthy. When we remember this fact, it helps us to avoid pride or dependence on our own abilities.

1. *Causes of Fear*

There are many causes of fear. The most common include the following:

- Fear of failure. We are often afraid that we are going to do something dumb, and people will laugh at us.
- Fear of the unknown. We are going to speak to a number of people and we have never done that before.
- Fear of rejection. Will they accept me?
- Fear of hostility. How will they react to what I am going to say?
- Fear of failure. This might happen when we have not properly prepared.

2. *Controlling the Fear*

There are a number of things that we can do to help control or conquer unhealthy amounts of fear.

- Give the message to God, Who is with you and caring for you.
- Do everything for the Lord. We want His approval, rather than that of other people.
- Remember that your message is very important, it is the Word of God. Concentrate on your message and how much the hearers need that message.
- Do your study well; know the message that you are going to present.

3. *Controlling the Tension That Comes From Fear*

There are a few physical exercises that you can do each time you prepare to speak that will help to reduce any fear-related tension that you may feel.

- Before you get up to speak, relax. Put yourself in a relaxing position and concentrate on allowing the muscles of your neck, back, legs and arms to relax.
- Control your breathing. Before speaking, breathe deeply to fill your lungs with fresh air. Do this several times. During the sermon, pause regularly, allow yourself to breathe deeply. Do not speak rapidly.

B. Pride

The opposite of fear is pride. Pride is a common sinful attitude—especially among those involved in public ministry and speaking. Paul warns Timothy that young Christians can easily fall into this trap if we exalt them to too high a position in the church too quickly (1Ti 3:6). However, almost any believer can give examples of more experienced Christian leaders who have suffered the same defeat.

Those who allow themselves to be controlled by pride forget that true spiritual growth comes only through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the hearer. A capable, proud speaker might be interesting, entertaining, or enjoyable to listen to. People might flock to hear him or her speak. However, he does not have the ability to cause true spiritual growth. As far as the kingdom of God is concerned, their sermons or messages are a waste of time at best, and sin at worst.

True spiritual growth comes only through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the hearer.

III. PHYSICAL ISSUES

Although preaching is a spiritual activity, good public speaking skills can make messages easier to listen to. Public speaking is a learned skill. Some people have a natural talent for public speaking, but by learning some helpful techniques, anyone can be an effective public speaker. Preaching is a special form of public speaking. It is publicly proclaiming God's word to others. It is important that the preacher's mannerisms or voice control not distract people's attention from the sermon.

There are a number of public speaking techniques that are helpful for the preacher. By implementing these helps, and through solid preparation and practice, you can preach effectively so that your people will grow in understanding of God's word and in obedience and deepening relationship to God.

A. Voice Control

A speaker will be much easier to listen to if he knows how to control his voice and adapt it to the acoustics of the room in which he is speaking.

1. *Characteristics of the Voice*

a. Volume

- Change the volume of your voice to follow the emotion and meaning of your message.

b. Tone

- Choose a tone that is neither strong nor weak.
- It is good to record your voice on a tape recorder and listen to it. You are able to change your voice to make it have a more agreeable tone.
- Do not speak in a monotone. Vary the tones of your voice

c. Articulation

- When you speak in public, you should open your mouth wide enough to sufficiently articulate the words.

d. Pace or speed

- You should speak neither very rapidly nor very slowly.
- Nervousness often leads us to speak rapidly. Practice giving the message in the quiet of your room and work on the speed of delivery.
- Your pace or speed must be adapted to the audience. They must be able to follow you and understand you without difficulty.
- Use pauses creatively, as you would do in normal conversation.

2. *Adapt Your Voice to the Acoustics of the Room*

In order to make sure that everyone in the room is able to hear you, you need to speak to the last person in the room. This is particularly important if you do not have a public address system. If the acoustics in the room are poor, you can adjust to it by the following means:

- Speak more slowly.
- Construct short phrases, and pausing between them.
- Pronounce your words carefully.
- Vary the tone.
- Accompany your words with more body movements.
- Use a low tone of voice.

B. **Appearance**

The physical appearance of the speaker is also important. When you speak, you should consider the following areas.

1. *Dress*

First impressions are important. You do not want to overdress or underdress. You do not want to call attention to yourself, but to God. Therefore, dress in a way that's appropriate for the group to whom you are ministering.

2. *Posture*

The audience sees us before it hears us. The manner in which we walk to the pulpit is already communicating something to the audience. When you walk to the pulpit, you want people to know that you have a message to them from God. It is an important message. Therefore, carry your head erect, and your body with dignity.

When you are in front of a group, keep your hands out of your pockets, and do not cling onto the podium with them. Allow your hands to be free for natural gestures as you communicate. Avoid the following positions:

- **Military** - The body is erect and rigid with the hands placed behind the back. This transmits hardness and tension.
- **Languid** - Avoid putting all of your weight on one foot with your shoulders slouched over. This communicates laziness and lack of interest.
- **Priestly** - With this position, we're trying to look extremely holy. Rigidly erect with our hands held in praying position.
- **The lion** - Here the preacher paces from one side to the other in the pulpit as a lion does in its cage.

Allow your posture to adapt itself to the emotion of the message. You are speaking to the audience with your voice and with your body. Allow your body to change naturally with your voice. Your body and voice then will work together in communication, rather than against each other.

3. *Gestures*

When you talk to friends, you use gestures with your head, with your shoulders, with your arms, with your legs, with your face. All of your body is used. When giving a sermon, you want to be as natural as you are when you are talking with your friends.

- A gesture should be genuine and natural. It should accompany the message as it would accompany a conversation with a friend.
- It is not necessary to smile all the time. In fact, that would be false, because some of your message may be about the need to repent. Your facial expression should accompany the normal emotion of your message.

- When giving an illustration about the life of an individual, or something that the individual has said, it is appropriate to imitate the tone of the voice, the gestures, and the facial features of the individual that you are imitating. In other words, it is appropriate to act out scenes from the Bible or everyday life.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience. You want them to know that you are interested in them personally. You can do that best by maintaining eye contact with them. You also want to know if they are responding to your message. You only know that by reading their eyes.

C. Interpretive Reading

Before you read a biblical passage to an audience, you need to understand the teaching about that message. You should understand first what the author is trying to communicate, so that you can be God's tool in communicating it effectively.

- Read the passage carefully, at least three times.
- Note the punctuation.
- Study the vocabulary. If there are any words that you do not know, look them up in the dictionary.
- Note the theme of the passage as well as its teaching. Also note how that theme is developed.
- Note the purpose that the author had in including this passage in a biblical narrative. In order to do that, it is important to look at the context.
- If there are people mentioned in the passage, note their characteristics.
- If the passage is a biblical story, accompany in your reading the development of the story from its introduction, development, climax and conclusion. Try to capture the emotion of the story in your own voice as it is developed.

You are reading God's word, so read it with conviction and enthusiasm.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Think of an effective preacher whom you know. What are elements of his speaking style which make him effective? Describe the use of his voice and body language.
- What are two helpful ideas you gained from this lesson to enhance your own preaching effectiveness?

ACTION PLAN

Have a friend use a tape recorder (or video camera, if you have access to one) to record you as you present a message. Then as you review the tape, evaluate your use of voice according to the parameters given in this lesson. If you use video, study your appearance and body language as well. If you simply have a tape recorder, ask that your friend who is taping watch these things and evaluate you.

THE FAMILY

THE FAMILY

3

LESSON

Ministry to the Family

A WORKSHOP

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to provide an opportunity for an open and honest discussion of issues that may have an impact for the church planter and the balance between ministry and family.

☞ Main Points

- There must be a balance between the time spent in ministry to the family and ministry to the church.
- In the life and ministry of a church planter, problems will arise which relate directly to the spouse and children. These problems must be recognized, openly discussed, and a commitment must be made on the part of the church planter to prayerfully resolve them.

☞ Desired Outcomes

As a result of this workshop, each participant should:

- Understand that as a church planter, balance and unity in a marital relationship as well as in the home are foundational concepts to a healthy ministry.
- Practice a commitment to understanding one's family members and how their lives are impacted and have an impact on the ministry of the church planter. Strive to obtain balance and unity in family and marriage.

☞ Suggestions To Trainers

The examples presented here are used merely to stimulate discussion about the need to seek balance between a church planter's ministry, and marriage and family. Please feel free to utilize your own examples and discussion questions but make sure that your discussions touch on issues such as servant leadership, conflict resolution, proper decision-making in the home, appropriate ways to express love to one's spouse, accepting one's own and one's spouse's weaknesses and strengths, etc. Carefully prepare for this session by reading all of the scenarios and then develop your lesson time according to issues that are of concern to your trainees. The scenarios and questions provided may or may not be adequate to meet the needs of your particular context. In this case, feel free to develop your own examples and questions.

INTRODUCTION

Often the question is asked, "Which comes first, family or the ministry?" The answer is neither. GOD comes first. Because we love Him, we serve Him. He has given us certain tasks to perform, all of which are part of our ministry to Him. To try and separate family and ministry is like trying to separate our spiritual life from our ministry. It is impossible, because they are interwoven. Our family is a part of our ministry.

The key to effective ministry in a church plant and in a family is balance. Some church planters and pastors take their commitment to ministry in the church to an extreme, and they effectively ignore their family. This is in direct contrast to the commands in the Bible for a father to instruct and discipline his children (De 6:7, Pr 22:6). How can a father do these things if he never sees his children or spends time with them? Consider Eli the priest, whose two sons were so wicked that God put them to death (1 Sa 2:34). God has given us the responsibility to raise our children because He knows that on their own, they will not make right choices.

Some church planters take the other extreme—they are overly preoccupied with their family, to the extent that they are not fulfilling the calling that God has given them as pastors and/or church planters. It can be very

easy for the family to become something that takes away our devotion from God. Jesus warned in Matthew 10:37 that anyone who loves his family more than Christ is not worthy of Him.

The qualifications for both overseers and deacons in 1 Timothy 3 require a more balanced view—a leader in the church is to be a man of one wife, who manages his children and household well. Just as individuals who fail morally disqualify themselves from ministry, so individuals who fail in their family lives also disqualify themselves from ministry. Every church planter who is married must strive to maintain a proper balance between the time that he spends with his wife and children, and the time that he spends with the church. Both are ministries, and both are his calling.

GUIDELINES TO THIS WORKSHOP

The following scenarios discuss situations and problems that are common among church planters. As you work through them, look for similarities in your own life and ministry.

- Break into small groups at the beginning of the lesson time. Each group should deal with just one of the scenarios.
- Come up with biblical principles that could have been applied to the situation.
- At the end of the small group time, have everyone gather as a larger group and have each group present its findings.

Note to Translator: Please change names in the following case studies to those common in your language.

I. SCENARIO ONE—IGOR AND LUBA

Rocked by the swaying of the train, Igor settled down for a welcome night's sleep. While it had been a busy five days during the training seminar, he was very encouraged by what he had learned and by the fellowship of others who had the same desire as his own: to start new churches. There had been such unity during the seminar. Everyone understood his struggles and concerns as they were all in the initial stage of establishing churches. Their times of prayer had been worshipful and empowering.

As Igor drifted off to sleep, contemplating the continuation of his church planting ministry, he felt a beautiful peace and a renewed sense of the powerful presence of God in his life. He couldn't wait to share his new ideas with his church planting team and start implementing them in his ministry.

Luba, at about the same time that Igor was drifting off to sleep, was in the middle of another of many family catastrophes since Igor's departure. As she rocked her and Igor's youngest baby (an 8 month old girl) she felt frantic. The flu had hit all three of her children in the last two days and now the baby Katya had a high fever and had been vomiting. Luba was exhausted. The continual needs of her children and the non-stop cleanup of messes related to the flu had brought her to the limit of her physical strength.

But flu was only the last of several problems since Igor left. Besides the extra work that his absence brought about, their refrigerator had broken down and a leak in the roof had damaged some of the living room wall paper during a recent rainstorm.

Having lived in this new town for just a few months, she had no one to turn to for help or even to talk to. She was looking forward to Igor's return. His help would be welcome, but even more than that she wanted to talk with someone about the burdens of her heart and soul related to the living in this remote area away from her family and friends and an easier lifestyle.

When Igor and Luba greeted one another at the front door they were very glad to see one another. He couldn't wait to talk about the previous week's events but there were more immediate problems that needed Igor's attention.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are some immediate things that Igor could do to make the situation better?
2. How should Igor respond to the situation he finds at home?
3. Please state what you think Igor will want to talk about when he and Luba sit down for their talk.

4. What kind of burdens could Luba be carrying that she wanted to share with someone?
5. Igor's ministry requires him to be away from home frequently- sometimes for as much as a full week. How can he prevent another stressful occurrence like this?
6. How can he encourage her and help her to see herself as his partner in ministry?
7. How can a church planter with a family determine how much time he needs to reserve/set aside for caring for his family's needs?

II. SCENARIO TWO—ANDREA AND TIBOR

Andrea was rejoicing about the young father whom her husband, Tibor, had just led to the Lord. She was so happy for Tibor because he was being used greatly by the Lord. In the last six months the new church had grown from a couple of families to 15. They were encouraged in this ministry but Andrea still had these haunting concerns and feelings. She had told Tibor about her need to talk but it seemed as if he was always so busy with his ministry that they never had time to talk. He came home almost every evening very late and dead tired. He said that it would be better if they talked when he was alert, but then he was up and out of the house early in the morning to go to some meeting or to talk to some new convert or to teach a class at one of the several cell groups which were meeting in their neighborhood. Besides her initial concerns, she was beginning to feel jealous. This church planting ministry was becoming a totally consuming love for Tibor that was taking her place in his life. She was feeling things that she didn't want to feel. She wanted to be supportive of Tibor and his ministry. That was her commitment to the Lord and to her husband. But she felt so isolated. This was a city that had no church before they came and until recently there were no believers. Now there were some women converts who were being discipled but they would never be able to understand her life as the pastor's wife. She wanted to feel like she was a contributing part of Tibor's ministry, but up to this point she hadn't been involved and she hadn't been asked to be involved. What could she do to get Tibor to slow down long enough to talk about these burdens on her heart?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. From the facts of the story does it seem that Tibor was communicating with Andrea about her needs as a wife and mother?
2. Do you think Tibor was involving Andrea in his church planting ministry? Was there partnership and unity in their lives?
3. In what ways is Tibor failing as a husband?
4. What practical advice can you suggest that would help Tibor to become better at communicating with his wife?
5. What do you have to say concerning "balance" in this marriage?
6. How is Tibor living out Ephesians 5:25-26?
7. How can Tibor involve Andrea effectively in his ministry?

III. SCENARIO THREE—NICU AND HIS FAMILY

Nicu had had a long week. He had made some major mistakes as a husband and a father. He had been humbled by his own sinful ways and now, after confession and repentance, life was taking on a positive look once again. But if anyone had asked him how he was doing these days, he would have had to admit that he was still angry. Here is the story:

One day his oldest son, Razvan, age 18 was watching a movie on their VCR in their home. He had borrowed it from one of his friends. Nicu walked into the room and sat down and joined Razvan. Soon after Lina, Nicu's wife, came into the room and joined them. After just a few minutes it became apparent to Lina that this movie was not appropriate for Christians to watch. She made her view known to Nicu and then left the room. Nicu followed her and explained that Razvan was old enough now to make decisions on his own about what he should watch and what he shouldn't watch. Lina argued that it was

their responsibility as parents while any of their children lived in their home to determine what should be watched, read or talked about in their home. Nicu was angry with Lina for confronting him about this, especially in front of Razvan. It was embarrassing as the head of the house to be confronted by his wife. So in somewhat of a vengeful way he didn't agree with her point of view and allowed Razvan to finish the movie.

That night when they were ready to go to bed, Lina raised the issue again but Nicu refused to budge from his position. He was even angrier with Lina now and he refused to pray with her before going to sleep. The next morning after a very miserable night of sleep, Nicu got up to have his devotions. He couldn't concentrate on his Bible reading, he couldn't pray because he was so angry. At the breakfast table, he made the announcement to the entire family that no videos would be allowed to be shown in his home again and there were to be no exceptions. The other children had no idea what was going on but they could tell by their father's voice and the tears in their mother's eyes that there was something wrong between them. Nicu had felt terrible about the whole situation. He was a pastor. He was involved in starting a new church and telling people about the love of Christ and the joy of the Christian life. He had no love and joy in his life due to this problem. But there was more to it than that. He knew that his wife was right about his responsibility to set the spiritual tone in the home. He was just too proud to admit his failure. He also knew that he was disobeying Scripture because he was not loving his wife as Christ loves the Church. This anger he had been feeling was in fact anger at his own body because they were one flesh. He had to correct the situation. So at the next meal, when the entire family was together again, he apologized for several things he had done that were wrong. He did so in brokenness and tears and asked for forgiveness from his family. They prayed together and good healthy discussion followed about the place of videos in their home.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Razvan is 18 years old, a young man! Why does he feel free to show improper movies on his parent's TV?
2. As evidenced in Nicu's response to Lina, what essential Christian attribute is missing in his life?
3. Was family meal time an appropriate "meeting" time to discuss this, or any significant family problem?
4. Why should there have been a difference of opinion in the thinking of a Christian couple on clear cut matters relating to spiritual or moral aspects of life?
5. What can you say about the communication and understanding between Nicu and Lina up to this point?
6. Should Nicu have been embarrassed by Lina's confronting him?
7. How can such occurrences be prevented in the future?

IV. SCENARIO FOUR—ANICKA AND MIREK

"See you soon!" Anicka called as she shut the door behind the last visitor. It was past midnight, and she had just enough energy to gather up the teacups and put them in the sink before slumping onto her bed. Her husband Mirek was already preparing for bed.

The phone rang early the next morning. Anicka ran to get it so that it wouldn't interrupt Mirek's study time. It was a friend from a neighboring city who was passing through town. "Could I stay at your house tonight?" he asked. It would mean extra work for her, but how could she say no?

Their life had certainly changed in the six months since they'd started planting the church. Anicka couldn't remember another time that had been so busy. When they weren't out in the neighborhood, it seemed as though the neighborhood was in their apartment. People were arriving for Bible studies, counseling, or meetings nearly every hour of the day. Anicka didn't resent that: other people were realizing what she already knew—that Mirek had a shepherd's heart. She tried to tell herself that she needed to be a supportive wife. But just because Mirek needed to be free to talk to people and help with their needs, did that mean that Anicka had to pick up all the rest of the duties?

Anicka thought back to the previous June, when they were sent out as church planters. Their pastor had encouraged them to work together and complement each other. The pastor knew that Anicka's gift of evangelism would be important in church planting. It proved to be true—the first new believers in their church were people Anicka had met and witnessed to. But now, she admitted to herself, she had little time to go out and do what she loved most: talk to others about Christ. Something had to change, and quickly.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Does Mirek and Anicka's lifestyle suggest that there is balance in their lives? Explain your answer.
2. What are Anicka's unvoiced expectations? What about Mirek's?
3. How could Mirek help his wife use her gifts?
4. Is it possible for spouses to be equal "partners in ministry?" (see Ac 18:24-26).

V. SCENARIO FIVE—RENATA AND HER FAMILY

Renata could tell by the look on her father's face that she had done something wrong. Did she forget a chore, or was this just his ongoing disapproval of her decision to follow Christ? She always tried to be careful to help around the house before going out to work with the church planting team. After all, her father made it clear that he felt a 26-year-old could better spend her time looking for a husband than leading a women's discipleship group.

Just that evening, the discipleship group had gone so well. Her co-worker Matthias had encouraged her to continue teaching women how to build the church and know Christ better. "I don't know what we would do without your help," he had said. "There's no way my wife could have led the group with two babies at home. We're so thankful that you're available."

Renata's mother entered the room and called her back to reality. "Renata," she started, "we need you to be home tomorrow night."

"Mom," Renata replied, "you know that's the night I meet with my team."

"Oh yes," her mother returned, sarcastically, "the important people in your life. How could I forget?"

Renata tried to control her temper and quickly stepped out of the room. She knew she was supposed to honor her parents, but the words she was tempted to say were far from respectful. Her feelings were a jumbled combination of anger and guilt. Why did she always react badly to her parents' comments? Why did they deliberately plan activities to keep her from what God had called her to?

More than anything, she wished she could afford to live on her own, but her work as a church planter meant she could only work part-time as a bookkeeper. Besides, it was still considered strange for a young, single woman to live outside of the shelter of her parents' household.

Sometimes Renata felt like she lived in two worlds: on the church planting team, she was praised and valued as a key player, and at home, she was criticized and treated like a slave. She knew which world she preferred, but she knew that, at least for now, she had to live in both of them.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Does the problem stem only from Renata's parents, or is she doing something to contribute to it? If so, what?
2. How can she honor her parents when they object to how she spends her time?
3. What would you suggest to Renata if she came to you seeking advice on her living situation?
4. What unique things must be considered when a single woman is helping to plant a church? How can other church planters be sensitive to those things?