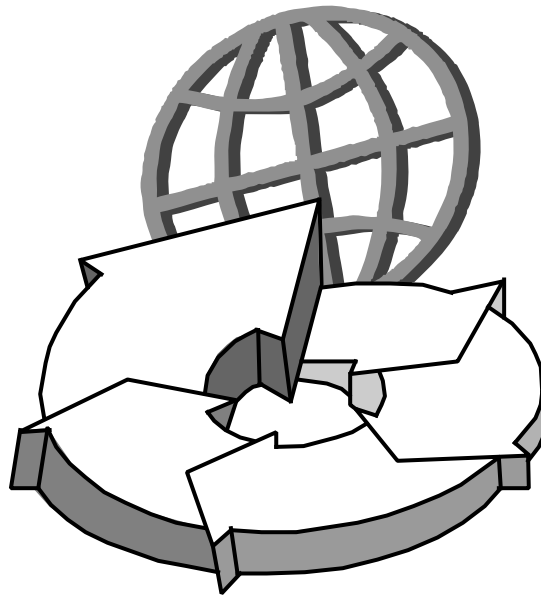


# *Omega Course:*

Finishing the Great Commission through  
“Saturation Church Planting”  
Practical Church Planter Training



## **Manual Two**

English Companion to the Chinese Translation

By

*The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting*



August 2008

**Omega Course:  
Practical Church Planter Training  
Manual Two  
English Companion to the Chinese Translation**

Copyright ©2008 by *United World Mission*.

You are **permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material** in any format provided that: (1) you credit the author, (2) you indicate if modifications are made, (3) you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, and (4) you do not make more than 1,000 copies.

If you would like to post this material to the Internet or if your intended use is other than outlined above, please contact:

United World Mission  
9401 Southern Pine Blvd Ste B  
Charlotte, NC 28273-5596  
+1 (800) 825-5896  
[chineseomega@alliancescp.org](mailto:chineseomega@alliancescp.org)

The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting

[www.alliancescp.org](http://www.alliancescp.org)

Translations and adaptations for your context are also encouraged. Again, please contact *UWM* so that we can encourage and inform others who may also be interested in your language or intended use.



All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. All rights reserved.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We extend heartfelt thanks and grateful acknowledgment to all who have contributed to the preparation of these training manuals. The following organizations have given so very much to the process of writing and editing these materials. Lord, plant Your Church...to the ends of the earth!

United World Mission

*World Team*

*Greater Europe Mission*

*Christ for Russia*

*World Witness*

*World Harvest Mission*

*C B International*

*Project 250 of Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries*

*Grace Brethren Intl. Mission*

*UFM International*

*Interlink Ministries*

*The Alliance Regional Resource Team*



# MANUAL TWO

## Table of Contents

<b>PREFACE .....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>SCP VISION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>LESSON 5 Biblical Foundations of Saturation Church Planting .....</b>	<b>3</b>
I. Saturation In The Old Testament.....	3
II. The Ministry Of Jesus.....	4
III. The Biblical Basis For Saturation Church Planting .....	4
IV. How Many Churches Is Saturation?.....	6
V. Saturation Church Planting In History .....	7
<b>LESSON 6 The First Advance .....</b>	<b>9</b>
I. The Birth Of The New Testament Church .....	9
II. Persecution .....	10
III. Paul's Missionary Journeys.....	10
IV. The Council At Jerusalem (Acts 15).....	12
V. Principles Behind Strategic Missionary Activity.....	13
<b>LESSON 7 Strategy Components for a Church Planting Movement .....</b>	<b>17</b>
I. Build Faith In The Vision.....	17
II. Set Goals Based On Faith.....	19
III. Practice Multiplication Instead Of Addition .....	19
IV. Work From A Strategic Center Rather Than A Remote Location.....	20
V. Develop Mobile Facilitative Teams.....	20
VI. Empower People .....	21
VII. Develop Networks .....	21
VIII. Seek God's Guidance And Timing .....	22
<b>Appendix: Faith and Obedience vs. Unbelief and Fear .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix: Things that Promote Natural Growth.....</b>	<b>25</b>

<b>THE CHURCH .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>LESSON 5 Functions of the Church .....</b>	<b>29</b>
I. Functions Of The Church.....	30
<b>Appendix: Baptism In The New Testament.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Appendix: The Nature of the Church.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>LESSON 6 Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry .....</b>	<b>43</b>
I. What Is A Philosophy Of Church Planting Ministry? .....	43
II. The Need For A Philosophy Of Church Planting Ministry .....	44
III. Contents Of An Effective Philosophy Of Church-Planting Ministry .....	46
IV. Sample Philosophy Of Ministry .....	47
<b>LESSON 7 How To Lead Worship.....</b>	<b>49</b>
I. The Role Of The Worship Leader .....	49
II. Qualities Of A Worship Leader .....	49
III. Guidelines For Leading Worship .....	50
IV. Leading worship and church multiplication .....	52
V. Training New Worship Leaders .....	52
VI. Solving problems that occur during the worship time. ....	53
<b>LESSON 8 The Church and Spiritual Gifts.....</b>	<b>55</b>
I. Why Do We Need Spiritual Gifts?.....	55
II. Leaders: Given By Jesus To Equip The Body .....	56
III. Abilities: Given By The Holy Spirit To Empower The Body .....	56
IV. Inductive Bible Study Of Passages On Spiritual Gifts .....	58
V. Hindrances To Discovering Gifts.....	60
VI. Mobilizing The Church According To Spiritual Giftedness .....	60
VII. Spiritual Gifts And Church Planting .....	61
<b>SPIRITUAL CHARACTER .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>LESSON 5 Understanding The Father’s Heart.....</b>	<b>65</b>
I. Three Parables About Lost Things -Luke 15 .....	65
II. The Parable Of The Prodigal Son .....	66
III. Application—Do We Love As The Father Loves? .....	68
<b>LESSON 6 Moral Integrity of Church Planters.....</b>	<b>69</b>
I. Honesty.....	70
II. Sincerity .....	71
III. Purity of Purpose.....	72
IV. Moral Integrity Can Be Costly.....	75
<b>Appendix: Bible Study on Integrity .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>PRAYER.....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>LESSON 2 Prayer and Fasting .....</b>	<b>83</b>
The Role Of Fasting .....	83
I. The Teaching Of Christ.....	83
II. The Example Of The Early Church .....	83
III. The Nature Of Fasting.....	84

<b>LEADERSHIP .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>LESSON 1 Biblical Principles of Leadership .....</b>	<b>87</b>
I. The Definition Of Leadership .....	87
II. Principles Of Biblical Leadership .....	88
<b>Appendix: Leadership Case Studies .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>LESSON 2 Profile of a Leader .....</b>	<b>95</b>
I. Maintain Christ-Like Character .....	95
II. Work Well With A Team .....	96
III. Develop The Giftedness And Abilities Of Others .....	96
IV. Know How To Delegate Responsibility .....	96
V. Set Goals, Plans And Objectives And Work Toward Them .....	97
VI. Articulate Vision In Such A Way That It Inspires Others .....	97
VII. Be Persistent And Overcome Setbacks .....	97
VIII. Lead In Evangelism.....	98
<b>Appendix: The Leader.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>LESSON 3 Introduction to Teamwork .....</b>	<b>103</b>
I. What Is Teamwork? .....	103
II. Biblical Basis For Teamwork .....	104
III. Characteristics Of Effective Teamwork .....	105
<b>LESSON 4 Team Development .....</b>	<b>109</b>
I. Forming Your Team.....	109
II. Leading Your Team.....	111
III. Understanding Your Team .....	112
<b>MULTIPLYING CHURCHES .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>LESSON 4 Discussion Dynamics .....</b>	<b>117</b>
I. Leading Discussion In.....	117
II. Developing Good Questions .....	119
III. Discussion Problems.....	120
<b>Appendix: Sample Discussion Questions .....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>LESSON 5 Training New Church Leaders.....</b>	<b>125</b>
I. Choose An Apprentice Leader.....	125
II. Prepare Your Apprentice For Leadership.....	127
III. Release Your Apprentice For Ministry.....	128
<b>LESSON 6 Church Evangelism.....</b>	<b>131</b>
I. Two Types Of Unbelievers .....	131
II. Understanding <i>Oikos</i> .....	132
III. Share Groups .....	133
IV. The Process Of Evangelism in Multiplying Churches.....	133
<b>Appendix: About "Oikos".....</b>	<b>137</b>

<b>DISCIPLE MAKING .....</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>LESSON 1 Introduction to Disciple Making .....</b>	<b>143</b>
I. Definition Of Disciple And Disciple Making .....	143
II. How Disciple Making Contributes To Church Planting .....	144
III. Keys to successful disciple making .....	144
<b>LESSON 2 Know Your Goal, Know Your People .....</b>	<b>147</b>
I. Understand The Present Spiritual Condition Of Your People .....	147
II. Practical Guidelines For Making Disciples .....	149
<b>Appendix: Faith, Hope and Love .....</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Appendix: Helping Disciples Grow Spiritually .....</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>BIBLE STUDY METHODS .....</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>LESSON 5 Various Ways to Use Inductive Bible Studies .....</b>	<b>159</b>
I. Review Of The Principles Of Inductive Bible Study .....	159
II. Biographical Studies .....	160
III. Book Studies .....	163
IV. Theme Studies .....	165
<b>Appendix: Biographical Study on Barnabas .....</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>LESSON 6 Leading Inductive Bible Studies .....</b>	<b>171</b>
I. Characteristics Of An Inductive Bible Study Group .....	171
II. Preparation For The Study .....	172
III. Leading The Study .....	173
<b>Appendix: Inductive Bible Study on Matthew 20:17-28 .....</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>Appendix: Inductive Bible Study on Luke 15:1-7 .....</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>LESSON 7 Workshop On Leading Inductive Bible Studies .....</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>Appendix: Passages for Inductive Bible Studies .....</b>	<b>189</b>



# 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.

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, 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.

## USING THE MATERIAL

### Advice for using this Material in Mentoring Groups

Be aware that real learning takes place when you work with others to apply the concepts presented in these lessons. Most lessons include an action plan at the end. These action plans are designed to help apply the ideas in the lesson and should be completed as you are studying the material. It can be extremely helpful to have a mentor lead the small group to encourage and advise the group as they work through the process of planting churches. This type of group can also provide mutual accountability to the concepts being learned in life and ministry. It is strongly suggested that you work through the material in this manual in such a group context.

## ***Mentoring groups***

The goal of these mentoring groups is to train cp'ers to plant churches, not necessarily train leaders for pastoring existing churches.

It is important that the mentor is prepared beforehand for each part of the meeting. Praying for the Spirit's leading in each area is important because He knows the specific challenges and problems that each person is facing. It is be a good idea for the mentor to keep a journal of the meetings for future reference. The focus of the mentor is on training cp'ers. It is important that the mentor be familiar with the model.

The mentor does not necessarily need a theology degree, but only a desire to help facilitate others through the process of planting churches. It is, however, suggested that the mentor have been involved in planting a church.

### ***Model for a Mentoring Group***

Style – The style of the mentoring groups is two-fold:

- Discussion Based - New ideas and concepts will be learned better through discussing the key concepts together in the group setting.
- Mutual care and accountability – Using personal growth type questions participants can share their needs and difficulties. In this way they can deepen their relationship, care for and help each other grow in Christ.

Size – The group should be four to eight people including mentor. The more people the longer the time needed for discussion.

Frequency – Once a week is best. Every two weeks if members are also mentoring leaders under them. Once a month for two day sessions if the group members live far away.

Length of time (dependent on frequency) – Two to three hour sessions are necessary for everyone to be able to participate in the discussion.

Location – It is best to meet in an informal situation, not in a classroom, so discussion and sharing will be more open.

Participants– Choose people who have a basic foundation in their faith. It is important that both the mentor and participant will come prepared having completed the homework assigned. (Suggestion for choosing participants, or the goal of training. A church planter is someone who is a competent evangelist, can lead a small group, and skilled in discipling new believers.)

### ***Steps for Mentoring Group Meeting***

The goal of these mentoring groups is to train church planters to plant churches, not necessarily train leaders for pastoring existing churches.

It is important that the mentor is prepared beforehand for each part of the meeting. Praying for the Spirit's leading in each area is important because He knows the specific challenges and problems that each person is facing. It is be a good idea for the mentor to keep a journal of the meetings for future reference. The focus of the mentor is on training cp'ers. If a mentor is involved in the training then it is important that he is shadowed in his group meeting with other cp'ers until he is familiar with the model.

It will be important for the mentor to journal what happens and how each cp'er is growing so changes can be made into any future revisions and to understand each individual more specifically for intercession and counsel.

### **Meeting agenda:**

It is essential that both the mentor and participant will come prepared having completed the homework assigned and answered the questions for review and application.

#### **Meeting Starter**

Before the opening prayer, the meeting should be started with either a scripture or a chorus dealing to bring focus onto the purpose of the meeting. Then, specifically pray the content of the scripture or chorus back to God. This should take 5 – 10 minutes.

#### **Personal Growth (Openness and trust)**

Prepare a question that will help the personal growth of the group members. The mentor should set the example in the beginning for openness and trust by sharing first. After a few meetings others may be willing to share first. Remember to be brief, but allow for the Spirit to have freedom if there is a specific problem that needs to be talked about and prayed for.

Pray for what was talked about. Different people can lead out but make sure everyone understands that this prayer time is asking for specific help in individual's lives. If there are no specific needs then different ones can pray generally for God's help in regards to this area of their lives. This may take 20-30 minutes.

### **Review and discuss homework questions (focus on application)**

This is an important part of the mentoring time because application of the material is what will bring change and growth to life and ministry. Choose one or two points from the application portion from the previous meeting that each person can share their answers and experience. This portion should not be rushed and further discussion can be encouraged. There may be some meetings where discussing the homework will take the rest of the meeting time.

### **Discussion of Lesson (Participative and challenging)**

There are several different ways that this section can be facilitated. The mentor will need to pray and understand what the Lord wants to emphasize in this section for study. You may choose to discuss or read a portion of the text, or ask the group members to summarize what they feel are the main points, look up some or all the scriptures dealing with a particular topic, answer questions that arose while reading the material etc. Be Creative!

The mentor can guide this discussion so that it is lively and informative. Asking the right kind of questions is important to draw out the main points of the material. What, how, why, are good ways to get discussion going. Be specific in your questions but stay away from yes or no questions, unless followed by asking "why?". Allow people time to share their ideas but don't let one person talk too long.

The mentor needs to allow people to discuss but also keep the discussion focused on topic and focused on the important issues the mentor will also need to share principles that he has learned or correct non-biblical ideas or challenge traditional ideas and methods from time to time.

### **Assign homework**

Homework assignments will consist of reading the next chapter as well as answering questions. Encourage them to complete the homework assignments as it will greatly impact the next discussion time. Some chapters will include an action point to be assigned after discussion of the material.

### **Pray for ministry (Mutual encouragement)**

Each person can share a brief request for prayer in their area of ministry, then pray one for another. You could be creative in this area, for example: starting a prayer journal with answers to prayers; assigning prayer partners for a specific period of time; creating a prayer chain; or doing prayer walks together, etc.

### **Evaluation**

The mentor should periodically take time to evaluate the process. Think about each individual and as well as the group as it relates to their specific ministry situations. Find ways to encourage participants to keep on track with goals. A base line of how many trainees and churches are represented will need to be recorded in the beginning so a true picture of growth can be attained during evaluation.

The Omega project should show proportional growth in both mentoring groups and new churches.

### **Advice for Using this Material in Seminars**

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.'

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 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**

For further assistance in spreading the vision of saturation church planting or practically equipping church planters, contact [chineseomega@alliancescp.org](mailto:chineseomega@alliancescp.org)

## SUGGESTED SCRIPTURES FOR MEETING STARTER

**Habakkuk 2: 14,2-3** For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

### Psalm 67

**Psalm 72:19** Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.

**Psalm 96:1-3** Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. 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.

**Isaiah 6:1-3** In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

**Isaiah 11:9** They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

**Matthew 13:31-32** He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

**Matthew 28:18-20** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

**Mark 16:15** He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

**Luke 24:46-47** He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

**Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

**Acts 4:23-31**

**Acts 8:1-4**

**Acts 16:31-34**

**Acts 19:9-11**

**Romans 15:20-21** It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."

**Romans 16:25-27** Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him—to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

**Ephesians 4:11-13** It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

**1 Thessalonians 1:7-8** And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,

**1 Timothy 2:3-4** This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

**2 Timothy 2:2** And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

**2 Peter 3:9** 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.

**Revelation 5:9** And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

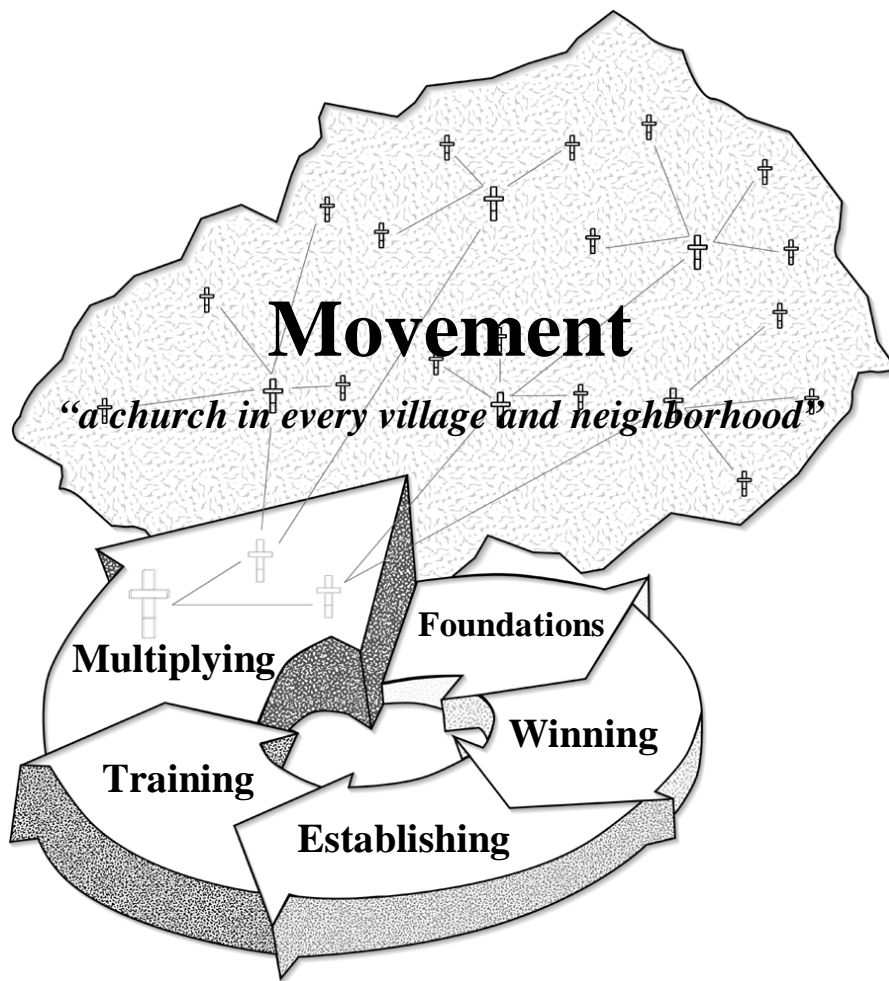
#### **SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL GROWTH (OPENNESS AND TRUST)**

1. What are your desires and hopes for your life?
2. What is keeping you from reaching your dreams?
3. What does God want from you and your church?
4. How has your prayer life been this week?
5. If you could change one thing in your spiritual life, what would it be?
6. What have you been studying in the Bible this week?
7. Does your home reflect the of joy and worship of a Christian life?
8. How does the Lordship of Christ affect your daily life?
9. What gives you the most satisfaction in ministry?
10. What are some of the opportunities God has given you to serve him this week? Did you miss any?
11. What Bible character do you most identify with and why?
12. What challenges or struggles are you dealing with?
13. Are you taking time to relax?
14. What is your favorite Bible verse and why?
15. If God could give you one thing you really wanted what would it be?
16. How much time have you spent with your family this week?
17. How have you demonstrated a servant's heart to those around you?
18. In what ways has God blessed you this week?
19. How have you grown spiritually in the last 6 mo?
20. Are you sensing spiritual attacks from the enemy right now?
21. How are you financially right now? (things under control?)
22. What are you afraid of?
23. Describe your relationships with people in the Church.
24. Who are you most praying for to come to know Christ and why?
25. Describe how non-Christians perceive the church.
26. What do you perceive to be your greatest spiritual gift?
27. What has given you the most joy this week?

Look in Manual 1/Multiplying Churches/Chapter 3/Appendix A Conversation Ice Breakers for more questions.



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.





---

# SCP VISION

---





# Biblical Foundations of Saturation Church Planting

## FILLING THE EARTH WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S GLORY

### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to show that saturation church planting is a biblical concept and is a means that God uses to fulfill His purpose.

### ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand a clear definition of "saturation."
- Saturation Church Planting is a biblical approach to fulfilling the Great Commission.
- Know that saturation is a biblical principle that applies to God's work in history.
- Participate in saturation church planting as a foundational principle in the church planter's philosophy of ministry and church planting strategy.

### ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Habakkuk 2:2-3,14 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What have you done this week to move toward your vision?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:  
Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.  
Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## SATURATION DEFINED

What is saturation church planting? To answer that we must first define the term "saturation."

The word saturation is the adjective form of the verb "to saturate," which is a scientific term meaning "to treat or charge with something to the point where no more can be absorbed, dissolved or retained" (Merriam Webster Dictionary. Note to translators: Use the definition in your language.) The picture is that of a sponge that is so full of water that it cannot hold one more drop.

God uses the principle of "saturation" or "filling" throughout Scripture, beginning with the filling of the earth with people and the making disciples of all nations. The goal is that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as waters cover the sea (Hab 2:14, Isa. 11:9).

In applying the word "saturation" to church planting, we communicate the concept of filling the land with churches so that every man, woman and child has a chance to hear and understand the Gospel, and accept or reject Jesus Christ as personal Savior for the glory of God.

### Discuss: What is Saturation Church Planting?

## I. SATURATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

### 1. From the Beginning—Filling the Earth (Saturation) was an Old Testament theme

God's command was to fill the earth with people (Ge 1:28, 9:1, and 9:7). After the flood, the nations spread out over the earth (Ge. 10:32). But then the people "settled down" (Ge 11:1-2). They began to build a city "...so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the earth" (Ge 11:4). So God confused their language and "scattered them from there over all the earth" (Ge 11:7,8).

**Discuss:** Why do you think that God wanted people to fill the earth?

## 2. God's ultimate purpose is for the whole earth to be saturated with the knowledge of Him

From the beginning of Scripture to the end, it is clear that God desires His glory to fill or cover all of the earth—each nation and every part of each nation. For example, God chose Abraham and blessed him **so that he would be a blessing**. God's promise to Abraham was so that "all people on earth would be blessed through you" (Ge 12:3). This is what it means to be a "chosen people."

God's desire that the whole earth know Him is stated in the following verses:

- All the earth shall be filled with the glory of God (Nu 14:21).
- And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory (Ps 72:19).
- For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa 11:9).
- I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory... all flesh shall come to worship Me (Isa 66:18).

**Discuss: What is God's ultimate purpose?**

## II. THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

### 1. Jesus Used Saturation As A Strategy For His Ministry In Galilee

Jesus targeted Galilee for saturation (Mt 4:23). He went to all the towns and villages (Mt 9:35). Jesus sent his 72 in teams of two to "every town and place where He was about to go" (Lk 10:1). With these teams, the Gospel was presented in no less than 36 towns and villages of Galilee!

It is interesting that, in targeting Galilee, the impact of his ministry there was not contained. "News about him spread all over Syria," and "large crowds" from Decapolis, Judea and the trans-Jordan region came to hear Him in Galilee (Mt 4:23-25). Apparently Galilee was a very strategic region to minister in since it resulted in a very broad impact.

**Discuss: How did Jesus use a Saturation strategy in his ministry?**

### 2. Jesus' Parables Of The Kingdom Show Saturation Principles

In Matthew 13, Jesus teaches his disciples about the kingdom of God through a series of parables. In the first one, He tells how the kingdom will be received by various kinds of hearers. In the next one, the Parable of the Weeds, he tells of the work of the enemy who sows weeds among the good seed. The last parable has the same application: it is the Lord's job to separate the true from the false. Parables five and six (Hidden treasure and Pearl) emphasize the joy of those who find this "treasure." In the middle are two parables that speak of the extension of this kingdom.

#### 1) *The Parable Of The Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)*

In this parable there is great growth. From a small beginning ("the smallest of all your seeds") it grew to become the largest of garden plants. The message is clear: from a small beginning the kingdom of God would grow into a "large plant."

#### 2) *The Parable Of Yeast (Matthew 13:33)*

In this parable, a small lump of yeast penetrated the large lump of dough. The message seems to be the same as that of the mustard seed, but with the added emphasis on the transformation that occurs as the yeast permeates the dough. From a small beginning the kingdom of God will continue penetrating until it covers all of the earth (Compare Rev 11:15).

At the end of these teachings, Jesus asked his disciples, "Have you understood all these things?" (Mt 13:51). The obvious answer is no, since after His resurrection He spent 40 days speaking to them about the kingdom of God (Ac 1:3).

**Discuss: How do these parables express God's desire for Saturation?**

## III. THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR SATURATION CHURCH PLANTING

As we have seen, God's ultimate purpose is for the whole world to be saturated with knowledge of Him. Saturation church planting is saturating a region with churches in such away that every man, woman and child has a chance to accept or reject the Gospel through the witness of a local church. Is saturating an area with churches just the latest fad in ministry or is it based on biblical precedent? As the following biblical principles will show us, saturation church planting is biblical.

### 1. The Instrument: The Church

When Jesus said, *"I will build My church and the gates of hell will not overcome it"* (Mt 16:18), He made his intention known to establish a people for Himself. From this statement two things are clear. First, the church and the work of building it belong to Christ and therefore He is intimately involved in its development. Second, the church will be triumphant. Because of who Jesus is, we can be sure that He will successfully do what He promised. Persecution, poverty or even the gates of hell itself cannot stop the Church. The building of the church is God's will and building the church is Jesus' major mission on earth today.

In his beautiful epistle to the Ephesians about the church, Paul says *'His (God's) intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known...'* (Eph 3:10). Again the church is described as the instrument by which the Gospel is spread.

**Discuss: What does "I will build My church and the gates of hell will not overcome it" (Mt 16:18) mean to the goal of saturation church planting?**

### 2. The Command: The Gospel Must be Proclaimed Everywhere

Before His ascension, Jesus told His disciples that they would receive the Holy Spirit and then be witnesses to the end of the earth, beginning at Jerusalem (Acts 1:8). Jesus opens and closes His ministry with saturation as a theme. In the parables of the sower and the dragnet (Mt 13), Jesus implied that the work of the Kingdom covers all the ground and goes after all kinds of fish. In His closing ministry, Jesus instructs His apostles to saturate the world with the Good News.

The Gospel must be proclaimed everywhere. This is clear from the Great Commission passages (Mt 28:18-20, Lk 24:46-49, Acts 1:8). Just as Abraham was blessed so that he would be a blessing to others (Ge 12:1-3), so God's people who have received God's blessing are to pass it on to others.

The Great Commission is to "make disciples of all nations" through baptizing and teaching obedience to Christ. Both of these objectives are best fulfilled by God's people, the church. The command was not a temporary command only for the original hearers. The reoccurrence of the word "All": All authority, all nations, all things (that I have commanded you) and all the days, indicates its far-reaching application. Completing the Great Commission results in saturation as converts are made in 'all nations.'

**Discuss: What is the purpose of the Great Commission?**

### 3. The Advance: To The Ends of the Earth

How did the apostles, those who first heard the Great Commission, go about completing it? The answer is simple. As recounted in the book of Acts, the Apostles were preaching first in Jerusalem. As people responded to the Gospel, they were gathered into groups for teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer (Acts 2:42). These groups became established with leadership and were known as the church. When persecution broke out, the believers were scattered from Jerusalem and everywhere they went they preached the Gospel and presumably new house churches were started (Acts 8:1-4).

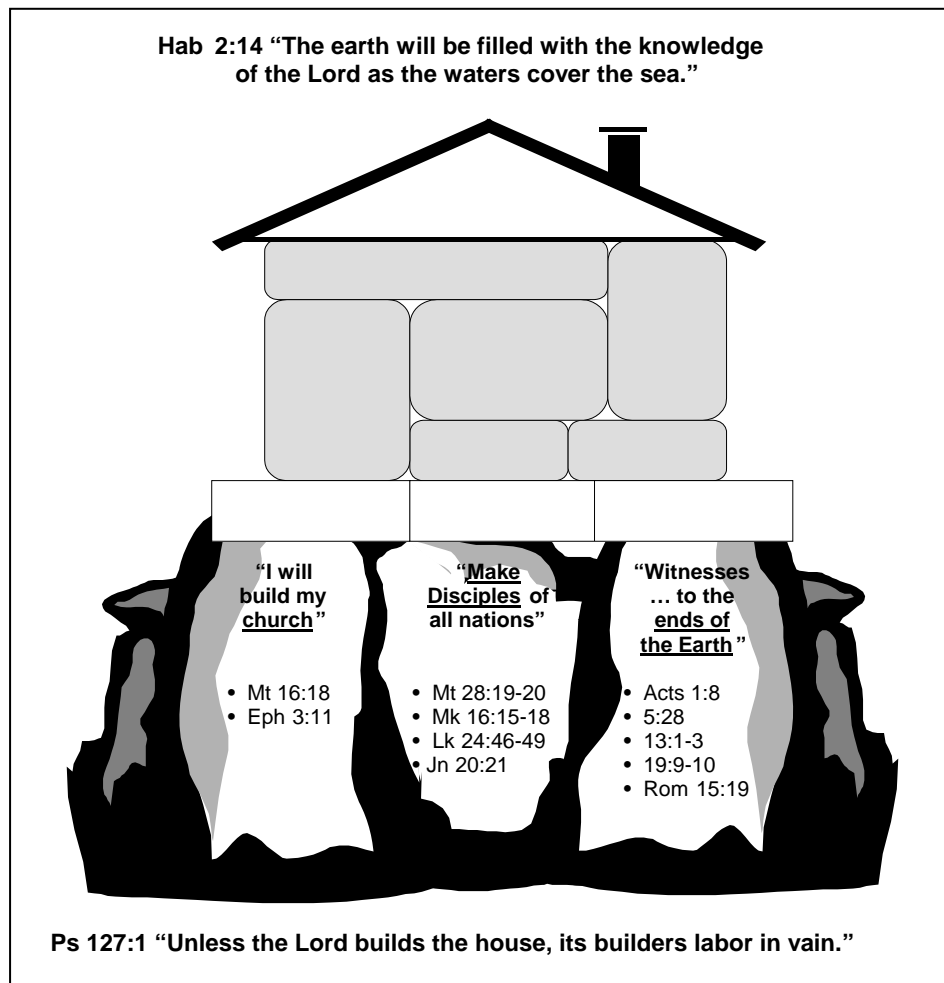
The church in Antioch sent out Paul and Barnabas as missionaries to continue the work. Everywhere they went, they established churches. Throughout the book of Acts, the spread of the Gospel and the expansion of the Church were always together. Wherever the Gospel went, a church was established.

In Acts 19:9-10, Paul's target area was the province of Asia Minor. He chose Ephesus, the most important city in the west of that province, as his headquarters. There he met with his disciples, who went out into the province *"so that all the Jews and Gentiles who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord."* Paul apparently had saturated Asia Minor with the message of the Gospel. How did he do so? From the other parts of the New Testament, we know that churches were started in at least seven of the major cities in the area (Rev 2, 3, Colossians 1:2). Who planted these churches? Most likely these churches were planted by those who Paul trained in Ephesus.

The three biblical principles described above, when considered together, lead to the conclusion that the Great Commission is to be fulfilled through saturation church planting (see figure 5.1).

**Discuss: What are some strategies you can think of that would help your church planting efforts have a greater effect?**

**Figure 5.1 - The Biblical Foundation for Saturation Church Planting**



#### IV. HOW MANY CHURCHES IS SATURATION?

If our task is to saturate our regions with churches, how many churches constitutes saturation? Another way to ask the question is: What does a disciplined nation look like? A disciplined nation is one in which every person has had an opportunity to hear and understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ, SO THAT they may either receive or reject Jesus as Savior. If this is the goal, how many churches are needed to reach it?

In answering this question, some emphasize geography, claiming a church for every neighborhood within normal travel distance of every person would be a good goal. Another point of view takes cultural and ethnic realities into consideration, proposing that churches must be established for every ethnic group in every region. A Tibetan church for a Tibetan population; a Han rural church for rural Han. Still others set goals of 1 local church fellowship for every 1,000 inhabitants. This is based on the theory that an average size church with viable, witnessing Christian believers can have an impact on 1,000 people.

A disciplined nation is one in which every person has had an opportunity to hear and understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ, SO THAT they may either receive or reject Jesus as Savior.

**Discuss:** How many churches are in your neighborhood, city, province or country? How close are you to the saturation church planting goal?

## V. SATURATION CHURCH PLANTING IN HISTORY

### 1. Ireland, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century

Patrick led a movement that filled Ireland with churches in every village. He penetrated and transformed the corrupt Druid religion by leading Druid priests to Christ as well as the general population. He used the existing Druid system of a priest in every village, and transformed the Druid temples and worship services into biblical Christianity. From Ireland, the legendary missionary teams went out and planted churches among the wild tribes of Northern Europe.

### 2. Hungary in the 16<sup>th</sup> century

The Reformation came to Hungary in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Reformed Church established a center in Debrecen that was called the second Geneva. From there, the Reformed Church made a systematic geographical saturation church planting outreach into Transylvania, filling its villages with Bible preaching Reformed churches.

### 3. Scotland in the 16<sup>th</sup> century

The movement led by John Knox in Scotland also saturated that region with Reformed churches. This movement was known for its commitment to intercessory prayer. Queen Mary said she feared John Knox's prayers more than all the armies of England.

### 4. England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century

The revival led by John Wesley and George Whitfield in England resulted not only in saturation church planting, but social change that may have averted a revolution like the one in France. Wesley was a powerful preacher and a strategic organizer. You could say he was a "Z" thinker who lived by the rule "In every act reflect on the end." Wesley proclaimed the Gospel among commoners in open rallies all over England. During his 40 years of ministry, he traveled 550,000 km on horseback. He preached 42,000 sermons and wrote 200 books. Wesley, considering the end, wisely gathered his converts into 'classes' which we would today call house churches. Some 100,000 people gathered in 10,000 of these groups that multiplied whenever 12 or more joined).

George Whitfield, also a leader during this revival, was considered a better preacher than Wesley. However, Whitfield's impact was not as significant as Wesley's because of Wesley's ability to gather converts into groups. About this Whitfield said, "My brother Wesley acted wisely. The souls that were awakened under his ministry he joined into societies, and thus preserved the fruit of his labor. This I neglected, and my people are a rope of sand" (Miller p97).

The Wesleyan revival spilled over into America and, led by Jonathan Edwards and Francis Asbury, resulted in saturation church planting of Congregational and Methodist churches.

### 5. The Philippines and Elsewhere in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

In 1973, a Filipino pastor named Jun Balayo caught the vision for saturating his nation with churches. He led an interdenominational effort that is still strong. They planted 10,000 new churches in less than fifteen years. The believers set long term goals of 50,000 new churches in the Philippines by 2003. Today, they are on target! This is the result of great prayer gatherings, regular events to keep spreading the church planting vision and hard work planting churches.

Similar movements are happening all over the earth today. Great movements are underway in Latin America; especially Brazil, in China, Korea, and Central Africa (once known as "The Dark Continent" it has been said that central Africa has become, "The Christian Continent") with a very strong movement in Ghana. Saturation church planting movements are beginning to gain momentum in Ukraine and Romania as well.

**Discuss: What are your impressions as you read the above stories of Saturation Church Planting movements around the world?**

## CONCLUSION

The saturation of the world with God's glory has been His desire from the beginning of time. Church planting was the principle and foundational means for spreading the Gospel in the New Testament, and continues to be

so to this day. For the nations to see and understand the Gospel of Grace, it requires a sufficient incarnational witness that is personally, geographically and culturally close to every inhabitant in the land. This means saturating every part of every nation with new, vital, reproducing churches.

The mandate has not changed. In every nation, the people of God are called to be a force to engage the lost world. This engagement may begin locally, then progress outward in concentric circles spanning cultural, relationships, skin color and language—the Church is to move to the limits of the earth. *"God will bless us and the ends of the earth will fear him!"* (Ps 67:7).

## **QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- Is it possible to fulfill the Great Commission in a particular region without planting churches?
- Is your church driven by the purpose of multiplying and saturating?
- Do you have a plan to plant churches among other nationalities within your country?
- How many churches does your region need to be 'saturated?'
- Do you believe God wants to add your nation to a chapter in church history?

## **SOURCES**

- Comiskey, Joel. *Home Cell Group Explosion*. Houston, TX: Touch Ministries, 1998.
- Miller, Basil, *John Wesley*. Minneapolis: Dimension Books, 1943.



SCP VISION  
**6**  
LESSON

# The First Advance

## THE CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENT IN ACTS

### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the trainee understand the biblical precedent for church planting movements by looking at the expansion of the Church as recorded in Acts.

### ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- The spread of the first-century Church was rapid and powerful.
- Certain events and the application of particular ministry principles contributed to the successful spread of the Church.
- Know principles from the great advance of the Gospel in the New Testament that moved church planting teams toward a church planting movement.
- Participate in a church planting movement of growing churches which multiply by planting other growing and reproductive churches.
- Be able to set strategy for evangelizing a region through church planting.

### ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Have a map of the Mediterranean world ready to show the region covered by Paul's ministry.

### ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Acts 8:1-4 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Describe your prayer life this week with respect to the vision?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:  
Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.  
Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

In the early days immediately following the ascension of Jesus, the gospel had had no impact on the world outside of Judea, Samaria and Galilee. At first, Christianity appeared small and powerless in comparison to the political powers of the day. Yet it rolled like an avalanche across the Roman empire so that within one generation worshipping communities were established everywhere from Jerusalem to Rome and beyond. Modern historians marvel, wondering how Christianity could have spread so widely in such a short time (Berkhof, p. 21). Was this just a haphazard expansion? Did the first missionaries blindly wander the world to spread the gospel? Not exactly. A careful study of Acts reveals that the expansion of the church resulted from Spirit-guided plans based on ministry principles that we can still use today.

During this lesson we will study the Scriptures, the best text book on church planting anywhere. We will look for the factors that contributed to the rapid expansion of the church believing that it is possible to extract ministry principles for advancing and saturating any region with the gospel.

A careful study of Acts reveals that the expansion of the church resulted from ministry principles that we can still use today.

### I. THE BIRTH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

The Day of Pentecost, when the New Testament church was born, played a major role in the rapid expansion of Christianity. Pentecost took place during a time of a major celebration when thousands of Jews and proselytes came to Jerusalem from all over the world. Luke records people from 15 different regions including Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappodocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Cyrene, Rome, Crete and Rome. Many of the Pentecostal pilgrims took their new faith

back to their homelands but only after receiving instruction and experiencing church life that took place after the Pentecost celebration (Ac 2:42-47). This initial training could explain how the church in Rome was well established before any of the apostles arrived there.

**Discuss: Read Acts 2:42-47. Why was what happened at Pentecost so important to the growth of the church?**

## II. PERSECUTION

In Acts 8 a great persecution broke out that caused the church to scatter (Ac 8:1; 11:19-21). This also influenced the spread of the Gospel. As the believers scattered they spread the gospel mostly to fellow Jews. At Antioch in Syria, however, many Greeks were targeted and won to Christ resulting in the establishment of the first church made up largely of Gentiles recorded in Scripture. This was considered so unusual that the leaders in the Jerusalem Church sent Barnabas to investigate the situation (Ac 11:22-24).

Barnabas was so impressed with the Gentile believers at Antioch that he spent at least a year ministering there. He even recruited Paul all the way from Tarsus to join him (Ac 11:25-26). With others from still other regions they made up a dynamic leadership team (Act 13:1). It was here in Antioch that the disciples were first called "Christians" (Ac 11:26).

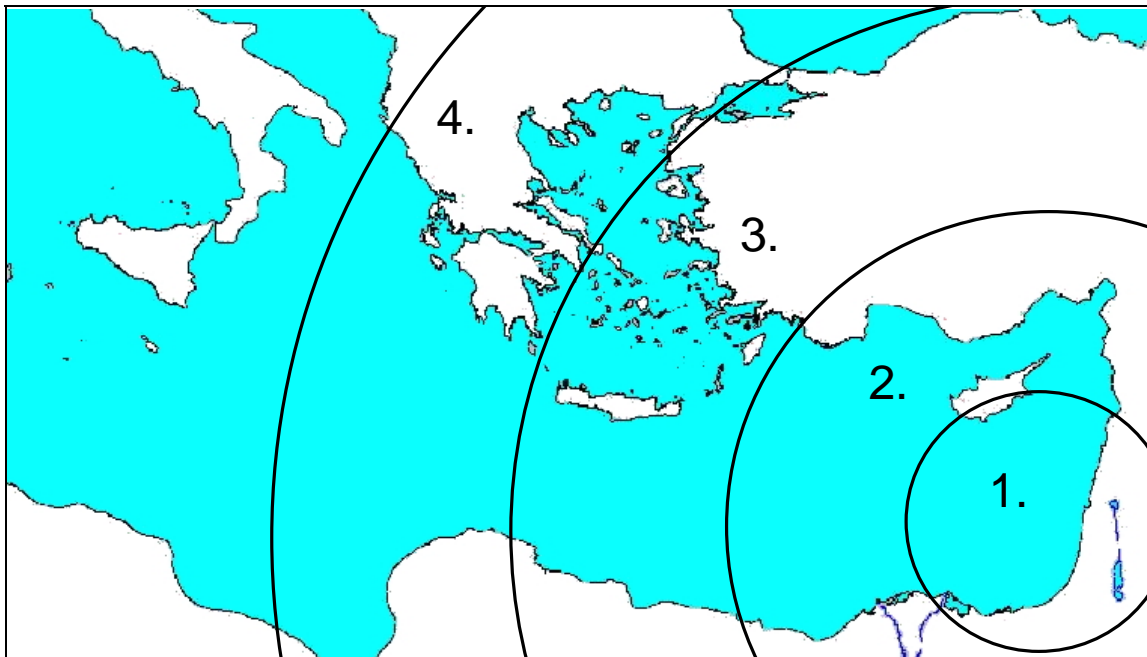
**Discuss: How was persecution an important part of the growth of the church?**

## III. PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

*"So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyicum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ"*  
St. Paul (Ro. 15:19).

Paul was many things: an apostle, a theologian and a teacher. But in all these things his role as a church planting missionary was clear. Others have received more converts than Paul, some have preached to larger audiences, but probably no one has been so successful in planting churches (Allen 1962:3). By examining Paul's missionary journeys we can learn the key to Paul's success.

Figure 6.1 The Spread of the Gospel



### 1. First Journey (Acts 13-14)—Expanding into Cyprus and Galatia

Paul and Barnabas were sent off as missionaries first to the Island of Cyprus, Barnabas' homeland. They started by preaching in the synagogue in Salamis the largest city on the island. Later they went to the city of Paphos the administrative capital of the island. The conversion of Sergious Paulus (the proconsul) would have given them favor in the region (Ac 13:1-12).

Following the ministry on Cyprus they headed for Galatia in modern day Turkey. In Pisidian Antioch, an administrative capital of southern Galatia, Paul preached in a synagogue and saw many Gentile

converts. Being the strategic city that Antioch in Pisidia was, the impact of Paul and Barnabas' ministry was not limited to the city as *"The word of the Lord spread throughout the whole region"* (Ac 13:49). In spite of this success the persecution incited by the Jews was so severe that Paul and Barnabas were forced to leave (Ac 13:14-52).

Paul and Barnabas traveled next to Iconium, an important commercial center also in Galatia. Many responded to their preaching in the synagogue, but they soon encountered a plot from both Gentiles and Jews (Ac 14:1-7). Having been driven away, they fled to Lystra, a military city with strong Roman elements. It appears that Paul passed by indigenous cities in the province like Misthia and Vasada (Allen 1962:13). As a Roman citizen, Paul felt more comfortable in the cities with a strong Roman presence. After the healing of the lame man in Lystra, the people proposed to worship Paul and Barnabas, confusing them with Zeus and Hermes. The Jews stirred up opposition and Paul was stoned. Undaunted, Paul and Barnabas escaped to Derbe (Ac 14:8-20).

In Derbe they preached the gospel and taught many. From Derbe, Paul could have easily gone back to Antioch via his home town, Tarsus. But he considered it more important to encourage the new believers and appoint leaders in the four churches he had planted in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe in spite of the danger he could again face (Ac 14:20-23).

## 2. **Second Journey (15:36-18:22)—Expanding to Macedonia and Achaia**

As a result of a disagreement concerning John Mark's role on the team, Paul and Barnabas began to minister separately. Barnabas and John Mark returned to Cyprus. Silas was chosen to accompany Paul on his second missionary journey. They set out with the goal to "strengthen the churches" (Ac 15:36-41).

The new team returned to Derbe, and Lystra and most likely other Galatian cities (16:1-6). While in Lystra, Paul recruited Timothy to join them in the ministry. Paul wanted to go to Asia but the Spirit led him away. While in Troas Paul saw a vision of the Macedonian man (Ac 16:7-11). Luke joins the team which has grown to four (Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke). Together they moved on to Philippi. Philippi was an important city on the "Egnatian Way," the Roman highway connecting Macedonia with Asia (16:12-40). In Philippi, Lydia is saved and her home becomes the center of operations. Silas and Paul were beaten and jailed after the delivery of a slave girl from demons resulted in official complaints by the slave owners. The jailer and his 'household' are saved (Ac 16:16-40).

Passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia Paul, Silas and Timothy arrive in Thessalonica, the district capital and chief port of Macedonia. Once again, they begin in a synagogue where Paul preached for three Sabbath days. There is a good response from both Jews and God fearing Gentiles. But jealousy on the part of some Jewish leaders leads to persecution (17:1-9). So Paul moves on to Berea where they are eager to hear. When the Thessalonian persecutors follow the missionaries to Berea, Paul is forced to escape leaving Timothy and Silas behind in Berea (17:1-15).

Paul waited for Timothy and Silas to catch up to him in the city of Athens the cultural and intellectual center of the world. While there he preached an excellent sermon in which he established common ground with his audience and then proclaimed the distinctives of the faith. A few were saved (17:15-34).

After this Paul settled in Corinth, the capital of Achaia, an important transportation and communication hub for the region (Ac 18:1-16). Paul is joined by Aquilla and Priscilla, fellow tentmakers from Rome. Now the team includes Paul, Silas, Timothy, Aquilla and Priscilla. Like so many other places, Paul's ministry in Corinth had a regional impact in the province of Achaia (2 Co. 1:1).

After 18 months Paul sailed to Antioch in Syria leaving behind Silas and Timothy to carry on the work in Corinth. On the way Paul stopped in Ephesus, a sea port in modern western Turkey. Paul was well received in the synagogue and the Jews invite him to stay. Having earlier been forbidden by the Spirit to preach in Asia, He promises to return "if it is God's will." Paul leaves Aquilla and Priscilla there to carry on the work there (Ac 18:19-21).

## 3. **Third Journey (Acts 18:23-21:15)—Expanding into the province of Asia**

Paul began his third missionary journey by visiting the churches he planted in Galatia for the fourth recorded time (Ac 18:23). He then made his way through the interior to Ephesus (Ac 19:1). Ephesus was a seaport on a major caravan route with easy access to the Roman province of Asia, for which Paul had had a burden for a long time. Just 150 km to the east up the Lycus valley lay the cities of Laodicea, Colossae and Hierapolis. Ephesus was a stronghold for sorcery and idolatry. At that time it was one of three main cities of the eastern Mediterranean world (the other two important cities are Alexandria and Antioch in Syria). This was indeed a strategic place in which to minister.

As was his pattern, Paul preached in the synagogue and was rejected after three months. This rejection resulted in what was perhaps the climax of his church planting ministry, the great advance of the gospel in the province of Asia: "...He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Ac 19:9-10).

How is it that everyone in the province of Asia heard the "word of the Lord"? Other passages in the New Testament reveal that Churches sprung up in the cities of Colosse (Col 1:2), Laodicea (Col 4:16), Hierapolis (Col 4:13), Smyrna (Rev 2:8), Pergamum (Rev 2:12), Thyratira (Rev 2:18), Sardis (Rev 3:1), Philadelphia (Rev 3:7), and elsewhere (probably Magnesia, Troas, Militus, etc.). These churches in the province of Asia give evidence to a church planting movement and substantiate Paul's statement that all of Asia heard the word of the Lord. In addition, the books of Ephesians, Colossians, First and Second Timothy, Philemon, First, Second and Third John, Revelation, portions of Acts, are all about churches and church leaders in Asia that came about from the great advance of the gospel there.

After three years in Ephesus Paul decided to go back to Macedonia and Achaia to visit four the churches he had planted on his second journey in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea and Corinth. He sent Timothy and Erastus ahead of him (Ac 19:22) and stayed in Ephesus a little longer. After a riot incited in Ephesus by those who depended on idolatry for their income, Paul left for Macedonia. Paul was traveling with Sopator (from Berea), Aristarchus and Secundus (from Thessalonica), Gaius (from Derbe) Timothy (from Lystra), Tychicus and Trophimus (Ac 20:3-6). Some of these were colleagues Paul had been training at the training center he had established in the hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus.

Paul encouraged the brothers in Macedonia and Achaia staying in Corinth for three months (Ac 20:1-3). On the way to Jerusalem Paul stopped in Miletus where he meets with the Ephesian elders to instruct them in their leadership (Ac 20:17-38).

**Discuss: How is it that everyone in the province of Asia heard the "word of the Lord?"**

#### IV. THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM (ACTS 15)

In the middle of the events just described, right after the first journey, an important meeting was held in Jerusalem which had a great impact on the rapid spread of the Church among the Gentiles. The events leading up to the counsel include incidents of Jewish and Gentile animosity. The first evidence of conflict occurs when Gentile widows of Jerusalem are neglected (Ac 6). Stephen, one of those was chosen to solve the problem is then stoned. Tension is seen again in the personal experience of Peter. He was asked by God to break the Law previously given and eat "unclean food." Only after this did Peter witness the conversion of the first Gentile, Cornelius (Ac 10). The third event involves the Church at Antioch which included many Gentile converts. It seemed strange to the Jews in Jerusalem that Gentiles in Antioch would be following the Jewish Messiah. Thus, they investigated it for themselves sending Barnabas to inspect (Ac 11:19-24). The first missionary journey was the last piece on the stage for the events of Acts 15. Paul and Barnabas saw and sought Gentile converts in many cities of Galatia. Soon some Jewish Christians from Jerusalem were in Antioch, the center of the Gentile Christian movement, teaching that all Christians were required to observe the Law of Moses (Ac 15:1).

This led to the conference at Jerusalem. The essential issue was whether the Gentiles needed to observe the Law of Moses. Or put another way, was the Gospel even open to the Gentiles or were they expected to convert to Judaism first? By God's guidance, the council made its decision without much trouble. Liberty was extended to the Gentiles so that they were not expected to observe the Law of Moses. *"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you (Gentiles) with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality"* (Ac 15:28-29).

The events in Acts 15 have great missiological and theological truth. Church planting movements take place when the Gospel, in all its fullness, is embraced by the Church. When the Gospel is hidden or replaced by traditions, laws or man-made "forms," its power to transform lives is diminished. We tend to put much emphasis on the "forms." It was natural for the first Jewish converts to expect the Gentiles to express their faith with exactly the same "forms" that they were accustomed to. But God was doing a new thing! Had the Jerusalem Council made the wrong choice, Christianity would likely have remained a small branch of Judaism instead of spreading among "all the nations" as it was intended.

Church planting movements take place when the Gospel, in all its fullness, is embraced by the Church. When the gospel is hidden or replaced, its power is diminished.

**Discuss: What was the council at Jersulam (Acts 15), and why was it important?**

## V. PRINCIPLES BEHIND STRATEGIC MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

The Scripture gives us detail on Paul's activity. We do not know as much about the other Apostles. However, tradition says that the Apostle Matthew planted churches in Mesopotamia, Thomas in India, Peter in Rome, and Mark in Egypt while Andrew took the gospel to Scythia north of the Black Sea (Shenk, p. 157 and Forster, p.40). In any event the church continued to expand steadily even after the Apostolic era. Note the following remarks:

- "Christ has planted a new race of us **Christians in every nation.**" Bardaisan, a Christian-nobleman of Edessa in northern Mesopotamia about the year AD 200.
- "But those whom you call 'third race' may well become first, since **there is no nation which has not Christians.**" Tertullian of Carthage around AD 200.
- "There are **churches now on the frontiers of the world**, and all the world shouts for joy to the God of Israel." Origen AD 240 (Foster 1972, p. 35).
- How did this happen? Was it haphazard? A careful study of Acts reveals that the expansion of the church resulted from Spirit-guided plans based on ministry principles that we can still use today. Now that we have carefully studied Acts, the following are some of the principles.

**Discuss: What do you think are some strategic principles for missionary activity?**

### 1. Submission to the Leading of the Holy Spirit

Much missionary activity is not only a result of biblical strategizing or good decision making, but of direct divine guidance. The Spirit sent Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch; the Lord told Peter to go to Cornelius' home; the Holy Spirit spoke to the leaders at Antioch telling them to send Barnabas and Paul as missionaries. The Spirit guided Paul to Macedonia instead of Asia (Ac 16:6ff). Jesus appeared to Paul in Corinth telling him to stay on there. The Holy Spirit and the prophet Agabus confirmed what Jesus said to Paul at his conversion, that "he must suffer for my name" (Ac 9:16). This prophecy led him on toward Jerusalem.

We cannot fully comprehend the ways of God, but we can be sure that there were reasons for all that is described above. Perhaps God forbid Paul to work in Asia during the second journey because the time was not right and because God knew that the most strategic place to reach Asia was from Ephesus and not from Bithynia and Mysia. It is interesting to note that when Paul went to Macedonia one of the first people he meets is Lydia who is from Thyritira a city in the province of Asia. Also note how God prepared the way for his later arrival in Ephesus by sending Priscilla, Aquila and Apollos there ahead of him.

Already involved in the work, Paul and others received guidance while "on the move." There is no biblical excuse for someone to remain inactive until apparently receiving a special call. Those involved in church planting must work from good planning and strategy but need to realize that God will intervene—even changing their plans—guiding them as they actively pursue their church planting objectives.

**Discuss: Why is submission and listening to the leading of the Holy Spirit crucial?**

### 2. Moving Quickly

Paul spent an average of only a few months in most of the cities where he planted churches. For example he spent only three weeks in Thessalonica. How could Paul plant churches so quickly? Perhaps Paul understood a great principle of church planting and knew when he needed to get out of the way. He knew that there was something about his presence as a great teacher that prevented the development of others. The little time Paul spent in each place forced others to realize that they

could not depend upon him for everything. They had to find their own resources. Paul trained leaders and trusted the Holy Spirit to guide the new believers. As Roland Allen explains:

"It is the training of the first converts which sets the type for the future. If the first converts are taught to depend upon the missionary, if all work, evangelistic, educational, social is concentrated in his hands, the infant community learns to rest passively upon the man from whom they received their first insight into the gospel" (Allen 1962:81, 93).

Paul understood as well that he was called to be an Apostle. For Paul this meant being a "pioneer", a "foundation layer" (Ro 15:20; 1Co 3:6-8). Paul trusted others who were gifted as pastors to lead the churches he founded.

**Discuss: Why is moving quickly crucial?**

### 3. Facilitating Others in Ministry

As we said Paul moved quickly, but there are notable exceptions to this practice. Paul spent 18 months in Corinth and three years in Ephesus. But in these cases, when Paul was not physically on the move, he worked in such a way that the Gospel was on the move.

Studying Paul's journeys reveals a gradual shift in emphasis during his ministry. During his first journey, he planted at least four churches and made a follow-up visit to each. His emphasis was on frontier evangelism and direct church planting. But during his last journey he does not seem to have the same objective. Instead of moving rapidly, he spent most of this journey in Ephesus. Ephesus was central enough so that from it he could easily get in touch with all the churches he had planted. It appears that he planted only one church (Ephesus) during this journey but he invested his travel time in visiting at least nine cities where he had planted churches before. His focus had changed from frontier/evangelism to discipleship/training. During this journey Paul had many disciples traveling with him (Ac 20:1-2). We also read about his teaching ministry from the Hall of Tyrannus which resulted in the evangelization of the province of Asia (Ac 19:9-10).

**Discuss: Why is facilitating others in ministry crucial?**

### 4. Preaching to Responsive People

All the cities Paul visited seemed to have a sizable Jewish community with the exception of Philippi. Paul normally entered synagogues to preach his message. This is partly because he was Jewish himself, partly because the Messiah's coming has unique significance for Jewish people (Ro. 1:16), and partly because the people in the synagogues would be "pre-evangelized." They could understand and accept the Gospel, which had Jewish roots, with the least amount of cultural disruption.

While Paul started in the synagogue as an apostle to the Gentiles, his real target was the God-fearing Gentiles. God-fearers were Gentiles who believed in monotheism and would have converted to Judaism had it not been for the strict legal requirements, especially of circumcision. God-fearers attended the synagogue meetings and would have studied the Old Testament Scriptures. When the Gospel was proclaimed by a Pharisee, Paul, in a synagogue, and circumcision was not required, many God-fearers would feel that this was a logical faith for them. Paul's message had the monotheism that attracted them to the synagogue without the legalism that kept them from converting to Judaism.

**Discuss: What does "Preaching to responsive people" mean?**

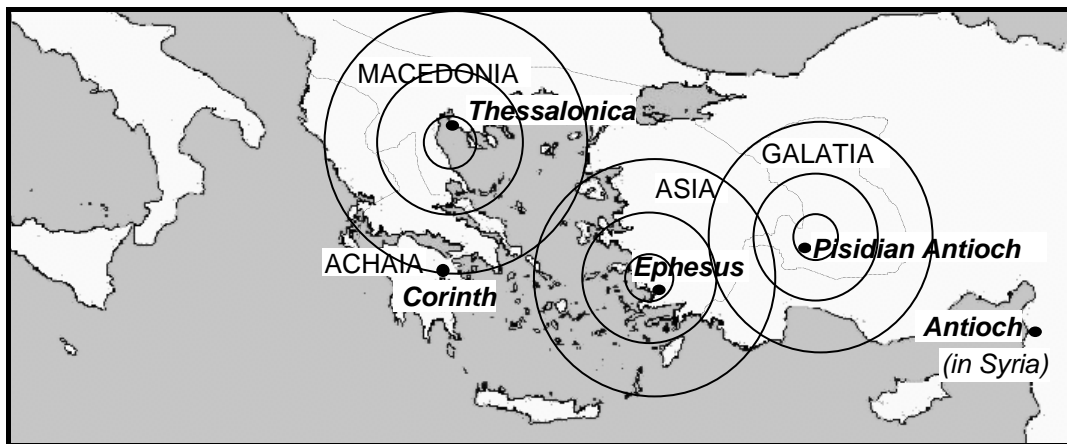
### 5. Working from a strategic base for a regional movement

Paul attempted to evangelize whole regions, but not by preaching in every part. Rather, he established strategically located churches from which the Gospel would spread and permeate the whole region. (See Figure 6.2.).

Nearly all the centers in which Paul ministered were great centers of trade. They were usually on the most important highways of the day. In fact even today, as a theologian who traveled the region observed, all of the cities Paul worked in can be reached by train or by boat or by both. This testifies to the importance of these locations. Paul, by divine guidance, made the highway of commerce the vehicle for spreading the gospel from Jerusalem all the way to the capital city of Rome (Berkhof, p. 40).

By establishing strategically located churches the Gospel spread and permeated the whole region.
--

**Figure 6.2 Regional Church Planting movements**



1) *Galatia from Pisidian Antioch*

In strategically selecting Pisidian Antioch *"The word of the Lord spread throughout the whole region (Galatia)"* (Ac 13:49).

2) *Macedonia, Achaia, and everywhere from Thessalonica*

The Great Commission as recorded in Acts 1:8 was illustrated by the church in Thessalonica to whom Paul says, *"The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia your faith in God has become known everywhere"* (1Th 1:8)

3) *The province of Asia from Ephesus*

As a result of Paul's teaching ministry in Ephesus *"all the Jews and Greeks in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord"* (Ac 19:10).

## CONCLUSION

Was the expansion of the church given to chance? The expansion of the church resulted from Spirit guided plans based on ministry principles that we can still use today. In summary, Paul's plan was to evangelize responsive people in strategic centers, facilitating regional church planting movements (especially in Galatia, Macedonia, and Asia) under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. What church planters need above everything else is to get back to the missionary methods of the early church.

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How was the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 a great day for the spread of the Gospel?
- Why was the counsel in Jerusalem so important?
- How did persecution affect the spread of the gospel? Has persecution resulted in the expansion of the Church in recent generations?
- Based on your study of the New Testament, how many churches did Paul plant directly?
- Describe the shift in emphasis between the first and third journeys of Paul.
- How did research affect the growth of the church in the Book of Acts?

## SOURCES

- Allen, Roland. *Missionary Methods - St. Paul's or Ours?* Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1962.
- Berkhof, Louis. *Paul the Missionary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans-Sevensma, n.d.
- Foster, John. *Church History: The First Advance*. London: Society for the Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1972.
- Shenk, David W., and Ervin R. Stutzman. *Creating Communities of the Kingdom, New Testament Models of Church Planting*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988.





# Strategy Components for a Church Planting Movement

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to show how to work strategically toward a church planting movement.

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Strategy is simply the effective method for accomplishing a task.
- Certain ministry strategies promote church planting movements.
- Understand how to work strategically toward church planting.
- Know what changes need to be made in his region in order to see a movement.

## ☞ Appendices

7A Faith & Obedience vs. Fear & Unbelief

7B Things that Promote Growth

## ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

These strategies, although biblical, are not absolute commands. Rather, they are useful strategies and examples of what the apostles did in situations similar to those that church planters may face.

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Matthew 13:31-32 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Describe your joys and struggles this week in leadership?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

Strategy is the effective method for accomplishing a task. It has been said that valor and bravery have won many battles, but that strategy has won more. This is illustrated best for us in the book of Joshua. The conquest of the land of Canaan under the command of God's servant Joshua was indeed strategic. With three swift campaigns, one through the interior, one to the south and one against the united forces of the north, the Israelites gained control of the land in spite of the fact that the enemy remained. Joshua's army was not better equipped, stronger or more numerous than the Canaanites. But with God's help they were able to strategically overtake the enemy. Strategy has a legitimate and important place not only in natural warfare, but also in the spiritual conquest of the world (Berkhof, p. 25). In this lesson we will examine several strategies that can be used to work towards a Saturation Church Planting movement.

### I. BUILD FAITH IN THE VISION

The most important characteristic for a saturation church planting movement is vision. Not everyone will immediately accept a vision to see churches planted within access of everyone. Some will oppose it and others will defer if they know it is true but won't join in heart and soul. But there will be still others whose hearts have been longing to hear what God wants to do through His church and they will come along.

## 1. Mobilize for Prayer

If you want to overcome resistance and see a saturation church planting movement in your region, you must seek God's desire for the region. This is best done through prayer. Aggressive prayer in search of wisdom concerning what God wants for the region is an effective way to unite people and instill vision concerning the fulfillment of the Great Commission. People who pray rarely have a problem accepting God's vision for saturation church planting. Prayer brings together those who have been longing for a great movement of God to impact their nation, people, and region.

A church planting movement can only go on if fueled by prayer. From the beginning, the early church dedicated itself to prayer (Ac 2:42), and even when persecution pressed hard, the believers held a prayer meeting (Ac 4:23-31). In the face of great opposition, they prayed for boldness to fearlessly and shamelessly proclaim their faith.

Paul stated the classic church planter's prayer request in Ephesians 6:19-20. He asked twice for boldness to proclaim the Gospel. Paul also asked that they pray for the right words, to be given to him, words that move peoples' hearts to a decision for Christ, and that he'd have no fear.

Those who pray contribute toward the success of those who plant churches. If you want to see a church planting movement in your region, one of the most strategic things you can do is encourage aggressive prayer.

**Discuss: How can you further mobilize people for prayer towards your SCP goals?**

## 2. Ask "What Does God Want?"

Another way to build conviction and vision is to constantly ask the "Z" question—"What does God want?" This should be the topic of prayer, Bible study, sermons and ministry planning.

In answering the question, we learn that the Bible makes it clear that God works his plan to redeem the world through his people. This is clearly seen in the life of Abraham the Patriarch. Abraham was blessed so that he would bless others (Gen 12:1-3). This was the purpose of Israel. The purpose of the Church is the same. Jesus said we were chosen "... to bear fruit" (John 15:16). We are to witness in such a way that the unbelieving world is impacted.

Studying the history of God's people reveals two succinct and quite different responses to God's will. The first response is one of doubt and disobedience; the second comes from faith and results in obedience.

### 1) *The Response of Doubt and Disobedience*

God's ultimate desires are clear. But many will respond with skepticism concerning the reality of its achievement. The best biblical example of this is found in Numbers 13:26-33 when the 12 spies returned from the land of Canaan that God had promised them. Ten spies, having seen the difficulty of the task, concluded, "We cannot attack those people for they are stronger than we are" (Nu 26:13:31). Their unbelief produced disobedience, for which the Israelites were punished.

### 2) *The Response of Faith and Obedience*

Caleb, also one of the 12 spies, saw all the challenges associated with conquering the land. But Caleb, a man of faith, said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it" (Nu 13:30). Caleb's faith resulted in a desire to obey God.

As the writer of the Hebrews says, "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb 11:6). In the same chapter we read of the great Old Testament heroes—those "who **through faith conquered kingdoms**, administered justice and **gained what was promised**" (Heb 11:33). Faith is essential to see what God wants. In order for a church planting movement in your region to be a reality, you must build faith in the vision. Responses by faith will be blessed by God! (See Appendix 10A).

**Discuss: How can you do a better job of asking what God wants? Explain the two above responses to God's will.**

## II. SET GOALS BASED ON FAITH

When God's people set goals, they are to be tangible expressions of the vision. Remember, when setting goals there are things you can plan to do and there are things you can hope to see happen. For example, a church planter may have a goal to win 10 people to Christ in a particular target region in a year. This is a goal that the church planter hopes to see realized. Since conversion involves the willing participation of other people, the church planter has only a certain amount of control over the outcome.

Coupled with the above goal, the Church planter may have a goal to share Christ with 100 people in the target region this year. This goal has more to do with conduct and activity than results, and the church planter can achieve this one. It can be very frustrating for people to set a goal such as the first one, but not have a plan to see it achieved, such as the second goal provides.

### EXAMPLE

The Muria Church in Indonesia has grand growth plans. In the mid-1980's they had about six congregations with a combined membership of just over 500. The leaders set a goal to have 10,000 members by the year 2,000. This goal may have seemed completely unrealistic, yet today they are ahead of schedule. They are reaching the goal by breaking it down into mini-goals. Each person is to lead another person to Christ every three years, while each congregation is to plant another congregation every three years. Growing from 500 to 10,000 in 15 years does not happen just because such a goal is set (Shenk, p. 66-67).

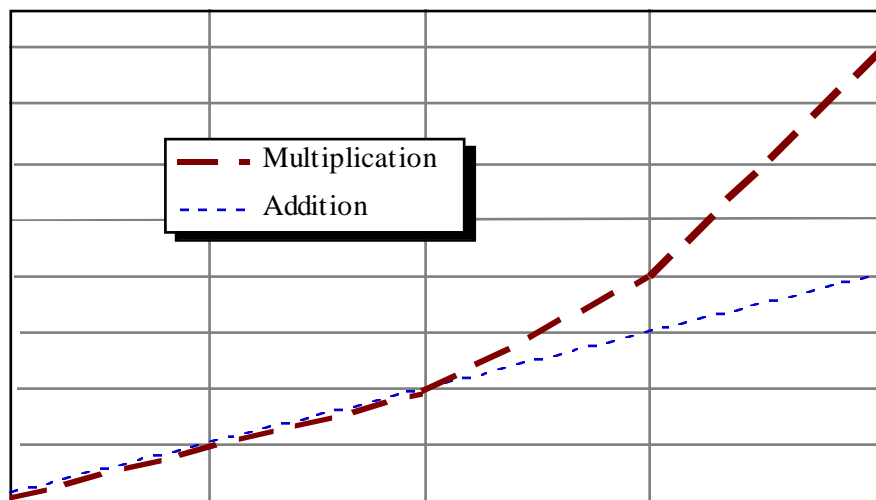
**Discuss: What does it mean to set goals based on faith?**

## III. PRACTICE MULTIPLICATION INSTEAD OF ADDITION

Addition is the common approach to ministry. We think about adding one new church, starting one more new small group, leading one more person to Christ. These are good intentions. But God's way is not addition—it is multiplication (2Ti 2:2).

The multiplication principle applies to evangelism, discipleship, church planting, leadership development and more. New converts should be taught to find other converts and churches should multiply regularly. Leaders should train other leaders to train still others. All this is multiplication. In practice, the principle of multiplication means we should employ ministry methods and models that are reproducible within the culture. Church planting models that depend heavily on foreign support or expertise may not be reproducible. Training programs that require long term residential study are also difficult to reproduce.

**Figure 7.1. Multiplication vs. Addition**



**Discuss: What does practicing multiplication instead of addition mean?**

#### IV. WORK FROM A STRATEGIC CENTER RATHER THAN A REMOTE LOCATION

Every church planter has a starting point. We have already seen how Paul selected strategic starting points in which to plant churches so that they multiplied to saturate the surrounding region. Cities of commerce and transportation centers can be used to promote the Gospel.

Selecting strategic centers is an ongoing process. In the beginning of the New Testament Church, Jerusalem was the strategic base from which the church went out. The next strategic center was the church in Antioch. From there, as the Antioch church leaders worshipped and sought God, the Holy Spirit sent out Barnabas and Saul to take the Gospel to the Gentiles (Ac 13:1-3). The next strategic center was Ephesus, the gateway to Asia and central to the four provinces (Galatia, Asia, Macedonia and Achaia) in which Paul invested most of his church planting ministry. Eventually Rome, the capital of the empire became the strategic center for the advance of the Gospel.

Working from a strategic center applies to evangelism as well as training. Intensive training in a strategic location allows church planters to fully absorb ministry skills and models so that they can effectively reproduce those skills and models in the lives of a multiplied number of disciples from a larger, targeted region.

Developing a geographic strategy for the training can result in more people being equipped. Find strategic areas in the country where there is receptivity to church planter training. Local leaders who are active in church planting and want to mobilize others in their region can carry out the training for church planting with your help. This will help the training multiply and will be a positive step towards a movement.

##### **EXAMPLE**

Project 250, with its main offices in Moscow, is a ministry that seeks to fulfill the Great Commission in the Former Soviet Union through church planting. The strategy is to train and mobilize 250 church planters in 250 strategically located centers throughout the FSU resulting in 62,500 new churches by the year 2020. This decentralized strategy maximizes local involvement and ownership.

**Discuss: What does it mean to work from a strategic center?**

#### V. DEVELOP MOBILE FACILITATIVE TEAMS

The New Testament reveals the emergence of a mobile community of missionary teams including Barnabas, Paul, John Mark, Silas, Timothy, Epaphras, Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos, Luke, Demas, Titus, Epaphroditus and others. These workers planted, strengthened, and led new churches from Galatia to Rome. The question is, why were these mobile facilitators necessary? The eleven apostles dedicated themselves to prayer, oversight, and teaching, which limited their church planting ability. They were going deep into the knowledge of God to counteract the heresies and controversies of that day. On the other hand, the new churches were made up of local people rooted in their communities. Often the local people lacked the mobility to move to where new churches needed to be planted. Thus, mobile, trained leaders worked as church planters, teachers, leaders, encouragers, problem solvers and messengers for the new congregations.

Established local church leaders may be too occupied with oversight and pastoral duties to actively plant new churches. A church planting movement requires that a missionary community of mobile leaders be mobilized, trained, and sent out. These leaders then act as a bridge between national leaders and local churches to more rapidly expand the Gospel by planting new churches.

The development of such a team in your country could be a necessary strategy for advancing the Gospel in your entire region. Members of a facilitative team should be respected workers who possess the SCP vision and can train, equip and mobilize others. As a team, they can assist church planters and challenge others to get involved in church planting. They can do these things best when they are not tied down to a particular local church for an extended period of time. This gives them the freedom to travel and get an overview of what God is doing in the region while also allowing them to be an objective voice to the believers.

**Discuss: What is a mobile Facilitative Team?**

## VI. EMPOWER PEOPLE

A saturation church planting movement requires people full of conviction advancing the cause of the Gospel through starting new churches everywhere. As these people emerge, the movement is best served by developing them in their area of giftedness. Empowering others with a vision and encouraging them to fulfill their ministry will serve the Gospel much better than forcing others to complete a program.

### EXAMPLE

George Whitefield and John Wesley were both leaders in the 18th century spiritual revival of England. Whitefield preached before audiences of sixty to eighty thousand at a time and was considered to be a better preacher than Wesley. Yet the strategic nature by which Wesley worked led to a greater impact. Wesley believed that the laity were the key to the spread of the Gospel. He understood the power of small units and he knew how to harness manpower. He wisely gathered his converts into 'classes' which we would today call house churches. Several classes in a region then constituted a 'society.' Some 100,000 people gathered in 10,000 'classes' at the height of the movement. Wesley's role as a leader in the movement was as a traveling facilitator who preached, but most of all empowered the leaders of the societies.

How can we empower others? Empowering people toward a church planting movement requires:

- Mentoring people more than managing them.
- Equipping people more than controlling them.
- Investing in people more than demanding from them.
- Challenging people more than pushing them.
- Encouraging people more than criticizing them.
- Convincing people more than commanding them.
- Training people more than lecturing them.

**Discuss: How can you do a better job of empowering people?**

## VII. DEVELOP NETWORKS

As entities with the same purpose of church planting (and especially saturation church planting) agree to work together, the movement will accelerate rapidly as organizations as well as individuals are mobilized for the task. Sometimes inter-agency partnerships or the development of new organizations allow groups to work together more smoothly.

### EXAMPLE

*The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting* is committed to facilitating church planters in the 27 countries of the former Communist world in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. *Alliance* personnel are not responsible to plant churches, but through *Alliance* efforts to facilitate nationals to plant new churches over 2000 new churches have been started. Rather than only giving fish (i.e. missionaries *doing* church planting), *The Alliance* prefers to teach people how to catch their own fish. This requires helping leaders catch the *vision* for SCP, encouraging *prayer* movements for SCP, *training* church planters, helping initiate *research* and sponsoring conferences on SCP related issues.

### 1. Build Communication

Like all movements, a saturation church planting movement relies on communication among those in the movement to go the same direction, clarify and advance the cause, and legitimize. Good communication also helps to build and deepen important relationships between people in the movement.

The production of literature and communication media such as newsletters, and in some cases web sites, can accelerate and legitimize a movement. Literature and media production should be of sufficient quality that people will accept it as being done well for their context. It should be accessible in both price and the ability to obtain it. It should be of an intellectual level that honors the intelligence of leaders in the movement but relevant and simple enough for all to grasp.

**Discuss: How can you help build communication?**

## 2. Sponsor Conferences

In a movement, leaders have to see each other face to face. Getting people together through conferences, congresses and consultations is also necessary for a movement to keep its momentum. Nothing can stir up potential like a room filled with like-minded leaders. Large gatherings inspire and motivate people. Smaller events like consultations allow leaders to work through difficult issues and clarify directions that they should pursue within a movement.

### EXAMPLE

AD 2000 and Beyond is a movement that keeps Christian leaders all over the world in touch with each other. They share common goals, dreams, and plans to advance the Gospel. Through events like congresses and consultations, they keep in touch. Through this movement and other things that God is doing today, ministries cooperate together to reach the world for Jesus like never before.

**Discuss: How can you help to develop networks?**

## VIII. SEEK GOD'S GUIDANCE AND TIMING

Church planting movements depend on God's sovereign timing more than any strategic factor. For this reason it is impossible to **make** a movement happen. However, it is possible to create the conditions in which a movement **can** happen. We see this principle described in Paul's description of the planting of the Corinthian Church. *"I (Paul) planted the seed, Apollos watered, but God made it grow"* (1Co 3:6). Paul and Apollos (and we can assume others) through their obedience did their part in creating the conditions so God would be glorified through His growing of His Church.

Just as no one can make God work in any certain way, no one can stop God if He sovereignly chooses to work in an unusual manner. Let's look at ourselves and our theologies. Do we sometimes try to force God to do things? In such a case, it seems that it would be better to find out what it is that God wants to do and join in. Then we can rejoice in however He chooses to show Himself to the people He has sent us to reach. He will show His power in the way He alone chooses when He works to reach a nation.

## CONCLUSION

The strategies we have studied are methods that are used where church planting movements are flourishing. "Ministry as usual", which focuses on maintaining and controlling, does not lead to the releasing of the power of God to work through His people. Are any of the strategies above helpful for your region?

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

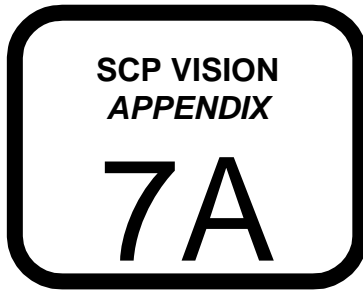
- What is a strategy?
- Why is vision so important in church planting movements?
- Why is multiplication so important in church planting movements?
- Of the strategies discussed in this lesson, which ones may apply to your current situation? How can they help you to progress in your church planting efforts?
- How would the concept of a facilitative team work in your context? How would they be used?

## ACTION PLAN

- Choose and apply at least one of the church planting strategies discussed in this lesson and share the results with your trainer or mentor.
- See Appendix 7A. Compare the list to your ministry situation.

## SOURCES

- Comiskey, Joel. *Home Cell Group Explosion*. Houston, TX: Touch Ministries, 1998.
- Correll, Richard C, *The Glory of God Among the Nations*. Grand Rapids: Church Planter Training International, 1998.
- Miller, Basil, *John Wesley*. Minneapolis: Dimension Books, 1943.
- Shenk, David W., and Ervin R. Stutzman, *Creating Communities of the Kingdom, New Testament Models of Church Planting*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988.



# Faith and Obedience vs. Unbelief and Fear

The following fears are common objections to church planting. These fears have no basis in truth. In fact, they are simply lies of Satan.

<p><b>“The Lies”</b></p> <p><b>Believing the lies leads to fear</b></p>	<p><b>“The Truth”</b></p> <p><b>Faith in the truth leads to obedience</b></p>
<p>We need to take care of the home church first.</p>	<p>Just as Abraham was blessed to bless others, so the purpose of the church always exists outside of itself. The truth is that in God’s economy, there is enough to take care of existing churches if we will be faithful to God’s mission.</p>
<p>We do not have enough trained leaders.</p>	<p>We often do not have enough leaders because we place barriers of education and time on men’s lives. It is a form of control resulting from distrust of the Holy Spirit to lead and teach others.</p>
<p>We do not have enough money.</p>	<p>God provides enough money to see His will done. Luke 6:38 clearly shows that if we give, we will have more than we could hope for. Throughout the history of the church, men of faith have been provided for by the Father.</p>
<p>One church is enough for this city.</p>	<p>Saturation means a culturally relevant witness within access of every person. If God expects the great commission to be fulfilled through the church, this is what God wants.</p>
<p>We will divide the church.</p>	<p>Multiplication of the body of Christ is God’s natural way to fill the earth for His glory. The Holy Spirit is one and can not be divided.</p>
<p>We will lose the standards of our morals.</p>	<p>Fear not, for the Holy Spirit will lead in truth and righteousness. He will purify the bride of Christ.</p>
<p>We can’t do this without outside help.</p>	<p>There is not a people on the face of the earth who do not have the resources for their own spiritual work. This attitude has often produced unhealthy dependence and created complex church structures which can not be reproduced or multiplied.</p>
<p>We shouldn’t work with ‘them.’</p>	<p>Disunity and anger within the body of Christ is Satan’s greatest weapon to keep the Church from completing God’s mission. Ephesians 4:26,27</p>

Adapted from: Correll, Richard C. *The Glory of God among the Nations*. Grand Rapids: Church Planters' Training International.





SCP VISION  
APPENDIX  
**7B**

# Things that Promote Natural Growth

---

<b>Things that Promote the Natural Spread of the Gospel</b>	<b>Things that May Not Promote the Natural Spread of the Gospel</b>
The establishment of churches	The establishment of missions
Self-governing churches	External control of churches
Self-reproducing churches	Stagnant churches
Self-supporting churches	External dependence
The multiplication of leaders	The addition of leaders
Training while in ministry	Training prior to ministry
Early departure	Stay forever
National ownership	Dependence on foreign leaders
"Z" thinking	Maintenance orientation
Cooperation/coordination/unity	Division
Local initiative and ownership	Central bureaucracy
Church based training	Institutional education

Adapted from: Correll, Richard C. *The Glory of God among the Nations*. Grand Rapids: Church Planters' Training International.



---

# THE CHURCH

---



THE CHURCH

5

LESSON

# Functions of the Church

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU COME TOGETHER

---

### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to discuss the biblical functions that the church must fulfill when it meets together and to discuss the relationship between individual, small group, and local church functions.

### ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Church functions include worship, the ordinances, preaching and teaching, giving, edification, and discipline.

### ☞ Appendix

- 5A Baptism In The New Testament
- 5B The Nature of the Church

### ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Mark 16:15 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Looking at your small group, how are you feeling about the balance between fellowship, worship, teaching, and evangelism?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

This lesson will focus on the functions that the church is to fulfill when it meets together. These functions include worship, the ordinances, preaching/teaching the Word, edification, evangelism, maintaining discipline, and giving. This list is not intended to be complete—rather, it identifies the *main* church functions as a starting point for further study. The distinction between church forms and church functions was explained in Church Lesson 3.

- Church Function = **What** the church must do.
- Church Form = **How** the church chooses to do the functions.

The *functions* of the church are commanded in the New Testament and must be implemented by the church. However, it cannot be stressed enough that the *forms* of the church may and should change and be adapted to best fit the particular target people. With that reminder, this lesson will focus on the functions of the church and assume that the church planter will be careful to choose relevant forms for the emerging church.

**Discuss:** What are some of the things you remember from the lesson on Forms vs Functions of the church?

## I. FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH

### 1. Worship

One of the most important reasons for the church to gather together is to worship the Lord. The worship of the church will be discussed later in another chapter. However, as soon as a small group of believers have been saved, they should begin to worship the Lord *together*.

Worship allows Christians to identify with a larger and more diverse body of believers than just their particular church. It also provides a public testimony to the community of God's life and power, as well as encouragement to believers that they are not alone and that God's spirit is working through many different people's lives. In addition, worship allows for the greater exercise of spiritual gifts for the edification of God's people as a body.

### 2. The Ordinances

The two universally accepted ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. While all churches accept these two ordinances, there is a wide range of opinion as to how they should be practiced. Denominational traditions normally dictate this. As you begin your new church, it is important for you and the members of this church to understand how these ordinances will be practiced.

#### 1) *Baptism*

Evangelical Christians hold differing positions on the meaning of baptism. The three major positions on the meaning of baptism are discussed below. It should be noted, however, that baptism in the New Testament was performed *immediately after salvation*, by *whatever believer led the convert to faith* (Ac 8:36). Even in new areas, they did not wait for a church to be established to baptize converts (Ac 16:33). Furthermore, the highest-ranking person did not necessarily do the baptism even when present (1Co 1:14-17).

##### a. Baptism as a Sign of Personal Belief in Christ

Some believe that baptism is an outward symbol of an inner change in a believer. It serves as a public testimony of one's personal faith in Jesus Christ (Ac 2:41; 10:48). There is some variation of mode of baptism, but often it is by immersion that pictures the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

##### b. Baptism as a Sign of the Covenant between God and Man

Others believe that baptism is the act of faith by which we are brought into the New Covenant with God through Christ (Mt 26:28, Lk 22:20) and hence enjoy its benefits. According to this view, adult believers and their families, including infants and children, are baptized. Just as circumcision was a sign of the Old Covenant (Ge 15, 17), so baptism is the sign of the New Covenant. The fact, rather than the mode of baptism, is the significant issue.

##### c. Baptism as a Sign of Church Membership

There is also another group of people who might be understood to hold a third position—that baptism represents local church membership. While they might state that they hold one of the other two beliefs, in actual practice they deny baptism to new believers until they grow to the point of being accepted as members. While few would attempt to justify this position from Scripture, many practice it.

**Discuss: How does your group view baptism?**

#### 2) *The Lord's Supper*

The Lord Himself commanded us to partake of the bread and the cup in remembrance of Him. He first gave this ordinance to the disciples in the upper room the night before His death (Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-26; Lk 22:19-20). Paul reminded the Corinthians of the importance of the Lord's Supper in a local church context (1Co 11:23-34). It is less clear whether the Lord's Supper can *only* be celebrated in an organized church, who is to minister it, how often it is to be partaken of. Although this is certainly the *ideal*, it seems unwarranted to limit it to a church context. It is commanded for all believers as a way of remembering the Lord's sacrifice for us.

Jesus personally explained the meaning of each of the elements. They represent His broken body and His shed blood. The key phrase is "do this in remembrance of Me" (1Co. 11:25-26). The Lord's Supper helps us remember the cost of our salvation. It causes us to focus on Christ's death on the cross of Calvary. Each time we partake of the elements, we proclaim the reality of His sacrifice. The Apostle Paul in giving instructions regarding how this should be done said that in so partaking we remember the Lord's death until He comes again. This keeps believers focused on both the price of our salvation and the fact that Christ will return again.

**Discuss: What is the purpose of the Lord's Supper?**

### 3. Ministry of the Word

The reading of the Word, preaching, and teaching must be a part of the gathering of believers. Jesus told the disciples to teach new converts to "obey all that I have commanded you" (Mt 28:20). Paul instructed Timothy to "devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching" (1Ti 4:13).

It should be noted that there is a great difference between proclaiming the Word of God and simply talking *about* the Word. All too often preachers, Bible teachers and Bible discussion leaders give their thoughts and impressions of the Scriptures—or simply rehash messages that they have heard in the past—rather than actually reading the Word and allowing God to speak through it. Simply reading a few verses before a sermon or during a Bible study is not sufficient. It is a disservice to God's people when leaders present their own ideas rather than opening the Word and showing God's message.

It should be noted that there is a great difference between proclaiming the Word of God and simply talking *about* the Word.

A student of the Scriptures should study, prepare, meditate, pray, think, examine, search and listen as he comes to the Word. The Bible is living and active, and is a source of wisdom and insight. The Inductive Bible Study lessons in this program are designed to facilitate Bible study and preaching that actually *focuses on the Bible!* The goal in using the inductive method is not simply to gain Bible knowledge but to apply God's truth so that lives are changed according to God's will.

**Discuss: What is the purpose of the ministry of the word?**

### 4. Building up One Another

Throughout the New Testament writings there is a series of commands on how believers should relate to each other. These "one another" commands describe how Christians should behave toward each other. One of the functions of the church is to encourage the practice of the "one another" commands. This emphasis on unity and caring for one another sets the church apart from other groups. It is only through God's Spirit working in the hearts of believers that we can obey these commands. Some of the "one another" commands listed in Scripture are:

- wash one another's feet (Jn 13:14)
- love one another (Jn 13:34; 15:12,17)
- be devoted to one another (Ro 12:10)
- accept one another (Ro 15:7)
- instruct one another (Ro 15:14)
- greet one another (1Co 16:20)
- serve one another (Gal 5:13)
- forgive one another (Eph 4:32)
- admonish one another (Col 3:16)
- encourage one another (1Th 4:18)
- encourage one another (Heb 3:13)

**Discuss: What are some things your church could do better to "build up one another?"**

## 5. Evangelism

The Church exists to reach the lost with the Gospel. Evangelism is one of the biblical functions that apply to every level of the church. We are to evangelize individually, in small groups, and as a local church. Each of these requires that the Gospel be presented clearly. However, there are differences between the methods that work most effectively. Friendship or relational evangelism seems to be a more productive method for individuals. Small groups can begin to use a more structured situation. A local church may effectively use music or other kinds of programs to persuade unbelievers to listen to the message. Ideally, a local church program should employ and encourage all of these methods. Individual friendships should convince the lost to attend a non-threatening church. They might trust Christ at any point along this journey.

## 6. Giving

The early church was deeply involved in meeting the physical needs of others. Although the specific emphasis of their giving was toward the other believers, their concern included both Christian brothers and sisters in their own churches, and also in other areas. In addition, they also gave to the needs of those who went out to plant new churches and reach the lost. There appear to have been organized local church programs for giving, but there was also spontaneous giving by the believers. The kinds of giving listed below should probably begin as a small group and become more organized as the church is formed.

### 1) *The Poor*

The believers sold their possessions and gave to their needy brothers and sisters from the very founding of the church (Ac 2:45; 4:34-35). However, it appears that this giving involved an organized program within the church. They brought the money from the sale of their goods and land and presented it to the apostles for their distribution to the poor (Ac 4:35).

The disciples did the same in Antioch. When they sent aid to the churches in Judea, they did so by sending their contribution with two appointed men (Barnabas and Saul) to the elders in Judea (Ac 11:28-30). The elders in turn would have distributed the gift. The church was to collect this money each week in an organized fashion (1Co 16:2).

### 2) *The Widows*

A similar system was also in place to help the widows. The dispute of Acts 6 arose because the number of widows needing aid grew to the point that the apostles were not able to adequately supervise the money. Therefore they asked that the church choose seven Spirit-filled men to take care of this task. There was also an organized list of widows in the Ephesian church while Timothy ministered there (1Ti 5:3-16). Paul gave Timothy general guidelines so that only the widows who were truly in need would be placed on the list for aid. If they had believing families, the church was not to be responsible for them. Also, if they were young enough to remarry, they should do so and not be a burden to the church.

There seems to be a clear precedent for an organized church program to distribute help to needy members. When such a program is organized, it is imperative that godly people be chosen to supervise it, as in Acts 6. It is also wise to make sure that there are several involved, so that there will be no chance of scandal.

### 3) *Church Planters*

The Apostle Paul was often the recipient of support from the churches as he ministered to the lost in unreached areas. In fact, the occasion for the writing of the Book of Philippians was the sending of a gift from the Philippian church to Paul as he ministered in Rome. In the final section of the book, Paul praises and thanks them for their generosity, and assures them that God will supply all their needs *as a response to their giving to him* (Php 4:18-19). Believers often claim the truth of verse 19 *without realizing the importance of the context, and to whom it was promised!* Such gifts allowed Paul and others to devote full-time to ministry rather than to the sewing of tents.

Philippians 4:19 is a promise to those who are supporting church planting.

There are many occasions in Scripture where believers supported the ministry, but one other deserves special mention. The normally gentle and loving Apostle John appears to have written his third epistle as a scathing rebuke of Diotrefes, who refused to help support the brothers who were traveling and preaching the Gospel (3Jn 9-10). Giving to the Lord's work is not optional—nor is it replaced by only helping the poor among us.



4) *Pastors and leaders*

It is the responsibility of a local church to take care of the needs of the pastor and other leaders. The Old Testament principle of the 'tithe' lays the foundation for congregations being responsible to pay their leaders. In the New Testament each church normally took care of the financial needs of its leaders. For example, Paul told the Galatians to support their own teachers (Gal 6:6). He told Timothy to teach churches to pay their teachers of God's word (1Ti 5:18). Churches that take this responsibility seriously are normally blessed by God for their faithfulness.

**Discuss: The Bible commands us to give and to give generously. Is your church taking care of its leadership? Are you starting churches that are taking care of its leadership's financial needs?**

## **QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- What are the functions of the church?
- What is the function of preaching? What is the function of group Bible study?





# Baptism In The New Testament

## INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

---

### INTRODUCTION:

One of the elementary or foundational teachings of the Christian life, according to Hebrews 6:1,2, is that of baptisms. Several different baptisms are mentioned in the New Testament, but this study is limited to a few *examples* of water baptism done by the Apostles and other leaders in the early Church, along with some *explanations* from the epistles of the Apostle Paul. For a complete study, use a Bible concordance to find all references to baptism.

### I. OBSERVATION

From the following passages, tell WHO was baptized, WHO did the baptizing; WHEN and WHERE the baptism occurred; WHAT was the meaning of the baptism.

	WHO was baptized?	WHO performed the baptism?	WHEN?	WHERE?	WHAT was the meaning?
Acts 2:38-41					
Acts 8:12,13					
Acts 8:36-38					
Acts 16:31-34					

### II. INTERPRETATION

From your observation, summarize the place of baptism in the early Church.

From the teachings of the Apostle Paul, we learn more about the meaning of Christian Baptism. From Romans 6:1-4, explain the connection between baptism and the death and resurrection of Christ.

Some other verses for your study: 1Co 15:12-20; Gal 3:26,27; 1Pe 3:21,22

### **III. APPLICATION**

How will you apply the principles you learned through this study in your new church?

Note: Some other baptisms mentioned in Gospels are found in Matthew 3; Mark 3; Luke 3; and John 3.

THE CHURCH  
APPENDIX  
5B

# The Nature of the Church

## THE CHURCH IS A LIVING ORGANISM

### Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to clarify the biblical teaching that the Church is an Organism, and to investigate the implications for a church-planting ministry.

### Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- The Church is the living body of Christ, comprised of all who have believed in Him, not a building or place.
- Know the basic biblical teaching of the Church as an organism.
- Identify how inadequate concepts of the Church have arisen in his or her culture or context, and how these concepts hinder the development of a living Church.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of the Church, which is so clear in the Scriptures, has often become cluttered with erroneous or unnecessary ideas. These vary from one culture to another, but each hinders the local church from becoming all that Christ intended it to be. Understanding the nature of the Church from a biblical point of view will assist the church planter in starting churches that focus on the important things and as a result are healthy, vibrant, culturally relevant, and biblical in nature.

## I. THE MEANING AND USE OF THE WORD "CHURCH"

### 1. Historical Meaning of the Word "Church"

The English word "church" is derived from the German word kirche, which comes from the Greek word kuriakon<sup>1</sup>, meaning "belonging to the Lord" (See 1Co 11:20; Rev 1:10). *(Note to translator: Rewrite this sentence to discuss the origin of the target language's word or words for church).*

The Greek Word that is translated "church"- ekklesia<sup>2</sup>, means "a called out assembly."

- In non-biblical (secular) usage- "an assembly of free citizens called together by a herald."
- In the Greek version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint), ekklesia translated the Hebrew word qahal<sup>3</sup>, meaning "an assembly." This word was often used of Israelites called together for a particular purpose (Ge 49:6; Ps 26:5).
- The New Testament reveals a development of the term, from the simple non-technical meaning, to the designation for the people of God. The word is used 114 times in the New Testament. Ninety-two times the word refers to a specific local congregation of believers. The word ekklesia is almost always translated as "church, congregation, assembly or gathering."

**Discuss: What are the historical uses of the word "Church"?**

### 2. Use of the Word Ekklesia (Church) in the New Testament

It is used geographically, to speak of Christians gathered together

- In a local house (Col 4:15).
- In a grouping in a city (1Co 4:17; Gal 1:22; 1Th 1:1).

<sup>1</sup> κυριακον

<sup>2</sup> εκκλησια

<sup>3</sup> ληθ

- In larger, regional groupings (Ac 9:31).
- Of Christians scattered throughout a geographic location (Ac 8:1-3, or "the church in Algeria").

It is used of all believers of every age and every geographic location, who are spiritually united to Christ, the Head of the Church (Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18). This is known as the Universal Church. Christians, including those who have already died, are part of His "Body," the Church. The term encompasses the whole body of believers in Jesus Christ (1Co 12:28; Eph 1:22-23; Heb 12:23). These people have been set apart by God, called out from the world for His pleasure, good purposes and eternal will (1Co 1:2; Ro 1:7; 8:28).

Typically, the word "church" is capitalized if it refers to the Universal Church (also called the Invisible Church). When it refers to local church, it is normally spelled with a small letter. As a result, it looks like this:

- The Church of Jesus Christ
- The church in Odessa

**Discuss: How is the word "Church" used in the new testament?**

### 3. General Use of the Word "Church" Today

The word "church" is used in a variety of ways in society and culture. It is used to describe a building for religious activity (the "church" down the street), or a denomination or sectarian group having some kind of associational relationship (the Church of Christ). It can refer to a local congregation (1st Presbyterian Church of Odessa) or a community of professing Christians (the church that meets in Mary's home). The word is used to describe Christians in a given country (the Russian Church), in a certain theological stream of thought (the Reformed Church) or tradition (the Pentecostal Holiness Church).

**Discuss: How is the word Church used today in your culture?**

## II. FALSE CONCEPTIONS OF THE CHURCH

Before any construction project can begin, one of the first steps is to clear the site of debris or other obstacles. The same is true with building a concept of the Church. It is necessary to clear away the inadequate or false ideas before we can build a true understanding on the bedrock of the Word.

### 1. Old Testament Shadows vs. New Testament Realities

The most common errors in understanding the Church arise from a failure to distinguish Old Testament and New Testament ideas. In the Old Testament, models, types, or images were often used to partially demonstrate spiritual truths that were not fully revealed until the New Testament. One good example is the Passover Lamb. It portrayed a substitution for sin *only until* Christ was revealed as the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29). The Passover Lamb was a temporary image. It pointed to Christ and is no longer necessary. There are many other such images, but the temple is perhaps the most misunderstood.

### 2. The Church Is Not the Temple

Many churches consider the Old Testament Jewish temple to be the pattern for the gathering of the believers. The Orthodox and Catholic churches carry this to the greatest extreme. In this model, the leaders of the service are called "priests" and the building may be called a "temple." Also, proponents of this model believe that a sacrifice to God is offered every time the Lord's Supper is celebrated. While rejecting the Mosaic Law, there is usually a rigid liturgy and order of service.

This model, in effect, attempts to create a "Christian" version of the Jewish temple. Access to God is obtained through the service of the priests in the temple. Because of the sacrificial ministry of the Old Testament temple, the altar stands between the people and the priests, and only the priests are allowed behind the altar. Churches modeled on this pattern always have the congregation in front of the altar (or communion table), and the priests or other "special" persons only are allowed behind the altar.

Paul taught that believers themselves are the temple of God—not the building in which they meet.

There are a number of biblical passages that contradict the concept of the church as a modern-day temple similar to the Jewish temple. For example, Paul taught that the believers themselves—and not the building in which they meet—are the temple of God (1Co 6:19). God no longer resides in a building, but in His people (Ac 17:24). They are a spiritual house, made of living stones (1Pe 2:5).

Furthermore, Christ offered one sacrifice for all time (Heb. 9:26; 10:12). He finished His work as High Priest, and no one can add to it (Heb 7:27). At His death, the veil of the temple was torn open from top to bottom—there is no longer any division between God and man (Mk 15:38). There is no longer a separate class of priests (1Pe 2:9). All believers are now priests and ministers of God and can offer themselves and their worship as sacrifices without a mediator nor earthly temple (Ro 12:1).

The New Testament believers lived in a culture where it was expected that each religious group build a "temple" to their god. Some of these beautiful pagan temples were so impressive that their remains continue to be major tourist attractions even today! Certainly, the local culture in which the early Christians lived expected and valued attractive temples. But the church understood that the only temple is their bodies, and they refused to propagate a false view of the Gospel by conforming to that cultural form.

### 3. The Church is Not the Synagogue

Some people think that the Jewish synagogue was the pattern for the church rather than the temple. There was only one temple—located in Jerusalem. However, there were synagogues in every city in which there were a number of Jewish families. The synagogue was a place of prayer and reading of the Scriptures. There were no sacrifices and no priests. Rather, men from the group were elected as "rulers" of the synagogue. Worship was much more informal than in the temple. The congregation normally sat in a circle, with the speaker standing in the center or sitting among them.

The early Christians made no attempt to recreate the Jewish temple. In fact, the first church buildings were not built until the fourth century!

The synagogue is a better model for the church than the temple. As the Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor, they made no attempt to recreate the temple. In fact, the first church buildings were not built until the fourth century! Believers formed house churches that resembled the informal teaching and prayer of the Jewish synagogue. Churches today should think about whether their buildings and forms of worship match this pattern of informal, comfortable worship.

While the synagogue model more closely resembles the New Testament Church than the temple does, it still lacks something important. Although local and informal, the synagogue was *never* anything more than a building in which the Jews met for instruction. The synagogue was comprised of stone and mortar—not of believers. As such, it is not an adequate model for the living Church.

## III. METAPHORS DESCRIBING THE CHURCH AS A LIVING ORGANISM

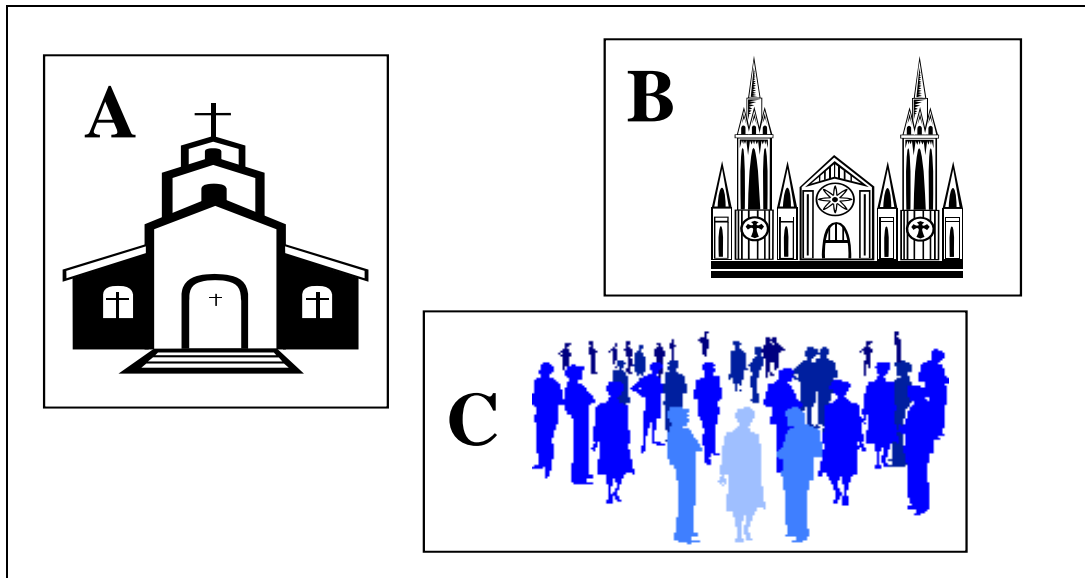
If the Church is not a building, what is it? The church was an entirely new 'thing' that Christ introduced that bears little resemblance to the buildings or temples of the other religions of that day. Rather than being a *building*, it is a *living body* comprised of believers in Christ.

There are many metaphors for the Church in the New Testament. It is striking how they picture the Church as a living organism from so many angles. A few of these are listed here.

- It is a family (1Ti 3:14-16; Eph 3:15). In this family, God is "Father," Jesus is His Unique Son, and we are His adopted sons and daughters (Jn 1:12-13, Eph 1:5); brothers and sisters in Christ (2Th 3:15, 1Pe 2:17).
- It is a body (1Co 12:12ff). This metaphor clearly shows the organic relationship of individual Christians ("the parts") to both the Church ("the body") and to Christ ("the Head"). The believers are its "members" joined to one another, even as the parts of a body are joined together to the head.
- It is a flock (Ac 20:28-29). Jesus is the One true Shepherd (Heb 13:20-21) who possesses it, and provides for it. Believers are His "sheep" who submit to the Good Shepherd's leading.
- It is a people (1Pe 2:9-10). The relationship of members of Christ's Church is not along ethnic or racial lines, but based on their new heritage as a holy "nation."
- It is a bride (Eph 5:25-33; Rev 21:2; Jn 3:29). As such, She is loved by Christ, but subject to Him. He is the bridegroom, Who gave up His life for her.
- It is a building (living temple) (Eph 2:20; 4:11). Christ is the living "cornerstone." The Church is likened to a living temple that is holy (1Co 3:16-17), growing (Eph 2:21-22), and spiritual (1Pe 2:5). Believers are living stones in this temple.

- It is a priesthood (Rev 1:5-6). The source of this priesthood is Jesus. All believers are part of this priesthood (1Pe 2:5-9), and can come confidently bringing acceptable sacrifices (Ro 12:1-2; Heb 13:15) into the King's presence (Heb 4:16).
- It is a branch (Jn 15:1-16). The believers are the living branches that bear fruit that remains.

**Figure 5B.1 Which is the Church?**



**Discuss:** Based on the metaphors listed above, which of the three images in Figure 5.1 best represents the Church? Why? How does this relate to your concept of a local church?

#### IV. PLANTING A LIVING CHURCH

How does the fact that the Church is a living organism influence our approach to planting a local church? There are a number of factors that are important to consider when the new church is planned.

##### 1. The Local Church Members Should Be Believers

The local church should be a miniature of the universal Church. To be a member or part of the universal Church (the organism), one must be divinely related to Christ. The most basic requirement of the local church is the same—union with Christ. Therefore, the sole requirement for local church membership should be new birth. It also follows that all believers in a local area should be members of a local church. There is no biblical basis for a church to refuse membership to a believer other than blatant sin (1Co 5:2).

##### 2. Buildings Should Not Be a Primary Consideration

As shown earlier, buildings are not the Church, nor did they even become a factor until centuries after the Church began. All too often, church planters focus too much attention or too many resources on providing a building. This emphasis can distract from evangelism and discipleship—the truly important parts of establishing the "church."

##### 3. Relationships Are Key

If buildings are not the key, what is? The answer is that relationships are the building blocks of a vibrant local church. This includes the relationship of the believers to Christ and to one another. But it also includes relationships with unbelievers who God may have chosen for salvation. A wise church planter will focus his time and energy on developing these relationships. He will be actively spending time building bridges of trust with unbelievers, and discipling the believers in the church.

**Discuss:** Why are relationships key?



#### 4. The Local Church Must Adapt to the Culture

As an organism, the Church is not static or unchanging. It is alive, dynamic, ever changing to meet the needs of the present situation. There is no one form or shape that it must take. The forms of the church should be developed for each local church as the church planter, guided by the Holy Spirit, seeks to express the biblical functions in a way that is appropriate for his specific target audience and cultural situation.

**Discuss: How and why should the church change to adapt the culture?**

#### 5. There Must Be Some Form of Order

The human body, though an organism, has organization. Its individual parts work together for the common good. The local church should also have some organization, but the organization should *always* be focused on meeting the needs, both spiritual and physical, of the body (the believers).

Examples of organization in the New Testament church included

- It had stated times of meeting (Ac 20:7)
- Leaders were chosen (Ac 14:23)
- Corporate discipline was practiced (1Co 5)
- Money was raised to help in practical needs (2Co 8-9)
- A list of widows who were eligible to be supported was kept (1Ti 5:9)

Despite the fact that this organization existed, the emphasis of the New Testament churches was always on the spiritual growth, doctrine, and moral purity of the believers. Any organization was based solely on its ability to help the body grow and care for its members.

**Discuss: Why is order necessary?**

#### 6. The Local Church Must Grow and Reproduce

If the Church were a building or a machine, it would simply need to be maintained. However, the fact that the Church is an organism means that it must grow and reproduce—as is normal for all living things. The Church grows as individual people believe the message of the Gospel and are born into the family of God. This growth is even more dramatic when new *local churches* are planted—each composed of *many* new believers. Since our task is to fulfill the Great Commission by reaching all nations, we should always seek the maximum growth. That occurs when local churches reproduce by planting other new local churches.

**Discuss: Why is growth and reproduction necessary?**

#### 7. Multiplying Churches Play a Vital Role

Local church programs and activities should reflect the fact that it is a living organism. Healthy churches focus maximum attention both on the growth and health of each member, and on reproduction. This model seems to most closely approximate the personal fellowship and relationships that existed in the early church (Ac 2:42-46).

### QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What would you say to a Christian and believer and therefore member of the Universal Church who is not involved in a local church?
- What must a person do to become part of the Church of Jesus Christ (the Body of Christ)? Base your answer on Scripture.
- What must a person do to become part of a local church?
- Why is the Old Testament Temple model not an adequate model for understanding the New Testament church?
- In what ways does your church experience reflect the New Testament teaching about the nature of the church?

## SOURCES

- Cook, Dr. Robert. *Unpublished Notes on Ecclesiology*. Western Seminary, Portland, OR: 1980.
- Getz, Gene. *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975.
- Hodges, Melvin L. *The Indigenous Church*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953.
- Lightner, Robert P. *Handbook of Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1995.
- Radmacher, E. *The Nature of the Church*. Portland, OR: Western Baptist Press, 1972.
- Ryrie, Charles. *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986.
- Saucy, Robert. *The Church in God's Program*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972.

THE CHURCH

6

LESSON

# Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry

## HOW CAN A CHURCH MINISTER TO THE LOST WORLD?

### Lesson Purpose

This lesson explains what a philosophy of church planting ministry is, and why it is important. It is intended to challenge the trainee to think through relevant issues pertaining to the "how" of a church-planting ministry.

### Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- A philosophy of church planting ministry is built on the biblical definition and nature of the Church, rather than on human traditions.
- A context-specific philosophy of church planting ministry increases the effectiveness of the church planter and his team.
- Develop a philosophy of ministry statement.

### Suggestions to Trainers

At the outset, be sure to explain to trainees that we are here discussing very practical matters of strategy, foundations, principles and outlook. The title "philosophy" should not lead them to doubt its importance, even though this word is used in the secular world to lead people off to other structures of thought that are not based on God and His word. Our church planting task must be rooted in theories and concepts (i.e. philosophies) that are consistent with Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church.

### Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Rom. 15:20-21 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Name one thing you should do this week to mobilize others toward the vision?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. WHAT IS A PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH PLANTING MINISTRY?

A philosophy of ministry can be used in a general sense for any kind of ministry. It can also be used with a more narrow focus on a particular kind of ministry. This lesson will specifically emphasize a *philosophy of church planting ministry*. The principles, however, can be used by any church, ministry, or Christian leader.

### 1. Philosophy of Ministry

In general, a philosophy of ministry is a statement or understanding that helps to answer the question "HOW will we do our ministry?" It is a practical guideline that helps us evaluate whether we are doing the *right things* in the *right way*. A philosophy of ministry takes our values into account, and therefore it will be different for every person or group.

It is also important to distinguish a *philosophy of ministry* from a "deceptive philosophy." In Colossians 2:8, Paul warns us to avoid "hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." This verse clearly describes how our philosophy can be:

- Philosophy based on human tradition—avoid
- Philosophy based on Christ—embrace

It is often unnoticed that this verse does not condemn the *idea of a philosophy*, but rather contrasts the two sources of philosophy. This wrong understanding has led many believers to react negatively to the concept of a philosophy of ministry. Sadly, when they choose not to *think about* their philosophy of ministry, they end up *blindly clinging to their current philosophy*, which is usually based on their traditions. As a result, they become guilty of doing exactly the thing that Paul was preaching against. The purpose of this lesson is to think through "how we do things" so that we can confidently say they are based on Christ and his Word rather than our human traditions.

When we choose not to *think about* our philosophy of ministry, we end up *blindly clinging to our current philosophy*, which is usually based on our traditions.

**Discuss: What is a philosophy of ministry?**

## 2. A Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry

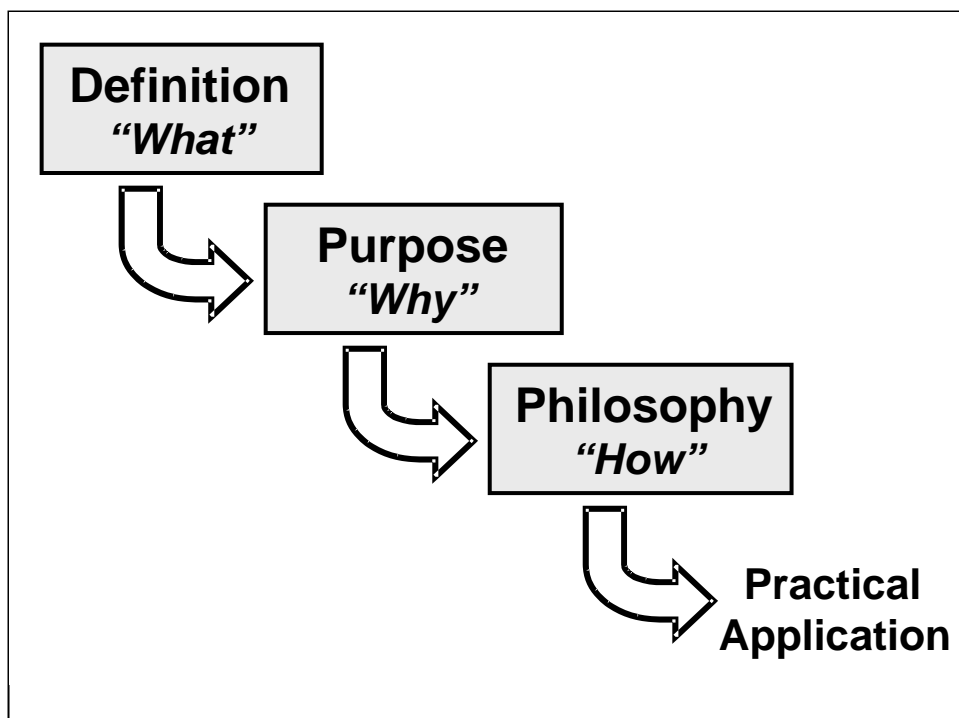
Previous lessons have already looked at the definition of the Church and its purpose statement. These three build upon each other in the following manner:

- Definition – **What** the Church is.
- Purpose – **Why** the church exists.
- Philosophy Strategy – **How** the church ministers.

In this lesson, the question is specifically "How should the church planter minister?"

**Discuss: What is a philosophy of church planting ministry?**

Figure 6.1 The Logical Progression



## II. THE NEED FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH PLANTING MINISTRY

There are a number of reasons why each church planter should have a philosophy of ministry that is formulated specifically for his or her ministry situation. These reasons include both the biblical teaching and also the practical outworking of the philosophy.

### 1. The Bible Teaches the Need for Thoughtful Planning

The term "philosophy of ministry" is not found in the Scriptures, but the concept of thoughtful planning, in reliance on God, is found there.

- Proverbs 14:15: "A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps."

- Proverbs 15:22: "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

1) *The Example of Jesus Christ*

Jesus' life and ministry reflect that He had a very definite purpose and a definite way by which to reach those goals. We see that Jesus always had the end result in mind. He didn't let anything distract Him from His purpose. Consider the following texts:

- Matthew 16:21-23: Jesus confidently directed His steps towards the cross.
- Mark 1:45: We see that Jesus had to refrain from doing some good things and from preaching to more people, in order to stay focused on His mission.
- John 6:5: Jesus planned in advance the miracle that He was about to perform, even though He had not revealed it to His disciples.

2) *The Example of Paul*

The Apostle Paul also planned what and how he would minister according to his Christian principles and beliefs. He recognized that God could, and often did, change his plans. However, Paul obviously did not think this should prevent him from thoughtfully planning how he would do his ministry. A few examples of Paul's planning are found in:

- Romans 15:20: Paul decided that his strategy would be to preach Christ in those places where He was not yet known.
- 1 Corinthians 2:1-2: Paul chose to limit the content of his preaching to the simple facts of the cross of Christ.
- 1 Corinthians 9:12: Paul decided not to receive support so that there would be no question as to his motives for preaching.
- 1 Corinthians 9:20: Paul chose to adapt to the cultural practices of those he wanted to reach.
- Acts 16:3: Paul circumcised Timothy in order not to be offensive to the Jews.

**Discuss: How does the Bible teach the need for thoughtful planning?**

**2. A Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry is Practical**

A philosophy of ministry helps us to focus on the "good works that God has prepared for us to do" (Eph 2:10). It can guide us and help us to make decisions in difficult situations when two paths or choices seem right. It is like a measuring rod to check what does or does not fit in our ministry.

It is a fact that everyone who is involved in ministry have a philosophy of ministry. It may not be written down. They might not be able to state it clearly. They may not even be aware that it exists—but it does. This is because *we all have an understanding of how to minister!* And that constitutes a philosophy of ministry. Therefore, it is not possible to not have a philosophy of ministry. There are only two available options. We can:

Everyone who is involved in ministry already has a philosophy of ministry—whether or not they are aware of it.
--

- Carefully examine our philosophy to make sure it is based on Scripture.
- Ignore it and risk propagating human traditions instead of truth.

Clearly, the first approach is the best one. This lesson is designed to help you articulate your philosophy of church planting, and to critically examine whether it is the most effective one.

**Discuss: Even though you have not already defined it, what is your current philosophy of church planting ministry?**

**3. A Clear Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry Focuses Our Actions**

The definition of the Church and the purpose of the Church remain theoretical until we allow them to shape our philosophy of church planting ministry. At that point we move from theory to the very, very practical issues of "*How do I plant the church?*" The philosophy of church planting ministry statement that you will write will shape your thinking about the specific steps and priorities that you will have as you develop the new church. It will keep you from the following errors:

- Spending time on unproductive activities or programs.
- Overlooking vital activities or components that the growing church needs.

**Discuss: How does a clear philosophy of church planting ministry focus your actions?**

#### 4. A Church Planting Philosophy of Ministry Should Be Specific

Each church planter, church planting team, or church should have its OWN philosophy of church planting ministry. God has given each believer different spiritual gifts. Also, each person is physically, spiritually, and emotionally unique. As a result, the method that one person uses effectively in ministry may not be appropriate for another. Similarly, the people to whom we minister are also unique. Furthermore, every town or target area has a different history and culture. Therefore a philosophy of church planting ministry should be specific to each of these areas.

##### 1) *The Church Planter*

The philosophy of church planting ministry should begin with an understanding of both the strengths and weaknesses of the church planter. It should define *how* he or she can best utilize his or her strengths, and minimize weaknesses. It should take into account such things as family, work, or personal responsibilities. For instance, a church planter who is a poor speaker might develop a philosophy of church planting ministry that would stress individual relationships and friendship evangelism. Family needs might allow or rule out actually living in the target location. In every case the philosophy should be workable and effective for the person who will implement it.

##### 2) *The Church Planting Team*

Teams are certainly the best way to plant new churches. In some cases a team is simply not available, but whenever possible, teams should be used. It is very rare to find a person who is so well-balanced and capable that he can accomplish more than a team. The mix of people on a good team multiplies the number of spiritual gifts and abilities, as well as the experience and energy that can be put into the planting of the new church.

For this variety of gifts, abilities, and personalities to reach its potential, there must be a workable plan to coordinate the team members and to guide their activities. A well thought out philosophy of church planting ministry will take the strengths and weaknesses of each member into account and maximize their productivity. Since every combination of team members is different, the philosophy must be created to fit each team.

A well thought out philosophy of church planting ministry will take the strengths and weaknesses of each member into account and maximize their productivity.

##### 3) *The New Church*

Every new church varies greatly according to the culture, age, social level, education, experience, language, and even personal preferences of its members. It is impossible to effectively use the same plan in all situations. An appropriate philosophy of church planting ministry will examine the target area and people to determine how to *most effectively* reach them. It will also determine which *forms* would be most appropriate for the spiritual growth of that particular group.

**Discuss: Why should the philosophy be specific? What areas should it cover?**

### III. CONTENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH-PLANTING MINISTRY

While every philosophy of church planting ministry will be unique, there are some common building blocks that should be present in each. Each of these requires thought and preparation, but will make the finished product much more helpful and effective.

#### 1. Builds on Definition and Purpose

As shown in Figure 6.1, the church planting philosophy builds on the definition of the church and the purpose of the church that you have developed earlier. Once you understand **what** the church is, and **why** the new church you will plant should exist, the next step is to decide **how** you can effectively accomplish that task.

The important concept here is that the philosophy of church-planting ministry *must be based on the biblical definition and purpose of the Church*, rather than simply restating how we have done things in the past. Building on human traditions, no matter how well meaning, is *never* an acceptable substitute for making the effort to study the Word and follow its precepts.

The philosophy of church planting ministry *must be based on the biblical definition and purpose of the Church*, rather than simply restating how we have done things in the past.

## 2. Is Context Specific

An appropriate philosophy will be based on the specific context in which it will be used. This demands that we do the necessary research into the target area. Other sections of this material describe how to compile and analyze this research. This initial effort in research and planning can greatly reduce wasted time and effort later by guiding us in the right direction and helping us choose the right methods and approaches.

## 3. Is People-Centered

Buildings, equipment, transportation, finances, and other practical matters should be considered in the philosophy of church planting ministry. However, they should never *dominate* the process! It must always, always be remembered that people are the most important focus and that their salvation and spiritual growth is the object of our efforts. A good philosophy of church planting ministry will make sure that we meet the needs of the true *church—the people*—rather than focus on secondary things.

## 4. Is Useful as an Evaluation Tool

A philosophy of church planting ministry, correctly designed, will be very practical and useful. It will help keep us doing the most important things at the right time, and in the right way. We should see more fruit from our effort, since we are making better decisions about each step of the ministry. This is why we spend the time to prepare the statement.

To realize the maximum positive results, we need to be careful to make the philosophy simple, clear, and understandable. The entire church planting team should understand it and agree with it. It should state the consensus as to *how, exactly, we are going to plant this new church*.

**Discuss: How can an effective philosophy be a useful evaluation tool?**

## IV. SAMPLE PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

Figure 6.2 following is a sample philosophy of ministry of one church. It is not specific to a new church plant, and therefore your statement will be somewhat different. It can, however, serve as a guide for you as you write your own.

As you read through this sample, note the emphasis on the people, their worship, and their spiritual growth. What are some of the other ways in which this statement is a good philosophy? What are areas that might need improvement, according to the principles that we have just studied?

**Figure 6.2 Sample Local Church Mission Statement**

**SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT**

*Smithville Community Church exists to:*

1. **EXALT God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit through**
  - a. Praise, prayer, worship and celebration of God's glory, holiness, truth, beauty and love.
  - b. Communion with Jesus Christ as the loving, powerful Savior, Lord and King.
  - c. Oneness and praise created by the presence of the Holy Spirit and expressed corporately through the Spirit's fruit and gifts.
2. **ESTABLISH a caring community of believers through**
  - a. Encouraging an environment of love, acceptance and forgiveness.
  - b. The development of warm, caring and supportive relationships.
  - c. Service and sacrifice to meet each other's needs.
3. **EQUIP believers for effective ministry through**
  - a. Preaching and teaching that faithfully expounds the Word of God while relating to the issues of the day and the need of the people.
  - b. Teaching, discovery, recognition, development and use of the gifts of the Spirit by each believer.
  - c. Ministry training and equipping believers to know Christ's will, to experience Christ's power and to do Christ's works.
4. **EXTEND the Good News of Christ to the world through**
  - a. Outreach into the surrounding community that is imaginative, sensitive and compassionate using creative forms of evangelism and communication, proclaiming that people should repent, confess Christ, put their trust in God through Him, accept Him as Savior and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His Church.
  - b. Concern for the whole person by ministering to emotional, physical, social and spiritual needs and bringing them to wholeness within our community.
  - c. Commitment to church planting and the revitalizing of the church throughout the world.

## QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- How does a philosophy of ministry help church planters?
- How is a philosophy of ministry biblical?
- What does a philosophy of ministry include?

## ACTION PLAN

Create your own philosophy of church planting ministry.

## SOURCES

- DeWitt, Larry. *Unpublished Notes from CPR2000*, Calvary Community Church, 1985.
- Fuller, Charles E. *How To Plant A Church; Advanced Seminar*. Church Growth Institute. 1986.
- Logan, Robert. *Beyond Church Growth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1989.
- Martin, Robert W. *Notes on a Philosophy of Ministry*. Camino Real Community Church. 1993.
- Morris, Linus J. *The High Impact Church*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Christian Associates International, 1998.



THE CHURCH  
**7**  
LESSON

# How To Lead 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.

### ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Psalm 96:1-3 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Ask the group a personal growth question. Look in the "Preface" for suggested questions.
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the primary purposes of the local church is to exalt the Lord. Worship is commanded and demonstrated by God's people in the Bible. It is a testimony to the world of God's reality and presence in our midst. In worship God's presence fills His temple, the church. His glory is revealed as His people open their hearts to Him and he fills them with His love and grace.

### I. THE ROLE OF THE WORSHIP LEADER

The role of the worship leader is to facilitate the time of worship in the church. The worship leader needs to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in orchestrating various types of worship so that through the participation of all the believers, God is exalted and the body is built up.

It is important for the worship leader to not be the only one responsible for leading the worship time, but as willing individuals are identified, they should be trained and released into this ministry. In this way when it is time for the church to multiply there will be plenty of people who can take responsibility for this area of leadership.

### II. QUALITIES OF A WORSHIP LEADER

Worship leaders need to be aware of the delicate balance 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.

Qualities of good worship leaders include the following:

**1. A Worshiper**

A Worship leader should be first and foremost growing in their own personal worship of God. It is impossible to lead others unless the leader has first learned how to worship personally. This person should have a good personal worship life and there should be a growing joy evident in his or her life.

**2. Spiritual Sensitivity**

A good worship leader should be developing a sensitivity to the leading of 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.

**3. Genuine Humility**

A good leader should be seeking to exalt Christ. He should be able to manage his personal thoughts, feelings and emotions so that they do not interfere negatively with the meeting. The leader must always seek to focus the attention of the worshipers on God.

**4. 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.

**Discuss: What are some of the qualities of a worship leader?**

**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 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.

**1. 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.

**Discuss: Why is theme important?**

**2. Transitions**

The connections between the service components are important. A spoken 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.

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.

**3. Sequence of Components**

Does the flow of components in the worship service make sense? For example, should the reading of scripture come before the singing? Is it appropriate to have testimonies in the middle of the singing time? Is there a balance between sitting and standing, between listening and participating, etc.? It is important to provide a variety of worship experiences to encourage participation by all in the worship time.

**Discuss: How do transitions and sequence help a worship service?**

#### 4. 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 music – both traditional and contemporary. Some things to consider when selecting music for worship are:

1) *Ease of Singing*

Choose songs which are easy to sing and relatively easy to learn. They should be ones which the people know well. When introducing new songs to the believers, use them in several succeeding services, so that the believers have 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 readable in some format for newcomers.

2) *Variety*

Try to include a mixture of contemporary and traditional songs and music, if at all possible. This helps to bridge the differences of worship style between older, traditional churches and newer churches.

3) *Mood*

Attempt to have a range of moods in the songs. A song of celebration to open and a song of triumph to close can be varied with other, more reflective songs 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. Musicians involved in worship should "play skillfully" on their instruments (Ps 33:3). Who in your congregation can play an instrument? 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.

**Discussion question: What is something you have learned here regarding songs and music that you can use in your church?**

#### 5. Various Forms of Worship

Worship includes much more than just singing. You can encourage participation of the body by including other expressions of worship such as reading of scripture, prayer, sharing testimonies (of God's provision, answers to prayer, etc.), sharing declarations (reciting favorite Bible verses, speaking names of God, etc.), listening to a special song sung by one or more members (or even from a recording), playing of musical instruments, dance, silent reverence, ministering of spiritual gifts such as prophecy, etc. The worship time should be a time where the body uses several different methods to express their Love for God and what he has done.

**Discuss: What are some forms of worship that you don't normally use that you could include in your next meeting?**

#### 6. 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. When using recorded music it is important that the worship leader does not just turn the music on and let the congregation sing along like karaoke music. Sometimes the music can be played loud or quiet, repeated if there is a sense of hearts responding to the Lord, or paused while someone prays aloud or reads a scripture. Be aware that if music (whether it is a recording or musical instrument) is played too softly, people may be too embarrassed to sing out loudly, and the quality of their worship experience may be affected.

## 7. Preparation

Sometimes preparation for worship is overlooked. However, worship is an offering to God, and we should be willing to give our best to God in worship. Also, well-prepared music, drama, testimonies, etc., actually allow people to worship God more effectively. Also, preparation helps 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.

**Discuss: Why is preparation important? How could you prepare better?**

## 8. Prayer

Before the service, the worship leader, church leader, and others participating in the 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.

## 9. 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.

## IV. LEADING WORSHIP AND CHURCH MULTIPLICATION

Skilled worship leaders are a blessing from God to the church, but relying too much on skilled individuals can slow the multiplication of the church. If there are not enough worship leaders, who will lead worship? Creating a simple style of worship will not only encourage more people to be willing to lead but can also create a more participative atmosphere in worship. Try having different people lead worship each time, inviting others to help. Pick a few people who express joy and involve them in picking songs, planning and praying before the meeting. The more people that participate the easier it will be to multiply and start new churches when the time comes.

Example: In one small house church network a sister was asked to consider helping lead worship. At first, she was hesitant because she had no musical abilities and was afraid to lead. This new challenge, however, caused her to seek the Lord and learn dependence on His strength. At first the worship time was dull with little participation, so she prayed and asked the Lord for help. She experimented by trying new songs and changing the order and expressions of worship. She learned as she went, involved others, relied on the Holy Spirit and was sensitive to his leading. Others saw her example and began to be involved. They thought if she can do it then so could they. Her example was one of faith and simplicity, not impressing others with her skills. When it came time to start new groups there was no lack of people willing to lead worship because so many people in the church could do it. All are now excited by the new worship time and feel it is more meaningful not because of the person leading but because the whole body has learned to participate in worship together.

**Discuss: How can your church's style of worship affect multiplication?**

## V. TRAINING NEW WORSHIP LEADERS

Your current worship leader is an example to your next generation of worship leaders, therefore don't let great talents overshadow the ability to lead a simple worship time. Just like any other form of leadership development, leaders are formed in community, so spend time with potential leaders and give them opportunities to use their gifts. New leaders grow in quality, ability and confidence during the process, so don't expect perfection from the start. Here are a few suggestions in developing new worship leaders:

1. Give new leaders the opportunity to lead the worship service.
2. Help them to use their own methods and develop their own styles in worship.
3. Spend more time encouraging and less time critiquing new worship leaders. New leaders need lots of encouragement.
4. Assist your new leaders for a while, then release them to do it on their own. Encourage them to use the same method for growing up their next generation of leadership.

**Discuss: Are you actively developing your next generation of worship leaders? How can you improve on your current way of doing this?**

## **VI. SOLVING PROBLEMS THAT OCCUR DURING THE WORSHIP TIME.**

From time to time you will experience various problems during your worship time. If you feel people are not participating enough, change some of your methods to teach them how to participate in worship. If this is the case, you can assign various people to read verses or share a testimony at a certain point during the worship time. If you find a certain individual often monopolizes the worship time with their problems, talk to that person separately after the service and help them realize that the worship time is meant to focus on God - not themselves. Encourage that individual that the leaders of the group are interested in helping them after the meeting time or during the week. It is inevitable that you will encounter many more problems than these, take some time to discuss these issues with the leadership team and look for creative solutions.

**Discuss: What are some problems you have encountered while leading worship?**

## **CONCLUSION**

Worshipping God is one of the major functions and privileges of the Church. Leading worship is an important task not to be taken lightly. 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 group'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?
- How can you identify, empower and release others to lead worship in your church?

## **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 and Spiritual Gifts

## GOD'S EMPOWERMENT FOR MINISTRY

### Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help church planting teams identify each other's spiritual gifts so that all may serve the Lord in the manner He gifted them.

### Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Know how to identify his own and help others identify their own spiritual gifts and realize spiritual gifts can be discovered through service and then developed.
- Be ready to make any changes necessary to work with others based on spiritual gifts.
- Participate in a church planting team effort where each member can be most effective according to the spiritual gift(s) God has given each one.

### Suggestions to Trainers

Note that this is a two-hour lesson. If a pause is necessary, it is possible to break between point III, "Abilities...Given by the Holy Spirit...", and point IV, "Observations from the list of Spiritual Gifts."

### Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read 1 Cor. 12:14-19 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What is something God has asked you to do this week/month that you have been able to accomplish?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. WHY DO WE NEED SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

The church is a spiritual entity. We believe that in the supernatural kingdom of God, angels and demons exist. We also believe that man himself did not simply evolve, but was created with both physical and spiritual attributes. We are more than flesh, blood and chemicals. We desire to live a supernatural life, living in the Spirit rather than in the flesh. Paul stated:

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds (2Co 10:3-4).

The church must use this divine power. Essentially, there are two types available to us—*prayer* and *spiritual gifts*. Both access God's power on behalf of His people and His work. Both are necessary to accomplish ministry that is too difficult for human effort. The Lord never intended that we minister in our own strength. He intends to help us. Jesus instructed the disciples *not* to leave Jerusalem or begin their ministry until they had received power from the Holy Spirit (Ac 1:4-5).

The Lord has provided various kinds of gifts to His Body to enable it to work properly. One category of gifts includes types of **leaders** "to prepare God's people for works of service" (Eph 4:12). Another category of gifts involves special **abilities** for service which are given in varying combinations to each believer. What we know about each of these categories we learn from Scripture.

**Discuss: Why did God give us spiritual gifts?**

## II. LEADERS: GIVEN BY JESUS TO EQUIP THE BODY

This first category of gifts includes the **leaders** described in Ephesians 4:11-16. These are not positions or offices to which people are elected. These are simply people given by God to the Body of Christ to equip each individual to do his or her part. These people are not specialists to do the work for us; their effectiveness is measured by our effectiveness as we do the work of the ministry.

The text lists apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor/teachers. Those with the apostolic role are those that are sent out to be foundational in beginning new ministry. Those with the prophetic role declare God's Word to the Body, while evangelists declare His Word to the lost. Pastor/teachers watch over and teach God's people. To understand a leader's role in the Body, consider the evangelist: he cannot just do evangelism; he must also equip other Christians to do evangelism.

**Discuss: What is the primary job of a leader?**

## III. ABILITIES: GIVEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO EMPOWER THE BODY

### 1. Definition

Another category of gifts is **abilities** given to believers by the Holy Spirit. Natural or learned abilities and talents should be used in God's service. However, the Spirit also gives believers abilities to contribute in a unique way to the building up of the Body of Christ. These are called **spiritual gifts**. Certain facts which stand out about these gifts are:

- Every believer has at least one (1Co 12:7; 1Pe 4:10).
- They are given at the Spirit's desire rather than our own desires (1Co 12:11).
- They are for the common good rather than individual benefit (1Co 12:7, 12-27 Ro 12:4-5).
- The gift (or gifts) that we have is the Spirit's work (1Co 12:4). The ministries in which we use them are tied to Christ (1Co 12:5), and their effectiveness is God's work (1Co 12:6). Our responsibility is simply obedience.

**Discuss: Define spiritual gifts:**

### 2. Spiritual Gifts and the Body of Christ

God has distributed these gifts for the purpose of building up the Body.

#### 1) *The Importance of Each Member*

The illustration of the Body in 1 Corinthians 12 shows the need for each member to fulfill his role in the Body. Just as the physical body suffers when one member is sick, the Body of Christ hurts when one member fails to use his gift. Each believer has "good works" (Eph 2:10) to accomplish. These works cannot be accomplished in our human strength. We need the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit working through us to complete them.

#### 2) *The Function of "Gifted" Men*

God has given gifted men to the church to lead and train the believers. Each local church has individuals who are uniquely gifted in these areas. However, these are never intended to become an elite group that carries on the ministry of the church. Rather, Eph 4:11-13 makes clear that they are to prepare God's people so that those believers can carry on the work of the ministry. It is vital that each believer discover and use his gift in ministry.

#### 3) *Ministering the Grace of God*

When we use our gifts, we are actually ministering the grace of God (1Pe 4:10-11). God's grace and power flow through us to others as we serve. God wants to minister to people, and He has chosen to do it through us—and specifically through our spiritual gifts. He has already decided how He wants to use each of us, and has given us the corresponding gift. Our job is to use it, and bear fruit for Him.

### 3. Determination of One's Spiritual Gift(s)

Determining what our gifts are takes time and experience. If you do not know what your gifts are, you can learn by knowing what the gifts are in general, getting involved in the ministry of the Body, and evaluating what God is doing through you by means of your spiritual gifts and natural abilities. In a sense your gifts will become obvious to you and others as you minister.



There is no test for spiritual gifts in the Bible. They do not depend on natural or learned abilities. A doctor does not necessarily have the gift of mercy, nor a teacher the gift of teaching. Such should have training and experience in those professions, but this is not the same as spiritual gifting. Their gifts might actually be evangelism, administration or some other kind. Evaluating your profession is *not* the way to discover your spiritual gift(s).

A gift is discovered by its effect when used. As we minister to others, God's grace, power and blessing flow through our gift to a degree that surpasses our human ability. The only way to discover our gift(s) is to be involved in various forms of ministry and watch to see what God uses. The process is essentially "trial and error." Since God's power will flow through us to others, it is important to listen to their counsel. We may not notice how the Lord is using us, but others will.

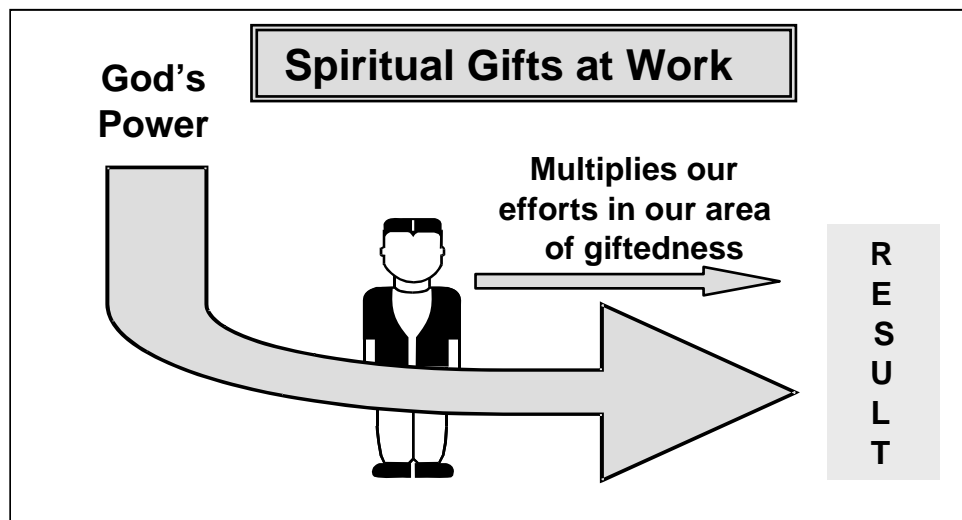
A gift is discovered by its effect when used.

There are many spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament (see Paragraph D below). Since each list includes different ones, it seems probable that no list is complete. There might be many other kinds of serving gifts. Also, it is clear that each believer has a gift. But it is not clear whether we each have only one. Some might have two or more. It is difficult to say. Because of this diversity, it is necessary that believers be involved in many diverse types of ministry.

Although natural or learned talents are not the same as spiritual gifts, training or talent can certainly increase the effectiveness of a gift. For instance, if a person has the gift of teaching, this means God wants to bless him in that ministry. But the gift is not a substitute for studying so that they have *something to say!* God is able to bless our *little*. He also desires to bless our *much*. Having a gift is no excuse for being lazy. This applies to any gift. Once we find out which gift(s) we have, we should do everything possible to develop them so that we increasingly become a better tool for service in the church.

**Discuss: How do you discover your spiritual gift(s)?**

Figure 8.1 God Multiplies Our Efforts



#### 4. Description of Spiritual Gifts

The two major references on which our understanding is based are Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12-14. Knowing our natural temptation to let this subject be divisive, the Holy Spirit put the great chapter on love, 1 Corinthians 13, in the middle of His teaching on gifts. An alphabetical rather than prioritized list follows. Most Bible scholars believe that these lists are not exhaustive.

#### 5. Two Warnings

First remember, as previously stated, that our knowledge of any one or all of these gifts is from the Bible. Second, the availability of some of these gifts today is a matter of disagreement in the Body of Christ. The controversy usually centers around whether or not some gifts are available to the Church today, since the NT was written. Some believe that, with the completion of God's written revelation, some of the gifts, especially in miraculous form, have ceased. Others believe that what the Bible teaches concerning spiritual gifts for the NT Church is still applicable for the Church today. Serious, sincere, and studied scholars line up on both sides. So what are we to do? A simple solution is to measure and pattern our obedience and experience on a simple and full application of what the Bible says.

**IV. INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY OF PASSAGES ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

**1. Observation**

Below is a list of verses that talk about spiritual gifts. In column two write the general observations about all the gifts; in column three list the gifts. Some initial work has been done for you.

**2. Interpretation**

In column four write what each passage says about each gift.

Scripture	General Observations	Gifts	Interpretation
Ro 12:6-8	We have different gifts according to grace Use according to faith	Prophecy	
		Serving	
1Co 12:4-11	different...same each person has at least one gift		

Scripture	General Observations	Gifts	Interpretation
1Co 12:27-29			

Scripture	General Observations	Gifts	Interpretation
Eph 4:11			

Now compare the lists. From your knowledge of Scripture, compose a working definition of each gift:

**3. Application**

Compile a list of the gifts you think you have. Beside each, tell how you believe that God wants you to use the gift to minister to the Body:

## V. HINDRANCES TO DISCOVERING GIFTS

### 1. Personal reasons

- Fearing some abuse or misuse by others.
- Lacking functional understanding of the supernatural working in the physical realm. This is a worldview problem.
- Harboring unresolved personal sin problem and/or lacking faith.
- Lacking commitment to serve and minister to others.
- Attempts to imitate others in the functional use of gifts.
- Striving too hard to "get the gifts" rather than seeking the Giver of the gift.
- Adopting a "waiting for the gift before I minister" attitude, rather than obediently proceeding to serve and minister to others, trusting that the Lord will accomplish His purpose through us. In fact, we may be totally unaware of the effectual use of our spiritual gift(s) as we seek to love and serve others.

### 2. Organizational problems

- Doctrinal imbalance: some exclude certain ones; others over-emphasize some of the gifts.
- Over-emphasis on some gifts as a "mark of spirituality" rather than as ministry to others.
- No biblical teaching about the gifts nor a freedom to use.
- Presenting the gifts as an end in themselves, rather than as a tool of ministry.

**Discuss: How can we be hindered from discovering or using our gifts.**

## VI. MOBILIZING THE CHURCH ACCORDING TO SPIRITUAL GIFTEDNESS

One of the keys to success in maturity and growth in a church planting effort is finding ways to train all members to discover, develop and exercise their gifts in ministry activities. There is no limit to the growth of a church which releases people to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit, rather than restricting them to the filling of a position of ministry.

The church planter is not only to "do the ministry" but rather to train new believers to do the ministry.

### 1. How to Help Others Discover and Use Their Gifts

The first thing we need to do to help others find their gift(s) is to encourage and to enable them to be involved in ministry. Only as they serve will we be able to see God use them effectively. It is important that we teach others about

- The need for the gifts
- The nature of the gifts
- The discovery of our gift(s)
- The responsibility to use our gift(s)

Then, in service, we need to observe the results of ministry to determine how the Lord is or is not blessing. If we see the presence of a gift, we need to encourage the believer to develop it and increase their ministry in that area (1Pe 4:10). If we do not see the presence of a gift, we need to be faithful to counsel the brother or sister about other areas of ministry to try, rather than allow them to be frustrated with lack of results.

It is also important to remember that all believers, *as part of the body of Christ*, have spiritual gift(s). The length of their Christian life is not relevant. Even new believers have a gift(s). Look at the results of the evangelistic efforts of the Samaritan woman (Jn 4:28-30). She had believed less than an hour when God used her to bring a huge crowd to Jesus. New believers should be encouraged to minister and discover their gift(s).

There is one note of caution concerning new believers in ministry. They *should minister*. But they should *not* hold an *office* (1Ti 3:6). Serving others is not the same as directing others. A leadership office requires maturity and proven faithfulness. But *all* Christians are to be involved in ministering to others and in evangelizing the lost.

## 2. Training helpful to develop the gifts

Though the spiritual gifts are gifts of grace from God, there is still a place for training and developing their use in ministry activities. The training is at the human skill level, while the gifting is in the spiritual empowering level. Both should come together in ministry activities.

**Discuss: How can you help others to discover and use their gifts?**

## VII. SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND CHURCH PLANTING

In order to be effective in a church planting ministry, a church planter must be aware of his gift(s). As a result, he can focus on the ministry that God blesses in his life. There are many ways to plant a church. People can be drawn to the Lord through a church planter's teaching, evangelizing, compassion, or other gift. It is important that a church planter with a gift of evangelism spend his time with the lost rather than all his time preparing Bible studies. But a church planter with a gift of teaching should focus on the Bible studies. If he has the gift of mercy, he should be with the sick and the hurting.

Since no one has all the gifts, it is important that the church planter form a team with others who have gifts complementing his own. Only in this way will there be balance in the ministry. A church planter who does not have the gift of evangelism can plant a church, but he will find it very difficult unless he finds a teammate who has that gift. Whatever gifts the church planter lacks should be present in a team member. Otherwise, much of the work will depend on hard, human effort.

A team can provide complementing gifts.
---

God's plan is that the local church body work together with each member using his or her gift(s). However, in a new church plant, there may be only a handful of believers at the start. In this case, it is even more vital that the gifts of each believer be discovered, developed and used quickly and effectively.

Jesus has given specialized people to the Body to equip each person to do his or her part. Additionally, the Holy Spirit empowers each believer with special abilities to carry out his individual tasks, thereby making the whole Body work. Leaders are given to the Body for equipping each believer to do ministry.

**Discuss: Why is it important to realize that 1 leader does not have all the gifts needed for the church? In what way do we try to rely too much on our leaders in this way?**

## ACTION PLAN

- Do the inductive study in section IV.
- Define the needs that you believe God wants your group to meet. List the ministry opportunities that the Lord has opened before this group.
- Have a time of dedication to the Lord asking Him to empower and release the gifts needed to meet the needs you have identified. Do not focus on the gifts but on the Giver of the gifts.
- Allow each person to begin moving toward meeting the needs they feel led to meet. Keep the focus and emphasis on meeting the needs in loving ministry rather than on the gift.
- Train people according to the ministry gift they feel led to use in the meeting of the needs.
- Allow others to evaluate and advise for confirmation of the gifts you have been using.



---

# **SPIRITUAL CHARACTER**

---





SPIRITUAL  
CHARACTER

5

LESSON

# Understanding The Father's Heart

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is that we as leaders might become loving, compassionate people who rejoice when lost sinners are found.

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand the Father's love for the lost.
- Know that as Christian leaders we must continually examine our attitudes and actions toward the lost.
- Ask God to give grace to love as God loves.
- God loves His children unconditionally.
- We should love as the Father loves.

## ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

The first two verses in Luke 15 are crucial to understanding the parables Jesus teaches in this chapter. Take time at the beginning of the session to get the trainees to imagine the setting with tax collectors and 'sinners' gathered around listening to Jesus. Imagine the Pharisees in the background criticizing Jesus' association with these people. Make this an interactive session by stopping to discuss the questions inserted in the text. Leave time at the end for personal evaluation and application.

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Psalm 72:19 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: How do other people respond to your leadership?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, we see that God's love surpasses not just our sins, but also our ingratitude for that love. We are called on to love others as God loves us. But do we really understand what that means? Jesus, through His life's example, teaches us much about what this means. One of the most vivid and clear passages talking about this kind of love is the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-31). It is crucial for us to understand God's love for us if we are to show that same love to others.

## I. THREE PARABLES ABOUT LOST THINGS -LUKE 15

### 1. The Context Of Luke 15

The first two verses of Luke 15 provide the context for Jesus' teaching in the later verses. Here we see Jesus surrounded by tax collectors and "sinners" eager to hear his teaching (Lk 15:1). Imagine what it would be like to Jesus to be sitting around telling stories with tax collectors and "sinners." Where would this take place—outside? In a courtyard in a Mediterranean style house? On a roof? What kinds of people would be in the group gathered around Jesus? What would be on the table? Would there be food? Do you hear laughter? Are people trying to impress Jesus with stories of their own?

After you have a picture in your mind of Jesus gathered with the tax collectors and sinners, now imagine the Pharisees and the teachers of the law (Lk 15:2). Where would they be standing or sitting? Certainly not in the same room with the tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees could not associate with sinners. Perhaps they are standing outside in the darkness or on the fringes of the

crowd some distance away -so as not to touch any of these sinners. What are the Pharisees muttering about?

Allow yourself to feel the impact of this scene and the tension between Jesus, the gathered crowd and the Pharisees. Keeping this scene in mind, read the parables which Jesus tells in the remainder of the chapter.

**Discuss the context of Luke 15.**

## 2. The Parables

The three parables in Luke 15 include the parable of the lost sheep (vv. 3-7), the parable of the lost coin (vv. 8-10), and the parable of the lost son (vv. 11-32). The main point of the three parables is found in Luke 15:10, *"I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."* Note the following comparisons and contrasts in these parables.

<p>"I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."</p>
---

- All three stories are about finding lost things (one sheep out of 100, one coin out of 10, one son out of two). The things that were lost were all valuable items. As Jesus tells the parables, He starts out with a loss (one sheep out of 100), then an increasing loss (one coin out of 10), then finally one of the greatest losses a person can experience (one son out of two).
- The lost things in all three parables were eventually found.
- Rejoicing and celebrating with others took place when the lost items were found. How do you think the shepherd, woman and father felt upon finding their missing items? What kind of rejoicing do you think took place?
- There is one contrast between the first two parables (lost sheep, lost coin) and the last (the parable of the lost son). Unlike the first two, in the parable of the lost son, no one goes searching for him. Why is that? Many people think that the reason for this is to show that a person must take responsibility for his own actions and "come home." This may be partly true, but it is not the point that Jesus was making here. There is a deeper reason that should become obvious as we look more closely at the passage.

**Discuss: Think of the most valuable thing in your life right now. Now think about losing it forever and how you would feel. How you would celebrate if you found it again? Do you understand the Father's love for you in this same way?**

## II. THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

As is his custom, Jesus places his emphasis on attitudes. A look at the attitudes of each of the three persons will help us to understand what Jesus intended his listeners to learn from the parable.

### 1. The Father

This parable is sometimes called the parable of the Father's love. The father was obviously a loving person who gave his son freedom to choose—even when he made the wrong choice. He continued to show unconditional love to his son, accepting him back, forgetting the past, not basing it on his performance. The unconditional love of the father lightened the hardship of the son's sorrow, opened the doors of hope for his return, showed the way and made the repentance process easier.

This parable tells us not only about a father's love. Christ presents in it an excellent picture of how a person responds to love, shown to him by our heavenly Father, God. The reaction of the two sons shows us two human reactions to the Father's love.

**Discuss the following questions one at a time:**

- 1) Summarize the story of the father in this parable.
- 2) What kind of things or experiences can affect our understanding of the Father's love?
- 3) Are there things in your life that has caused you to not fully understand the Father's love?
- 4) How does not fully understanding the unconditional love of the father (loving you, accepting you back, forgetting the past, and not basing it on performance) affect your relationship with Him?
- 5) How does not fully understanding the unconditional love of the Father affect how you love others?

- 6) **How does not fully understanding the unconditional love of the Father affect what kind of leader you are?**
- 7) **How does not fully understanding the unconditional love of the Father affect our repentance forgiveness and acceptance when we sin or in our service for God?**
- 8) **How can we fully know the father's unconditional love for us?**

## 2. The Younger Brother

The younger brother's actions revealed a person who was basically selfish. He was unconcerned for his father's feelings or his own responsibilities as the member of the family. In Jewish culture, the father might divide the inheritance but had a full right to keep the income from it until his death. For a son to ask for full rights to the inheritance and its income while the father was still living was to express that he considered his father as dead.

The son's selfishness was shown in his squandering his wealth without concern for how hard his father had worked to earn that money. Nor did he stop to think that his absence would mean that his brother would have to work much harder.

Quite naturally, his selfishness eventually led to his disappointment and despair. When he reached the end of himself, he was truly repentant. He openly confessed his sin and unworthiness before the father (v. 21). The love demonstrated by his father and the way he received him obviously made a profound impact on the son and changed his life forever. What do you think... would the prodigal son ever run away from his father again? Most of us would agree that it is doubtful that he would ever run away again, because he had found what every soul longs for—love. Love is the most powerful motivator known to us (otherwise God wouldn't be 'Love' 1Jn 4:8). This love was available to the prodigal son unconditionally from his father. He is a true son in a spiritual sense.

Would the prodigal son ever run away from his father again?
---

**Discuss the following:**

- 1) **Summarize the story of the younger brother in this parable.**
- 2) **How did the younger brother's misunderstanding of his father's love for him affect his actions?**
- 3) **How did the father respond to his son's actions?**

## 3. The Elder Brother

We often favor the older son, whose actions seem more decent to us. Of course, he showed responsibility, worked hard and never left the family as his younger brother did. Nevertheless, the elder brother was also self-centered. He did not show concern for the suffering of his father or for his lost brother. There is no mention about the fact that he ever tried to find and bring his brother back. He did not even call him his brother, but rather referred to him as "your son" when speaking to his father (v. 30). His attitude was one of jealousy toward his brother and resentment that his father would honor the brother rather than him. He justified himself on the basis of his work for the father.

Deep inside, the elder brother envied his brother and felt insulted when the father celebrated the 'prodigal' son's return. He was thinking that he deserved this kind of treatment due to his hard work for his father (v.29). Such a reaction from the older son reveals that for years, he had been serving the father out of a sense of obligation, not love. Spiritually speaking, this son is an orphan (see Spiritual Character lessons 6 and 7).

His heart remained cold and egotistic, which ruined his relationships with the rest of the members of the family. Like his younger brother, he needed repentance.

**Discuss the following:**

- 1) **Summarize the story of the older brother in this parable.**
- 2) **How did the older brother's misunderstanding of his father's love for him affect his actions?**
- 3) **How did the father respond?**

#### 4. Interpretation

God loves His children the same way as the father in the parable does – unconditionally. With this parable, Jesus answers the charges of the religious leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees). 'The prodigal son' symbolizes the sinners with whom Jesus had fellowship (Luke 15:1-2). In telling this parable, Jesus explained to his accusers why He had fellowship with sinners – He loved them unconditionally. The religious leaders who judged Jesus for having fellowship with sinners were acting like the envious and self-righteous elder brother, while they should have been like the father, full of unconditional love and rejoicing when the lost return home.

**Discuss the following:**

- 1) How have you acted like the younger brother?
- 2) How have you acted like the older brother?

### III. APPLICATION—DO WE LOVE AS THE FATHER LOVES?

A real danger for believers is that although we have all been prodigals and come home, we have a powerful tendency to become like the elder brother after a time. Jesus wants us to repent like the younger son did and to have the love that the father had. The following questions will help you determine your true condition (whether or not you have become like the older son in the parable).

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Do I "run to meet sinners" and show them compassion, or do I reject them along with their sin? (For example, how would I react if a prostitute or drug addict came into my fellowship?)
2. Is my love for the Father such that I love those that He loves? When someone repents (believer or unbeliever), do I rejoice and accept them as brothers and sisters?

### ACTION PLAN

Read Luke 15. Then re-read and write answers to the application questions. Spend time in prayer and ask God to reveal His unconditional love to you as your heavenly Father, then ask Him to give you the same heart of compassion for people that He has. If there are areas in your heart that need healing and freedom then ask Him to help you. If there are things you need to confess to Him, do so. If you need to confess to others or to make plans for positive steps towards relating to others as God relates to you, write these down along with how you will do it.

SPIRITUAL  
CHARACTER

6

LESSON

# Moral Integrity of Church Planters

## COMPLETE INTEGRITY

### ☞ 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 and Desired Outcomes

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

- Honest believers should acknowledge their own propensity to fail in moral integrity.
- Without the supernatural virtues, available by God's grace, we cannot be good.
- 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.

### ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read James 3:1 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Take turns defining the word integrity as you understand it.
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Do the assignment and read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of every Christian minister should be to finish well (Hebrews 12:1). This means continuing on in integrity until the Lord calls us home to be with him. For this chapter we will define integrity as, honesty, sincerity and purity of purpose. We will take an in-depth look at each of these concepts, including warnings, habits and how to continue on being above reproach (Paul). Integrity has to do with firmly holding to our values (ref), to being unmovable in our quest for holiness, and being undivided in our motivations.

For this chapter we will define integrity as honesty, sincerity and purity of purpose.

Christian workers are called to a higher standard of morality, and will be judged harsher because of their position of influence. Therefore our pursuit should never be better than others, but to be holy as our Father is holy. It is a much higher standard than we usually use to gauge ourselves, and it is not to be taken lightly. It is not merely the avoidance of doing evil or having evil desires, but it also includes taking responsible for doing the good things we know we should be doing – for not doing them is sin (James 4:17).

Satan wants to take our focus off the importance of moral integrity. Leadership is usually a choice target because leaders are the example to so many others. As the Bible says, he prowls like a lion seeking to kill and destroy. For those of us that are leaders within the Church, this means finding any opportunity that could remove our leadership influence.

The moral integrity of church workers profoundly affects ministry width and depth. The character of these people will invariably make a mark, both in local churches and in the reputation of wider regional or national efforts. Here we are going to take a frank and candid look at several of the components of integrity in hopes of prodding us on towards righteousness (Proverbs 27:17).

**Discuss: How have you seen other church leaders fall because of problems with integrity?**

## I. HONESTY

Honesty is defined as “the state of being honorable or truthful, upright and fair in dealing with others.” (Nelson’s Bible Dictionary). If we are going to deal with honesty we need to plainly recognize that whenever we are even the slightest bit short of complete truthfulness, we are telling a lie, deceiving our neighbor and being unjust. When we tell the truth, but choose not to say something that might hold some influence in the conversation, we have fallen short of the truth and entered into deception, which the Bible clearly lists as a sin (Ps 32:2). We are called to tell the truth in love to others (Eph 4:15).

### 1. *The Warnings*

Leviticus has the following to say about Lying, “When a person sins and acts unfaithfully against the Lord, and deceives his companion in regard to a deposit or a security entrusted to him, or... lied about it and sworn falsely, so that he sins in regard to any one of the things a man may do; 4 then... he shall restore... anything about which he swore falsely; he shall make restitution for it in full and add to it one-fifth more.” (NAS). Revelation 21:27 says that liars will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

### 2. *The Habits*

We must use wisdom when dealing with the faults of others that the truth we share might be said in a way that builds others up and not tear them down. Whether we are dealing with individuals, governments, companies, organizations, we are called to be truthful and upright in our dealings. It means abiding by the laws the government has laid out – including paying full taxes to whom taxes are due (Luke 20:22). It means dealing honestly believers and other leaders. It means being truthful with employees and employers, investors, policemen, officials, other leaders, foreigners and farmers, etc.

Leaders must deal with people in a wide range of levels of maturity, therefore when we are sharing with others about changes they need to make in their lives, we need to be honest, but love must ever cover honesty.

Honesty means being honorable and truthful no matter what the situation. When we are faced with someone of a higher standing than our own, we can feel the pressure to tell that person what they want to hear, in some cultures this considered a form of giving respect or giving face to another. However when we hold this practice up to the standard of the Bible, we can see it is dishonesty. Leaders in the church must practice the habit of honesty and truthfulness. When we find ourselves telling anything but the full truth, we need to immediately make the situation right (Matt 5:23).

### 3. *Without a Doubt, Being Above Reproach*

The Bible is clear that those in authority will be held to a higher standard (James 3:1). Therefore, it is important that ministers of God’s Word be above reproach, without having even a hint of possible wrong doing (scripture).

Many leaders are selective in what they share with others, simply because there are some things that the leader feels he or she does not need to burden the body with. However sharing too little can cause others to suspect or question the motives for decisions or methods of doing ministry. Even though the individual may have been completely honest and upright in their dealings, a lack of communication can cause even bigger problems than being caught in a lie. Practicing something called “over communicating” is a very effective tool in striving to being above reproach. Over communicating is simply explaining something 2 or 3 times in various ways to make sure that something is understood by the listener. Often times the leader only explains it once and the listener only understands one small part.

Another practice for being above reproach is to admit your own failings in being truthful with those around you. When you find you have been anything short of completely truthful explain what you have just done.

Being completely truthful generally has large consequences, especially in societies and cultures where various degrees of lying is cultural. Christians are called to a higher standard of truth, and living up to this standard is sure to bring some amount of hardship (Matt 5:10).

Here is an example: Mr. Tong had a meeting with 3 other church leaders. When they got together they began discussing how God has been blessing their ministry. The other church leaders all seemed to be having greater success in ministry than Mr. Tong. Being afraid to lose face with the other leaders, Mr. Tong slightly exaggerated a few of the figures when it was his time to share.

This is a true story. One day a pastor of a large church went to a small corner shop to purchase a drink. He paid with a 5, but the shop attendant gave him change as if he had paid with a 10. Exiting the store, the pastor noticed he had been given back too much change. He paused for a moment to consider whether he should accept the money, or return it. He decided that though it wasn't much it would be better to return it. Entering the store, the shop keeper exclaimed, "I recognized you, you are the pastor of that large church up the road, aren't you?". The shop keeper had given the pastor a test to see if he practiced what he preached.

**Discuss: How are we tempted to be dishonest, why is it important for leaders to be honest at all times?**

## II. SINCERITY

Sincerity is the quality of being open, earnest, serious, wholehearted, warm and true. Sincerity is included as one of the attributes of integrity because sincerity guards us from hypocrisy. A sincere person values individuals more than a task, more than a method, more than the goal, however with respect to the goal, a sincere person displays earnest devotion without reservation.

Sincerity is a quality that includes those you work with and those you choose not to. A sincere person is someone whose speech doesn't change whether a person is present or not, that is, they don't talk behind someone's back. When referring to a person they speak about them as if they were directly in the room with them.

In your work, sincerity means being on time, following through with what you tell others you are going to do. It means letting your yes be yes and your no be no. Sincerity means taking on the full responsibility required of the task you are facing at the time and doing it to the best of your ability, whether someone is watching or not, because they know the Father is always watching.

Discuss: How can we be sincere with people, yet keep earnest devotion to our goals? Do these two conflict?

### 1. *The Warnings*

Matthew 23:2-6 "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues"

James 2:1-4 "My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?"

2 Corinthians 1:17-18 "When I planned this, did I do it lightly? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say, "Yes, yes" and "No, no"? But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." "

### 2. *The Habits*

One of the marks of a sincere person is that they take a genuine interest in others, their thoughts, feelings and point of view. This does not mean that you agree that their point of view is correct, but before making a judgment call on it's truthfulness or lack thereof, you are willing to talk to that person about their view. A sincere person is open to other peoples methods of doing things because they realize their own methods are not necessarily the only way to accomplish a task. A person with this character will willingly spend the extra needed time in building relationships because this person realizes that good relationships lead to greater teamwork. Moreover a sincere person will choose to genuinely listen to people by paying attention when they talk. They concentrate on what the other person is saying, not thinking what they themselves are going to say in response or of other pressing ministry issues.

One of the marks of a sincere person is that they take a genuine interest in others, their thoughts, feelings and point of view.
--

Sincere leaders avoid hypocrisy by teaching and preaching only what they first are willing to do, not placing undue burdens on the flock (Matt 23:23-25). In working with coworkers, they never ask someone to do something that they themselves would be unwilling to do.

Sincere people realize the power of unity and relentlessly fight for that unity in the body of Christ, whether between coworkers churches, or even networks. Sincere people realize that slandering another coworker, believer or non believer in any fashion is gossip and as such is a sin. Therefore though they may choose to not work with another coworker because of methods or supposed wrongs, they purposely choose not to speak ill of anyone.

**Discuss: Have you seen coworkers slander each other before? How does slandering other churches, other church leaders or coworkers in other networks hurt the unity of the universal Church? If a leader sees two people in their church slandering someone, (regardless of the reason, Biblical or methods) what should the leader say? How can you be an example?**

Sincere people keep commitments they make whether to meetings, use of resources, or promises made. When they say they are going to go to a meeting, they show up on time. If they cannot make it, they inform people well in advance so that no one makes an unnecessary trip. By this, sincere people show that they value other peoples time, money and resources.

### 3. *Without a Doubt, Being Above Reproach*

Being above reproach here means valuing each individual, saved or unsaved, as a creation of the Father, worthy of respect and worthy of Christ's ultimate sacrifice on the Cross. Therefore a sincere person will treat all individuals equally regardless of social status, income, education, knowledge of the Bible, what they can get out of them (teaching, relationship, resources, etc.).

Lastly, sincere people are committed to the Church and the task God gave the church. They take their job as a servant leader seriously and constantly seek to improve themselves and those around them.

**Discuss: What are some areas of sincerity that you need to work on?**

## III. PURITY OF PURPOSE

Having purity of purpose simply means being of one heart and mind with your priorities in order. The Bible is clear that no one can serve two masters (Luke 16:13) If we seek to serve both God and money, possessions or power, these priorities will conflict sooner than later.

The Christian leader must ask the question of whether they are pursuing doing Gods work or both God's and their own. One cannot seek God's work and seek to make a lot of money. One cannot seek God and seek to have the power of being over a church or network of churches. Having money, being successful or even being the head of a large network are not bad things, but you must be careful where your motives lie. If your motivation comes from being the leader in the Church or the leader in a network, you will eventually run into problems. Our motives should always stem from our desire to do and be whatever God wants us to do and be.

Purity of purpose is being fully committed to the work of the Lord, and not letting the distractions of possessions (including money), power, or immorality distract us from our goal or influence our motives.

**Discuss: What are your biggest motivations right now? Are they what you want for your life, or what God wants for your life?**

### 1. The Distraction of Possessions

Possessions refers to not only to money but also to other possessions or resources, whether they be ours personally, or those of the Church.

#### 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*

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.

... 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?

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).

3) *Without a Doubt, Being Above Reproach*

The Bible is clear that those in authority will be held to a higher standard (James 3:1). Therefore, it is important that ministers of God's Word be above reproach, without having even a hint of possible wrong doing (1 Timothy 3:2). Many times, ministers of God's word view themselves as being above reproach, but there are still those around them that suspect their dealings with money or possessions. In a fallen world, we probably cannot ever fully escape this type of criticism, but this should not be used as an excuse either.

Ministers of God's Word need to exercise extreme wisdom and sometimes even caution when using the resources of the church. In order to not even let a hint of impropriety mar our reputation our methods must also be above reproach.

Full time workers often feel the pressure to tell others what they want to hear, which may not be a complete picture of reality. This includes sharing a slightly more positive view of reality, omitting particular facts or items, exaggerating and even out right lying. The truth is all of these are a form of lying, if we are to be truly honest with ourselves. There are many reasons why full time workers may do these things: financial benefits (more money for projects or fear of losing current funding); gaining or losing face; wanting to appear more experienced than you really are; wanting to be able to prove God's work through yourself and your abilities, etc. Workers also may feel the pressure to hide certain important aspects which could

Workers also may ask several other individuals to fund the same project, in hopes that one source may come through. Let us be clear and honest with ourselves: It is a lie and deceitful to continue to take funding for any project or monthly needs after the need is met – even if you are going to use it for good purposes. Unless the money or goods are going to be used for need which was expressed to solicit the funding, honesty demands that the situation be explained before the funds are used, or funds should be returned.

Here are some other examples of deceit: soliciting funds or other goods for one purpose but using them for another; soliciting funds or other goods but keeping extra for yourself without first explaining the situation; helping others solicit for funds, books or other goods then keeping any amount of that for yourself without first explaining the situation, holding back key details about a situation that could influence whether an individual gives or not; ... the list goes on.

Here is another example: Mr. Li needed funding for a project he wanted to do in a poor area several hours outside of town. He asked several groups to donate for the project. From one group came complete funding for the project, but when another group said they wanted to fund the project fully, he did not refuse the funds, thinking he would just use it for other good works. Why is this dishonest?

Mr. Xie asked for 2000 books he needed to give to needy people in the countryside. When he got them, he sold them for 10 yuan a piece. Why is what Mr. Xie did dishonest?

Ms. He needed books for people in a far away place and asked a group to send them to her. She asked for 500 books. When the books arrived, there were only 200. Ms. He inquired and 500 were sent, however 300 were taken from Mr. Wang who had to help with the shipping. Mr. Wang took 300 because where he lived in also had a great need. He thought, since he had 500 books, how could he pass them on to someone else and ignore the need he had right there. Why is what Mr. Wang did dishonest?

Mr. Liu asked for 800 yuan to be able to help poor people go to school. When he received the money, an old friend appeared at his door needing 600 yuan for an urgent need. Mr. Liu gladly gave the money to his friend instead of helping the poor people. Why is this dishonest? Why did Mr. Liu feel the pressure to give it to his friend?

4) *Bringing Finances Under the Scrutiny of Another's Authority.*

Being God's servant does not mean that we no longer report to other earthly authority. On the contrary, being God's servant often times means we need to voluntarily bring ourselves under the authority of another. There are several positive advantages of this: financial accountability, protection against other people's criticism, moral accountability, etc. It is important that you be able to build an open relationship with the one in leadership above you, so that you will not feel you have anything to hide. It may prove beneficial to find someone who you can be accountable to.

**Discuss: What are some things you could do to help protect yourself from being accused of wrongdoing with finances?**

2. **The Distraction of Sexual Immorality**

Integrity in male and female relationships is essential for leaders. Far too many families, ministers and churches have been destroyed because of sexual immorality or the accusation of sexual immorality. For this reason it is extremely important that ministers guard themselves and their behavior as to not fall into this trap.

1) *The Warnings*

1 Timothy 5:1-2 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

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.

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

2) *The Habits*

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 (Genesis 37). He avoided tempting situations (Genesis 39). Joseph refused to give in to sin.

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.

Leaders need to watch their language and joking regarding sexual issues. If a leader frequently enters into coarse joking, it may be an indication of a deeper heart issue that probably signals a weaker resistance to temptation.

Leaders should also be aware of the way they dress. Latest fashions are fun to wear, however be careful that you are not compromising the modesty that should be exemplified by a Christian leader.

3) *Without a Doubt, Being Above Reproach*

Church leaders need to be aware of the time they spend alone with members of the opposite sex. This is especially important if one of the parties is married. The more time spent alone with another individual the more chances there are for something inappropriate to happen. More than this, the leader needs to be aware of the opportunity for accusation. Even if nothing inappropriate happens, many ministries and churches have been torn apart just through accusation.

**Discuss: Is there anything you need to do to change some of your methods?**

### 3. The Distraction of 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.

**Discuss: How have you seen power as a dangerous force for people in position in the church?**

1) *The Warnings*

No church planter doing evangelism, discipleship or equipping for ministry hopes for anything less than the opportunity to influence others for our Lord. Power, however, is a two-edged sword; it can open paths for the work of Christ or, corrupted, it can open a path 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*

A God-sized vision for the future and a focus on desired outcomes should make church planters dependent upon God. It is only His power that can equip us for the journey. 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.

3) *Without a Doubt, Being Above Reproach*

Many of the issues discussed in the money section could easily also apply to the issue of power. The same sinful habits can be used to either gain more money, or gain more face, or gain more recognition.

Some church leaders will discredit other leaders, churches or denominations in order to make themselves look better. This happens by accusing each other of being parts of cults, of taking bribes, of using finances improperly, of exaggerating results, the list goes on and on. It is so sad to see the body hurting itself instead of building itself up. The Bible says true love always believes, thinks the best of others, covers faults, etc. (1 Corinthians 13). The church should show the world the best expression of this love – esp. when the only differences are regarding methods of ministry or differences in unessential doctrines (not the death and resurrection of Christ). Using your own position to discredit others is an abuse of power. As Jesus said to Peter about John, “If I choose for him to stay alive until I return, what is that to you?” Jesus here is saying that We need to be more concerned with ourselves and our own ministry than with the ministry of others. We need to remove every doubt and every suspicion of impropriety from our own ministries before we judge someone else’s ministry (1 Corinthians 4:5). God is the only judge of men’s hearts.

There are also less subtle abuses of power. Ms. Song likes being a leader and likes telling other people what to do and how to be a good Christian. What she doesn’t realize, however, is that her methods are putting heavy loads on believers by focusing on outward behaviors and not on heart issues. Moreover, she is hindering church multiplication because she is not teaching her people how to be leaders themselves.

**Discuss: What are some things Ms. Song could do to change her methods?**

### 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

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.

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.

**Discuss: How can integrity be costly?**

## 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.

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.

**Discuss: If we know what we are doing is not wrong, why is it also important that we examine whether others perceive our actions as being right or not?**

**Discuss: Why do you think this chapter was placed after the other "Spiritual Character" chapters regarding the gospel, grace, and the Father's heart?**

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How does private moral failure affect public ministry? Or 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 primarily addressed money, sex and power. Discuss the relationship between these and other areas of 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 seeking him) pray and make a plan that includes particular discipline(s) to strengthen a weak element of your character. Perhaps this is an area of failure, or it may be a private practice that 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.

## SOURCES

- Dyer, Charles. *The Power of Personal Integrity*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997.
- Hendricks, Howard, ed. *A Life of Integrity*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1997.
- Kreeft, Peter. *Back to Virtue*. Fort Collins, CO: Ignatius Press, 1992.
- Searcy, Nelson, Chad Hall and Kelley Edwards. "Integrity; Searching for Cracks." *SmartLeadership Magazine* (October, 1998): [www.SmartLeadership.com](http://www.SmartLeadership.com).



# Bible Study on Integrity

---

## CHARACTER STUDIES

The Bible describes the Father's character using the word Integrity (Ps. 92:15; Deut. 32:4; Job 34:10-12). In addition, Jesus' blameless life on earth was also an example of Integrity (Jn. 8:46; Lk. 23:41; 1Pet. 2:22). The Bible commands us to "Be imitators of God as dearly loved children" – Eph. 5:1. Spend some time reading about each of the following individual, studying how they lived a life of integrity. Write a short description in the space provided.

<b>Noah</b> Genesis 6:5,9	
<b>Joseph</b> Gen 39:12-20	
<b>Samuel</b> 1Samuel 12:3-5	
<b>David</b> 1Samuel 24	
<b>Paul</b> 1Thess. 2:10 2 Corinthians 6:3; 7:2; 8:18-20; 10:12-18	

The testing of a leaders Integrity will come from different sources: from God, from other believers, from non-Christians, and even from the devil. It is usually not the areas of our strength that we are tested in but the areas of our weakness. Spend some time reading through these scriptures to find how the integrity of each of the following people was tested. Write your answer in the space provided.

<b>Moses</b> Numbers 12:1-8; 20:1-13	
<b>Hezekiah</b> 2Chronicles 32:24-31	
<b>Job</b> Job 1:8-12	
<b>Daniel</b> Daniel 6:1-5, 21-22	
<b>Peter</b> Galatians 2:11-14	

## II. DISCIPLINES FOR MORAL INTEGRITY

We are called to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mt 6:33). Unless we put our relationship with God first, we cannot display his righteousness to this fallen world. 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.

Accountability to others has proven to be a helpful deterrent to failure and a source of encouragement for many. Such accountability might happen between two close friends or co-workers or within a small group. 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 – as we see from so many examples in the Bible. Let us run the race to win.

Use the following verses to study various ways you can protect your integrity. Write a short description in the space provided.

Luke 17:3; 21:34	
Proverbs 4:23-27 Psalms 101:1-8	
1 Peter 3:16; 1 Timothy 1:5; 3:9 Acts 23:1; 24:16	
2 Peter 1:3-4	

**III. BENEFITS OF MORAL INTEGRITY**

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

The Lord promises many benefits to those who walk blameless before Him. Walking in integrity does not mean that we live a perfect life, but we still seek to please Him in every thing we do (2Cor 5:9) knowing that if we fall He will pick us up, if we sin He will forgive us (1Jn 1:9). What are some of the benefits of a life of Integrity?

Proverbs 11:3 Isaiah 26:7	
2 Chronicles 16:9 Job 17:9	
Proverbs 2:7-8 Psalms 25:21 Daniel 6:22	
1 John 3:21-22	
Psalms 26:4-12	
Psalms 84:11	
Proverbs 10:9; 20:7; 28:18	
Matthew 25:21, 23	





---

# PRAYER

---



PRAYER  
LESSON 2

# Prayer and Fasting

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

To take a fresh look at the roles of prayer and fasting in the church planting process.

## ☞ Main Points

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

When he has mastered the content of this lesson, each participant will ...

- Know biblical teaching on prayer and fasting.
- Be consistent in his or her dependence on God through prayer and fasting.
- Pray and fast for the church planting task.
- Prayer is essential to the accomplishing of the spiritual work of church planting.
- Fasting was a biblical method of intensifying prayer in both the Old and New Testaments.

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Acts 4:23-31 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Ask the group a personal growth question. How can you further mobilize prayer toward your vision?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:  
    Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.  
    Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## THE ROLE OF FASTING

Fasting is our deliberate abstinence from some or all food or drink for the purpose of undistracted prayer. Also there may be times of withdrawal from activities and the fellowship of friends for a time in order to devote one's self more fully to fellowship with the Lord—to seek Him and His will. **Fasting is a spiritual discipline, not a commandment.** Therefore, if a person has medical problems or for some other reason cannot fast, that person should not be made to feel guilty or be accused of sinning. Fasting is done in some cultures and religions as a ritual or tradition. The function of biblical fasting is to focus one's undivided attention on the Lord. It should never be done merely as a ritual.

### I. THE TEACHING OF CHRIST

Jesus taught fasting and fasted himself (Mt 4:2). His disciples may not have fasted while he fasted while with them (Mk 2:18-19). However, even this text clearly states that Jesus expected that the disciples *would fast after He was taken up to heaven*. He also taught His disciples regarding fasting in prayer. In a context of teaching about prayer, twice Christ said about fasting, "When you fast...do not be as the hypocrites..." (Mt 6:16-17). Note that He said "when" not "if," as if this were a regular practice of the disciples.

**Discuss: What did Jesus say about fasting?**

### II. THE EXAMPLE OF THE EARLY CHURCH

In the book of Acts, we see prayer, fasting and church expansion all going hand in hand. As the church relied upon the Lord, the Gospel advanced.

**1) Acts 13:1-3**

As the leaders of the church in Antioch ministered (prayed) unto the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit came to them with instruction and guidance. The expansion of Paul's ministry and the expansion of the church into Asia Minor and Europe began with prayer and fasting.

**2) Acts 14:23**

Paul and Barnabas committed the elders of the new churches into the Lord's care with prayer and fasting. Through prayer and fasting, Paul and Barnabas gained the courage to release control of these elders and how they would lead their churches into the Lord's hands.

**Discuss: How was fasting a part of the early church?**

**III. THE NATURE OF FASTING**

Christ taught that to receive heaven's answers we need to ask, seek and knock (Mt. 7:7). Each word indicates a deep intensity of seeking. Deliberate fasting reveals a yearning desire, a persistent burden of the heart that is greater than the desire for physical food. The motivation for fasting seems to be two-fold. The believer enters into a more intense seeking of God for the dual purpose of:

- Spiritual strengthening
- Advancement of the kingdom of God.

As shown in the instruction of Christ and the example of the early church, fasting is an expected and a vital aspect of prayer.

**Discuss: Should your group start fasting for new churches? If so, decide now when you will fast as a group.**

**QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- Have you ever spent time in prayer and fasting? What was your experience like? Did you sense a spiritual strengthening or see God answer your prayer in a special way?

**ACTION PLAN**

- Read Matthew 6:16-18.
- Describe how the "hypocrites" looked as they fasted. Why did they do this?
- Describe how a person should look when he fasts.
- How can we keep our fasting from becoming a ritual?
- Plan and experience the spiritual discipline of fasting. Below are a few ways that some Christians do this. You may wish to follow one of these, but the form is up to you.
  - Abstain from some food and drink for a specific time.
  - Abstain from all food but drink juices and other fluids for a specific time.
  - Abstain from a specific food but not all food for a specific time.
- Set aside one day a week/month that you will fast.
- Make a list of specific things for which you will pray when you fast.
- Record in your spiritual journal your experiences during your fast. How did you feel? What did you learn about yourself? About God?

**SOURCES**

- Duesel, Wesley L., *Touching the World Through Prayer*. Coral Gables, FL: Worldteam, 1986.
- Eastman, Dick, *No Easy Road*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1971.
- Piper, John, *Hunger for God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997.

---

# LEADERSHIP

---



LEADERSHIP  
**1**  
LESSON

# Biblical Principles of Leadership

## Lesson Purpose

This lesson defines leadership and introduces five biblical teachings concerning leadership. When discussing leadership, it is essential that we begin with the absolute truth of Scripture, rather than with our own personal assumptions.

## Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Know the one-word definition of "leadership."
- Know five basic biblical principles of leadership.
- Leadership is influence.
- All authority is from God.

## Appendix

1A Leadership Case Studies

## Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson includes three in-class activities. Use your own judgment on the time spent on them. In addition, appendix 1A gives you an opportunity to consider the implications of the principles described in the lesson. If it is at all possible, this would be best done in class in small groups, or at least in a format that will encourage discussion.

## Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Joshua 1:6-7 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What is holding you back from being a better leader?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

It is often said that one of the greatest needs of the church is a need for better-equipped leadership. The search for leaders, or the training of them, can be best accomplished once we have defined what leadership is. How do we understand leadership? "Leadership" is a term with many connotations. When we discuss leadership in the specific context of the Church, then its actual meaning may be even more difficult to understand. Most of us have certain assumptions about leadership, which come from our particular cultures, traditions or experiences. Principles of leadership also come from Scripture, which contains absolute truth. When we study the biblical principles of leadership, we realize that godly leadership is dramatically different from the leadership in the world. In this lesson, we will focus on what the Scripture teaches about leadership.

### I. THE DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

**Discuss:** *Take a minute to define the term "leadership" in as few words as possible. Share your definition with others.*

Note the two definitions below:

*"Leadership is influence, the ability of one person to influence others" (Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, p. 31).*

"Leadership is a dynamic process in which a man or woman with God-given capacity influences God's people toward His purposes for that group." (Clinton, *Making of a Leader*, p. 14; cf. p. 127).

The key word in both definitions is "influence." A one-word definition for leadership may be that leadership is "influence." People gain influence (and thus leadership) in a variety of ways. Sometimes people have influence by virtue of their position. Others are influential because of their competence. Still others may have influence because of their personality. It may be difficult to determine what it is that gives people leadership, but somehow those who lead are able to do so because they have influence.

A one-word definition for leadership may be that leadership is "influence."

When we talk about leadership in these lessons, we are not talking about leadership as a formal position. Rather, we wish to emphasize leadership as a *function*, so that the person with the most influence in a group may be viewed as the real leader despite his or her position. This understanding can greatly change the perspective of those with leadership responsibilities. As a great Church leader recently said: "When you understand that leadership is influence instead of position, that changes everything. You do not strive to be a leader; you strive to add value to people, and they'll let you be the leader" (Maxwell, *The Potential Around You*. p. 25).

**Discuss: Why is leadership defined as influence?**

## II. PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

Many of our ideas concerning human nature, motivation and leadership come from the world. The worldly way of dealing with people can be quite devious. The secular business world often assumes that "leaders can't trust their subordinates to do what they should do," and that "if you trust people too much, they will take advantage of you." Worldly leaders may further believe that people will do what you want them to only when motivated by reward or threatened by punishment. As a result of these presuppositions, worldly leaders often assume authority purely on the basis of either the position they hold, or by the power of personality.

**Discuss: In groups, take seven minutes to discuss how you have felt victimized by leaders who behaved according to the above ideas.**

Since we live in a depraved world where we see these ideas at work so often, they may make sense to us. But we are called to another approach concerning leadership. Note the biblical principles about leadership.

### 1. Authority to Lead Comes from God

The centurion in Luke 7:1-10 was in charge of 100 Roman soldiers. Yet he described himself first of all, not as a leader of many, but as a "man under authority." It seems that he properly understood that though he was a leader, he was not free to lead in any way he chose. He answered to those over him.

God has established legitimate authority in a variety of institutions such as civil government (Ro 13:1-7, 1Pe 2:13-17), the family (Ex 20:12, Eph 5:22-23, 6:1-4) and the church (Heb 13:17). Just like the centurion, no human leader has complete authority. Rather, all authority comes from God. God alone is sovereign, so all those in leadership must always be in submission to Him. He works through those He places in leadership for His purpose (Pr 21:1). Jesus modeled this submission to His Father in His earthly ministry (Jn 8:28-29).

With this in mind, we can understand that the best leaders are good followers - followers of their Lord Jesus Christ. No one is free to lead in any way that he wishes. In fact, Christian leaders are not leaders by their own choice; rather, they are chosen or called by God (Jn 15:16). Great Christian leaders realize that they have a great responsibility to lead as God directs, and thus they strive to follow God as He leads. Instead of relying on their position, personality or personal power for authority, they look to God, the source of all authority.

The best leaders are good followers—followers of their Lord Jesus Christ.

**Discuss: Why should Christian leaders continue looking to God instead of their position or power as the source of their authority?**



**2. Humble Servanthood Should Characterize Christian Leaders**

A Christian leader is first and foremost a servant. Servanthood should characterize all that a leader says and does. Perhaps nothing is more deadly to a Christian leader than the opposite of servanthood—pride. Not only does pride create barriers between leaders and followers, but also it is one of those things that the Lord hates (Pr 6:16-17).

The Christian leader is not a "ruler" in the sense of a dictator. Instead he is a servant. The word "rule" is never used in the New Testament to describe relationships between Christians. Seeking a position of leadership for personal ego satisfaction or as a base for exercising personal authority is contrary to the biblical concept of servant-leadership (Php 2:1-8).

The Christian leader is not a "ruler" in the sense of a dictator. Instead he is a servant.

Jesus made it very clear to His followers that leadership should not be self-serving (Mt 20:20-28; Jn 13:1-16). Only once in Jesus' ministry did He specifically state that He was doing something as an example for His disciples, when He was humbly serving them by washing their feet (Jn 13:15). Though many worldly leaders use intimidation or a sense of superiority to get followers to submit, these things should never be characteristic of a church leader (Mt 20:25-28, 1Pe 5:1-7).

Some Christian leaders start out humbly, but after some success in ministry, they develop a subtle pride or sense of status. But the apostle Paul grew in humility over the course of his ministry. Notice that early in his ministry he describes himself as "the least of the apostles" (1Co 15:9). Later in his letter to the Ephesians he calls himself "the least of all saints" (Eph 3:8). And at the end of his life he describes himself as the "chief of all sinners" (1Ti 1:15).

**Discuss: What does it mean to be a humble servant leader?**

**3. Christian Leadership Needs to be Developed through Careful Study and Exercise**

We often wonder whether leaders are born or made. There can be no doubt that certain people are born with leadership ability, but Christian leaders are made. After all, who is born with the ability to do all of the tasks below, which might be expected of a Christian leader?

- Instruct the church in God's Word
- Help others to identify and use their spiritual gifts, talents and abilities
- Motivate others to good works
- Plan and organize the activities of God's people
- Encourage the weary
- Counsel the weak in faith

Most of these activities are supernatural and foreign to us. Christian leadership goes against our in-born sinful inclinations; therefore, it must be developed. Notice the table below which indicates many of the differences between worldly leadership and Christian leadership.

**Figure 1.1 Worldly vs. Christian Leadership**

Worldly Leadership	Christian Leadership
Self-confident	Confident in God
Understands man	Understands God and man
Makes his own decisions	Seeks to find God's will
Ambitious	Servant
Develops his own methods	Finds and follows God's methods
Enjoys commanding others	Delights in obeying God
Motivated by personal considerations	Motivated by love for God and man
Independent	God-dependent

Perhaps you know someone who is characterized as a "natural leader." Probably the qualities that have earned him that title are the ones in the left column of Figure 1.1. In the same way, one without these qualities would probably not be described as a "leader." In reality, both the "natural leader" and the "non-leader" probably need to work equally hard to become true "Christian leaders." The "natural leader" must learn to rely on God, instead of on himself. The "non-leader" must learn that he *can* rely on God, even if he himself is weak.

Both the "natural leader" and the "non-leader" need to work hard to become true "Christian leaders."

Leadership is also one of the spiritual gifts. Those who have this gift (and not all do) are instructed to exercise their gift diligently (Ro 12:8). The Holy Spirit may give this gift of leadership to "natural leaders" or "non-leaders." It does not depend on natural ability. Therefore, it is important for each believer to discover whether or not this is one of his or her gifts. This is best done through participation in serving others.

The gift of leadership might be compared to the gift of evangelism. Some believers have it, and some do not. However, all are expected to *serve* in evangelism and leadership as the occasion and need arises. Those with a gift of leadership will see more fruit from their labor, but each believer is responsible to apply the principles of biblical, Christian leadership in his life and ministry. This may be in the home, at work, in the church, in a new church plant, or another situation. Because Christian leadership is a function (something we do) rather than a position, the Lord expects us to use it.

**Discuss: The differences between worldly leaders and Biblical leaders.**

**4. The Bible Describes a Diversity of Leadership Styles**

A close examination of the Bible reveals that no two leaders are exactly alike. Leaders range from the apostolic type (Paul), characterized by the ability to motivate people to respond to God in new ways in new situations, to the pastoral type (Barnabas), characterized by nurture and management ability. Personalities and circumstances increase the diversity of leadership styles. Certainly Joshua responded differently to his leadership challenge than David did to his. Different styles are understandable because personalities and situations are always different.

Ephesians 4:11-12 describes several leadership roles that were present in the New Testament Church. Although very different from each other, each one functioned to "prepare God's people for works of service" or, in other words, to lead them into ministry.

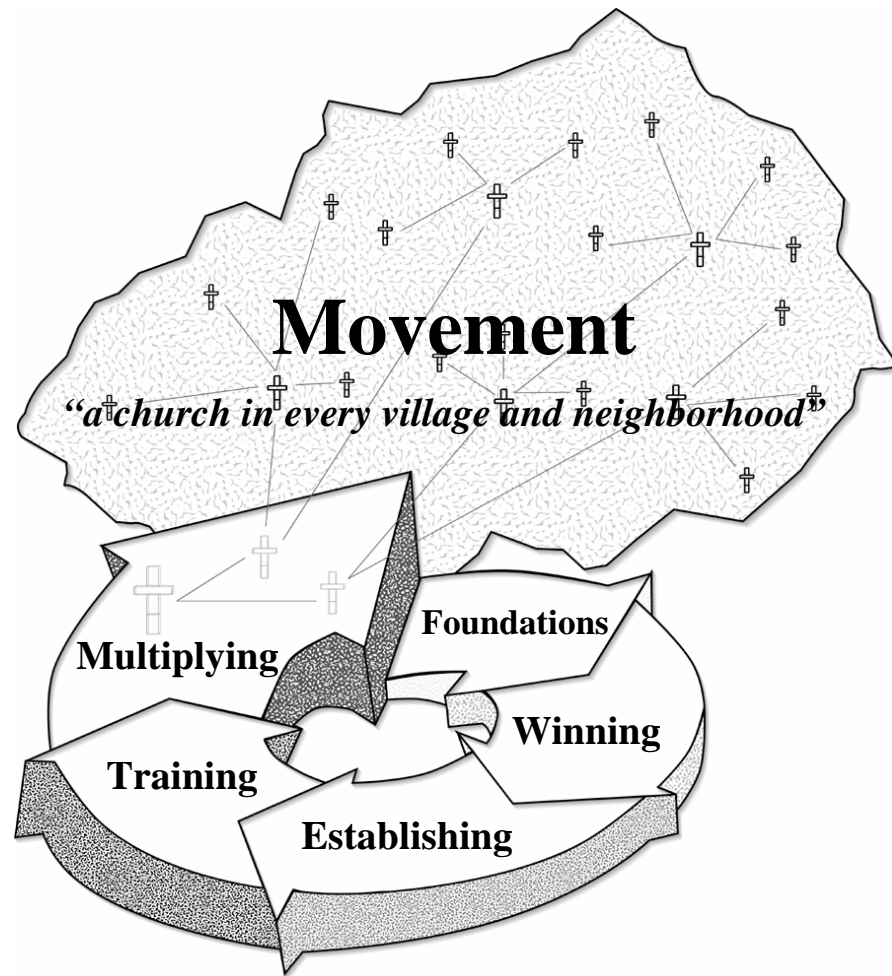
**Figure 1.2 New Testament Leadership Functions**

<i>Calling</i>	<i>Concern</i>	<i>Function</i>
<i>Apostle</i>	Vision	Pioneer
<i>Prophet</i>	Sin	Preach
<i>Evangelist</i>	Salvation	Outreach
<i>Pastor</i>	Nurture	In-reach
<i>Teacher</i>	Truth	Instruct

The functions listed in Figure 1.2 are often needed in the church today. One leadership style is not necessarily better than another, but one may be more necessary than another given the needs of a group at a certain time. Throughout the duration of your ministry, you may have to assume various styles at different times because of specific needs.

**Discuss: Take several minutes to look at the "Church Planting Cycle". In small groups or as a class, discuss the styles of leadership that are necessary for each phase of the cycle.**

Figure 1.3 Church Planting Cycle



5. The Primary Function of Church Leadership is to Equip

Traditionally, the pastors and church leaders have been thought of as the ones who "do" the ministry—as the Old Testament priests ministered for the people. However, the clear teaching of the New Testament is that every believer is a priest, and we are all supposed to minister. Ephesians 4:11-12 shows that the primary responsibility of the pastor should be to envision and equip the believers so that they are able to do the ministry. His attitude should be: "better to put 10 men to work than to do the work of 10 men." In other words, church leaders need to be facilitators.

Figure 1.4 Directive and Facilitative Leaders

DIRECTIVE LEADER	FACILITATIVE LEADER
Work oriented: "Get the job done"	People oriented: "Get people involved"
Doer	Delegator
Goal - "To do the work of the ministry"	Goal - "To equip others to minister"
Practitioner	Equipper, Enabler, Trainer

The concept of facilitation may be illustrated by the saying of an ancient Chinese wise man named LaoTse: "When the work of the best leader is done, its task accomplished, the people will say 'we have done it ourselves.'"

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are the implications of defining leadership as "influence?" Who are the leaders in your church or ministry with this definition in mind?
- How do people become leaders in your culture?
- Why is it important that all leaders first be good followers?
- How does the understanding that your authority to lead comes from God change your perspective on your leadership?
- What chances are being taken when a new believer with natural leadership ability is given leadership in the church?
- Which of the five leadership styles shown in Figure 1.2 are most natural for you?
- In what ways are these biblical concepts of leadership contrary to worldly principles of leadership?

## ACTION PLAN

Discuss worksheet 1A, "Leadership Case Studies." For each of the case studies, note what biblical principles are or are not being applied. For each situation, how would you advise the leader if you were called upon to assist?

## SOURCES

- Clinton, J. Robert. *The Making of a Leader*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988.
- Sanders, J. Oswald. *Spiritual Leadership*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980.
- Maxwell, John. "The Potential Around You," *Leadership Journal*. Fall, 1996.



# Leadership Case Studies

## PRINCIPLES APPLIED

---

**Worksheet:** answer the questions related to the case studies below.

1. Yuri has been leading a church plant project in Yekatarinburg. Misha and Marina have been members of the team for three months. Recently Misha and Marina began to feel a great deal of frustration with the ministry. They have some good ideas for evangelism but they do not feel the freedom to even state their ideas. Their leader, Yuri, seems unwilling to listen to their suggestions. Instead he tells them what they should do and how they should do it. As a result, Misha and Marina are thinking about leaving the ministry and starting out on their own. **How would you evaluate Yuri's leadership?**
2. Gennadi is a prominent university professor who found Christ when his neighbor Nic gave him a Bible to read. He began to attend church with Nic and was impressed with the adult Bible study that meets each Wednesday night. In the first few weeks, someone suggests that Gennadi, an excellent teacher, lead the study. Gennadi's leadership could bring many visitors to the group as he is very popular and of course a good teacher as well. **Should Gennadi lead the study group?**
3. Slava leads a team of three couples in a church plant in Rostov. Slava provides excellent sermons during worship each Sunday morning. The church has grown to nearly 20 faithful members. Everyone loves Slava's ability to teach and preach the Word of God, as well as his ability to organize activities. However, Slava is beginning to feel exhausted from the workload. Slava asks fellow team member Anatoli to start a new church with several from Slava's group. But, there is little interest, which is very discouraging for Anatoli. **Evaluate how Slava handled the transfer of responsibility to Anatoli.**
4. The new church in the Smolensk region is growing at a rapid rate. Many attribute this growth to the excellent leadership that Victor and Luba have provided. They began the church after Victor returned from Moscow with a Seminary degree. Most of those who attend are new believers with no previous church background at all. Victor does most of the preaching and Luba organizes the Sunday school program. As they have grown, Victor has had his eye out for some new leaders to assist him in the church work. But no one else seems qualified to lead. He feels fortunate to have found three young men who could be trained for church leadership. Victor found scholarships for two of them to attend the seminary in Moscow. They leave in the fall to begin a 3-year program. **How would you evaluate this method of leadership development?**
5. Boris lives in a small town in southern Russia that has no evangelical church. Boris recently discovered several believers in his village who travel all different directions to attend church- some as far away as 30 km. Under Boris's leadership, the believers are organized into a new church. As the believers gather, they are all excited about a local church and everyone enthusiastically shares ideas about how the church should be organized based on their experience in their former churches. But Boris makes it clear that he will be the pastor and that the people should forget about any traditions or practices in the churches they came from, because he is in charge as the pastor of this new church. **What do you think will be the result of Boris' approach?**

6. Keril has planted three churches in various cities in western Russia. Keril is a natural church planter. He is very energetic and outgoing, having gifts as an evangelist. He plays the guitar and sings and can entertain an audience for hours. He loves to start things and then move on to something else. The churches he starts seem to resemble his personality. They are very exciting at first but soon fizzle out when something more exciting comes along. Keril contends that this is just his personality and that there is really nothing he can do to change. He knows that God uses him in spite of this. **How would you evaluate Keril's leadership?**
  
7. Zhenya has been working hard in his church plant for several years. The church is doing very well. It has grown to nearly 200 in the past three years. His wife and four children sometimes go for several days without seeing him because he leaves early in the morning and returns late at night. Zhenya does not like to live this way but his people are so needy. Many are sick and need to be visited, and the soup kitchen for the homeless demands constant attention. Zhenya knows that if he stops doing all that he is, the ministry will suffer, people will not get saved and the church will not grow any more. **Do you think Zhenya is a good leader? Why or why not?**

LEADERSHIP

2

LESSON

# Profile of a Leader

## Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the trainee to understand his role as a leader in the specific context of church planting.

## Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- There are eight characteristics of a Christian leader.
- 'Natural leaders' and 'non-leaders' can improve their leadership skills.
- Know the role of the leader in the church planting process.
- Know his/her personal strengths as a leader.
- Be committed to work on two specific areas where he/she intends to grow in leadership ability.

## Appendix

2A "The Leader"

## Suggestions to Trainers

Keep in mind that almost all of these concepts are expanded on in greater detail in later lessons.

## Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read 2 Chronicles 1:10 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What is one thing that you need to do this week to be a better leader?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

There are different styles of leaders. However, no matter what style is most natural for the church planter, he should always be a facilitator. A facilitator is someone who enables others to use their gifts and abilities more effectively. Church leaders are responsible to *prepare God's people for works of service* (Eph 4:12), rather than do most of the ministry themselves. Although a church planter must be a "doer," it is even more important that he "causes things to be done."

Below is a list of several personal characteristics and skills that enable a church plant leader to see a church planted under his ministry.

### I. MAINTAIN CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

The church planter, first of all, must possess Christ-like character. Ministry flows from character. Consider the maxim: "private victory precedes public victory." Unless Christ has claim on your heart so that Christ-likeness is evident, how can you expect to see Christ work through you in your nation? If the church planter is not being changed by Christ, it is doubtful that others will be changed through him.

Christ-likeness springs from understanding God's love for us, and from our own need for him to work in our lives. Ministry must be a result of God's grace at work in our lives; no other motivation will be honored by God or will sustain commitment when times are tough. Awareness of God's grace in our lives is gained and sustained by meditating upon God's Word, believing his promises, prayer, and worship.

Through daily fellowship with Christ, focus on God's promises, and on the vision that He has given for your ministry. Acknowledge your dependency upon Him to accomplish His purpose in your life and ministry. Worship God for what he has done in your life already.

**Discuss: Why is a Christ-like character essential to a leader?**

## II. WORK WELL WITH A TEAM

Many church-planting projects start out with a leadership team in place. Other times, a church planter starts out alone and must develop others who join his team as the project develops. Whatever your situation, always work toward developing teams, both leadership teams and ministry teams. Make it a normal pattern for your ministry and for the church in its development.

Teamwork was the normal pattern for ministry in the New Testament.

Effective church planters do not work alone. On the contrary, they stand with others, or others stand with them in the work that God has called them to do. Often working with others as a team can be just the crucible in which our true character is seen and developed. Beware of the leader who is not surrounded by a team. If one cannot work with a team, how can one lead a church? Teamwork is the normal pattern for ministry in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit set apart Paul and Barnabas as a missionary team (Ac 13:2). Although Paul and Barnabas went their separate ways later in ministry, they both formed new teams with whom they ministered (Ac 15:36-41). Teamwork was so important to Paul that even when he had an open door for ministry, he held off because he was alone (2Co 2:12-13).

A "team" may be defined as a group of people who have banded together to work toward a common objective. A good team has common values and philosophy of ministry. The giftedness of the various team members ought to be diverse while mutual respect, affirmation and loyalty should be evident through open and constructive communication on the team. It is the job of the leader to work with the team not as a boss or chief, but as a facilitator. His teammates are not his personal staff, but his co-workers. Building and working with a team can be extremely difficult and time intensive process, but you can be certain that its dividends are great.

**Discuss: Why is it important to work in teams, instead of the leader doing all the work himself?**

## III. DEVELOP THE GIFTEDNESS AND ABILITIES OF OTHERS

A Church Planter multiplies himself through identifying and developing other workers. Many leaders try to build their ministries around themselves and their accomplishments. God calls us to disciple and train others (2Ti 2:2). It is better to put 10 people to work than to do the work of 10 people.

It is always better to put 10 people to work than to do the work of 10 people.

One of the main tasks of the leader of a church plant must be to enable others to identify their spiritual gifts and to become effective in ministry. This involves training mature church workers as well as new converts to do the tasks of the ministry, and matching people with appropriate gifts to the ministry opportunities as they arise. This also means the leader is, first of all, a *trainer*. Even if he does not spend a lot of time training in the technical sense, his life models how to do ministry. People develop their gifts and abilities by just being around this person.

Part of the discipleship process of new believers is to help them identify and use their gifts. Involving them in ministry is a great way to do this. Consider taking a disciple on a visit to a sick person, or on an evangelistic opportunity. This is an effective way to train him or her for ministry.

**Discuss: How can leaders seek to develop the giftedness and abilities of others?**

## IV. KNOW HOW TO DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY

A wise leader is happy to delegate when it is appropriate (Exodus 18). Delegation accomplishes more than working alone, by involving others in the ministry.

There are several reasons to delegate. The church planter may delegate responsibilities in areas of ministry where he is weak and others are gifted. In other situations, he may delegate so that others will feel a sense of ownership in the work. People tend to be more committed to things they participate in.

While a church planter always looks for ways to delegate, he does so without demanding more from others than he himself is willing to give. He avoids overworking others. When assigning people to ministry responsibilities, he also makes sure that they have the necessary resources to complete the task. When appropriate, the wise leader models ministry before expecting it from others.

**Discuss: How is delegating responsibility different from giving orders?**

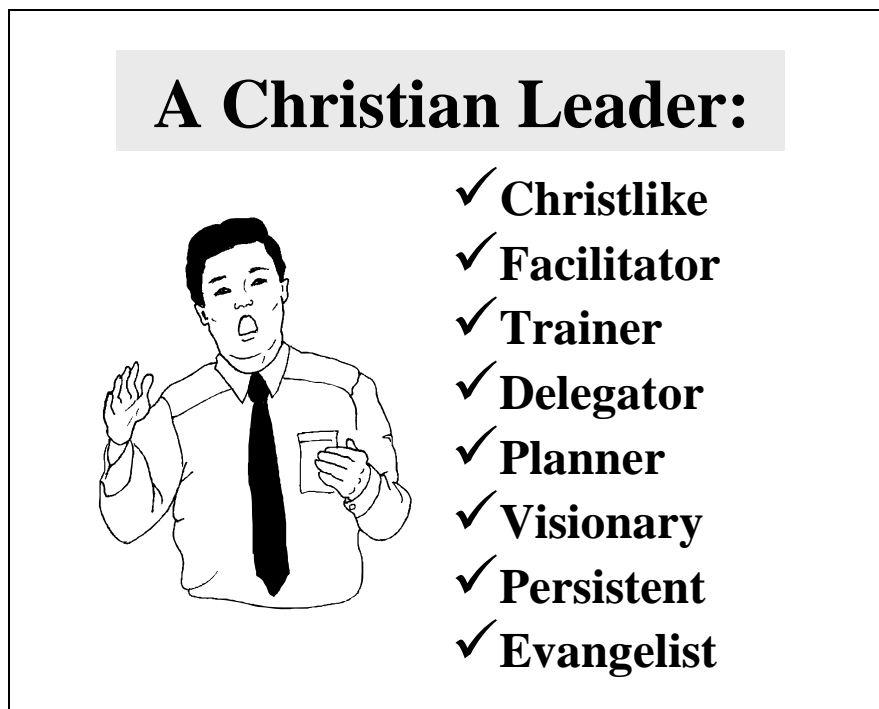


## V. SET GOALS, PLANS AND OBJECTIVES AND WORK TOWARD THEM

Setting goals and planning is a normal practice approved in Scripture. In Proverbs, we learn that we should "Make plans by seeking advice, if you wage war, obtain guidance" (Pr 20:18). Jesus used the illustrations of a builder who did not plan before building a tower and of a king who did not prepare properly for a battle as examples of people poorly committed to their tasks (Lk 14:28-33). If we are truly committed to our ministry, then setting clear goals and plans is proper for us as well.

A church planter prayerfully establishes goals, objectives and strategies in consultation with his team. His plans are realistic. He avoids unrealistic goals that cannot be achieved. His plans are flexible, so that he can cope effectively with ambiguity and change. He is able to adapt strategies and plans to specific situations. When necessary, he adjusts his priorities and emphasis according to the various phases of church birth and growth.

Figure 2.1 Characteristics of a Christian Leader



## VI. ARTICULATE VISION IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT INSPIRES OTHERS

The leader is a person of vision. That is, he sees not only the present, but can also imagine what the future could be like. For the church planter, this means communing with God through the Word and prayer, with the result that he has a clear sense of what God wants to do through him in the future. He also recognizes the importance of persuasively communicating this vision to the church or to the other believers who will help him plant a new church. He may develop a theme/slogan that highlights the vision and philosophy of the ministry. A visionary church planter is able to keep the vision central to everything that is done in the establishment of the new church. Through his efforts, those involved in the church plant remain committed to the vision, and feel responsible for the growth and success of the ministry.

**Discuss:** Describe some ways how vision is shared that will not cause change or cause negative pressure? How are some good ways to share vision to inspire others?

## VII. BE PERSISTENT AND OVERCOME SETBACKS

A Christian leader must be persistent. Satan will resist any attempt to build the Church of Jesus Christ. Problems *will* arise. He must be willing to work hard and long and not give up. He takes initiative and is aggressive in getting things done, without being bossy or unpleasant. He is a self-starter like the ant in Proverbs 6:7 who works because of his own initiative, without waiting to be directed. He approaches challenges as "opportunities" rather than as "problems." He believes that God will do great things for His Own glory.

A leader approaches challenges as "opportunities" rather than as "problems."

Most people are reactive; meaning their activity is controlled by events as they happen to them. A reactive person is always responding to what is going on around him, and ends up being the victim of circumstances. A Christian leader or church planter should be pro-active. He needs to think *ahead* and prepare himself and those to whom he ministers so that they can victoriously work through problems when they happen. For example, a Christian leader teaches truth *before* the cults steal his sheep, and deals with problems while they are still small and manageable. Inevitably, there will be times when the best leader must react to a problem. But a good leader will lay a good foundation in advance, so that problems are easier to solve. Even in difficult times, he will remain a *leader*, rather than a *victim*.

**Table 2.2 Victim or Leader?**

Victim	Leader
Says: "There is nothing we can do"	Says: "Let's look at the alternatives"
Focuses on the problems	Focuses on the possibilities
Lives in the past	Lives for the future
Pessimistic	Optimistic
Waits for others to move	Takes initiative

**Discuss: What is the meaning of the word victim, and how is a leader different from a victim?**

### VIII. LEAD IN EVANGELISM

It is impossible to plant a church without evangelism. Because evangelism is such an important part of church planting, it must be clear that it is a priority of the leader. Many in the church planting project will have the same attitude as the leader when it comes to evangelism. If the leader is not involved, they will not be. If the leader only talks about evangelism, and never does it, neither will they. If the leader is passionately active as an evangelist, they will be too.

Evangelism is a fundamental task commanded repeatedly in the New Testament (Mt 28:19-20). Jesus trained 12 men to take His place. Training them was His main focus - but He never lost sight of the reason He was training them. He made it obvious by His teaching and His example that His concern was for the masses who needed salvation. His disciples caught that same concern through Jesus' example as well as His explicit teaching. Paul also told Timothy to do the work of an evangelist (2Ti 4:5). Evangelism may not have been his gift, but Paul felt that Timothy had to make it a priority.

Evangelism and ministry training are both crucial activities of church planters. One may ask how the church plant leader can concentrate on each of these activities at the same time. This is a good question. One way to answer it is to involve the leaders you are training in evangelism. Always work with a partner and he will always be learning.

**Discuss: Why is it important that the leader lead in evangelism?**

### CONCLUSION

The above personal characteristics and skills better enable a church plant leader to successfully see a church planted under his or her ministry. A church planter will be wise to develop these skills and characteristics. Yet it should be kept in mind that church planters are not all alike. Personalities and styles differ as with any other ministry gift. In which of the above ways are you gifted as a church planter? In which ways are you limited, in your opinion?

## **QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- Why should a leader delegate?
- What particular task are you doing that you should delegate to another?
- What is a facilitator?
- In what ways is a church planter like a farmer?
- How can a leader get others involved in setting goals?
- Which is more important, the training of leaders or active evangelism?
- What does it mean to be pro-active and why should a church planter have this characteristic?
- Do you have a team to work with? Why or why not?
- Do you or your team have goals for your ministry?

## **ACTION PLAN**

See Appendix 2A: "The Leader." What characteristics of Christian leadership do you see in this account of the life of Christ? List them for yourself on a sheet of paper, and then compare them to the characteristics discussed in this lesson. Do they agree? How important do you think they are? How does your life and leadership compare?



LEADERSHIP  
APPENDIX  
2A

# The Leader

---

The leader had quite a job to do. His mission was to transform the world. The transformation this leader sought was not merely cosmetic, or temporary. It involved a whole new philosophy of life resulting in a new culture reaching every tribe and nation. To say the least, the leader had a most difficult task before him. Other great leaders had attempted less grand things and failed. Humanly speaking, this leader was completely alone in this mission. No one else was committed to it, nor did anyone else even understand it. How would he ever accomplish his task? How would he get his message out? How would he inspire others to live according to it?

An examination of the leader's method contains many surprises. The leader did not do many of the things that we might expect. He did not seek public office or gather an army. He didn't open an institute, or hold formal seminars to train others in his new philosophy; he did not pull his followers away for a period of secluded intellectualism. He did not submit writings to a printing press to produce books and newsletters pitching his plan. Instead, the leader started by gathering a small group of followers to himself (Mt 10:2-4). Rather than concentrate on the multitudes, he spent three years specifically training these men in his transforming way of life in hopes that they would then help him in the transformation of the multitudes.

The leader did not do many of the things that we might expect.

With only 12 men, this seemed like a hopelessly small start. Nevertheless, he lived his beliefs and deeply loved these 12 as if they were his own family. They lived together, eating, resting, working and relaxing without any constraints or barriers. In all this, the leader put his ideas into action by living them out with his followers. They traveled together from village to village where he interacted with others, meeting all kinds of needs. The leader commonly preached to enormous crowds (Mk 4:1). His sermons weren't elaborate; he used many illustrations from life as it was lived in that land at that time. He would often retreat with his followers alone to the countryside where he made his sermons especially meaningful through in-depth follow-up discussions (Mk 4:34).

The followers were committed and seemed eager to learn, but they showed little promise. Several were backward villagers, barely literate; one had been a tax collector, a profession despised by the general population; a few were in the fishing business. At best they were ordinary men, not the 'cut above' kind from whom one would expect great things. None of them possessed the statesman-like charisma desired for leaders of a great movement. And although the leader carried a spiritual message, none of the men he picked were religious leaders. In spite of all these disqualifiers, these unlikely followers were the ones that he personally picked to stand alone as the front-runners of a great movement. The leader thought that the qualifications of these men would be that they had been with him.

The followers he picked were at best, ordinary men.

The leader had an unusual humility. He paid no attention to sarcastic remarks about his hometown. He was content to be known as a small-town boy and the son of a carpenter. He did not seek attention or self-gain, but sought to empower others and to stay out of the limelight himself. Some thought that he could have had a greater impact if his leadership would have been more formal, if he had worked in the existing system. But the leader rejected formal status. He rejected the direct control of the kingdoms of the world even when it was offered to him (Mt 4:8-10). Instead of working toward reformation of the current system, the leader endeavored to ignite a whole new movement.

In retrospect, we might wonder about the leader's competency. He befriended sinners (Mk 2:15-17). His sermons and his teaching stepped on the toes of many who were in positions to help the cause. With few exceptions, this leader showed no confidence in the religious leaders of his day. His standards were high—he demanded all or nothing from would-be followers and many could not make the commitment (Mt 10:37-39).

The leader evaluated customs and routines according to their resulting function. For example, to the leader, "busy work" could be a trap that kept people from really important things (Lk 10:41-42). Concerning the religious law, the leader was always respectful while also being practical, not getting hung up on the letter of law. He vented the full extent of his anger when he observed the Temple not being used for its intended function. The leader scorned traditions and rituals that weighed people down instead of providing inner freedom. He was much more concerned with inner transformation according to the 'spirit of the law' than with outward conformity to rules and regulations (Mt. 15:7-9).

The leader loved people deeply; his mission involved servant-like ministry to other people. Perhaps this is why many people do not remember him first and foremost as a 'leader.' Misconceptions of leadership as 'rank,' 'position,' or 'status' keep many from thinking of this person as a leader. Rather, he is remembered as a servant, a teacher, a healer, a counselor, or any such designation that makes clear that this man assisted and guided people. His personal routine was often influenced by the needs of others. He always took time to talk to common people, to meet their needs by healing them or guiding them toward inner freedom. When large crowds came to him, he responded to their interests and needs with little regard to formal schedules or his own needs. He did not mind the interruptions of children (Mt 19:13-15). He dealt graciously with all sorts of unruly interruptions, even when the ceiling was torn away over his head. He did not get caught up in petty divisions of people. So important were people to him that he summarized the law relationally.

The leader loved people deeply; his mission involved servant-like ministry to other people.

He was not impressed as much by knowledge, riches, or rigid obedience to the law, as he was by faith. In fact, if you wanted to impress the leader, mustering up faith seemed like the best way to go about it. Faith was perhaps his only measurement for others. He constantly urged others to believe and was prone to almost embarrassing outburst of excitement when he found people of faith. When an outcast of society demonstrated faith in him, even in a disruptive way, the leader accepted him (Lk 7:36-38). Though he personally possessed supernatural ability, at several points he stated that he was actually limited by the lack of faith of others.

Near the end of his work with his followers, it seemed that there were many failures. His followers often could not understand what he taught. The general population was confused about who he was. His followers were committed to him when he was popular but they did not stand by him when he needed them most. Even one of his closest followers denied even knowing the leader at a crucial moment (Mt 26:69-74). Another follower betrayed him in favor of the first solid cash to come along, but then soon committed suicide. Eventually the establishment turned on the leader. He was arrested, tried, convicted and put to death as an enemy of the people. So much for transforming the world.

His followers were no doubt surprised and disheartened by the leader's strange and sudden departure. They did not feel ready for him to leave. It seemed that he had just begun. He had had an amazing impact, but the world, having just rejected the leader, was far from transformed. Because the work was not complete, the leader, in his leaving, gave his followers the mandate to lead on as he had done (Mt 28:18-20). He had sufficiently prepared them so that if they applied what they had learned from him, they would have a similar (even greater) impact.

And lead on these followers did. They emerged as people of great faith and vision for the transformation the leader had sought. With tremendous zeal and enthusiasm they carried on the mission. As they did so they made one thing very clear—the leader had never really left. It only seemed that way for a moment. In fact, his spiritual presence was key to the very transformation he sought. He, the leader, was with them as they set out to spread his message to every tribe and nation. His presence was their message and their inspiration!

These followers, showing themselves to be good followers after all, did not depart significantly from the pattern that the leader had established. They carried on influential discussions with common people in the market places, as well as the established temples and synagogues (though their own worship centers were apparently in homes). They lived their message boldly and loved others deeply, while gathering still other followers to do the same. As people accepted the message, local fellowships celebrating the leader's presence were established. Like the leader, these followers and their local fellowships had such an impact that the formal establishments of government and religion were seriously threatened—to the point of retaliation.

His followers lived their message boldly and loved others deeply.

Not many generations later, followers developed more 'sophisticated' methods of following the leader. Sometimes with more regard for "doing as the Romans do" than for doing as the leader had done, they made use of the dominant modes of worldly operations. The informal spontaneous movement that emphasized the leader's presence gave way to formal institutions and rigid programs. Impressive organizations, large buildings, and 'cutting-edge' programs replaced the simple celebrations and heartfelt proclamation which allegiance to the leader had inspired. This trend provided a certain security and control, but the leader's presence was overshadowed and much of what the leader stood for was denied. By establishing and honoring forms at the expense of functions, the real impact of his mission was lost.

Formal institutions and rigid programs overshadowed the leader's presence.

The leader's influence continues. Those who follow the leader are commanded to work as he did. As elaborate schemes for transforming the world through programs and institutions show less promise than ever, his followers should again be reminded of the unique approach of the leader. The basic idea is strangely simple: a leader, who lives what he believes, deeply loves his followers with whom he shares a way of life—this is leadership at its best. This is The Great Leader who touches lives and transforms the world.

**SOURCES:** Adapted from *The Teacher*, an unpublished manuscript by Ted Ward and Lois McKinney.

LEADERSHIP

3

LESSON

# Introduction to Teamwork

## WORKING WITH OTHERS

### ☞ Lesson Purpose

This lesson explains how working together with others in a church plant can increase the effectiveness of the church planter by complementing his abilities.

### ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Teamwork is more effective than working alone.
- Teamwork involves a group working together on a common task.
- Understand the benefits of including others in ministry versus working alone.
- Understand the biblical basis for teamwork.
- Be committed to teamwork for effective church planting.

### ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson about teamwork relates to both formal church planting teams, and also to more informal groups of believers working together to plant a new church. It would be helpful to ask if any of the trainees are working on formal teams, and then decide which kind of teamwork would be the most helpful focus for your trainees.

### ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Matt. 20:25-28 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What is one thing you can do this week to help those around you become a better leaders?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

A typical church leader may find his congregation wandering aimlessly, even with his very clear direction. He might say to himself, "I can't get the congregation moving, even though I'm using every ounce of energy I have. I have to keep driving the people constantly just to keep the things done that we have going now. If I stopped pushing, our church would simply be adrift." How sadly true these words are for so many churches. Strong direction from strong leadership has, over the years, lulled many congregations to sleep. They begin to move only when they are pushed, and to do only as much as they are instructed to do (Adapted from Kilinski, pp. 159, 160).

"Work alone" leaders, like the one described above, believe the only way to lead is to use personal influence and charisma to motivate, push and persuade the masses. For someone who takes this approach, success is limited to the number of people that he can influence and the extent of his personal ability and creativity.

### I. WHAT IS TEAMWORK?

Teamwork involves working together with others on a task (such as planting a church), rather than doing it alone. As such, teamwork requires an agreed-upon goal that the group is working to accomplish. By doing the work together, the members of the group (or team) make use of the varying gifts and abilities of each member, as well as the increased amount of time and effort each can contribute to the task.

Teamwork involves working together with others on a task, rather than doing it alone.

Teamwork might take the form of a formal ministry team, with a focus on starting a new church. In this situation, there would normally be a recognized team leader, and perhaps some kind of official agreement spelling out the task and the responsibilities of each member. This kind of arrangement has many advantages. Roles are clearly defined, and so is the goal. Usually, there is a strong system of accountability that keeps each team member effectively contributing to the common goal. However, teamwork should not be limited only to such formal situations.

Even when a formal 'team' does not exist, or when cultural issues hinder a team's formation, teamwork can and should be used. Almost any difficult task is easier when a group works together. This is especially true when the task is a new church plant, where countless man-hours are needed to evangelize, disciple, and edify potential church members. One person attempting such a task alone usually gives way to frustration and exhaustion, rather than to the reaching of the multitudes. Teamwork is a better way.

Almost any difficult task is easier when a group works on it together.

Even informal groups working together to plant a church will function more smoothly if there is a recognized 'leader.' Hopefully, that leader will be functioning as a servant-leader, building up the others, rather than "lording it over" the group. This lesson focuses on that "leader" and how he can foster teamwork. There are several characteristics common to both formal and informal teamwork:

- The ministry vision (goal) is determined by the group.
- Decisions are made by the group.
- Problems are owned by the group.
- The members of the group are mutually accountable to one another.
- Each member uses his or her strengths to contribute to the successful completion of the task.
- Someone is recognized as 'the leader.'
- The group accomplishes more than the individuals could do alone.

**Discuss: According to the author, how would you define teamwork?**

## II. BIBLICAL BASIS FOR TEAMWORK

### 1. We Were Created to Be 'Together'

God calls his children to work together. We see this principle as early in the Bible as creation itself. God first created Adam but soon declared "It is not good that man should be alone." God then created Eve to be a "suitable help mate for him."

Solomon, in all his wisdom, also understood that we need each other.

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)*

### 2. Leaders Should Not Work Alone

Moses had enormous responsibilities leading the Israelites to the Promised Land. He accomplished much and was faithful as a leader, and yet, if we examine his faults, we notice that he worked alone too much. We do occasionally see Joshua and Aaron at his side, but more often we see Moses acting as the sole individual responsible for the multitudes. There were times when this became too much for Moses and he felt himself to be a victim of the people (Ex 17:4; Nu 11:10-14).

When Moses was reunited with his father-in-law Jethro (Exodus 18), Jethro was impressed with all the God had done through Moses. But when Jethro noticed that Moses was the sole judge for all the people, he immediately told Moses that what he was doing was "not good." Moses thought that serving the people in this way was commendable.

Moses serving the people alone was "not good."

But he needed help to lighten the workload and make sure that the work was done properly. Jethro set up a plan by which Moses could share this responsibility with others (Ex 18:17-26). Later in a similar situation, when Moses was sad about the rebellion of the people, God saw that Moses needed support and established the 70 elders to help 'carry the burden' (Nu 11:16-17).

**Discuss: Is it easier for the leader to do all the work himself in the short term? How is this harmful for long term goals?**



### 3. Working Together Is the Normal Pattern for New Testament Ministry

We see teamwork again at several points in the New Testament. Jesus called His disciples and worked with them as a group. When Jesus introduced them to ministry, he multiplied their efforts by sending them out 'two by two' (Mk 6:7, Lk 10:1). Peter went with *other Christians* to evangelize in Caesarea (Ac 10:23). The Holy Spirit set apart Paul and Barnabas as the first missionary team (Ac 13:2). After the first missionary journey, this team multiplied into two (Ac 15:36-41). Paul had an open door for ministry, yet he held off from taking the opportunity because he was alone at the time (2Co 2:12-13). When leaders were appointed in the early church, normally a group of elders was appointed to lead each church (Ac 14:23).

The reasons for the biblical emphasis on teamwork is obvious: in the multiplicity of counselors there is great wisdom (Pr 15:22), and no one person has all the gifts (Eph 4, 1Co 12). We need one another. Ministry today should benefit from the advantages of teamwork. As few as 2-5 people working together can drastically increase the growth of the new church. In your church plant, look for those who seem to have a vision similar to yours, and ask them to pray about joining you in ministry.

Teamwork can dramatically increase the growth of the new church.

**Discuss: How does the bible teach teamwork?**

## III. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK

### 1. A Common Vision and Understanding of the Task

A group of people cannot move together if they are not going in the same direction. Teamwork requires that each member knows the goal towards which the group is working. Some formal teams have a purpose statement, which in one sentence explains why they work together. In other situations, the purpose statement of the church could be the common vision that keeps a church planting team working together.

If you have not taken the time to discuss and agree on a goal with those you work with, do so as soon as possible. This process in itself can be a very valuable experience. As you talk about the purpose of your group, the personal passions, desires and preferences of each member may become clearer. These desires may not be made known otherwise. As the unique passions and desires of team members are discovered, consider how they can be incorporated into an overall vision. Often you will find that God has brought together just the right "mix" of gifts and abilities in order to enable you to accomplish the task.

Incorporate the passions and desires of group members into an overall vision.

However, when people working together have incompatible approaches or conflicting goals, working together is not always possible. In such a case, either the members must give up particular desires, or they form a separate team, as Paul and Barnabas did in Acts 15:36-41.

Review your common goal on a regular basis with your group. Do not assume that each member understands it (or remembers it!), so that it does not have to be revisited.

Here are some examples of purpose statements:

- Our team exists to plant a healthy, multiplying church in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Our group exists to minister to alcoholics in \_\_\_\_\_ in such a way that they will find salvation from their sin and freedom from their addiction.
- We are working together to facilitate the birth and development of a saturation Church planting movement in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Our group exists to plan and lead meaningful worship when believers gather at \_\_\_\_\_ Church.

**Discuss: Why is a common vision and understanding of the task important to teamwork?**

### 2. Time Spent Together for Prayer and Planning

The participation of group members is most valuable when people know what is happening and can adequately communicate ideas, needs and desires to one another. This can be accomplished by meeting together weekly (or more often) and doing the following things:

1) *Pray Together*

Nothing binds people together in unity as much as prayer. Effective church planters and church planting groups are committed to prayer. They pray together for personal needs, ministry goals and also for the lost with whom they have contact.

2) *Discuss Individual Ministries*

Teamwork requires taking time to hear what individual members are doing. Hearing first hand how other team members are contributing can help the team grow closer, build morale and teach ministry skills.

3) *Plan Together*

Planning together can be a very valuable experience. Some leaders make plans and then tell their group what they are to do. When group members are inexperienced or immature, they may need the leader to temporarily do this. But more often, the leader should involve those working with him in the planning process. People are most committed to the things that they themselves have been involved in creating.

The leader should involve those working with him in the planning process.

Planning maximizes the potential of teamwork. This planning could involve: 1) looking at the common task, 2) determining what the group needs in order to reach its goal 3) identifying ministry resources 4) developing strategies for reaching goals.

4) *Edify and Equip Each Other (As Needed)*

A good leader will facilitate the development of the ministry skills of each member of his group. He will set aside time to help them to be more effective in preaching, evangelism, or caring for the sick. Reviewing the ministry of the recent past may provide the teachable moment when someone is willing to learn.

If the group that you lead does not have regular meetings, then consider starting them according to the pattern above.

**Discuss: Discuss why each of the 4 items are essential (cannot be without) to teamwork.**

**3. Relationships Characterized By Love**

Teamwork assumes a willingness to harmonize and work together. Group members need to possess a willingness to be open about themselves. Closeness is gained by acceptance, shared experiences and time. Therefore, mutual respect, understanding, encouragement and an emphasis on serving one another are key elements to teamwork.

Group members need to possess a willingness to be open about themselves.

In order to achieve this kind of closeness, relationships among the group members must be based upon a special kind of love—God's love. This love does not love another person because of his personality, looks, ability or intelligence. It is motivated by God's infinite and unconditional love for us. When we apply this kind of love we encourage and build up one another as Paul says to the Thessalonians (1Th 5:11). Jesus Christ is the model for the leader who wants to learn to "consider others better than themselves" (Php 2:1-8).

One test of love is the ability to handle conflict. Conflict is normal, but when there is disagreement, it must be acknowledged and discussed. Groups that love one another have the confidence to discuss even things that they do not agree on. They recognize that each member is important to the group and will not let disagreement destroy their relationship.

**4. Clear and Diverse Roles**

Many people in ministry look for people exactly like themselves to join with them in church planting. This is a big mistake, and it ignores the fact that we are a body with many parts, and many different gifts (1Co 12:12-31). A variety of people can better accomplish complex tasks. For example, a group planting a new church together might need people responsible for the following:

A variety of people can better accomplish complex tasks.

- Evangelism
- Discipleship
- Worship
- Finances/facilities

- Assimilation of new members
- Ministry
- Ministry training
- Care for the sick
- Hospitality

Teamwork demands that members understand each other's responsibilities. If members do not know who is responsible for certain areas, then frustration levels are bound to rise, and the ministry will suffer. If no one is in charge of worship, the group might find itself scrambling each worship time, since no one knows the plan for the service. When no one is in charge of finances, members may not have the funds necessary to purchase evangelistic literature when it is needed.

Teamwork is most effective when each member knows his or her particular role, and is placed in situations that build on his or her strengths. When this happens, the result of the group's efforts multiply, because every member is working to their maximum potential. A primary responsibility of the group leader is to see that this happens.

Teamwork is most effective when each member is placed in situations that build on his or her strengths.

**Discuss: Why are clear roles important for teamwork?**

## 5. Honest and Open Communication between Members

A major barrier to good communication is the tendency to evaluate and to judge without really listening. When a group is practicing teamwork, they seek to understand others before giving advice or sharing their own opinion. This kind of communication shows love and respect for the other person.

This kind of communication happens only when we take the time to understand problems before offering a solution. One good rule of thumb is to always restate a problem or the opinion of another before responding. Restating gives a chance for feedback and correction. It also shows understanding and respect.

When communication problems arise among your group members, remember the following:

- Ask questions to clarify the thoughts, feelings or opinions of others.
- Recognize and admit your personal desires, agenda and ambitions.
- Maintain unconditional acceptance even when you do not agree.

If the conflict is interpersonal, remember:

- Speak only to the individuals who are involved in a situation or issue (Mt 18:15).
- Do not enter into gossip or slander (2Co 12:20).
- Watch your words (Jas 3:1-12).
- Bless, and do not curse (Ro 12:14).

**Discuss: How does communication usually break down between people? How can you avoid these problems?**

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What advantages are there for church planters to work together with others, rather than working alone? What are some disadvantages to this approach?
- Teamwork requires a common vision. What are three things you can do as a leader to help those who work with you formulate and remember a common vision?
- Sometimes meetings are seen as "boring" and a "waste of time." What kinds of meetings would be a waste of time, and what kinds of meetings would be beneficial to a group working together to plant a new church?
- In your particular context, what roles are necessary to start a new church (e.g. evangelist, discipler, etc.)? Is it necessary to have all the roles present before you start a church?

## **ACTION PLAN**

List four key tasks that need to be accomplished in your church planting task. Consider to whom you might assign responsibility for each task, based on the designated gifting and strengths of others believers who might be willing to help. Then decide how you might recruit and train the person for that task. Then, do it.

## **SOURCES**

- Engel, James F., Jane Overstreet, and Terry Sparks. *Leadership: Making Human Strength Productive*. St. Davids, PA: The Center For Organizational Excellence, Eastern College, 1996.
- Kilinski, Kenneth K., and Jerry C. Wafford. *Organization and Leadership in the Local Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.
- Robinson, Martin and David Spriggs. *Church Planting, The Training Manual*. Oxford, England: Lynx Communications, 1995.

LEADERSHIP

4

LESSON

# Team Development

## Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain how a Christian leader can form a church planting team and develop the character and abilities of the members.

## Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Know the basic steps to form a church planting team.
- Understand that the role of a team leader is to develop the character and skills of each team member.
- The key to team formation is commitment to a common task, such as planting a new church.
- A leader's first responsibility is to develop the character and abilities of the team.
- Teamwork doesn't just happen—it evolves through four stages.

## Suggestions to Trainers

Although the material in this lesson concerns developing the members of a church planting team, it is applicable to a church leader, who also must strive to develop his or her members in similar ways. It is also valuable for a pastor who seeks to develop members and other leaders in his church.

## Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read 1 Chronicles 28:10 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Who is there in your group that you need to release into a higher level of leadership?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework: Complete the Action Plan, Read the assigned Chapter(s) for the next meeting time.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

The advantages of planting a church as a team have been discussed in previous lessons. Perhaps you already have a team. Maybe you don't, but would like to have one. You might be undecided and would like to know more about how a team would work. This lesson helps to address those issues.

In many ways, the success of a church planting team hinges on the leader. Often, it is the responsibility of the leader to recruit the team members. And while a church planting team should work together to make decisions about vision, task and purpose, there still must be one person, the leader, who is responsible to help them strive toward their vision and reach the goals they have set. This lesson will assume that you are that person who will form and lead the team in the successful planting of a church.

### I. FORMING YOUR TEAM

Even if you already have a group of people working with you to plant a new church, you may or may not have a team. Much has been written about the essence of a team. There is also a tremendous amount of research on how to lead a team. The majority of this research is secular, and while it offers helpful ideas, is not sufficient to a good church planting team. As you assemble a team for the spiritual task of church planting, you will need to seek individuals who have three basic characteristics:

- Commitment to the goal of planting a church.
- Godly character.
- Agreement to maximize strengths through clear roles.

It is desirable, but not necessary, that potential team members have all these characteristics. If they are lacking in some of the traits, they might be able to grow in those areas during the church planting process. Your role as a leader will be vital in these kinds of situations. You will need to be aware of the weaknesses and encourage growth regularly. If you are successful, your team can model the fact that all believers are growing and maturing—none of us is perfect. This might make team members more approachable and sensitive to the new contacts that you will seek to win.

On the other hand, planting a new church is a serious undertaking. There might not be time or energy enough to sort through known weaknesses in the team as you are working to evangelize the lost and make disciples of them. Jesus did not pick perfect men as His disciples, but He also spent three and a half years changing their lives before they were ready. How much time do you have? The presence of immature members on the team could possibly cause great harm through ungodly actions or attitudes. Therefore, you will need to evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of each potential member carefully and prayerfully before you make a decision.

If you are still forming a team, evaluate these qualities in each potential member carefully. If you already have a team that includes some members who are weak in the three qualities listed above, you should make it a priority to begin helping them to overcome them. Failing that, you will need to consider asking them to leave the team.

**Discuss: What are three basic characteristics essential to forming a ministry team?**

**1. Commitment to the Goal of Planting a Church**

The importance of a common goal can hardly be overstated. This seems logical. In the sporting world, for example, 'successful' teams are often composed of people that might not be particularly compatible in any other situation. In fact, they may not even like one another. But a strong commitment to the goal of winning the game can often help them overcome their differences and work/play together.

If a group of unbelievers can demonstrate such cooperation and sacrifice for the sake of sport, how much greater might be its effect on a church planting team? If each member of your church planting team maintains a strong and vital commitment to seeing the church planted, they will be much more understanding and flexible in their ministry relationships. This strong commitment might already exist, or you might have to help them develop that vision. Either way, you will also have to help them continue to *maintain* that commitment.

**Discuss: Why is a commitment to a common goal important for team members?**

**2. Godly Character**

Consider for a moment the disciples that Jesus chose. They were hardly an educated or 'capable' group. Jesus evidently looked for another qualification. You should do the same. What was the qualification? When the disciples were faced with choosing men to help them, they looked for men "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:3). They apparently did not care about education, age, ability, experience, or the other characteristics that we might consider important. Rather, they valued godly character.

Paul he told Timothy to choose "faithful" (Gk.*pistos*)<sup>4</sup> men (2Ti 2:2). In the same verse, he says they will be "able" to teach others. The word "able" or "capable" is a translation of the Greek word *ikanos*<sup>5</sup>. This translation has led some to emphasize education or ability, in contrast to Acts 6. A study of the usage of *ikanos* shows that a better translation would be "worthy." Consider the same word in Matthew 3:11—"whose sandals I am not fit (*ikanos*) to carry." Do you think John wasn't "able" to carry sandals, or that he was not "worthy?" In Matthew, *ikanos* is translated as "deserve."

This means that Paul agrees with the apostles that godly character is the most important issue. Without godly character, we are not "worthy" of serving the Lord. It should be the primary quality that you look for in a team member. God will bless such choices. Whether your team members are men, women, or both, the same biblical principle would seem to apply. This does not mean that training, ability, or experience are of no value. But these things are secondary to a godly, Spirit-filled life.

Godly character is the most important issue.
--

**Discuss: Why is Godly character essential for team members?**

---

<sup>4</sup> πιστο

<sup>5</sup> ικανο

### 3. Agreement to Maximize Strengths through Clear Roles

A church planting team should represent the church it seeks to plant. The biblical model is a body, with its diversity working together in unity (1Co 12). This image of the body illustrates the advantage of the different team members having complementary abilities and spiritual gifts. A good church planting team will have this diversity. There might be an evangelist, a counselor, a shepherd, a teacher, someone to show mercy, etc. Each is important. There should probably also be diversity in gender, age, and personality. The exact balance will depend on the needs of your situation and the available members. Look to diversity as an advantage rather than a weakness.

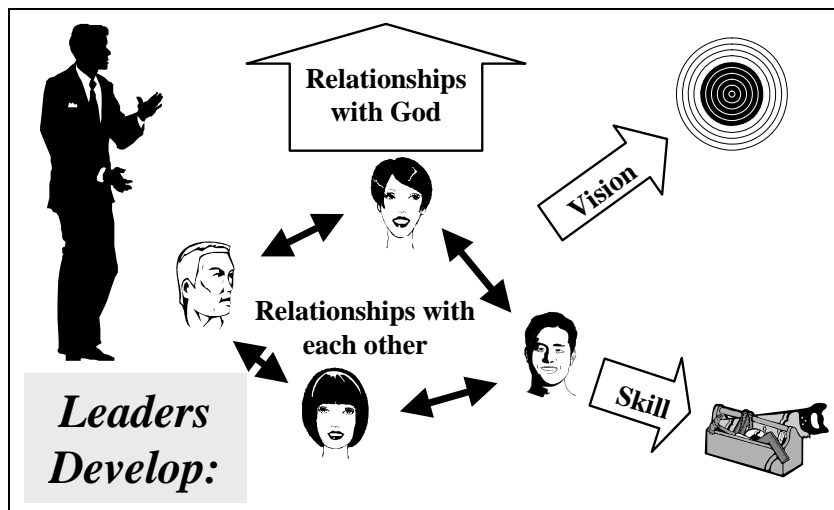
Like the body, this diversity is valuable only if guided toward the common goal. It must have a head. In the same way, a team must have a head, or leader—probably you. The emphasis is on guiding the members into ministry, rather than “lording it over them.” This ‘headship’ should be *functional* rather than *positional*. Make sure that the team agrees to be led.

**Discuss:** How do clear roles maximize your strengths?

## II. LEADING YOUR TEAM

The specific responsibilities of a leader will be related to the purpose of the team he leads. The following objectives reflect the responsibilities of a leader in the context of starting a new church. As you lead your team, strive to do each of the following activities.

Figure 4.1 Leaders Develop Their Team



### 1. Develop Your Team Members' Relationships with God

Be a pastor to your team. Offer spiritual support when they are in need spiritually. This assumes that you know each of the team members well enough to know when they have spiritual needs. Spend time with them, and do not be afraid to ask them "hard questions" about their walk with the Lord and struggles that they may be having.

The spiritual health and growth of each member of your team will be directly related to their understanding of God's Word and their ability to put biblical truths into practice in ministry and in their everyday lives. Pray for their spiritual health and growth. If they do not have one already, help team members to develop a personal discipline of Bible study and prayer. Pray that they will discover and develop their spiritual gifts, and then actively look for ways to give them opportunities to do this.

**Discuss:** How are some ways you can encourage your teammates to have deeper relationships with God?

### 2. Develop Your Team Members' Relationships with Each Other

Teamwork requires that team members understand and trust one another. If there are relationship problems in your team, the ministry of the team will suffer. You will need to help team members develop and sustain trust and love for one another. Keep the following goals in mind as you do this:

If there are relationship problems in your team, the ministry will suffer.

- Help the team members understand their temperaments.

- Help the team members understand their relational strengths and weaknesses.
- Help the team members develop positive attitudes towards differences.
- Identify relationship tension areas.

**Discuss: How are some ways you can develop relationships within the team, while not focusing on your task?**

### 3. Develop Team Members' Vision for Ministry

Many church planting situations are difficult. In these cases, your team needs to see progress or they will get discouraged. This is especially true in the early stages, when the foundation is being laid, and a little later, when there may only be a few converts. As the leader, look for ways to help the team see the big picture, the vision (the Z!), so that they will be inspired to be more dedicated to the task (Gal 6:9).

Do not assume that the vision and goals are understood by every member of the team. People in most teams tend to lose sight of the vision if not constantly reminded of it by the leader. Keep the vision out front, and whenever possible challenge the team to think just a little bigger, so that they do not become satisfied with less than what God intends for them.

**Discuss: How can you develop your team member's vision for ministry?**

### 4. Develop Your Team Members' Ministry Skills

Most people avoid ministry if they do not have the skills required to carry out the task. Many people do not evangelize or study the Bible because they feel that they do not know how. Be willing to take time to improve the ministry skills that your team will need to plant the new church. Practice inductive Bible study together. Talk about and demonstrate several different ways to do evangelism.

Be willing to take time to improve the ministry skills of those working with you to plant the new church.

When training people for ministry, do not assume that good example and general instruction are sufficient. Some people need direct and personal contact (1Th 5:14). As you teach ministry skills remember the following:

#### 1. Prepare your heart and mind before you advise

Spend time in prayer, asking God to give you wisdom in working either with the entire team, or with one member. Put together a concrete plan for what skills you want to teach, and the different ways in which you might be able to do this. Think about what was helpful for you when you first learned how to do different types of ministries.

#### 2. Look for teachable moments (Pr 25:11 "A word aptly spoken")

The time to instruct is when:

- People are not threatened.
- You are not angry or frustrated.
- The other person recognizes his or her need for help or support.

**Discuss: What are some ways you can help develop other team member's skills?**

## III. UNDERSTANDING YOUR TEAM

Your team will not immediately or automatically function the way you might desire. Every team goes through a process of growth and maturation. The chart in table 5.2 describes four common phases that teams normally go through as they grow and mature together. It is essential for the leader to be able to identify where his or her team is in regard to leadership, common purpose, relationships, roles, flexibility, communication and spiritual life. Each of these areas represents an important aspect of the overall health and maturity of a church planting team.



**Table 4.2 Four Phases of Team Development**

	<b>1. IMMATURE TEAM</b> <i>Leader-centered</i>	<b>2. YOUNG TEAM</b> <i>People-centered</i>	<b>3. LEARNING TEAM</b> <i>Process-centered</i>	<b>4. MATURING TEAM</b> <i>Purpose-centered</i>
<b>Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders make most of the decisions</li> <li>Directive (telling) style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decisions are still made by the leader but more input is given, more options are considered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Becomes more participative as members work towards the purpose</li> <li>Decisions are made by the team efficiently and effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leader is flexible in style, adapting to situation</li> <li>Some leadership is task-driven, so that those with skills assume temporary leadership roles</li> <li>Tasks are delegated</li> </ul>
<b>Common Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No shared understanding of what needs to be done</li> <li>Confused purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team still lacks unity of purpose but becomes aware of lack</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purpose is discussed and clarified in the minds of team members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness becomes the focus</li> <li>Progress becomes pertinent</li> <li>Internalized</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no understanding of others ... their strengths, weaknesses, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus is on getting to know and understand others, their strengths, weaknesses, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Love and loyalty among the members is developing</li> <li>Members have become less defensive and more open to input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pride in team membership</li> <li>Weakness is accepted &amp; accounted for</li> <li>Commitment to helping others reach their full potential</li> </ul>
<b>Specified Roles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-defined on individual basis</li> <li>Not yet clear how roles fit with the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The matching of strengths &amp; situation is discussed but little is done</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roles are clarified—strengths are matched to situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division of labor is apparent but with concern for the whole task</li> </ul>
<b>Flexible Processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rules, processes &amp; procedures imposed from the top or outside</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problems are faced more openly</li> <li>Risky issues are discussed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team explores different approaches &amp; alternate routes</li> <li>Focus in on efficiency</li> <li>There is agreement on how things will be done</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual initiative is encouraged</li> <li>Flexibility becomes the keynote with both strategy and method</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little effective communication</li> <li>Defensiveness</li> <li>Mistakes are covered up</li> <li>Self-centered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication is more open and effective</li> <li>Self-centered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open, task-oriented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication is characterized by trust, openness, honesty, cooperation and confrontation</li> </ul>
<b>Dynamic Spiritual Life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prayer is routine</li> <li>Faith walk not owned as a team experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team meets regularly to pray for common needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpersonal relationships are measured against the Scriptures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prayer is a natural, first response to new problems</li> <li>Obedient faith is stimulated</li> <li>Spiritual warfare entered into by the team</li> </ul>

In an ideal situation, a team of Christians working together would be at the same level in all areas. However, in reality, they may be very immature in terms of leadership and specified roles, but more mature in the area of relationships and communication. This is more realistic to expect.

**Discuss:** Look at the above chart. If you currently have a ministry team, by looking at the definitions of each phase of team development, which stage is your team at currently? What can you do to move the team forward?

This chart has a two-fold purpose. One, it can be used by the leader to help identify where his or her team is in terms of development and maturity. Second, it can be used to help the leader to see how the team needs to develop further, and how to tell when they have reached a higher level of development.

For example, in the area of leadership, a team might let the leader make all the decisions and always tell them what to do. Using the chart, the leader sees that the team members need to participate more in making the decisions. He or she can then think of several ways to ask for input, request others to help, etc. in order to help the team grow and mature. This process can and should be repeated for all the areas that are listed.

A leader should identify where his or her team is in terms of development and maturity.

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How does being a leader of a team that is planting a church differ from being a leader in general?
- The responsibilities of a leader are focused on developing character, vision and ministry skills in the members of his or her team. Why bother with all that when there is a job to be done (i.e. plant a new church)?
- In your own words, describe the role of a leader as it relates to the task to be accomplished and the members of the church planting team.
- What can happen to a team which matures in some areas but remains immature in other areas?
- Is a leader able to help his or her team develop and grow, or is this simply a "natural" process which will happen on any team that spends enough time together?

## ACTION PLAN

- Using the chart in table 5.2, "Four Phases of Team Development," determine at what level your team is currently in each of the listed areas. On a separate piece of paper, make a list of each area (leadership, purpose, relationships, etc.) and write down where your team is at (phase 1, 2, 3 or 4).
- Look at the chart to see what would be some characteristics of a team that is more developed in each of these areas. For each area listed on your paper, write down at least three concrete, measurable things which you can do in order to help your team to develop and mature in this area.
- Begin to implement your ideas, and after two months, review this chart and repeat this exercise. In what areas did your team grow? In what areas did it stay pretty much the same? What other ways can you try to help your team continue to grow and develop in these "static" areas? Review your ideas and insights with your mentor.

## SOURCES

- Engel, James F., Jane Overstreet, and Terry Sparks. *Leadership: Making Human Strength Productive*. St. Davids, PA: The Center For Organizational Excellence, Eastern College, 1996.
- Kilinski, Kenneth K., and Jerry C. Wafford. *Organization and Leadership in the Local Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.

---

# MULTIPLYING CHURCHES

---



**MULTIPLYING  
CHURCHES**

**LESSON 4**

# Discussion Dynamics

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to equip the leader with the skills necessary to lead meaningful times of discussion in the group.

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- The goal of discussion is to involve the group members.
- The group leader should be aware of common discussion problems.
- Understand communication skills which are necessary for the leader.
- Know the principles of developing good discussion questions.
- Practice identifying and resolving problems that arise during the discussion time.

## ☞ Appendix

4A Sample Discussion Questions

## ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Although the purpose of this lesson is to equip a leader to lead times of good discussion, the discussion itself is not the ultimate goal. A time of meaningful discussion between group members encourages fellowship, strengthens relationships, and provides a means for learning and applying biblical truth. By learning how to lead discussion well and avoid communication problems, the leader will be able to build trust and commitment between group members and motivate the group to fulfill its purposes.

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Thessalonians 1:6-8 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What is it that is holding you back from fully committing to the vision?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. LEADING DISCUSSION IN

The value of good discussion time cannot be emphasized enough. It is through discussion that the members learn more about each other and grow closer to one another in Christian love. Discussion of the Bible is a vital part of the process of discipleship and growth in the life of a believer. The Holy Spirit uses these discussions between believers and unbelievers in order to draw people closer to Jesus.

The role of the leader is to facilitate meaningful discussion and to model to the members of his group how to listen, ask good questions, and avoid problems that might arise. In this way, the leader continues to help the members grow and mature in their faith and in their ministry skills.

This lesson is designed simply to teach a form, or method, for leading times of discussion. Trust, commitment and strong relationships should be the outcome of group discussions, not the ability of the leader to "put on a good show." Each trainee should think about group communication and interaction in light of his own culture, and then use appropriate discussion skills which will build trust between members. The following keys to good communication are simple and easy to use:

The leader facilitates meaningful discussion and models to the group members how to listen, ask good questions, and avoid problems.

**1. Listen**

One of the most important skills of the leader in discussion is **listening**. Listening involves both physically and emotionally focusing on the person who is talking. Remember that your body language speaks louder, perhaps, than your words. Maintain good eye contact, and don't be preoccupied with other things while someone else is talking.

**2. Ask**

Often, people who are more extroverted will tend to do all the talking. If this happens, **ask others** in the group their ideas or opinions. Don't let one or two people control the conversation.

**3. Clarify**

Sometimes you will need to **clarify** something that has been said. "Max, what did you mean when you used the word 'saved'?" Do not assume you understand what someone has said, without restating what you think she said in your own words. Or, ask her to restate her thought in a different way. "Lena, I'm a bit confused—could you explain that differently?"



**4. Justify**

It can be helpful to ask people to **justify** their comments. Ask why they feel that way, where they find that idea in the passage of Scripture being studied, etc. "Vladimir, I don't come to the same conclusion as you did from these verses of Scripture. Could you help us better understand your point of view?"

**5. Extend**

Sometimes you will need to **extend** the discussion by asking if anyone has more to add, or asking how what has been said relates to a previous thought.

**6. Redirect**

When someone in the group is talking only to the leader, **redirect** his or her questions or comments to others in the group. "Bob, I can understand why you would feel that way. Laura, what is your impression of Bob's suggestion?" If the discussion is always between the leader and only one other person in the group, the rest of the people have nothing to contribute and feel left out. Communication in a group should go back and forth between the members of the group, and not just one way from the leader to each group member.

**7. Summarize**

At several points in a discussion, it can be helpful to stop and **summarize** what has been said. Point out main ideas or contributions that individuals have made. This will help keep the focus of the discussion on the main topic, and provide a sense of accomplishment to the group members.

**8. Affirm**

Remember to **affirm** the group members by recognizing and appreciating what each person is saying. Thank them for their contribution to the discussion. "Lisa, I want you to know that I appreciate that you shared your thoughts on this with us." Even if the comment which a person made requires amending, the speaker is important and should be acknowledged for their willingness to contribute to the discussion.

**Discuss: Which of these communication skills are you good at and which do you need to develop?**

## II. DEVELOPING GOOD QUESTIONS

The questions you ask can greatly enhance the relationships between members and can facilitate the discovery of truth in God's word. Questions that are well thought out will encourage people to share about themselves, their thoughts and their feelings.

### 1. Fellowship Questions

Questions are an important part of building personal relationships between members in the group. Appendix 4A, "Sample Discussion Questions," contains examples of questions that will help the members of your group get to know each other better. It is important that you learn how to format your own questions that relate to the lives of the people in your group. Ask questions that will enable members to share about themselves things that would not easily be seen by others: "What is something that you are worried about?" "What is one change that's coming for you in the future? How do you feel about it?" These types of questions encourage people to talk about their inner thoughts and feelings, which builds a caring and supportive atmosphere in the group.

It is important that you learn how to format your own questions that relate to your life and to the lives of the people in your group.

Ask questions that can be answered in 2-3 minutes: "Could you please share one area of struggle that you are working on this week?" In the early stages of a new group, occasionally ask questions that will let members affirm one another: "What one good thing can you say about at least one other person in our group?"

Fellowship questions are simple and yet strengthen relationships in a group. They do not require negative answers (e.g. don't ask, "What is your worst fault?"). Everyone in the group is able to answer fellowship questions, and they help members get to know and love one another. These types of questions ask people to share from their heart, not give opinions on issues.

**Discuss: What is the purpose of asking fellowship questions?**

### 2. Bible Discussion Questions

The questions you ask during the Bible discussion time will be slightly different from those you use during fellowship time. You will want to develop questions that will guide the group through an inductive study of a portion of Scripture. When your group is still very new, your questions will be an example to them of how to study inductively.

As the group grows and matures, you will want to have them begin to ask the questions that will give them insight into God's word. You can do this formally by requesting one of the members to lead the study in one of the meetings. Or, you can do this informally, by simply asking the group for ideas as you go through a passage of Scripture together. You might ask things like, "What could we ask about these verses in order to observe carefully what has been written?" or "What kinds of application questions can you think of to relate this passage to our everyday lives?"

Remember, the focus during a Bible discussion time is not simply Bible knowledge, but to discover truth in God's word which will result in changed lives.

One possibility is to take one or two meetings and develop a Bible discussion lesson as a group. Not only would this teach the members of the group how to develop good questions, but it would help to further prepare them for future ministry, especially those who will become leaders themselves.

When a leader uses good Bible discussion questions, he or she models for the group how to lead a Bible discussion time. These lessons provide guidelines and practice for leading Bible discussion times. Remember, the focus during a Bible discussion time is not simply Bible knowledge, but rather the ability to discover truth in God's word which will result in changed lives.

**Discuss: What is the purpose of asking Bible discussion questions?**

### III. DISCUSSION PROBLEMS

Every group will have some members who like to talk and some who are more quiet. Some people can get off track and talk about anything besides the topic at hand. Others like to argue in order to prove their point. As a leader, you will soon find that problems will arise in the discussion time. How you handle those problems is important to the growth of the group as a caring community, as well as the personal growth of each group member.

#### 1. Types of Discussion Problems

1) *Someone is talking too much / Someone is not talking at all*

These are perhaps two of the most common problems during a time of discussion. How do you tactfully ask someone who talks too much to be quiet and let someone else contribute to the discussion? When someone is talking too much, affirm that person's comment and then direct the discussion to someone else in the group. "Tom, that's a good point. How about someone else who has not shared yet? Are there other ideas? Jim, you have been quiet tonight, what do you think?" The leader can also choose to sit beside the talkative person, so he or she is able to make more eye contact with others in the group and encourage them to share.

Sometimes the only way you will get shy or quiet people in the group to talk (at least initially) is to ask them questions directly. "Janet, what are your thoughts on this verse?" Again, the leader can also sit across from a quiet person in the group (assuming the group is sitting in a circle) so that he or she can encourage them to share through eye contact and body language.

You might also have someone in your group who has been a Christian for a while, and who knows the answers to many of the questions during the Bible discussion time. The problem is, this person also gives all the answers before the others have time to think about it or venture their own answers. In this case, it can be helpful to talk with this person privately and enlist his support to help you include the rest of the members of the group into the discussion. Maybe this person is a potential apprentice leader whom God is wanting you to mentor.

2) *The speaker is being too general or vague*

Sometimes people find it difficult to express what they really want to say. You can help them focus their idea or main point by asking for clarification. "Can you give us an example of that point? Your general idea is good, but I wonder if we can bring it into sharper focus. Does anyone know of an example of something like this?" Or you might need to rephrase in your own words what was said, in order to make it more clear and understandable.

3) *The conversation has gotten away from the topic at hand*

Keeping the group members on track can be one of the most difficult aspects of leading the discussion. People have a tendency to talk about what they know, even if that is not what you are studying or discussing. "Karen, that's an interesting point, and perhaps we can talk about it (or do a Bible study on it) at another meeting." Or, you could say "Karen, that's an interesting idea, but it does not really relate to tonight's topic." You could then ask the group members a question which relates to the topic at hand, in order to get them back on track.

4) *There is a question which the group and the leader cannot answer*

This happens more often than you might think. The worst thing to do is to give a vague or general answer, so it appears that you know something you don't. Your group needs to know that leaders don't know everything. If no one in the group is able to answer the question, then as leader, tell them you will do your best to find out and let them know at the next meeting. Make yourself a note to do this so that you will not forget. Also, commit the question to prayer. Since man is limited in his understanding of the infinite God, you may or may not be able to find an answer.

5) *Two or more members get into an argument*

First, arguments are not always bad. They can help to clarify what is being said, and they can help the group think through a passage of Scripture or a topic at hand. However, there is a difference between healthy debate and angry confrontation. Your role as a leader is to carefully monitor the conversation and stop it if things become too heated. "Ivan, Sergei, I think we all understand both of your points of view, but we need to move on. Perhaps you can discuss it more after our meeting."



Sometimes arguments are not angry, but have no single or quick solution. Two people can argue two points of view for a single portion of Scripture, with no progress toward a solution. In this case you also need to stop the debate and get back on track with what you are studying or discussing.

6) *Someone is always joking around*

Some people enjoy telling jokes or being witty, and in reality, they can be very funny. God may have given your group a person who has a good sense of humor and the ability to find something funny in almost any situation. In the right context, these people can be very beneficial to your group, since they can help to “break the ice” when things either get too serious or boring.

However, if this person is constantly making jokes and wanting to be the center of attention, he soon becomes a problem. Take him aside privately and let him know how much you appreciate his ability to “help” when things get slow or uncomfortable, but make sure you set limits on what is and is not appropriate behavior. Often he does not realize that he is causing a problem. Do not imply that he is the problem, but rather that it is harder for the others in the group to concentrate or participate when he is always being funny.

7) *Someone is either not paying attention, or is preoccupied with something else*

If someone appears bored or not interested in the discussion, try to get him or her involved by asking them questions directly. “We’ve not heard from you yet, Sharon. What do you think?” If she is obviously preoccupied with something else (knitting, shuffling through papers, etc.), try to get her involved in the current conversation by asking her enough questions so that she doesn’t have time to do whatever else it is she is doing. However, if this is something she constantly does, you might need to talk with her privately and share how her behavior is disrespectful to the others in the group.

There is one other thing to consider in this situation. Perhaps the discussion really is boring! If boredom seems to be a problem in your group, it would be wise to discuss this with your apprentice leader, or with someone in the group whom you trust, to learn what topic is more relevant for the group.

8) *Two members are constantly having a “private” conversation between themselves*

There are several ways you might be able to get them to stop. One would be to ask them to share what they have been discussing with the group (assuming they are talking about the topic at hand). Another would be to ask them more questions directly, so that they have to stop talking with each other in order to talk with the group. If it becomes a constant problem, you will need to talk with each of them separately and privately about how their conversations are disruptive to the group.

**Discuss several of the above problems and the suggested solutions. Are you facing any similar problem in your Bible study group?**

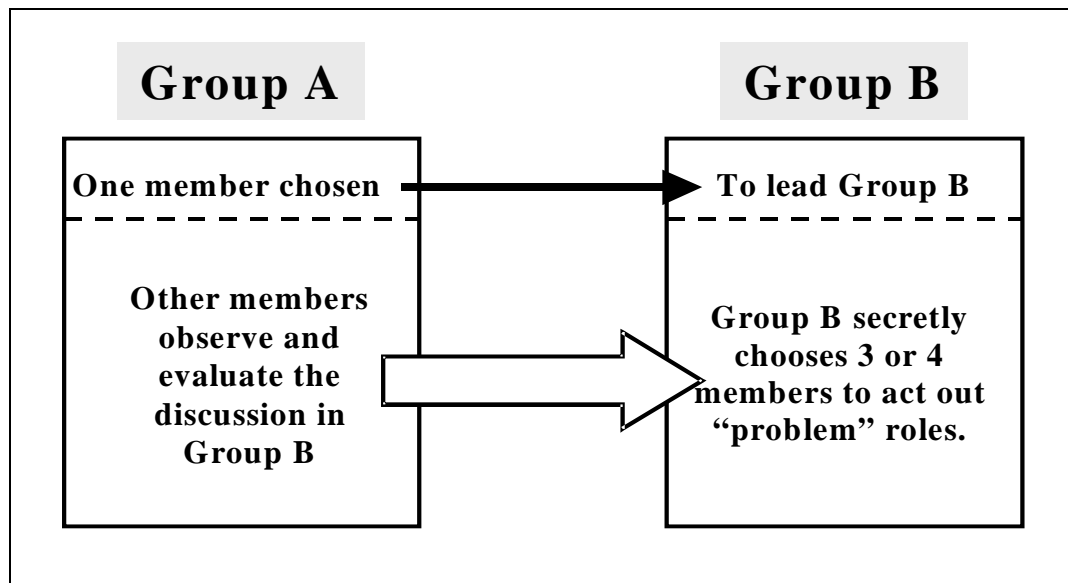
## 2. Exercise: Handling Discussion Problems

Divide the trainees into two groups, Group A and Group B. Group A chooses one person from their group to “lead” Group B. While they are choosing, Group B secretly picks no more than 3-4 people to act out one of the roles listed below. For a period of about five minutes, Group B is to discuss the topic “The Role of the Church in Improving Society” (or any topic they want). Group A observes. Figure 4.1 illustrates how to arrange the two groups.

The “problem” people in Group B should act out their roles accordingly, and the leader from Group A must try to solve the problems as they occur. Remember, the “normal” people must also contribute to the conversation, and not just the “problem” people! At the end of five minutes, Group A may guess which people played which roles. Both groups should evaluate how the leader attempted to handle the problems which arose.

Group B now chooses someone to lead Group A, while Group A secretly chooses 3-4 people to act out the problem roles, etc. The activity continues as long as time allows.

**Figure 4.1 Discussion Exercise**



**Problem Roles:**

- The shy person who does not talk
- The “jokester” who is always being funny
- The chatterbox who talks all the time
- The busy person who is preoccupied with something else
- The two friends who carry on their own private conversation
- The two friends who get into a heated argument
- The person who always wants to talk about something else
- The person who is always very vague and unclear
- The person who gives a sermon instead of a short answer to a simple question

**QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- What communication skills do you consider to be most important for the leader? Why?
- What types of discussion questions would be appropriate for a new group, or a new person who has come into an existing group? What types of questions would not be appropriate in these situations?
- During the “Handling Problems” exercise, in what ways did the “leader” handle the problems well? In what ways did the “leader” poorly handle some problems?

**ACTION PLAN**

- Spend some time developing sample questions to use for a new group. What could you use to help new members get to know one another?
- Next, develop some questions you could use to help the group grow deeper in their relationships. What topics or areas of life would you discuss?
- Finally, develop some questions that would encourage the group to reach out to the people in their circle of oikos relationships. What could you ask that would motivate them to build relationships and share Christ?



# Sample Discussion Questions

---

These discussion questions are best suited for use during the fellowship time. They differ from the “ice breaker” questions in Appendix 3A (Manual 1) in that they are designed to go deeper in understanding oneself and others in the group. They are best suited for use in a group where the members are already comfortable with one another and where there is some level of trust.

The questions have been organized into four areas, representing four types of relationships a person can have in their life.

## THE FOUR RELATIONSHIPS:

### I. RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

1. When was the first time that you were aware that God loved you?
2. What are your strongest convictions about God?
3. What do you think is the one thing God is trying to say to you?
4. What one thing would you want God to hear you say to Him?
5. What single question would you most want God to answer for you?
6. Describe someone you know who you feel knows God intimately.

### II. RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF

1. What would you do if you knew that you could not fail?
2. What would you most like to do over the next five years if there were no limitations?
3. Who is the most interesting person you have ever met? What did you like about him or her?
4. What is your most satisfying accomplishment? In your early life? In recent years?
5. Share your three strongest points.
6. What is your happiest memory (at various ages)?
7. Describe the most significant event in your life.
8. Describe the characteristics of the "ideal person" to the group.
9. Who, besides your parents, has been most influential in your life?
10. What gift would most bless you?
11. Whose approval do you need the most?
12. In whose presence are you most comfortable? Why?
13. If you had what you really wanted in life, what would you have?
14. Briefly list your long-range and short-range goals.
15. Describe the most exciting, creative person you have met.
16. What will people say about you after you die?

17. List some creative, helpful ways to begin and to end a day.
18. In what do you trust the most?
19. Who has most changed your life?
20. What are the two best books you have ever read (besides the Bible)?
21. How do you like to spend your spare time?
22. What makes you feel most impressed?
23. What makes you most worried, anxious, or afraid?

### **III. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS**

1. Describe the person who means the most to you, and tell why.
2. Who is the first person who really understood you?
3. What kind of person do you find yourself confiding in the most?
4. What makes a person a good listener?
5. Are you the kind of person others confide in? Why?
6. How do you feel this group has listened to you (corporately and individually)?
7. What makes a good marriage?

### **IV. RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD**

1. What would you most like to be known for by the world around you?
2. What is most needed in our society?
3. Describe your feelings about injustice in society. What most concerns you?
4. What is the most important thing you can do about that injustice?
5. What is the most obvious need in society?
6. What will you do to change your church, your community, or your job for the better?

MULTIPLYING  
CHURCHES  
**5**  
LESSON

# Training New Church Leaders

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to provide practical guidelines for existing leaders to train new leaders.

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- ☐ Know the importance of having an apprentice leader in each church, and know how to choose an apprentice.
- ☐ Understand the process of preparing an apprentice for leadership by involving him or her in all areas of ministry.
- ☐ Understand the process of releasing an apprentice to lead his church.

## ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

The in-class exercise “Whom to Choose When No Choice is Obvious” contains several scenarios of leaders who are having a difficult time choosing an apprentice leader. Remember that there is not one correct answer for each of these scenarios. The purpose of the exercise is to help the trainees think in practical terms of choosing an apprentice, and to deal with situations which may be similar to what they will face in their own churches.

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read 2 Timothy 2:2 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What have you done this week to build your next generation of leadership?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. CHOOSE AN APPRENTICE LEADER

### 1. The Importance of Apprentice Leaders

A biological cell in the human body, by its very nature, will reproduce itself. The definition we have chosen for a multiplying church, which sets it apart from other churches, is that a church must also multiply. However, whereas a cell in the body is able to multiply on its own, a church cannot multiply without someone to lead the new group which is formed.

Without new leaders to begin new churches, it is obvious that this process breaks down. Where do you find new leaders? From within the churches themselves! One of the first tasks of a leader is to prayerfully choose and develop an apprentice leader. The process of multiplication becomes a reality only when new leaders are chosen and disciplined.

**Discuss: Why is it important to always be raising up new leaders?**

Where do you find new leaders? From within the churches themselves!

### 2. The Process of Choosing an Apprentice

Leaders are to entrust the teachings of Christ to “reliable men who will be qualified to teach others” (2Ti 2:2). These are people who are not only able to become leaders, but who are also able to repeat the process and train other leaders themselves.

We have many examples from the Bible of mature believers who spent time and ministered with those who were less mature in their faith and ministry experience. The well-known exhortation from Paul to Timothy can be seen in some of the examples we have in the New Testament: Jesus with his disciples, Paul and Timothy, Aquila and Apollos, Paul and Silas, etc.

What are the requirements for an apprentice leader? Every mature leader should have the following three aptitudes: character, experience, and skills. Of these three aptitudes, only character is required for someone to begin the process of developing as a leader. Experience and skills will come in time, as the leader disciplines his apprentice and involves him in various areas of ministry.

The issue of character is very important. The apprentice should be growing in Christian character, as listed in the qualifications for overseers and deacons in 1 Timothy 3:2-12. If these character traits are evident, this person can be considered a "candidate" to become a leader. The goal of our search is not a perfect person, since that person doesn't exist. Rather, we want a person who is diligently pursuing growth in these areas. Spiritual character is discussed in detail in the spiritual character track of this training program. You can use it as a guide for encouraging the development of your own and your apprentice's spiritual character.

The timing for choosing an apprentice leader is important—not too early, and not too late.

The leader should spend much time in prayer before choosing an apprentice leader. He should pray for guidance and wisdom from the Holy Spirit as he makes a decision. Selecting someone as an apprentice leader is no small matter, and the leader must seek confirmation from the Holy Spirit about the choice he is making.

The timing for choosing an apprentice leader is important. The leader cannot make the choice too early, when perhaps he has not had sufficient time to observe and get to know the members of his group. On the other hand, the apprentice leader cannot be chosen at the last minute, when the church is ready to multiply and the leader realizes that he needs a new leader to help. Sufficient time must be spent with an apprentice leader in order for him to learn and grow in his experience and skills. The leader must prayerfully decide when to choose his apprentice and begin modeling ministry with him.

**Discuss: What is the process for choosing new leaders?**

### 3. Exercise: Whom to Choose When No Choice is Obvious?

Leaders often struggle with the important decision of whom to choose to be an apprentice leader. It is helpful to observe the example of the Apostle Paul as he traveled and started new churches. As we look in the book of Acts, Paul and Barnabas did not install leaders in the new churches until their second missionary journey. They did not immediately appoint elders to lead these churches.

1 Timothy 3:1 says, "Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task." 1 Peter 5:2 says, "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers - not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve." Leadership is to be appointed to the person who "sets his heart" on it and is "willing" and "eager to serve." Spiritual maturity is a prerequisite for leadership, but an apprentice leader must also earnestly desire to serve the Lord.

**Discuss the following situations:**

- 1) *Scenario:* Michael has recently started a house church in his neighborhood. His goal is to start many reproducing churches so that several new churches can be planted in his city. He has invited several friends and family members, and the group has met for several months already. Everyone in the group is a new believer, and no one seems mature enough to be an apprentice leader. Michael has prayed about it, but he is unsure what to do. Can he choose a new believer to be his apprentice leader? What would you suggest to him?
- 2) *Scenario:* Peter has started a church with the help of two other believers. These other men have been Christians for several years, but neither of them has much ministry experience. Peter thinks he should wait a long time before choosing one of them to be his apprentice leader, so that they will have lots of opportunity to watch him as he runs the meeting. What do you think of his approach? What would you suggest?

- 3) *Scenario:* Eugene started a church in a community with a very high unemployment rate. The group attempts to help the men in the community find work, as well as introduce them to the Bible. Eugene asked the first few men who came to invite other friends who were out of work. The response was overwhelming, and the group grew to 15 people in one month. Eugene knows that the group should multiply when it reaches 15, but this obviously cannot happen since none of the members are even believers yet. He is worried that the group will continue to grow, and he doesn't know what to do. What advice would you give him? What do you think of his strategy? Is there anything you would have done differently?

## II. PREPARE YOUR APPRENTICE FOR LEADERSHIP

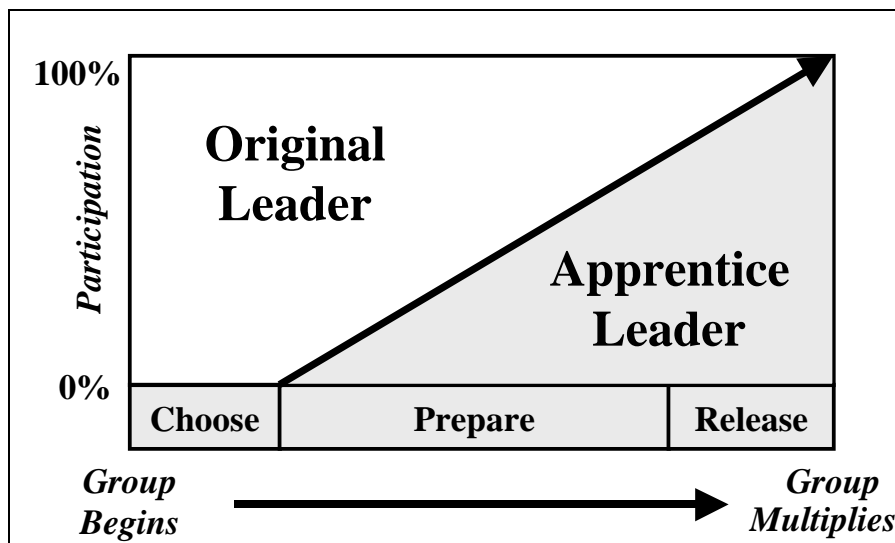
### 1. Involve Your Apprentice with You in All Aspects of Ministry

Once you have chosen your apprentice leader, you must make a conscious effort to involve him in everything you do with regard to the meeting. Everything that you used to do on your own, you must now attempt to do with your apprentice leader. Explain everything, more than once, until you are sure that your apprentice understands it well enough to pass it along to another new leader.

You should begin involving your apprentice with the preparation and running of each meeting. Discuss in advance what you are going to do in each meeting, and explain why you are taking this approach. After each meeting, discuss what you both learned from that meeting. Then plan the next meeting together. Discuss problems in the meeting, such as someone dominating the conversation, and how the issue was (or wasn't) resolved. This increasing involvement of the apprentice is illustrated in Figure 9.1.

You must make a conscious effort to involve your apprentice leader everything you do with regard to the meeting.

Figure 5.1 Developing an Apprentice



Once your apprentice is comfortable with the various aspects of planning and running individual meetings, you can begin to help him develop an understanding of the bigger picture and philosophy of ministry. Discuss how multiplication is a part of your saturation church planting goals. Help him understand the life cycle of a church, and discuss at which phase your group is currently.

Of course, this process of involving your apprentice with you requires a significant investment of your time and effort. But in the process of discipling, there are no shortcuts. Investing your life in the life of another requires commitment, perseverance, and a lot of help and encouragement from the Holy Spirit.

**Discuss how you can involve a new leader in ministry. How are you doing that in your current situation?**

## 2. Evaluate your Apprentice

As a leader, you know all too well that you have strengths and weaknesses as you carry out your ministry. In the same way, your apprentice will excel in some areas of ministry, while making mistakes or struggling in other areas of leadership.

You should discuss with your apprentice the things that he does well. This will provide encouragement and confirmation of his calling to be a leader. It is also beneficial to talk with him, in love, about areas in which he needs to grow. An apprentice can have lots of ministry experience and yet lack good ministry skills. As you disciple your apprentice, you need to help him to see where and how he can improve as a leader. When you see an area of need, offer constructive ways to improve. In other words, don't simply point out the problems; offer suggestions on how he can correct problem areas.

As you model ministry with your apprentice, ask him also to share with you areas where he thinks you might have room for improvement. None of us is perfect, and quite often we have shortcomings or weaknesses that we don't even realize. The beauty of the discipling relationship is the ability to help each other towards deeper Christian maturity and growth. By discussing and evaluating together your strengths and weaknesses, you are demonstrating the value of team work. Church planting is best done in a team of people who can help to compensate for one another's strengths and weaknesses and help one another grow towards deeper Christian maturity.

Church planting is best done in a team of people who can help to compensate for one another's strengths and weaknesses.
---

**Discuss: Why and how should a leader evaluate the apprentice.**

## 3. Pray For and With Your Apprentice

As you disciple your apprentice and model ministry for him, take time to pray for growth in his character, his experience and his skills. Pray that the Holy Spirit will comfort, encourage and guide him. Pray also for your ability to disciple him and to be an example of a leader for him.

It is also important to pray with your apprentice. Make time to spend together in prayer as you plan meetings and evangelistic events. Pray together about individuals in the group, about their needs and the people to whom they are reaching out. Pray for each other regarding areas of struggle or other personal needs. Attempt to instill in your apprentice the tremendous importance that prayer has in all areas of ministry.

# III. RELEASE YOUR APPRENTICE FOR MINISTRY

## 1. Give Vision to Your Apprentice

One of the most important steps in releasing your apprentice leader is to continually give him a vision for what could happen through his life and ministry. Ministry skills training without vision is like preparing to go on a journey but having no destination in mind. Your apprentice needs to understand that the potential end result of his ministry could be many, many new churches started through his ministry. He needs to see how what he is learning and doing right now fits into this larger "end result" vision. The realization of what God can do through His imperfect people can be a tremendous motivation for your apprentice leader. Take time to ask your apprentice what his own vision is for the work God is calling him to do. Evaluate whether or not you are helping develop his vision. Make sure your apprentice understands that he has an important role in helping to fulfill the Great Commission.

**Discuss: What are some ways you can give vision to your apprentice?**

## 2. Delegate Ministry to Your Apprentice

As your apprentice grows in his understanding of the various aspects of ministry, you need to begin to delegate more and more responsibility to him. In general, you want to first model ministry for your apprentice, explaining what you did and why. Then, perform the ministry together with your apprentice (such as planning for a meeting or leading the Bible discussion time). Now allow your apprentice to perform the ministry on his own, with your encouragement and supervision. Objectively explain strengths and weaknesses you observed, and provide constructive suggestions for improvement. Finally, allow your apprentice to perform the ministry without any involvement on your part. When he reaches the point of being able to completely run the meeting, you might want to "be busy" from time to time so that he gains confidence in his abilities without your being there.



This process of delegation starts small, but eventually you want your apprentice to have many experiences in leading a meeting without your involvement. It is the only way that he will be truly prepared to lead a group of his own, trusting the Lord Jesus to guide him in that leadership role.

Realize that delegation is not always easy for the leader. Giving up the authority and responsibility for your group is hard to do. What if the apprentice doesn't do a good job? What if he or she makes lots of mistakes? What will the group think, and how will they react? The leader must step out in faith as the apprentice takes on more and more responsibility. He must decrease as the apprentice increases. To some leaders, it feels like they have "lost" their job and they are now unemployed. Share your feelings with your apprentice during this time, so that he will be prepared to deal with it when the time comes for him to turn over his group to a new leader.

**Discuss: How do you delegate ministry? How is delegating different from giving orders?**

### **3. Release Your Apprentice to Start a New Meeting**

As your church meeting continues to reach out and grow, the time will come when it is ready to multiply into two meetings. As this time approaches, discuss with your apprentice an overall ministry strategy for his new group. What are his goals for starting a church, and how will his new church fit into this larger saturation church planting strategy? Perhaps his meeting will be a building block for the same church as your group, or perhaps his group will help start a different church. The important part is that your apprentice understands the larger strategy and where his meeting fits into that strategy.

Encourage your apprentice to develop a prayer support team to pray for him before, during and after the beginning of the new church. Help him to understand how to prepare for the very first meeting, since he may not have been a part of that process when your group was started.

During the final month before your church meeting is ready to multiply, completely turn over the ministry of the meeting to your apprentice. In this way, the members of the group will have confidence in him as a new leader when two groups are formed from one. Finally, stay close and be available to help your apprentice with his new group. Don't "abandon" him to swim in the deep waters alone. Pray with him and hold him accountable to select an apprentice of his own from the new group. Continue to encourage him as he leads his own group.

**Discuss: How do you release an apprentice to start a new group?**

(The process of multiplication in a meeting will be discussed in detail in Manual 3.)

### **4. Begin the Apprentice Process Again**

After your church has multiplied into two groups, your former apprentice leader will now be working with some of the people from your original group. This means that the original group can begin again to actively reach out and draw in new people. This also means that you again need to prayerfully consider who will be your next apprentice leader. This process of finding, discipling, and releasing leaders is an effective method to see new groups started, to see people come to the Lord, and to fulfill the Great Commission through new churches.

## **QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- What are the qualifications for an apprentice leader?
- If no one in your group appears to qualify as an apprentice leader, what are some concrete ways that you can develop leaders from within your group? What would you need to do to make this happen?
- What would you do if you prayerfully chose an apprentice leader and he or she refused?

## **ACTION PLAN**

- If you have not yet chosen an apprentice leader from within your church, pray about it and then do it. If no one seems qualified, select someone to disciple and develop into a leader.
- Begin to involve your apprentice in ministry with you, and actively delegate more and more ministry to him.
- From time to time, evaluate your apprentice, and ask your apprentice to evaluate you in regards to your ministry with the group.
- Pray for your apprentice leader.

## **SOURCES**

- Neighbour, Ralph. *The Shepherd's Guidebook*. Houston: Touch Publications, 1990.
- Logan, Robert. *Multiplication of Cell Groups*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d.

MULTIPLYING  
CHURCHES

6

LESSON

# Church Evangelism

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain the process of evangelism in church multiplication.

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- *Oikos evangelism reaches those you already have relationships with.*
- *Target evangelism reaches those outside your immediate circle.*
- *There are two types of unbelievers: type A and B.*
- *Have an understanding that in general, unbelievers can be grouped into two categories (Type A and Type B), and that different types of evangelism are needed to reach each of these types of people.*
- *Understand the concept of oikos—each person's network of relationships.*
- *Make a list of their own personal oikos relationships.*
- *Understand the process of oikos evangelism and target evangelism in church multiplication.*

## ☞ Appendix

6A "About Oikos"

## ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson describes one way to look at the spiritual condition of unbelievers by categorizing them into two groups—basically, those who are interested in the *Gospel* and those who are not. This simple definition helps the trainees better understand how evangelism can work in church multiplication.

Be sure to leave enough time during the lesson to have the trainees do the "Making a List of Your Oikos Relationships" exercise.

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read 2 Timothy 4:2 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: How are you an example to others in the area of evangelism?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. TWO TYPES OF UNBELIEVERS

In order for a church to effectively reach lost people around it, there must first be an understanding of how best to minister to those people. In the second chapter of Ephesians, Paul writes about how Christ came to break down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles and make salvation available to all who would believe. Ephesians 2:17 says that Jesus came and preached peace to those who were **far away** (the Gentiles) and peace to those who were **near** (the Jews).

We can use a similar analogy when we look at those who have not yet accepted Christ as Savior. Some people are very far away from this commitment, and others are much closer. Ralph Neighbour has categorized those unbelievers who are **near** as "Type A" unbelievers, and those who are **far away** as "Type B" unbelievers. These designations are arbitrary, and we could call them whatever we wanted. The point is that because these groups of people are different, the multiplying church is going to have to use different methods to evangelize each of them.

**Discuss: What is the difference between near and far unbelievers?**

### 1. Type A Unbelievers: Those Who Are Interested

Type A unbelievers are people who may already believe in God, and know that Jesus is the Son of God. They might have some knowledge of the Bible, and understand that Jesus died on the cross. They may or may not attend a church, or perhaps just attend occasionally (e.g. Christmas and Easter).

These are people who are open to God's direction for their lives and are searching to find spiritual answers to their problems and questions. Type A unbelievers would not be opposed to coming to a Bible study to learn more about God and His word. Many times, a Type A unbeliever is very close to making a commitment to Christ. Often, he simply has not had the Gospel message clearly explained to him.

### 2. Type B Unbelievers: Those Who Don't Want To Know

Type B unbelievers seldom or never attend church, and may or may not believe in God. They don't necessarily accept the Bible as an authoritative book, and probably do not know much about the Bible. Jesus is probably nothing more than a historical figure or they may not even have heard of Him.

Type B people are perhaps happy with their way of life, and are not searching for God's purposes for them. They will not listen to an evangelistic outreach, and they won't attend any type of "church" activities. In fact, some Type B unbelievers are openly hostile to the Gospel message. They do not want to attend a Bible study, and do not see how "religion" has any relevance to their everyday lives.

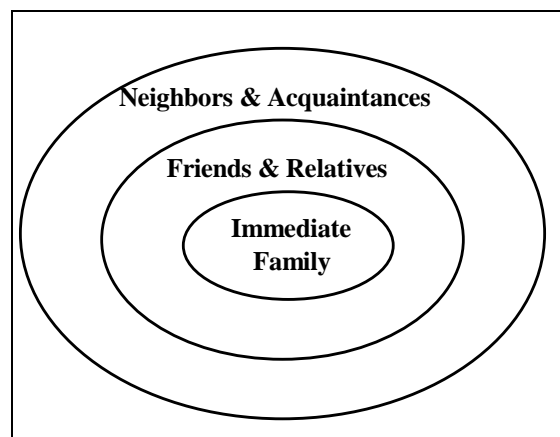
**Discuss: Who do you most spend your time evangelizing – Type A or Type B? Why should you spend a majority of your time with type A unbelievers?**

## II. UNDERSTANDING OIKOS

*Oikos*<sup>6</sup> is a Greek word that appears frequently in the New Testament. It is a term that describes the personal community of relationships which exists for each person. Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament defines *oikos* as "a house, all the persons forming one family, and/or a household." For example, in Acts 16:15, it is used to describe Lydia's family: "When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home."

Each of us has an *oikos*, the circle of people in our lives with whom we have relationships. These relationships include our family, close friends, people we work with, neighbors and others with whom we spend time on a regular basis. Figure 6.1 shows the relationship of these groups that make up our own personal *oikos*.

Figure 6.1 *Oikos* Relationships



Our most effective personal evangelism is usually with the people who are already in our lives, the people with whom we have relationships.

There are many methods for doing evangelism, depending on the situation and whom you are trying to reach. We can and should sometimes speak to total strangers about Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit gives us opportunities. But our most effective personal evangelism is usually with the people who are already in our lives, the people with whom we have relationships. In His wisdom, God has given us a method to share Christ with others that is based on the trust and caring that comes from having a personal relationship with them. It is not an impersonal "program" with people you do not know; rather, it is a very genuine way to show a friend that you care about them.

Being a "living example" is a powerful witness to the people in our *oikos*. The Holy Spirit uses our problems and victories to show others that Christ makes a real difference in our daily lives, that the Bible has answers to life's problems, and that joy and peace can be found in an often troublesome world.

**Discuss: Why is evangelizing within the circle of people in our lives more effective?**

<sup>6</sup> οἶκος

### 1. Exercise: Making a List of Your *Oikos* Relationships

On a piece of paper, take a few minutes to write down the names of the people with whom you talk or interact with on a regular basis during the course of a week or a month. Write one name per line. Limit your list to no more than 20 people (if there are more, choose the 20 with whom you have the closest relationships).

Now, examine the names on your list. For each person who you know is a believer, place a cross in front of his or her name. Next, think about the people who are not believers. For all the "Type A" people, place an **A** in front of their names. These are people whom you think would be open to spiritual things, to studying the Bible, or to learning more about God's purpose for their lives.

Finally, look at the rest of the names. If these are people you know are not interested in God or spiritual things, who would not want to come to a Bible study, and who do not see God as relevant in any way to their daily life, place a **B** in front of their names. These are "Type B" unbelievers.

Save this list, perhaps in your Bible. The people with a cross in front of their names are believers who could possibly help you start a new church. The people with an **A** in front of their names are those for whom you can be praying and inviting to your meeting. The people with a **B** in front of their names are those for whom you can be praying about spending more time with.

You might be surprised to see how few (if any!) unbelievers are in your personal *oikos*. Many Christians have few relationships with unbelievers. A new believer will have the most relationships with unbelievers. However, as Christians begin to fellowship with other Christians, they soon find that they spend little or no time any more with their non-Christian friends.

**Discuss: Who are some close friends that are type A nonbelievers? Who are some type B nonbelievers?**

### III. SHARE GROUPS

When we think about the functions and activities of a multiplying church, we see very quickly that this type of group would appeal to a Type A unbeliever. They would probably feel comfortable as the group prays, worships and learns from the Bible. However, it is just as easy to see that a Type B unbeliever would feel very uncomfortable in a church. Type B people would either never come to a church meeting in the first place, or if they did attend, would most likely never return.

When we think about the functions and activities of a multiplying church, we see very quickly that this type of group would appeal to a Type A unbeliever.

In order to reach a Type B unbeliever, we need to use something which Ralph Neighbour calls "Share Groups." You can call it whatever you like, but the basic principle is that for a Type B unbeliever, relationships must be built before the Gospel can be explained. Developing these relationships takes time and effort, but it is the best way to reach people who are indifferent or antagonistic towards God.

A **Share Group** is simply two or three Christians who begin spending time with Type B unbelievers from their circle of relationships. Initially, this will not be time for Bible study, for prayer, or even for talking about God. Rather, it is time for relationships to be developed, so that the unbelievers can see that the Christians are genuinely interested in them, in their problems and in their families. In time, the Holy Spirit will provide opportunities for the Christians to share how God is working in their lives, how He helps them with problems, and how the Bible has answers to life's questions.

**Discuss: How is evangelizing a group of people more powerful than one person at a time?**

### IV. THE PROCESS OF EVANGELISM IN MULTIPLYING CHURCHES

#### 1. *Oikos* Evangelism

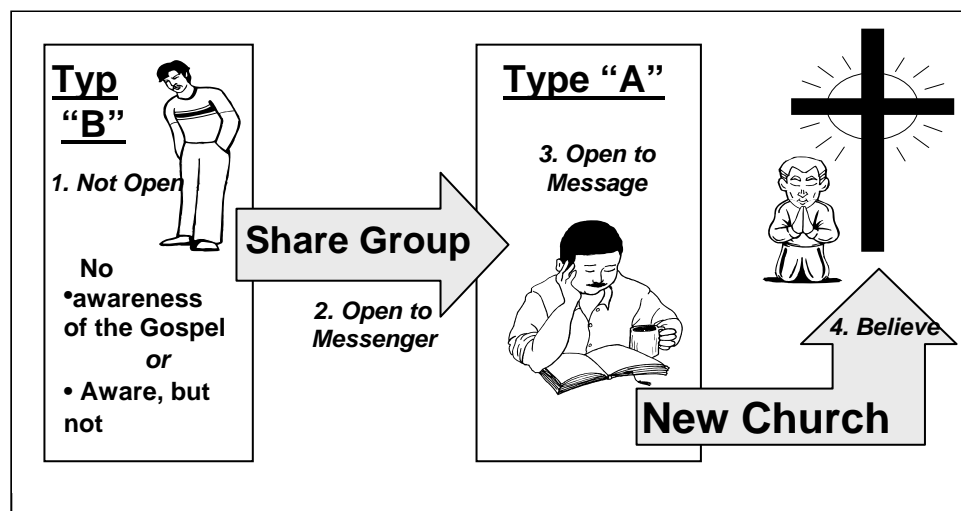
A new church is usually started with several Type A unbelievers. These are the people for whom the Christians have been praying and to whom they have been witnessing. The first Bible discussions with the group are very evangelistic in nature, and should be designed to introduce the new members in the group to Christ. As the Holy Spirit convicts hearts, the unbelievers will commit their lives to Christ, and begin growing in their faith. As new believers, these people will have many natural contacts with unbelievers in their *oikos*. As they are grounded in their faith and begin to mature, they also will reach out to the Type A people they know, by praying for them and inviting them to the group. In this way the process of

A new church is usually started with several Type A unbelievers.

praying, reaching, commitment and growing in the Lord is repeated in the group. Conversion and growth happen along the lines of *oikos* relationships that God gives to each one of us.

At the same time that the Type A unbelievers are being brought into the group and are committing their lives to Christ, the mature Christians in the group begin to pray about which Type B unbelievers to reach out to. They choose only several people for this type of ministry, since a large amount of time and effort is required. At least two and possibly three of the Christians begin to pray for and spend time with each of the Type B unbelievers. This is not time for Bible study, prayer or "religious" things. Initially, this is time spent simply to build trust relationships. Figure 6.2 illustrates how share groups and new churches help to present the Gospel to both Type A and B unbelievers.

Figure 6.2 Reaching Type A and B Unbelievers



As these relationships deepen, the Holy Spirit will give opportunities to begin sharing how God is actively working in and through the lives of the believers. They can let the unbelievers know they are praying for them in times of trouble, and give credit to God for answers to those prayers. A simple study of the Bible might be started between members of this "share group," but not yet in the church. In time, the Holy Spirit will bring the Type B person to a point where he is ready to learn more about spiritual things, and the Christian is able then to invite him to the church meetings. This Type B person (who at this point is probably closer to being a Type A) feels comfortable in the church meeting, since the same people who were spending time with him before are also in the meeting. He then moves along the path of discovery, conviction, commitment and growth. In time, this new Christian will begin reaching out to the people in his *oikos* who need to learn about Christ's love.

**Discuss: Do you have a group of friends/coworkers/family that you could invite to a gathering to share the gospel with them all at the same time?**

## 2. Target Evangelism

*Oikos* evangelism is one of the most natural and effective methods for reaching the lost around us. This is the primary method of evangelism to use with new believers in a church. After the group has been involved in *oikos* evangelism, a second type of strategy (which Ralph Neighbour calls "targeting") can be introduced. **Target evangelism** reaches out to people who are strangers, but share common needs, interests or problems. Target evangelism should be used only in groups that are already involved in *oikos* evangelism.

Target evangelism groups are similar to share groups because the people they reach are not necessarily interested in the Gospel. They come together to discuss their needs, problems or common interests. The topic or theme for these groups ranges widely, from self-esteem, building marriages, raising children and divorce recovery to groups that meet to discuss music, pets or car repair! The best way to decide what type of group to offer is to talk with the new members of the share group as they are reaching out to the people in their *oikos*. The need for a certain type of target group is often determined by the hurts or interests of those people with whom new members are building relationships.

*Oikos* evangelism reaches friends and acquaintances.  
*Target* evangelism reaches strangers with common interests.

As the groups meet to discuss needs, hurts, interests or problems, the Christians have an excellent opportunity to share how God and the Bible provide answers, encouragement and relief to these areas of life. Those who express deeper interest can be invited to the church meetings, where they can begin to experience the fellowship and encouragement of the group. Target evangelism is often an appropriate method for reaching out to an area where natural lines of *oikos* do not exist, as in the case of a "pioneering" ministry.

**Discuss: What are some ideas you have for evangelizing groups of people?**

### 3. Group Size and Multiplication

The ideal range for the size of a multiplying house church is 8-12 people, and it should never grow larger than 15-20 people. Once a group grows larger than 20, the dynamics of communication and interaction change, and it no longer is able to provide the sense of togetherness and intimacy that a multiplying church will naturally have.

As the group begins to reach out through *oikos* evangelism and target evangelism, the Holy Spirit will convict hearts and people will begin to join the group. Consider the rate of growth of the group versus the maturity of the apprentice leader with whom you are working. Do not allow the group to grow so large so quickly that multiplication must happen before the apprentice is ready. Once the group begins to approach 15-20 people, share with the group that it must stay at this level until the apprentice is prepared spiritually, mentally and emotionally to take over leadership of the new group.

Once multiplication takes place, the leader of each group will begin working with an apprentice, and evangelism will continue in earnest in both of the groups.

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- In Luke 5:32, Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." How much time did Jesus spend with "sinners" during his earthly ministry? Give two or three examples of people Jesus met with who would be considered Type A and Type B people.
- What types of activities can you think of to build relationships with the Type B people from your own personal *oikos* list? What other Christian can go with you as you build these relationships?
- How much time do you think it takes to build meaningful relationships with unbelievers? What priorities, if any, would have to change in your life in order to spend more time with unbelievers?

## ACTION PLAN

In your church, develop a strategy for reaching out through the relationships of each member. If others in your group have not made a list of the relationships in their *oikos*, have them do it at the next meeting. Have the group decide which Type A people to pray for and contact, and which Type B people to pray for and begin spending time with. The leader should maintain a list of these names, so that the group can hold itself accountable to reaching out to them.

## SOURCES

- Neighbour, Ralph. *A Guidebook for Cell Group Churches*. Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1990.
- Neighbour, Ralph. *Knocking on Doors, Opening Hearts*. Houston, TX: Touch Outreach Ministries, 1990.
- Trinity Christian Center, *Cell Growth and Evangelism Strategy Seminar*, N.P., n.d.







## About "Oikos"

---

To fully understand the importance of multiplication in a church planting strategy, we must consider the word *oikos*, a biblical term that describes the basic building block of any society. It appears throughout the Bible and refers to the personal community that exists for us all. It is translated into English as "house" or "household." For example, in Acts 16:31, Paul and Silas used it when they said, "*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.*"

### **OIKOS: THE WORLD'S WAY OF FORMING CHURCHES FOR ALL**

The *oikos* each of us lives within are not large. We may know several dozen, even several hundred, people, but quality time spent with others is extremely limited—and only those to whom we devote quality time can be said to be a part of our *oikos*, our personal community. Each of us has a primary group that includes some of our relatives and some of our friends who relate to us through work, recreation, hobbies, and neighbors. These are the people we talk to, relate to, and share with, for at least one hour per week.

Only those to whom we devote quality time can be said to be a part of our *oikos*.

It is most unusual to find a person who has as many as 20 people in his or her *oikos*. For many years, I have surveyed the sizes of the *oikos*es of those attending my seminars and classes. Christians usually average nine people, and a large percentage of them had not developed a single new *oikos* relationship in the past six months!

Life is made up of endless chains of *oikos* connections. Every person is already entwined in these relationships. If people are accepted into an *oikos*, they feel a security that does not exist when they meet strangers.

In every culture of the world, the intimacy of *oikos* connections is considered to be sacred. The Chinese have a special word for close friendships, and such bonds are considered to be a sacred thing. In Argentina, I was shown a gourd and a metal tube with holes on one end of it for the drinking of "mate tea." A most intimate *oikos* custom in their culture is sharing with a friend by drinking from the same tube. Usually, the ceremony is limited to family members.

### **OIKOSSES VARY WITH EMOTIONAL STRENGTH**

Since the world began, people have always lived in *oikos*es. Every single culture, without exception, has them. The security of the individual is in the affirmation received by those who are significant in the *oikos*. In the earliest hours of childhood, the mother is the one who provides affirmation by her presence and her attention. As the child develops, this affirmation is received, or not received, by the other household members. Then the school teacher becomes a part of the *oikos*, and later it becomes the adolescent's *oikos* group that must approve him. In the workplace, affirmation is tied to promotions and raises in salary.

Each *oikos* becomes a part of a larger social structure. The important thing for us to grasp is that every human being lives in a special, tiny world, often being compelled to relate to people who are forced upon him or her by *oikos* structures. Today, the hurts of being thrust into a home where the mother is an alcoholic or the father is a child molester composes a significant ministry for a multiplying church.

As you read this, consider the implications of this in your own life. Take a moment to write down the names of all the people you spend one full hour each week sharing with in a direct, person-to-person manner. (This hour can be accumulated a few minutes at a time, scattered over seven days, but it must be regular—and it must be face to face). The overpowering impact of a limited few upon each of our lives must be considered. For example: Who are the significant others in your life? Whose approval or disapproval is important to you? (I have counseled those who are still trying to please a disapproving father who has been dead for years). Who do you fear may reject you, and whom do you look to for affirmation? Meditating upon one's own *oikos* can bring great insights!

## CHRISTIAN WORKERS HAVE *OIKOS*ES LACKING UNBELIEVERS

My own survey of this subject among Christian workers has revealed amazing facts. I am certain I have polled over 5,000 pastors, pastor's wives, church staff members, and missionaries in at least thirty countries. It is a rare thing to find those who are in "full time Christian work" who have unbelievers in their primary *oikos*.

It is a rare thing to find those who are in "full time Christian work" who have unbelievers in their primary *oikos*.

Unless she is employed in the secular world, the wife of a Christian worker is least likely to have a single contact with the unchurched. Her *oikos* is filled only with church people. On one occasion an educational director of a large church put his head in his hands and wept with embarrassment as he realized he had spent his entire career within the confines of church work. He could not remember having an *oikos* with an unbeliever in it since he graduated from a secular college.

## JESUS CONSTANTLY INVADED PAGAN *OIKOS*ES

While the church pulls people out of their *oikos*es and gives them membership in an organization which swallows them up, the New Testament reveals a different approach to people relationships. Jesus constantly did His work by invading *oikos* groups. He knew there was no other way to share the Gospel except to penetrate these small clusters of people. It is obvious that each *oikos* is based in a house, not an institutional building. Thus, the Lord spent His time going from one house to another.

In Luke 19:2-5, we see Jesus making contact with Zacchaeus. He says to him, "*Zacchaeus...I must stay at your house today.*" In Luke 7:36-38 we find Him in the *oikos* of a Pharisee who has invited Him to have dinner with him. While He reclines at the table, a prostitute comes and pours perfume on His feet. What amazing examples of *oikos* penetration!

In Matthew 8:14, He enters Peter's house and heals one of the *oikos* members living there. In Matthew 9:10, He eats dinner with His disciples and many tax collectors and sinners at Matthew's house. Again, He penetrates an *oikos* in Matthew 9:23 as He enters the ruler's house and sees the flute players and the noisy crowd. In Matthew 17:25, Peter finds Him in a Capernaum house, where Jesus speaks to him about paying taxes. We read in Mark 3:20 that Jesus entered a house and a crowd gathered, "*so that He and His disciples were not even able to eat.*" In Mark 7:17, He enters a house where His disciples quiz Him about a parable. In Mark 7:24, He enters a house to be alone, only to be swamped by a crowd that has learned where He was staying.

## THE EARLY CHURCH PENETRATED *OIKOS*ES, TOO!

In Acts 5:42, we read that the early church went from house to house. In Acts 8:3, when Saul wanted to destroy the church, he knew where to find the people of God. We are told that "*going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.*"

It is interesting to see in Acts 10 how the Holy Spirit arranged for Peter to get from the house of Simon the tanner to the residence of Cornelius, where Cornelius' conversion took place. The penetration of *oikos*es is the pattern for ministry in the first century.

The penetration of *oikos*es is the pattern for ministry in the first century.

Conversions are frequently recorded as sweeping an entire *oikos* into the Kingdom.

In Acts 16, both Lydia and the jailer are converted along with the members of their *oikos*. The first act of Lydia after her conversion was to invite Paul to stay at her house.

## REJECTION BY ONE'S *OIKOS* FOR BECOMING A CHRISTIAN IS PAINFUL

Jesus reminded us in Matthew 10:36 that following Him can be a costly decision: "*a man's enemies will be the members of his own oikos.*" Making a decision to follow Him can cause confusion in relationships with primary people. This is why He said in Matthew 10:35, "*For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law....*" In verse 37, He calls for a decision between the *oikos* and the Kingdom: "*Anyone who loves his father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me....*"

In Singapore today, there is a Zone Pastor Intern on the staff I work with who is from a Hindu home. After he committed to follow Christ, the *oikos* descended on him with wrath. His uncle waited until he was present to say to his father, "Why do you allow your son to disgrace us all like this?" In contemporary Southeast Asia, a young physician followed the Lord at the price of his Muslim family declaring him dead and buried. *Oikos*es can be ruthless when one chooses another path for life.

## OUR LORD'S BODY IS CALLED AN "OIKOS"

However, there is a very special *oikos* for those who have faced the ultimate rejection. Hebrews 3:6 says, "But Christ is faithful as a son over God's *oikos*. And we are His *oikos*, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast." Consider these additional Scriptures that speak of this truth, found in 1 Peter 4:17, 1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:19; and 1 Peter 2:5:

*"For it is time for judgment to begin with the oikos of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the Gospel of God?"*

*"If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's oikos, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth."*

*"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's oikos."*

*"...you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual oikos to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."*

The concept of *oikos* describing the church should make us recognize the significance of the multiplying church as the basic Christian community. Scripture refers to the early Christians as members of this spiritual *oikos* by speaking of those who have come to faith by family units, rather than just by personal commitments:

*"Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire oikos believed in the Lord... Greet also the church that meets at their house... Greet those who belong to the oikos of Aristobulus... Greet those in the oikos of Narcissus who are in the Lord... some from Chloe's oikos have informed me that there are quarrels among you... Yes, I also baptized the oikos of Stephanas... You know that the oikos of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia... Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their oikos... the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's oikos... Give my greeting to... Nymphas and the church in his oikos... May the Lord show mercy to the oikos of Onesiphorus... Greet Priscilla and Aquila and the oikos of Onesiphorus."*

Truly, the early church thought about the chains of *oikos*es to be won while they simultaneously rejoiced that God had formed them in basic Christian communities. For the church to live at *oikos* level was certainly God's plan. The heart of the Christian life is not related to a word for "temple," or "synagogue," or "church building." As the basic fabric of human life is embedded in the *oikos*, even so the life of the Body of Christ is to be *oikos*-based.

The early church thought about the chains of <i>oikos</i> es to be won.
---

By R. W. Neighbour, edited by J. Geske  
From "Where Do We Go From Here?"- used with permission.



---

# DISCIPLE MAKING

---



DISCIPLE MAKING  
**1**  
LESSON

# Introduction to Disciple Making

## Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce the strategic place of disciple making in the overall church planting process.

## Main Points and Desired Outcomes

- Understand the biblical basis for disciple making as it relates to the Great Commission.
- Have a greater personal vision for and commitment to the disciple making task.
- Understand God's ultimate purpose and how that relates to the disciple making task
- Understand how effective disciple making will contribute to his success as a church planter.

## Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Ephesians 4:11-13 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What have you done this week to improve yourself as a leader?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. DEFINITION OF DISCIPLE AND DISCIPLE MAKING

### 1. A Disciple

A disciple can be defined as one who has placed his faith in Christ and, through baptism, has identified himself as a follower of Christ and as a member of Christ's Church. As a member of Christ's covenant community, he has pledged submission to Christ and is striving to live a life of obedience to the whole will of Christ. This obedience is not merely an external conformity to Christ's will, but springs from a heart of love, faith and hope. The disciple's growth in obedience is a lifetime process. The Scriptures describe a disciple as one who will "deny himself and take up his cross and follow (Christ)" (Mt 16:24). The disciple serves others (Mt 20:25-28). He has a supreme love for Christ (Lk 14:25-27). People will know that he is a disciple of Christ by his love for others (Jn 13:34-35). His life will bear the fruit of the Spirit (Jn 15:8).

**Discuss: What is a disciple?**

### 2. Disciple Making

Disciple making can be defined as the process by which the Church, depending on the authority and presence of Christ, takes the initiative...

- to lead people to faith in and submission to Christ,
- to incorporate them into Christ and his covenant community, the Church, through baptism
- to lead them into a life of obedience to the whole will of Christ.

Leading people to faith in and submission to Christ we often refer to as evangelism, which you have studied earlier. For the purpose of this part of your training, we will also assume that they have already been incorporated into Christ's covenant community through baptism, and are part of His Church. In this part of the course we turn our attention to leading them into a life of obedience to the whole will of Christ.

**Discuss: What is disciple making?**

### 3. To Make The Bride Worthy Of the Bridegroom

All that we are and all that we do must be evaluated in light of God's "calling" to take part in the creation of God's holy community, the Church. Our success in disciple making is measured by how well we are preparing a bride worthy of Christ. Are the things we are doing now preparing a bride who is worthy of Christ? Consider these questions:

- Are we equipping people to grow in union with God and with one another? Are we leading them to live lives that manifest that divine love which reflects this union?
- Are we equipping people to grow deeper in their faith and hope in Christ?
- Are we equipping our disciples to minister effectively to others, to build others up in Christ?
- Are we equipping people to be Christ's ambassadors, calling others to become part of God's holy community and thereby enlarging Christ's Bride?

## II. HOW DISCIPLE MAKING CONTRIBUTES TO CHURCH PLANTING

Disciple making lies at the very heart of church planting. Your success in establishing new churches will depend not just on winning new converts to Christ, but in making true disciples who obey Him faithfully.

**Planting churches is, in reality, establishing communities of disciples where none existed before.** The initial phase of church planting involves leading people to faith in and submission to Christ. As seen in the discussion on the Great Commission above, conversion is the first step in making disciples.

It must always be remembered that conversion for conversion's sake is never the goal. Conversion must be understood as the first step in a lifelong process. Disciple making leads new converts to an ever deepening understanding of Christ's will for them and builds them up to more fully obey. This deepening of understanding and obedience comes from hearts that grow in union with Christ and one another. In other words, true "community" is created when disciple making is done properly. If church planting is to establish new "communities" of disciples, then disciple making, as we understand it here, is essential.

Another vital aspect of obeying Christ is equipping new converts for ministry. Disciple making includes enabling converts to fruitfully serve others, using the spiritual gifts God gave them. Disciple making leads to the rapid multiplication of co-workers and some of these new co-workers will join in the church planting task. This rapid multiplication of co-workers is a critical factor in establishing a church planting movement.

**Discuss: How are disciple making and church planting related?**

## III. KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL DISCIPLE MAKING

### 1. Grow Spiritually

Your own spiritual growth is absolutely essential if you are to become an effective disciple maker. What you learn in this training is just a small beginning. Deepening your own spiritual life must be your number one priority.

#### 1) *Develop Spiritual Discernment*

In the end, your ability to discern the spiritual condition of people will depend on your own spiritual maturity. No training program or book can replace that. The more mature you are in your own personal experience and faith, hope and love, the more clearly you will be able to discern their presence or absence in others. The deeper you grow, the more clearly you will see the real spiritual issues in your disciple's lives, from God's point of view.

Spiritual discernment comes through having your heart, soul, and mind conformed to God. This means you begin to look at things the same way God does. What God loves, you love. What God rejects, you reject. What causes God to rejoice causes you to rejoice. What causes God to mourn causes you to mourn. God's cause is your cause. His goals are your goals. His values are your values. Spiritual discernment comes from sharing a deep fellowship with God as you share all these things with Him in prayer.

Growth in spiritual discernment creates a hunger to grow in your knowledge and understanding of God. You desire to be open and honest with God, not hiding anything from Him. You want to give God all you are and all you have. You rejoice at every opportunity to serve Him. You consider it a joy and privilege to make sacrifices for His sake. Nothing matters more than to walk with God in this way, to experience His intimate fellowship.



2) *Learn What Produces Spiritual Maturity*

Your understanding of what it takes to grow spiritually depends on your own struggles and victories in these areas. If you have not grown yourself, then you have no practical experience of what “works” and what doesn’t. The deeper you have grown, 1) the more clearly you will understand what direction you need to take so your people will continue to grow, and 2) the more clearly you will understand how to deal with the spiritual barriers in their lives.

3) *Develop Spiritual Influence*

The demonstration of spiritual growth in your own life will be the single greatest “eye opener” for your disciples. Their understanding of these things will deepen as they observe you. On the other hand, if they see that you are all talk but reality doesn’t match what you say, they will quickly lose motivation. They may also lose respect for you as a spiritual leader, destroying your ability to influence their lives. You will talk, but no one will listen.

**Discuss: How do these three aspects help us to successfully disciple others?**

**2. Focus On The Real Spiritual Needs Of People, Not On Programs**

1) *Keep Things Simple*

Maintain the focus on the simple core, i.e. on love, faith and hope. The rest will flow from these three. The most basic of all is love. If your disciples fail to maintain their love for God and others, the Holy Spirit will be grieved and quenched. When this happens, the Spirit is no longer able to witness to their spirits that they are children of God. They can easily begin to lose both faith and hope. They can easily lose confidence that God really accepts them, and perhaps even doubt that they are saved. If they reach this point, all your comforting words will not help. You must recognize the work the Holy Spirit wants to do in their lives and cooperate in that work with Him. Help the person resolve any sin issues. Don’t give false comfort. Help them see God’s ultimate purpose for them and how He is working it out in their lives.

2) *Enable Them To Keep Their Proper Priorities*

Don’t overload your people with programs and activities. Give them the freedom to drop out of activities that are less important so that they can maintain their priorities without becoming overworked.

3) *Be Patient*

New believers have a long way to go. Their whole interior life must be renewed: how they think, their values, and their desires (Ro 12:2).

You must continue to give them hope when they fall. Their natural tendency will be toward despair. You need to be like a parent who encourages his child when the child has failed. Give them time to come to their senses. Encourage them. Never give up on them. They must know that you believe in them and that God can and will forgive. They must know that nothing they do can stop you or God from loving them. If you fail to communicate this, they will be in danger of losing hope and giving up.

**Discuss: What does it mean to focus on the real spiritual needs of people, not programs?**

**3. Aim For Reproduction And Multiplication**

Regardless of what kind of “form” or structure you use for disciple making, you must find ways to multiply those who are involved in the disciple making task. You cannot personally disciple everyone. Your resources are limited and you need to get others involved in the task for their benefit and growth. You must plan how you will multiply co-workers for ministry on the large group, small group, and one-on-one levels.

In general, you will need to provide the following kinds of support to those whom you are equipping for the disciple making task:

- Opportunities to observe people who are doing the kind of ministry for which they are being prepared.
- Instruction and practical training in critically important skills.
- If needed, help in developing a practical strategy to do what is needed.
- Appropriate opportunities to practice what they are learning, with helpful feedback.
- Practical advice and support as they develop confidence and skill.

**Discuss: How can you aim for multiplication in disciple making?**

**4. Frequently Evaluate Your Ministry And Be Ready To Make Needed Changes**

Is each person receiving what is needed in order to live a life of love, faith and hope? Is each person growing in love and unity with God and each other? Is each person being effectively used by God to build up the Body of Christ and his/her own family? Is each person being effectively used by God as His ambassador to the world? What changes need to be made in order to enable each person to make real progress in each area?

Don't waste time maintaining a program just for the sake of having a program. Your goal is that every ministry activity serves the purposes mentioned in the previous paragraph. Always ask yourself if your "forms" are effectively serving the "functions."

**Discuss: How often do you evaluate the effectiveness of your ministry? Are there changes you currently need to make based on your current effectiveness?**

**5. Learn, Learn, Learn!**

Keep setting the pace as a disciple. Don't stop asking questions. Discover what resources are available to help you grow and help you help others grow in Christ. Ask others what tools are available and helpful in disciple making. If some resource is needed but not available, create it and share it with others.

**Discuss: What are you doing to continue growing as a disciple and maker of disciples?**

**QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- What is wrong with evangelism without discipleship?
- What difference would an effective disciple making ministry make in establishing a new church? ... in establishing a church planting movement?
- Is it possible to plant a church without a good emphasis on discipleship? Why or why not?

DISCIPLE MAKING  
**2**  
LESSON

# Know Your Goal, Know Your People

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to provide practical ideas for making disciples.

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

- Understand the a few simple things you can do to begin making disciples.
- Understand how to focus on heart issues over behavior issues.
- Have a method to evaluate your effectiveness in disciple making.

## ☞ Appendix

2A Faith, Hope and Love

2B Helping Disciples Grow Spiritually

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:6-12 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: How can others help you to be a better leader?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF YOUR PEOPLE

Once you have clarified your goal, i.e. the kind of disciples you want your people to become, you must evaluate them in light of this goal. Following are some suggested questions to help you begin. Ultimately, however, your ability to discern the maturity of your people depends on your own spiritual maturity. No list, book or training program can replace that. The more mature you are, the more clearly you will be able to discern spiritual reality in the lives of those you help. The deeper your own personal experience and understanding of faith, hope and love, the more clearly you will be able to discern their presence or absence in others. As your own "heart" knowledge of the Word of God increases, you'll be able to use the Word with more skill and insight in making disciples.

### 1. Focus On Issues Of The Heart, Not External Behavior

In determining the spiritual condition of your people, it is important to focus more on the issues of the heart rather than on external behavior. The presence and growth of faith, hope and love in the person's heart is the primary thing you are concerned with. External behavior (words and deeds) reveals what is in the heart (Mt 12:34-35, 15:18-20; Lk 6:43-45, 8:15). It is a waste of time to try to produce desired behavior if there is a problem in the heart. If the heart is changed, appropriate behavior will follow.

If you notice something in their behavior which is not right, try to discern the reasons and motives behind their actions. For example, let us say someone is no longer attending church services. Instead of focusing just on their behavior and putting pressure on them to attend, try to discern why they have stopped coming and minister to them on that level. There are three basic questions to ask yourself:

- What does their behavior reveal about what they believe or don't believe?
- What does their behavior reveal about what they understand or don't understand?
- What does their behavior reveal about the orientation or attitude of their hearts?

In most cases, it will be necessary to talk with the person in order to really find out what is going on inside them.

A disciple making ministry which fails to focus on the heart will produce people who may be good at external conformity to what is expected. In the meantime, little real spiritual growth will occur.

**IMPORTANT:** Although the orientation of the heart cannot be directly observed, it can be measured indirectly by the person's words and deeds. Learn to look for patterns of behavior which show their basic heart attitudes with regard to the following questions.

**Discuss: Why is it so easy to focus on behavior and not heart issues? How can you begin focusing on heart issues?**

## 2. Evaluate Maturity In Love, Faith, And Hope

### 1) *How To Evaluate Maturity In Love*

Key questions to ask concerning how mature your people are in the area of love:

#### a) Love For God

- Do they desire God above all other things or relationships? Is He their number one priority in life? If not, then what has taken His place in their hearts? What do they desire more than Him?
- Do they rejoice in God above all else? Do they delight in Him above all else? If not, then what do they enjoy more than Him? What has taken His place in their hearts?
- Are they of one heart, soul and mind with God? If not, then what has taken His place? To whom or what have their hearts and minds conformed? With whom or what do they identify? Whose values do they reflect? Are their loyalties divided?
- How consistently do they walk in this love? When they do fall, how quickly do they repent and begin walking with God again?
- Do they evidence any (inappropriate) love for this world? We must realize the seriousness of this issue. It is an issue of idolatry. To whom or to what one has given one's heart is the single most important question we face in this life. Many will display divided hearts, trying to love both God and the world at the same time. Help your disciples realize the impossibility of this position (Mt. 6:24, Jas 4:4-5, 1Jn 2:15-17). Love for the world and love for God are incompatible. One or the other will win out. Clear evidence of continuing love for the world indicates that their love for God is either dead or dying, regardless of how "religious" they appear on the outside. Spiritual growth is impossible until this is dealt with. See the lists which Paul wrote describing the fruit of the flesh. These are an additional indication that love of the world is present in their hearts (Gal 5:19-21; 1 Co. 6:9-10; Ro. 1:28-32; Jas 3:14-16).

#### b) Love For Others

- Do they desire to have true fellowship with other believers (Heb. 10:24-25) and to spend time with them? (Php 4:1, 1Th 2:17-18).
- Do they rejoice in other believers? Do they delight in them? (Eph 1:15-16, Php. 1:3-8, 4:1, 1Th 2:19-20, 3:9).
- Are they of one heart and mind with their brothers and sisters in Christ? Are they demonstrating in practical ways their unity and love? (Ac 4:32-35, Ro 12:10-21, 1Co 13:4-7, Php 1:27, 2:1-4, Heb 13:3).
- Do they love their families? Are they consistently serving their families in love, and unity as a family and building each member up in Christ? (Eph 5:25 - 6:4).
- Do they have a heart for the lost? Are they consistently demonstrating love to the lost? (Gal 6:10).

### 2) *How To Evaluate Maturity In Faith*

Key questions to ask concerning how mature your people are in the area of faith:

- a) Do they understand what faith is?
- b) Do they understand God's grace?
- c) Is their faith firmly rooted in the Scriptures? Do they have an adequate understanding of the central biblical truths (Ro 10:17)?
- d) Do they have a deep conviction concerning these truths?
- e) Do they have a deep conviction that God loves them and has accepted them fully in Christ?

f) Are they living by faith, depending on God's grace in every area of their lives?

### 3. *How To Evaluate Maturity In Hope*

Key questions to ask concerning how mature your people are in the area of hope:

- a) Are their hearts set on Christ and His call to them? (1Jn 3:1-3). Is this what they are really living for? (Php 3:7-14).
- b) Do they understand God's promises to them? Are they trusting God to be faithful to His promises? (Ro 4:18-24).
- c) Are they convinced that God is causing all things to work together for good for them, preparing them for the destiny He has for them? (Ro 8:28-30).

**Discuss: How do these questions help us evaluate the maturity of those we are discipling?**

### 3. Evaluate Effectiveness In Ministry To Others

As your disciples grow in faith, hope and love, they should become more and more effective in ministry to others. Key questions to reflect upon are:

- Are they effectively using whatever gifts and abilities God has given them to build others up in love, faith and hope? (Eph 4:11-13, 15-16).
- Are they encouraging and enabling people to grow in union with God and with one another? Are they enabling others to live lives which manifest that divine love which reflects this union? (Heb 10:24-25).
- Are they giving their brothers the practical support they need in order to overcome the spiritual difficulties in their lives?
- Do they effectively communicate the Gospel to the lost? (1Th 1:8).
- Are they effectively leading the lost to Christ and incorporating them into Christ's Body?
- Are they encouraging and enabling other Christians to effectively communicate the Gospel to the lost by word and deed?

**Discuss: How do you evaluate effectiveness in ministry to others?**

## II. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR MAKING DISCIPLES

- **Spend time regularly with them.** Rejoice in them and show that you are of one heart and mind with them. Look at the characteristics of love for others which are described in Ro 12:10-21, **Php 2:1-8** and **1Co 13:4-7**.
- **Plan your time together.** Spiritual growth in discipleship doesn't happen by chance. Disciples are made, not born. Each disciple has special needs, and you need to address these needs in an organized way.
- **Share your struggles.** Sharing your struggles and being open to each others' needs is helpful for creating a bond between you and your disciples.
- **Pray together.** Pray about problems beings experienced and answers being given to situations. Ask God to show you how to demonstrate such love to the people He has given you, in ways to which they will respond and grow.
- **Study together.** Read books together and share the things you're learning. Study the Scriptures together, applying them to everyday problems.
- **Be creative.** Use time creatively to accomplish multiple purposes. Work together, play together, have meals together. Surprise growing believers with your sincere, intense interest in them.
- **Be available.** Its important that your disciples know you are available for answering questions and counseling concerning doubts that arise in everyday life.
- **Seek suggestions and support from other Christians.** If you are weak in this area (i.e. demonstrating love), seek the support you need in order to make progress.
- **Minister together.** Involve them in what you are doing and they will learn from your example.

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- In light of God's ultimate purpose, what does it mean to be spiritually mature? What does it mean to be effective in ministry?

- How mature do you think your people are, when measured by faith, hope and love? Where is growth most badly needed? (If you have not yet started working with anyone, apply these questions to yourself.)
- How effective do you think your people are in ministry to others in light of the above criteria? (If you have not yet started working with anyone, apply this question to yourself.)

## **ACTION PLAN**

Think about those people God has entrusted to you to disciple and use the information in this chapter to evaluate their needs. Then plan some time to be with them for fellowship, instruction, counseling, or helping you in some ministry activity. Complete the worksheet contained in Appendix 2A, " Faith, Hope and Love Worksheet."

DISCIPLE MAKING  
APPENDIX  
2A

# Faith, Hope and Love

## WORKSHEET

---

*Below are several passages of Scripture which were addressed to various New Testament churches. Please circle each occurrence of the words "faith", "hope" and "love" in these passages, using a different color for each of the words.*

**Romans 5:1-5** "1Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 3Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."

**1 Corinthians 13:13** "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

**Galatians 5:5-6** "5But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope. 6For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."

**Ephesians 1:15-18** "For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. 17I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, "

**Ephesians 3:14-19** "14For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

**Colossians 1:3-5, 22-23** "3We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints—5the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel ..." "22But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—23if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant."

**1 Thessalonians 1:2-3** "We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. 3We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."

**1 Thessalonians 3:6** "6But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you."

**1 Thessalonians 5:8** "8But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet."

**2 Thessalonians 1:3-4** "We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing. <sup>4</sup>Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring."

**1 Timothy 1:5** "<sup>5</sup>The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

**2 Timothy 1:13** "<sup>13</sup>What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus."

**Philemon 4-7** "<sup>4</sup>I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, <sup>5</sup>because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. <sup>6</sup>I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. <sup>7</sup>Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints."

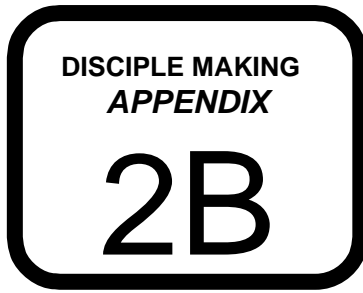
**Hebrews 6:10-12** "<sup>10</sup>God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. <sup>11</sup>We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. <sup>12</sup>We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised."

**Hebrews 10:22-24** "...<sup>22</sup>let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."

**James 2:5** "<sup>5</sup>Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?"

**1 Peter 1:3-9, 21-22** "<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup>who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup>In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup>These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. <sup>8</sup>Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup>for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls."  
"<sup>21</sup>Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God. <sup>22</sup>Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart."





# Helping Disciples Grow Spiritually

---

## INTRODUCTION

As church planters, part of our task is to ensure that the new church is growing spiritually. In this session we will discuss some common causes and remedies of spiritual struggle in the lives of new believers.

### I. IDENTIFY COMMON CAUSES OF SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE

There is one more important consideration you must deal with if you are to discern and address the true spiritual condition of your people. This has to do with the major spiritual hindrances in their lives. What are the most common reasons for spiritual struggle? What keeps them from living lives of love, faith and hope? What prevents them from ministering effectively to others? In order for your disciples to grow, you must find ways to help them overcome these hindrances.

Some of the most common causes of spiritual struggle are the following:

#### 1. New Believers Lack Understanding

- They fail to understand some key biblical truth(s).
- They don't know how to do what is needed. They are not sure what to do or how to do it (For example: share the Gospel with someone, spend time with God in His word and prayer, etc.)
- They are not sure how to become involved in ministry to others.

#### 2. New Believers Lack The Will To Obey:

- They are forgetful or are easily distracted.
- They want to obey, but simply forget to do what they should. In the rush of the world around them, they forget their priorities and become preoccupied with other things.
- They understand the truth, but don't really believe it.
- They have allowed love of the world to overcome them or have become slaves of sin.
- They are discouraged and have given up.
- They are disappointed in God or other Christians and now are angry with them.
- Fear is holding them back.
- They lack motivation.
- If they have lost motivation, try to find out why. The cause is usually one or more of the problems mentioned above.

**Table 2B.1 Dealing With The Sources Of Spiritual Struggle**

THE PROBLEM	WHAT THEY NEED
<p>They fail to understand some key biblical truth.</p> <p>Perhaps the person fails because he understands neither God nor God's purpose for him, because he doesn't understand what true faith is nor how to live by faith, because he doesn't understand the hope he has in Christ. Perhaps he doesn't understand God's provision for him in Christ and in Christ's Body, because he doesn't understand Christ's love for him nor what it means to truly love God and others, or because he doesn't understand what it means to be part of the Body of Christ, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correction and instruction which clearly communicates the biblical truth they fail to understand and how it applies to their lives.</li> <li>• Opportunities to study the Scripture in greater depth.</li> <li>• Encouragement to become students of the Word and instruction in the necessary skills.</li> <li>• Opportunities to observe people who demonstrate the meaning of that truth in their own lives.</li> </ul>
<p>They don't know how to do what is needed.</p> <p>They are not sure what to do or how to do it. Perhaps it has to do with their personal walk with God (for example: pray, study the Bible, have a quiet time, etc.). Or, perhaps it has to do with practical ministry to others (for example: teach, encourage, lead a family devotional, give a personal testimony, share the Gospel with an unbeliever, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouragement to apply what they are learning.</li> <li>• Opportunities to observe people who are doing what is required.</li> <li>• Instruction and practical training in the required skills.</li> <li>• If needed, help in developing a practical strategy to do what is needed.</li> <li>• Appropriate opportunities to practice what they are learning, with helpful feedback.</li> <li>• Practical advice and support as they develop confidence and skill.</li> </ul>
<p>They are not sure how to become involved in ministry to others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help to see various ministry opportunities and encouragement to get involved.</li> <li>• People who show genuine appreciation for their efforts.</li> <li>• Others who are willing to let them minister to them while they are developing.</li> </ul>
<p>They simply forget or are easily distracted.</p> <p>They want to obey, but simply forget to do what they should. In the rush of the world around them, they forget their priorities and become preoccupied with other things.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continual reminding to follow through.</li> <li>• Continual stimulus and practical support to do what is needed.</li> </ul>
<p>They understand some particular truth but don't really accept it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admonishment for unbelief and encouragement to believe.</li> <li>• Reasons to believe the particular truth they reject.</li> <li>• Opportunities to observe people who wholeheartedly apply these truths in their own lives.</li> </ul>

THE PROBLEM	WHAT THEY NEED
<p>They have allowed love of the world to overcome them or have become slaves of sin.</p> <p>The worries of world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desire for worldly things can often be almost overwhelming. An immature Christian, and even those who are more mature, may not have the strength of will to resist (Gal. 5:17; Mt. 13:22, 1Ti 6:8-10, Jn 2:15-17).</p> <p>Sin results in spiritual death. The Holy Spirit is quenched. The person loses the will to confront his sin. He loses the will to follow Christ. He loses the desire for real spiritual fellowship and is tempted to withdraw from both God and his brothers. The person becomes sin's slave and is no longer willing or able to break free on his own (Jn 8:34, Jas 1:14-15, Heb 3:13).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical advice and close support to deal with their particular weaknesses and to avoid temptation.</li> <li>• Help in recognizing their sin or blind spots.</li> <li>• Admonishment and a reminder of the seriousness of their sin.</li> <li>• Encouragement to repent for specific sins.</li> <li>• Practical advice and close support to overcome the sin.</li> <li>• Close support in developing new habits.</li> <li>• After repentance, assurance of forgiveness.</li> <li>• Close support to begin walking again in the Spirit.</li> </ul>
<p>They have become discouraged or fearful.</p> <p>In the New Testament discouragement is often the result of suffering (from persecution or loss - Mt. 13:20-21, Heb 12:3). Your people may face opposition from family, friends or the local priest. Fear of rejection or loss may discourage them from following Christ. Discouragement can also result from false expectations of what the Christian life will be like, of what God will do for him, or of what church or Christians are like.</p> <p>Discouragement may also result from his own spiritual failures. As a result, he may begin to doubt that he can make it in the Christian life or may feel that God will no longer fully accept him. He may even begin to doubt his salvation. In the end he may become so discouraged that he simply gives up. Failure in attempts at ministry may cause him to lose motivation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminders of God's promises.</li> <li>• Continual assurance of love, acceptance and forgiveness.</li> <li>• Assurance that they are not alone.</li> <li>• Continual encouragement to press on.</li> <li>• Practical help to face their fear and do what is needed in spite of it.</li> <li>• Assurance of God's protection and blessing for faithfulness.</li> <li>• Continual encouragement to hope in God.</li> </ul>
<p>They are disappointed in God or other Christians and now are angry at them.</p> <p>Sometimes new believers have false expectations as to what the Christian life will be like. When their expectations are not met, they become angry with God. Or, when other Christians let them down, they become angry and no longer want to associate with them. Sometimes they may also blame God for what so-called Christians have done.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction to bring their expectations into line with God's Word.</li> <li>• Encouragement to see God's greater purpose in allowing these things in their lives.</li> <li>• Admonishment not to blame God for the failures of Christians.</li> <li>• Admonishment to forgive others as God has forgiven them.</li> </ul>
<p>In all of the above areas:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They need brothers/sisters who are devoted to them in love (Ro. 12:10).</li> <li>• They need people who will pray for them and with them.</li> <li>• They need people who will hold them accountable before God.</li> <li>• They need people who will help keep watch over their hearts.</li> <li>• They need people who will do whatever it takes to help them overcome their spiritual problems and grow.</li> </ul>

## II. DETERMINE THE SUPPORT BELIEVERS NEED TO OVERCOME SPIRITUAL HINDRANCES

When you have identified their greatest spiritual struggles, you must ask yourself: what kind of support must these people receive in order to overcome these hindrances? What kind of help must they have in order to consistently live lives of love, faith and hope? What must they have to effectively minister to others?

At this point you must be utterly realistic. Every one of your people faces these problems. Few of them will be able to overcome these hindrances on their own. If they do not receive the right kind of support, at the right time, their spiritual lives will come to a standstill. It is your responsibility to make sure they receive the support they need.

Scripture makes it very clear that teaching and preaching are not enough. How many of the common problems noted in Table 2B.1 can be overcome with instruction alone? Very few of them. The Bible talks about many other essential ministries within the Body of Christ, such as

- warning, encouraging, helping one another (1Th 5:14),
- correcting and rebuking (2Ti 4:2),
- refuting (Tit 1:9),
- turning one another from sin (Jas 5:19-20),
- speaking the truth in love (Eph 4:15),
- counseling one another (Col. 3:16),
- encouraging and building each other up (1Th 5:11),
- stimulating one another to love and good deeds (Heb 10:24),
- strengthening weaknesses (Heb 12:12),
- comforting and urging (1Th 2:11-12),
- restoring one another, carrying each other's burdens (Gal 6:1-2),
- bearing with one another (Eph 4:2),
- forgiving one another (Col 3:13),
- praying for one another (Eph 6:18, Jas 5:16, 1Jn 5:16),
- confessing sin to one another (Jas 5:16),
- serving one another (Gal 5:13),
- accepting one another (Ro 15:7),
- honoring one another (Ro 12:10),
- doing good to one another (Gal 6:10).

If your disciple has truly set his heart on following Christ, he will welcome this kind of help. Talk with him about this and get his permission to help him in these ways. Thus, when it becomes necessary to help him deal with some issue, it won't come as a surprise.

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are some of the most common reasons for the spiritual failure of new believers?
- Why do they fail to effectively minister to others?
- What are the most important truths they fail to understand or believe?
- What are the most important things they fail to do or don't know how to do?
- Which kinds of support are most critical for new believers in light of their most common spiritual hindrances?

---

# **BIBLE STUDY METHODS**

---



BIBLE STUDY  
METHODS

5

LESSON

# Various Ways to Use Inductive Bible Studies

## ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to encourage the use of inductive Bible study methods in various kinds of studies in addition to short passages.

## ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Bible study's purpose is to learn what the Bible says, and is best done through the inductive method.
- Biographical studies, book studies, and theme studies can benefit from the inductive method.
- Be convinced that the inductive method should be used for every Bible study the learner does or leads.
- Know how to approach the study of a Bible character, book or theme from an inductive perspective.

## ☞ Appendix

5A Biographical Study on Barnabas

## ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Matt. 25:14-21 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Are you spending enough time with your next generation leaders?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## INTRODUCTION

The previous manual explained how the inductive method of Bible study focuses on discovering and applying the meaning of the Word of God. The emphasis is on the Scriptures rather than our prior understanding of the passage. Hopefully, it has already enhanced your study of the Word.

So far, we have only used the inductive method to look at short passages because of the brief time available. However, the inductive study method can be used to study much larger portions of the Bible or to compare verses from different sections—as would be necessary in a theme or biographical study. In this lesson, we will discuss some of the guidelines for applying the inductive method to other kinds of studies.

### I. REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES OF INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

Before you apply the inductive Bible study method more broadly, you should look back through the Bible Study Methods section of the first manual.

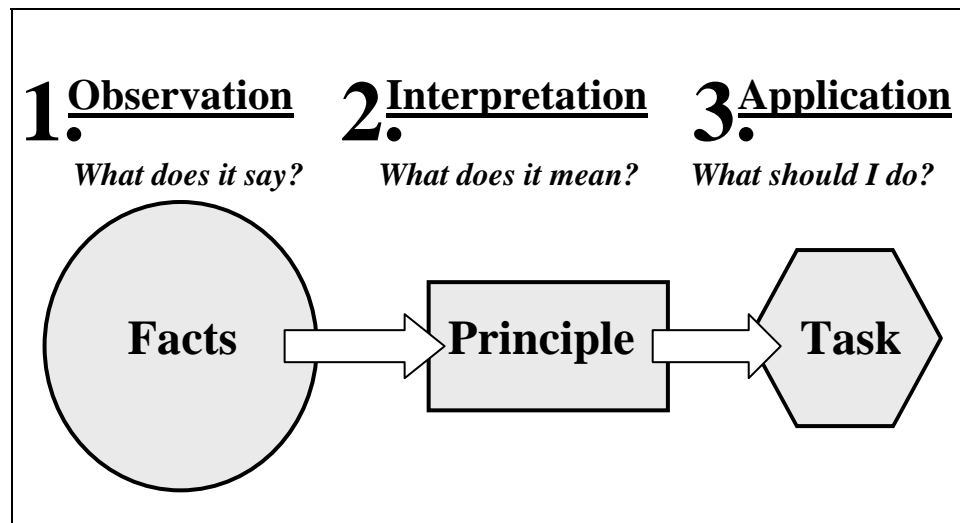
#### 1. The Reason for the Inductive Method

The deductive method begins with a pre-existing understanding or fact that determines the meaning of the topic being studied. When we use this method to study the Bible, we end up trying to make a verse say *what we already understand* rather than learning from it. By contrast, when we use the inductive method in Bible study, we come to the passage *to learn* and allow the Word to speak to us.

#### 2. The Steps of the Inductive Method

The three steps of the inductive method—observation, interpretation, and application—are shown in figure 8.1. The inductive method leads us through the process of asking what the Bible says, what it *means*, and what I should *do* about it. It begins by taking time to examine closely the content of the Scriptures, and ends with putting it into practice in my life and ministry.

Figure 5.1 The Three Steps



It is important to work through the steps *in order*, without jumping ahead. The process is like a pyramid, where it was necessary to build a large and strong foundation of observation before building our interpretation on it, and applying it to our lives.

**Discuss:** What are the steps to inductive Bible study, and why must we spend enough time on each step?

### 3. The Emphasis of the Inductive Method

The inductive Bible study method can be used for many kinds of Bible studies, as we will see below. There are a number of general principles that are important, no matter what kind of study you are doing. These include:

- Ask Lots of Good Questions Such as Who?, What?, Where?, When?, How? and Why?
- Look for the Main Point
- Understand the Author's Purpose
- Allow for Progressive Revelation
- Understand the Context
- State the Biblical Principle
- Compare the Biblical and Modern Context
- Pray

Refer to the previous lessons for more information on these principles.

## II. BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES

Biographical studies, or character studies, involve studying everything recorded about a particular person in the Bible. If this involves a great number of passages, it might be helpful to study a particular event or time frame in that character's life. For example, you might study Paul during his missionary journeys or David during his flight from King Saul. However, even in this situation, consider the entire life of the person, and how the chosen section fits into the whole.

### 1. Why Do a Biographical Study?

Everyone likes a story. It is easy to relate to the problems, challenges, temptations, joys, and victories of others when these are seen in story form. The Bible is full of both negative and positive examples seen in the stories of people's lives.



By studying the lives of biblical personages with their strengths and weaknesses, we can learn many lessons to help us conform to the image of Christ. Much of the Bible is concerned with God's working with individuals to restore this process. For example, from Abraham we learn about faith; from Joseph we learn how to face temptations; from Esther we learn about God's sovereign working; from Daniel we learn about prayer; from Jonah we learn what happens to a person trying to run away from God; from Paul we learn about missions. 1Co 10:11 is a key verse: "These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us." What other examples come to your mind?

By studying the lives of biblical personages with their strengths and weaknesses, we can learn many lessons to help us conform to the image of Christ.

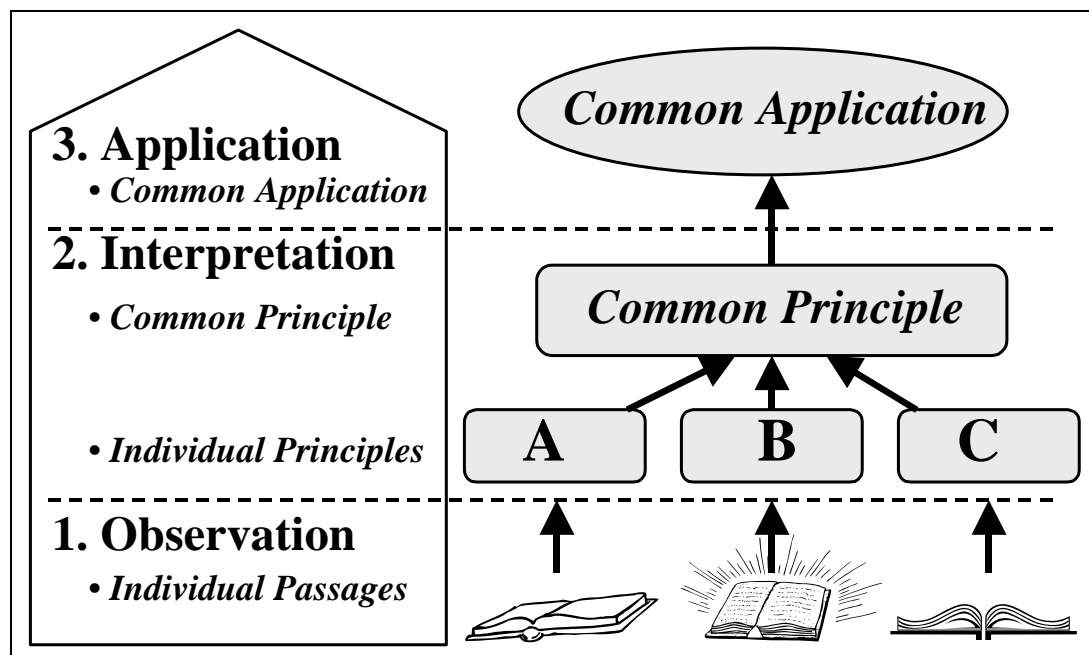
By using stories about the lives of biblical characters, church planters must be able to communicate many important truths to those they are seeking to evangelize and train. But in order to apply the Bible most accurately, it is necessary to understand what the Bible is teaching through a person's life. Good Bible study principles must be applied to biographical studies the same as to any types of Bible study.

**Discuss: Why should you do a Biographical study?**

## 2. How to Do a Biographical Study

Inductive biographical studies follow a similar pattern of observation, interpretation, and application as the individual texts do, with one significant exception. Figure 5.2 illustrates how *observation* is done on each passage. However, *interpretation* requires an extra step. First, the biblical principle for each passage is determined. Then, a *common principle* is formed from the individual principles. Finally, the *common application* that summarizes all the passages is formulated and put into practice. The sections below will expand these concepts.

**Figure 5.2 Biographical Study**



### 1) Observation

Observation involves thoroughly looking at all the relevant passages—one at a time. Each passage teaches a particular truth in a specific context. You need to discover what that truth is for every passage before proceeding on to interpretation. Use the steps below as a guide:

- Select the Bible person you wish to study.
- Make a list of ALL biblical references to that person. If available, use a concordance or Bible dictionary.
- Arrange the verses in chronological order.
- Formulate and ask as many observation questions as possible (Who?, What?, Where?, When?, How? and Why?)

- Pay special attention to clues as to the character, personality, thoughts, or actions of the person you are studying. For instance:
  - What can we learn about his ancestry and family?
  - Is the meaning of his name significant? Was it changed? If so, what was the significance of that change, e.g. Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, Simon to Peter, etc.
  - When and where did he live? What do we know from other sources, both biblical and non-biblical, about life in his day?
  - What significant events occurred in his life: crises, accomplishments, call to a specific task, problems faced, etc.
  - Relationships: What was his relationship to God? How did he get along with others?
- Record and summarize your notes on each verse.

**Discuss: How do you do the observation step for a biographical study?**

2) *Interpretation*

Interpretation is a two-part process when it involves more than one passage of Scripture—as is often the case in a biographical study. Each of the passages that you select to study has a specific purpose and teaching of its own. Because of the unity of Scripture, these purposes will never contradict, but they may be different. Usually, they add further information. Each of these purposes should be discovered and stated as a biblical principle, using the guidelines presented in earlier discussions of the inductive method.

Each of the passages that you select to study has a specific purpose and teaching of its own.

Once these principle for each individual passage have been stated, it is possible to finish the process of interpretation by combining them carefully and thoughtfully into one principle that sums up the contribution of each part. Suppose you chose to study a portion of the life of David. One passage taught that he was devoted to the Word. Another stressed his prayer life. A third emphasized his trust in God in times of trouble. An appropriate common principle might be, "We should be devoted to the Word and prayer as we trust God in difficult times." This principle summarizes the teaching of all three passages.

**Discuss the interpretation step for a biographical study.**

3) *Application*

Once your study of the character has defined a common biblical principle, you can compare your situation to his or hers and determine *what you should do*. That is, you will look for ways in which your context and that of the Bible character are similar, and respond according to the teaching that you have seen in the Word. As you do this step, you may want to review some of the passages when the Holy Spirit brings it to mind, and allow Him to teach you and guide you through the process.

There are many interpretation questions that you can ask to help discover the most important application for you. These include:

- How is my experience similar to his?
- Do I have the same strengths? Weaknesses?
- Why did God include this person in Scripture?
- What specific things does God want to teach me through the study of his or her life?

*Note: An example of a biographical study on the life of Barnabas is found in Appendix 5A.*

**Discuss the application step for a biographical study.**

### III. BOOK STUDIES

Most Bible scholars agree that the Bible has one common theme—although they debate how exactly to state it. Each book of the Bible develops that common theme by contributing something unique. A good example of this is seen in the Gospels. Four Gospel writers each wrote about the life of Christ. There are many similarities in the Gospels, and also many differences. Each is written from a unique perspective.

- Matthew – presents Christ as the Jewish Messiah (royal)
- Mark – presents Christ as the Servant (humble)
- Luke – presents Christ as the Son of Man (human)
- John – presents Christ as the Son of God (divine)

Each of these portraits of Christ are true, and yet, each is different. Each Gospel describes an important aspect of His person or character better than the others. The four Gospels work together to more fully describe the Lord. In the same way, all sixty-six books of the Bible work together to present the full message that God has for us. One book best describes His love, another His patience, another His wrath. One book emphasizes the lost condition of fallen man, while another describes our glorious salvation through Christ's atonement.

All sixty-six books of the Bible work together to present the full message that God has for us.

#### 1. Why Do a Book Study?

Since all sixty-six books work together to present God's message to us, we need to carefully examine each book if we want to accurately understand its contribution to that message. There is also another benefit. When we understand the theme of each book, we know where to turn to quickly find answers to a particular problem. Does someone struggle with legalism? Turn to Galatians. Do we doubt our salvation? Read Romans. Do we question the deity of Christ? Read John. If we doubt the seriousness of sin, we should read Judges. Each book has a special emphasis and message.

**Discuss: Why should you do a book study?**

#### 2. How to Do a Book Study

A book study uses the same steps of the inductive method that we have been learning. Normally, a book study will require quite a bit of time to do it right. The benefits, however, will easily make it worth your time. A book study consists of four stages:

##### 1) *Read the Book Several Times*

Many of the books of the Bible are simply short letters or messages. They were intended to be read from beginning to end without interruption. The best way to study them is to read them several times until you begin to notice the theme and repeated or stressed ideas. Some of the longer books (such as Isaiah and Jeremiah) were written over many years, but they are also addressed to one audience and will communicate more clearly if we read them in their entirety. Once is not enough—nor is simply looking at selections from the book. Take time to read it repeatedly before you attempt to interpret it.

Take time to read a book repeatedly before you attempt to interpret it.

##### 2) *Study the 'Setting' of the Book*

There are a number of important factors that we will call the 'setting' of the book. You may find some of this information in the book itself or in notes in your Bible. Other questions will require the use of commentaries, Bible handbooks, or other helps. As you start your study, limit your use of these helps to introductory facts about the book, and not at the commentator's dialog. Save that for later, once you have had time to let the Scriptures speak to you first. As you start your study, look for the following 'setting' facts:

- *Author* – If possible, decide who wrote the book, and then learn as much about that person as you can. Why did God choose him as the human author? What was his background and experience? What kind of person was he? Who was his family? When and how was he saved? How old was he? What was his profession? Answer as many other questions about him as you can.
- *Recipients* – To whom was the book written? What was their situation at that time? Why do you think the book was written? How was it delivered to them (preached, prophesied,

hand-carried letter, etc.)? What was their relationship to God? To the human author? What was their political situation? Their religious situation?

- Date – When was the book written? What important events were happening in history at that time? Where does this book fit into God's progressive revelation to man? What was the time span of the writing of the book?
- Literary Style – What kind of writing is used (poetry, prophesy, historical, didactic, etc.)? See Bible Study Methods Appendix 4B: "The Language of the Bible" for more information on styles. How will this style affect your interpretation? How would it have affected the recipients?

**Discuss. How do you study the setting of a book?**

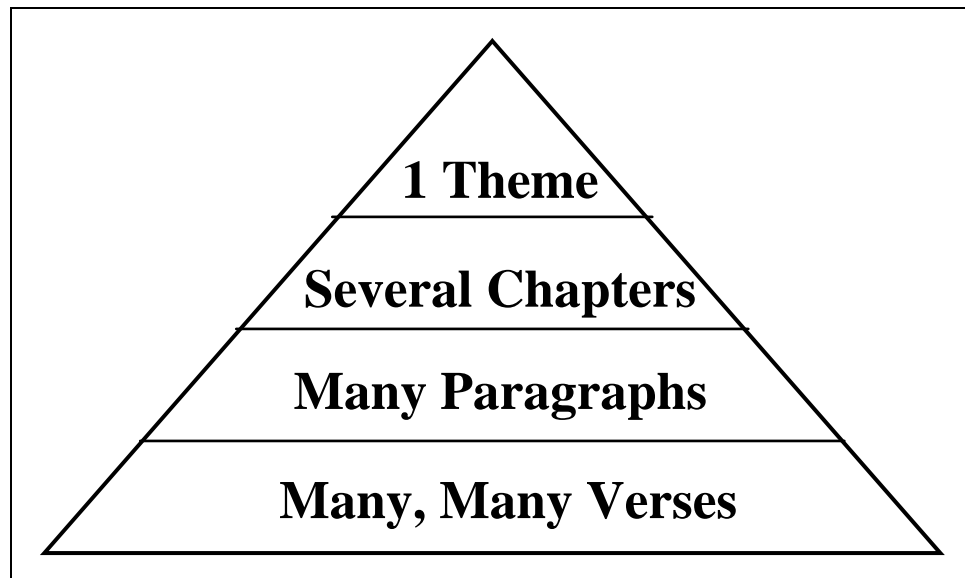
3) *Study the Content of the Book*

There are two main considerations in a book study. The first is the theme and the second is how that theme is developed. In other words, the author wanted to communicate a specific idea to us, and he did so in a particular way. Both are important.

a) The Theme of the Book

Now that you know many facts about the book, study the content of the book. The book will have one major theme that might or might not be easy to determine. For example, John states clearly the theme of his Gospel (Jn 20:31). So does Jude (Jude 3). Other writers are less clear.

**Figure 5.3 Parts of a Book**



b) The Development of the Theme

The content of the book will work together to communicate the theme of the book to the recipients (and to us). As you study and ask questions, note how the writer accomplishes that task. What kind of attitude does he express (authority, gentleness, love, anger, etc.)? What kind of language does he use—clear, sarcastic, eloquent, persuasive, etc.? Does he focus on the mind or the emotions? How? Why do you think he uses those approaches?

4) *Chart the Development of the Theme of the Book*

One helpful technique in a book study is to make a chart of the major themes, characters, places, etc. that are discussed in the book. Often a study Bible or commentary will include such charts. There are also other sources of these charts, such as Jensen (see Sources). However, you can also make your own. In fact, your study will be much more profitable if you attempt to chart the flow yourself before consulting another source. These charts need not be elaborate—they are meant to help you see the overall nature of the book. Figure 5.4 is a sample chart for the Book of Acts.

Figure 5.4 Chart of the Book of Acts

<b>The Book of Acts</b>						
<b>Theme:</b>	<b>"You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8)</b>					
<b>Chapters:</b>	<b>1-7</b>	<b>8-12</b>	<b>13-28</b>			
<b>Places:</b>	<b>Jerusalem</b>	<b>Judea &amp; Samaria</b>	<b>The Ends of the Earth</b>			
<b>Ministry to:</b>	<b>Jews</b>	<b>Jew &amp; Gentile</b>	<b>Gentiles</b>			
<b>Key People:</b>	<b>Peter John Stephen</b>	<b>Peter Philip Saul/Paul Barnabas</b>	<b>Paul Barnabas Silas</b>			
<b>Key Events:</b>	<b>Ascension Pentecost</b>	<b>Eunich Cornelius</b>	<b>(13-14) 1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey</b>	<b>(15-18) 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey</b>	<b>(19-20) 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey</b>	<b>(21-28) Paul Goes to Rome</b>
<b>Principles:</b>	<b>Growth</b>	<b>Persecution</b>	<b>Missions</b>			

5) *Apply the Theme of the Book to Your Situation*

At this point, you should have a good understanding of *what the book says* from your observation. You should also have determined the theme and its development—that is, *what the book means*. The final step is to think about *what you should do*. As in the previous lessons, this involves examining your own life and situation to see what similarities exist between it and the original context of the book. Questions you might want to ask yourself to help this process include:

- What in my life resembles the situation in the book?
- What in my life resembles the author of the book?
- How would I have addressed this situation?
- What particularly spoke to my heart as I read the book?

**Discuss: Do you think you will ever do a book study? Why or why not?**

**IV. THEME STUDIES**

Often, we want to study a particular subject of topic. This kind of study is also referred to as a 'theme' study. The normal rules of inductive study still apply.

**1. Why Do a Theme Study?**

Many topics or truths are developed throughout the pages of the Bible. Many span both testaments. Book studies will show only a portion of these themes. For instance, teaching on prayer is everywhere in the Scriptures. The only way to adequately study it is to do a theme study.

**2. How to Do a Theme Study**

Once you have decided which theme you will study, you will want to work through the following steps:

- *Find the Related Verses* – Notes and cross-references in the margins of your Bible can help you find verses that relate to your theme. Find one verse that you know is relevant, and then begin to follow the links from verse to verse. However, a more thorough method is to use a concordance to look up all the verses that discuss your topic. Be careful, though—verses that have the same word do not necessarily relate to your topic.
- *Arrange the Verses in Order* – The theme you have chosen may be developed gradually through the Bible. Read the verses that were written earlier before the later ones. That way, you will discover the truth in the same way that God originally revealed it.
- *Study and Summarize Each Verse in Context* – Avoid being guilty of ripping a verse out of its context and trying to make it say what you want it to say. Let the Holy Spirit speak to you

*through it. Observe and interpret each verse carefully. Summarize what it is teaching about the theme.*

- *Summarize the Teaching on the Theme – After you have studied the individual verses and know what they say and mean, summarize their teaching into a clear statement that includes the contribution of each verse. This process is essentially the same as the method for a biographical study that is shown in figure 5.2. The main difference is that each passage concerns a theme instead of a person.*
- *Apply the Truth – Prayerfully and thoughtfully ask God to show you how this truth should change your life and ministry. You have "looked in the mirror"—now go out and do what you have learned (Jas 1:22-25).*

**Discuss: How do you do a theme study? What theme are you interested in studying?**

Sample theme studies and key verses for them are listed for you in Bible Study Methods Appendix 7A: "Passages for Inductive Bible Study."

## **SUMMARY**

The inductive Bible study method is helpful for many kinds of Bible study. It is so powerful because it reminds us at every step to let Scripture speak to us, instead of enforcing our understanding on it. Even when we study a book or multiple passages (as in a theme or biographical study) we need to be careful to study every verse in its context so that it can speak clearly to us.

## **QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW, AND APPLICATION**

- What is an advantage of doing a biographical study?
- What is the difference between the 'setting' and the 'content' of a book of the Bible?
- Why is it important to arrange verses for a biographical or theme study in chronological order?

## **ACTION PLAN**

- Work through the biographical study on the life of Barnabas in Appendix 5A. Think through his role in the church planting process in Acts. What application do you see for your own life and ministry?
- Take the time to use the inductive method for a book study and for a theme study. Pick a smaller book or a more manageable theme for your first attempt. Evaluate the effectiveness of this method in helping you discover things you had not formerly seen in the Word.



# Biographical Study on Barnabas

---

Use the inductive method of Bible study as you work through this biographical study on the life of Barnabas. As you have questions about the process, refer back to point II, "Biographical Studies" of Bible Study Methods Lesson 5: "Various Ways to Use Inductive Bible Studies."

## I. STUDY THE RELEVANT PASSAGES

The verses where Barnabas is mentioned by name are listed for you. Read each verse or passage in the following list, and record your observations. Then summarize the passage. The first one has been done for you.

### 1. Acts 4:36,37

#### 1. Observations:

- Was a Levite
- Was from Cyprus
- His given name was Joseph
- The Apostles nicknamed him "Barnabas"
- Son of Encouragement
- He sold his land to help fund the work of the church
- He presented his gift humbly ("at the apostles' feet")

#### 2. Interpretation / Summary:

Barnabas was an 'encourager' by his very nature—even to the extent of giving of his possessions to encourage and enable other believers.

### 2. Acts 11:19-24

#### 1) Observations

#### 2) Interpretation / Summary

**3. Acts 11:25-26**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*

**4. Acts 11:27-30**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*

**5. Acts 12:25**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*

**6. Acts 13:1-13;42-43**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*



**7. Acts 14:1-23**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*

**8 Acts 15:2-4, 12, 22, 25, 35-39**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*

**9. Colossians 4:10**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*

**10. Galatians 2:11-13**

1) *Observations*

2) *Interpretation / Summary*

## II. SUMMARIZE THE TEACHING

Now that you have looked at the individual passages, it is time to look at the results and summarize what the Bible teaches about Barnabas. As you do so, think through the following questions:

- What kind of background did Barnabas have?
- Why do you think the apostles gave Joseph the nickname "Barnabas?"
- What evidence do you see from these passages that Barnabas was an encourager?
- What is the significance of the order in which Paul and Barnabas (or Barnabas and Paul) are mentioned?
- How did Barnabas respond to the shift in leadership to Paul?
- How did he respond to conflicts? (Ac 15:1-4 and Ac 15:36-40)
- Why do you think he responded as he did in Gal 2:11-13?

Now write down a statement to summarize what you have learned about the life of Barnabas. Make sure that it includes all the key ideas that you have seen in each of the passages:

## III. DECIDE WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

*A study of Scripture is of little value until we decide how we need to apply it to our lives. Think through the teaching of Barnabas' life as you consider the following questions:*

- Have you had any "Barnabases" in your life? Who were they and how did they encourage you?
- Do you know of a Christian that needs encouragement? What can you do to encourage him/her?
- In Ac 9:26ff and 11:25-26, Barnabas risked his own reputation to encourage another. Are you willing to do the same for the sake of the Gospel?
- Barnabas moved aside and allowed Paul to assume the first place in leadership. Are you willing to train new leaders and allow them to assume leadership even if you must take a secondary position?
- What specific lessons has the Lord been teaching you as you studied the life of Barnabas?

Prayerfully consider how God would have you live differently as a result of this study. In the space below, write what you intend to do about it, and then ask the Lord to help you faithfully accomplish this:

BIBLE STUDY  
METHODS

6

LESSON

# Leading Inductive Bible Studies

## LEADING OTHERS TO DISCOVERY

### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain how to lead an inductive Bible study group in such a way that the members are able to discover the meaning and application of the Scriptures they study.

### ☞ Main Points and Desired Outcomes

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

- Discovery is more powerful than "telling."
- Good questions facilitate discovery.
- Know the difference between "teaching" and "leading in discovery."
- Be able to create appropriate questions that lead to discovery.

### ☞ Appendix

6A Inductive Bible Study on Matthew 20:17-28

6B Inductive Bible Study on Luke 15:1-7

### ☞ Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Philippians 3:13-14 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: Will your current level of commitment enable you to achieve the vision?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## I. CHARACTERISTICS OF AN INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Inductive Bible study is first and foremost a method for personal growth of the Christian. However, it is also a very effective form of ministry to others. It can be used for evangelism, or for discipleship. This normally occurs in a group context.

An inductive Bible study group is a small group of people who come together for the purpose of studying the Bible. The members may or may not be believers—although, of course, the leader should be. Inductive Bible study is a good way for unbelievers to discover the message God has for them—that is, repent and trust Christ for salvation. If the members are unbelievers, the leader will want to choose a portion of Scripture for the study that explains the Gospel clearly. The Gospel of John, and especially chapter 3, is a very good example. If the members are believers, the topic can be anything that is of interest to them.

An inductive Bible study group is a small group of people who come together for the purpose of studying the Bible.

There are a number of differences between an inductive Bible study group and a sermon. Three of the most important of these differences are listed below.

**Discuss: What is an inductive Bible Study group?**

### 1. The Authority is the Scriptures

In a sermon, the source of authority is all too often perceived as residing in the teacher. As a result, if the speaker is very capable, people listen to what *he* says, and may or may not realize that message comes from God. In the opposite case, the message of the Word can be clouded or confused by a poor speaker. In both situations, a person stands between the hearers and the Word of the Lord.

Inductive Bible study, by contrast, allows each member of the group to focus on the Scriptures. The living and active Word of God is capable of touching the innermost being of a person, bringing conviction or comfort. Nothing stands between the Word and the hearer. No human interferes. The Holy Spirit applies the message directly to the heart of the reader.

Obviously, there is a time and a place for teaching. Sometimes it is helpful to listen to a teacher when people are not willing to read the Word for themselves, or when the teacher has particularly good insight in to a particular passage or subject. However, teaching should be balanced by personal study of the Scriptures. Teaching should *add to* what we are learning on our own—it should never *replace it*.

Teaching should always be balanced by personal study of the Scriptures.

## 2. The Goal is Discovery

Educational theory has strongly and repeatedly proved that we learn and remember something best when we discover it for ourselves. Having someone tell us about fishing is nothing like actually going fishing and experiencing it for ourselves. The same holds true for the truth of the Word. When we discover the truth in the pages of the Bible, we are more likely to understand it, believe it, and act on it than when someone preaches it to us. In order to enable this discovery, an inductive Bible study group should be small enough to allow for interaction among the members. Less than 10 people would be ideal, although some group leaders can stimulate interaction with larger groups.

## 3. The Leader is a Facilitator

Since the best method of learning spiritual truth is to discover it ourselves, the leader of an inductive Bible study must help the members *discover* truth in the passage—not *tell* them. This is accomplished through the skillful use of questions. Questions are a way of directing the attention of the members to important facts in the passage, without actually telling them. It guides them, but allows them to discover. That is the goal.

The best method of learning spiritual truth is to discover it ourselves.

It should be obvious, therefore, that the questions you choose to ask the group are very important. There will not be time during a group study to ask all the questions. Rather, the responsibility of the group leader is to study the passage ahead of time, and note which questions were most helpful for him or her. This includes all areas—observation, interpretation, and application. The number of questions needed depends on the length of time of the study session, but you will not need a lot since you will want to allow enough time to discuss the answers. Also, you should allow the members to ask and answer their own questions—especially as they gain experience in the process.

**Discuss: What does it mean for the leader to be a facilitator?**

**Discuss: What are the characteristics of an inductive Bible study and what are the benefits?**

## II. PREPARATION FOR THE STUDY

Before the study, the group leader should plan the study carefully.

### 1. Study the Passage Yourself

It is important that the leader discover the central truth(s) and main application(s) of the passage. The leader should observe, interpret, and apply the passage on his own according to the inductive Bible study guidelines taught in Manual One.

### 2. Write Down the Purpose of the Study

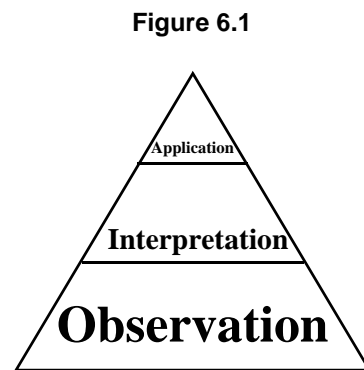
The leader should decide the general direction for the small group Bible study to take but should not be too specific. Remember, the Holy Spirit may teach the group in ways that you did not anticipate.

### 3. Prepare Questions on the Passage for the Group Which Cover All Three Parts of the Study

The leader should prepare to lead the group to **apply** sound **interpretation** based on careful **observation** by guiding the group through the same process of discovery that he has already taken. Thought-provoking questions should build on one another so that the discussion concentrates on the main purpose and application of the passage. The questions should not require simple "yes or no" answers. Rather, they should guide the group to search the verse for the facts, meaning, and application. If it takes a few minutes and several attempts to adequately answer a question, that is fine. The questions should help the members discover—not insult their intelligence.

The previous manual showed you how to prepare these three kinds of questions, and asked you to prepare a sample study. In all future studies that you lead, you should work through the same process. As you prepare, you will think of far too many questions to use in a group. After you have completed the study of the passage for yourself, you will need to sort through your questions to identify the most helpful or informative ones, and use only those in leading others in a study of the text.

Make sure to include several questions for each of the steps—observation, interpretation, and application. Remember the example of building a pyramid with a strong base. It is preferable to have more observation questions than interpretation questions, and even fewer application ones. This does not mean that application is less important—it is the *most* important thing. However, it will require a number of questions to lead the members of the study group to the point of discovering the one application that is most needed in their lives. Guiding people to discovery through skillful questioning is difficult, but rewarding.



**Discuss: How do you prepare questions for the group study?**

#### 4. Review the Questions

When the questions have been formulated, the leader should ask:

- Are my questions clear?
- Is each brief enough to be readily grasped?
- Do the questions make the group search the passage?
- Do the observation questions provide a solid basis on which to ask interpretive and application questions?
- Do the questions move the group through the whole passage?
- Do the application questions lead the group to specific actions?

#### 5. Prepare an Introductory Question to Get the Members Excited about the Bible Study

The introductory question can focus on how this passage speaks to a particular situation with which the members identify. For example, 1 Peter was written to churches facing persecution. Studying of this book, you might ask: how do you act when you are persecuted for being a Christian? How did the people Peter was writing to react to persecution?

**Discuss: What does it mean to prepare an inductive question to get the members excited about the Bible study?**

### III. LEADING THE STUDY

#### 1. The Study Should Be Started and Closed with Prayer

Studying the Bible is not just a mechanical process. It requires the help of the Holy Spirit to open our eyes to the truth that God wants to communicate to us. We should pray for enlightenment before we study, and then ask the Lord to help us apply what we learned after the study.

#### 2. The Leader Should Be Prepared to Learn from the Group

Remember that the same Holy Spirit who speaks to the leader speaks to others. Others will have insights that the leader missed. If the leader is not prepared to learn, then he will appear to be an 'expert.' The presence of an 'expert' can kill honest discussion. In many cases, people will not want to share their opinions in the presence of an expert who may correct them.

The presence of an 'expert' can kill honest discussion.

#### 3. The Leader Should Not Answer His Own Questions or Questions That Might Arise from Within the Group

The leader should avoid answering his own questions. It will limit group thinking. If the leader does answer his own questions, the questions begin to sound like test questions with correct answers. Many people will be reluctant to answer questions that they could get "wrong." When there is a lot of

hesitation after a certain question, the leader should be alert to rephrase the question in case the group has difficulty understanding. Likewise, questions that arise from within the group should be reflected back to the group for their consideration. For example, "Sasha has a question about \_\_\_\_\_. What do you think about it?" Or, you can direct Sasha's questions to a particular person in the group: "Tanya, how would you answer Sasha's question?"

**Discuss: Why should you take time to discuss other answers?**

#### **4. Do Not Be Afraid of Silence**

The leader should allow sufficient time to answer the question. There may be a few moments of silence—which is perfectly all right. People need time to think. Silence is a group pressure that works on the behalf of the leader.

**Discuss: Why is silence helpful?**

#### **5. The Leader Should Not Always Be Satisfied With the First Answer Given**

If the leader constantly accepts an answer and moves on to the next question, then the group can fall into a question/answer, question/answer pattern. It would be better for the group to have a discussion, not a quiz. By soliciting several responses to the question, a natural discussion is more likely. Also, the first answer given is often not the most complete or insightful. Sometimes there can be more than one answer. By taking time to discuss other answers, a more comprehensive understanding of the passage is gained.

**Discuss: Do you feel that you must agree with everyone despite their answer?**

#### **6. Questions Not Answered By the Group May Be Left Unanswered**

The leader should refrain from answering questions that the group has not been able to process. To do so would be to stifle individual and group thinking by providing the answer. Also, if we trust the Holy Spirit to be the real teacher, then we have to trust that an unanswered question is something that the group is not ready to handle at that moment. The unanswered question may hold their curiosity and bring them back the next week.

**Discuss: Do you feel comfortable being able to say you don't know the answer to a question?**

#### **7. Incorrect or Partial Answers Should Be Corrected By the Scriptures and/or the Group, Not the Leader**

There will be wrong answers and incorrect statements. The natural response is for the leader to correct and rebuke. But doing so can discourage group members from opening up. This will in turn kill open and honest discussion. Instead of correcting a wrong or partial answer, the leader can do one of the following:

- Ask the person answering to re-read the text, or refer them to another text.
- Ask the group whether it is in agreement with the answer or not.
- Ask group members for other related Scripture verses to support or correct the answer.

**Discuss: Do you feel like you should correct incorrect answers? How can you encourage the group to help answer these questions? Why is this important?**

#### **8. Keep the Discussion on the Main Theme of the Passage**

Satan is a master at getting people to divert their attention from the main truth. The discussion of Jesus with the Samaritan woman (John 4) is a good example of an attempt to divert Christ from addressing the woman's real needs. It is likely that good questions, even important ones, will arise out of the discussion. If they are not related to the main theme, then the leader should say something like the following: "Sasha, that is a very interesting question. But since it is not really related to our theme tonight, we will save it until after the study to answer." Or, "Sasha, your question is very important. It deserves a whole study itself. We will plan a study later on. Tonight we want to focus on our theme of this passage."

**Discuss: What are some ways you can keep the discussion on the main topic if the discussion goes astray?**

### 9. Do Not Forget to Ask the Application Questions

The goal of the study is not just to gain knowledge about God's word, but to discover how to practically obey God's word. The leader should not be afraid to use rather direct questions that prompt people to action. Group members will not want to be like the man in James 1:22-24 who did not act on what he learned. The leader should help everyone be as specific as possible in application so he can look back after a week and see the progress he has made in the application of Scripture to his life.

### 10. Control the Participation of Those Who Talk Too Much or Too Little

Most small groups will have a couple persons anxious to answer every question, the majority who will answer occasionally, and a couple persons who have to be really encouraged to participate. For those who always answer, the leader needs to say something like this: "Sasha, we can always count on you for an answer. Let us hear what Tanya thinks about \_\_\_\_\_." For those who rarely participate, the leader can ask them to read the text or answer an observation question with an easy to see answer in the text. As confidence builds, they can be encouraged to participate in easy interpretation and application questions.

**Discuss: Are there people in your group that like to talk to much or too little? What are some steps you can take to help correct this in love?**

### 11. At the End of the Study, the Leader Can Summarize What the Group Has Learned and Expressed

The leader should avoid adding new information the group did not consider. Adding new information not only sets up the leader as the "expert," it also shows a lack of trust in the leading of the Holy Spirit to reveal what He wanted the group to discover. It is better to affirm what the group has learned and move on.

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW, AND APPLICATION

- Why is discovery necessary for Christian growth? Why is preaching alone not enough?
- What would constitute a good discussion question?

## ACTION PLAN

- In the last manual, you were instructed to prepare a brief inductive Bible study on one of the following passages:

Acts 13:4-12 (Paphos)

Acts 17:10-15 (Berea)

Acts 13:13-52 (Antioch)

Acts 17:16-34 (Athens)

Acts 14:1-7 (Iconium)

Acts 17:16-34 (Athens)

Acts 14:8-20 (Lystra and Derbe)

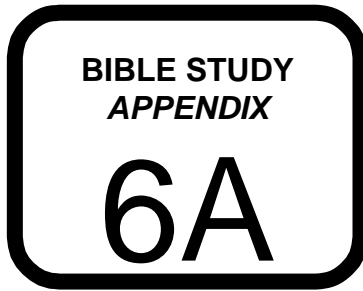
Acts 18:1-17 (Corinth)

Acts 16:11-40 (Philippi)

In preparation for the next lesson, you should have this completed study with you, including your observation, interpretation, and application questions.







# Inductive Bible Study on Matthew 20:17-28

---

*Note: This study is provided as a model of an inductive Bible study. If absolutely necessary, it may be used for the Workshop in Lesson 7.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Leadership lessons in this church planting course will be looking at the ministry of Jesus as our model for leadership. There are many kinds of 'leadership' in the world, but Jesus presented a very different understanding of what it means to lead others. As we will see in Matthew 20:17-28, even His disciples had a difficult time grasping the implications of this new kind of Christian leadership. We want to answer the question: "What is Christian Leadership?"

### I. PRAY

Begin the study by praying for God to remove other distractions from your mind, and allow you to focus on learning the truth of the passage so you can be a better Christian leader.

### II. READ MATTHEW 20:17-28

Read the passage carefully and thoughtfully. One person can read it all, or you can divide the reading among the members of the study group.

### III. OBSERVATION

Our first task is to discover what the passage says. Look closely at the verses and answer the following questions:

*From the context (Mt 19:27-20:16)*

- In **what** way might Jesus' teaching in Matthew 19:27-28 have sparked James' and John's desire to rule in the kingdom?
- **What** is the main point of the Matthew 20:1-15 parable, as summarized by Jesus in verse 16?

*From the passage (Mt 20:17-28)*

- **Where** were the disciples and Jesus are going, and **what** was going to happen to Him there?
- **What** favor does Mrs. Zebedee ask of Jesus?
- **How** did the other disciples react to her request, and **why**?

- **Who** decides who sits where in the kingdom, and **what** are the criteria for this seating?
- How do these criteria differ from the world system (the Gentiles)?

#### IV. INTERPRETATION

Now we are ready to look at the *meaning* of this passage. Think carefully about the following questions as you refer back to your observations:

- How would you summarize the attitudes of Mrs. Zebedee and the disciples as they went to Jerusalem? What did they anticipate it would be like there (think about the meaning of "right hand and left hand"). **What** does this imply about their reasons for following Jesus?
- **What** did Jesus mean by "the cup?" (Note: we have the benefit of hindsight!) **What** did it involve in Jesus' life, and how was it later fulfilled in the disciples' lives? Is it a specific kind of service, an act, an attitude, or something else?
- Is it OK for me to desire to be honored in God's kingdom? Was the problem that the disciples wanted to be honored, or that they wanted to be honored now rather than when Christ returns?

Summarize in a sentence or two the *main point* of these verses. State it in terms of a *biblical principle* if possible. Write it in the space below.

*The principle of the passage:*

#### V. APPLICATION

Now you need to think about how this principle can be applied in your own life and ministry today. Think carefully about the following questions:

- **What** are my motives for serving Christ as a church planter? What do I hope to get out of it, and when?
- If my desire is to please Christ, how should my leadership differ from that of others around me? What specifically should I be doing in order to lead as a servant and to give my life for those Christ ransomed?

## **SUMMARY**

As you have worked through this passage, you should have answered the question, "What is Christian Leadership?" You also thought about what that would mean for you personally in your life and ministry. Now is the time to begin to pray to God for help in living that kind of life. Specifically ask Him to help you in those areas where you now see that you have weaknesses or wrong motives.





# Inductive Bible Study on Luke 15:1-7

---

*Note: This study is provided as a model of an inductive Bible study. If absolutely necessary, it may be used for the Workshop in Lesson 7.*

## INTRODUCTION

Have you ever lost something important? How did you feel? What did you do to try to find it? If you found it, how did you feel? In Luke 15, Jesus explained how He and His Father feel about God's "lost" children.

### I. PRAY

Begin the study by asking God to help you understand how these verses should affect your life, and your ministry of church planting.

### II. READ LUKE 15:1-7

Read the passage carefully and thoughtfully. One person can read it all, or you can divide the reading among the members of the study group.

### III. OBSERVATION

Look closely at the passage and try to discover what it says by answering the following questions:

*From the context (Lk 14:12-24)*

- **What** kind of people has Jesus been saying that we need to invite to come and associate with us and with the Lord (14:13, 23)?
- **How** might the illustration of worthless "salt" in verse 34 relate to those who are or are not inviting the lost to come to God?

*From the passage (Lk 15:1-7)*

- To **whom** was this parable addressed—the sinners or the religious Pharisees and teachers of the law (v. 3)? **What** do you know about this group?
- **What** was the complaint of the Pharisees and teachers of the law against Jesus?
- **How** many lost sheep are equal to **how many** sheep that are safe in the fold?
- **What** was the response of the shepherd to one lost sheep?



## **SUMMARY**

Throughout the history of the world, as recorded in the Scriptures, God has been seeking lost men to repent and return to Him. Christ left the glories of heaven and became a man in order to pay the price of our redemption and make our reconciliation to Him possible. He has left us with the command to fulfill the Great Commission by taking the message of the Gospel to everyone. What will be my contribution? Is the Lord calling me to plant a new church where the lost are perishing in ignorance of the Gospel? What should be my response?





BIBLE STUDY  
METHODS

7

LESSON

# Workshop On Leading Inductive Bible Studies

## Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to give the trainees "hands-on" supervised experience in leading an inductive Bible study.

## Main Points and Desired Outcomes

- The focus should be on discovery.
- Know how to lead an inductive Bible study.
- Know his or her strengths and weaknesses in leading the study.

## Appendix

7A Passages for Inductive Bible Studies

## Suggestions to Trainers

This 2-hour session is devoted to allowing the trainees to practice leading inductive Bible studies, and evaluating each other. Your job as the trainer is to get the groups organized, and then to circulate between them to listen to the presentations, and make sure the trainees are doing a fair and thorough job of working through the checklist after each study. Encourage the trainees to be honest, but positive.

## Suggestions for Mentoring Time

1. Read Philippians 3:13-14 and use it as a basis for your opening prayer time.
2. Personal Growth Question: What are your struggles as a leader?
3. Suggestions for discussion time:
  - Answer questions from previous lessons or homework.
  - Discuss the questions in the text and at the end of the chapter.
4. Homework Assignment: Read the next chapter and appendix.
5. Pray for ministry needs.

## WORKSHOP FORMAT

Each trainee should have prepared a brief inductive Bible study on a passage of his or her choosing. Ideally, trainees should take about 20 minutes to lead their study, followed by a 7-minute evaluation using the checklist included in this lesson. Since this is a 2-hour session, that means each group should have four people, so that each one can lead their study. Divide into as many groups of four as needed for the number of trainees. It might be a good idea to take a 5-minute break between the two hours.

As each trainee leads his study, he should remember that this is not a preaching session. The goal is **discovery**. The trainee should lead the group by asking questions that help the other trainees uncover the facts, meaning, and application for themselves. For this reason, the trainee who is leading should already have chosen a few helpful questions in each of the areas—**observation**, **interpretation**, and **application**. After each question is asked, allow time for finding the answer, and discussion. Encourage discussion, but limit the number of questions you ask so that you have time to move all the way through to application.

Remember to pray for enlightenment. This should not be just an exercise. The groups should see the passage clearly, and learn from it if the study is properly lead. This is a *real* study of the Scriptures, and each one should be encouraged from it. The difference from a 'normal' inductive Bible study is the 20-minute time limit. Usually, a personal inductive Bible study would take hours, or possibly days to adequately complete. A group study would normally require an hour, depending on the length of the passage chosen. 20-minutes is very brief, so you will not be able to cover all that you have learned in your preparation. It will, however, give you a good idea of what is involved in such a study.

This is not just an exercise. The groups should learn from the study.

Even the trainee who prepared the study should gain a clearer understanding through the eyes of the other trainees. Don't be discouraged if the group arrives at an understanding that is different from the leader's original one. This is normal and natural. We never fully plumb the depths of the Word. There is always more to learn.

### THE CHECKLISTS

There are four checklists included below, one for each of the four trainees in your group. Do not fill out the checklist during the Bible study. Rather, participate whole-heartedly in the discussion of the passage. Then, after each trainee has completed his or her study, circle the answers to each question in the right column of the checklist for that trainee.

After you have completed the checklist for the first trainee, take the remainder of that 30-minute segment to share your evaluations with that person as a group while they are fresh in your mind. Be honest, but also remember that this is their first attempt, and therefore, be encouraging.

There are two major areas of concern. The first is whether or not the study actually followed the inductive method, and whether you learned something from it. The second area is how well the leader of the study was able to guide the group to discovery through the use of good questions and appropriate discussion dynamics. If you have a helpful comment that is not covered by the twelve questions on the checklist, add that information to the "comments" section on the bottom of the checklist.

Move on to the second trainee and Bible study only when the group has finished with the evaluation of the first one. However, try to keep to the 30-minute limit so that the fourth trainee will have the full 30 minutes for the final study.

**Checklist 1: Trainee Name \_\_\_\_\_**

Evaluation Questions	Evaluation	
1. Did the study follow the inductive method—observation, interpretation & application?	Yes	No
2. Were the questions clear and understandable?	Yes	No
3. Did the questions help you to understand the passage better?	Yes	No
4. Did the leader allow the group to answer questions, rather than answer himself?	Yes	No
5. Did the leader feed questions the group asked back to the group?	Yes	No
6. Did the leader rephrase questions that were hard to understand?	Yes	No
7. Was the leader able to help all the members become involved in the discussion?	Yes	No
8. Was the leader able to keep anyone from dominating the discussion?	Yes	No
9. Did the leader summarize the things the group discovered in the study?	Yes	No
10. Did the leader allow the group and Scripture to correct any wrong answers?	Yes	No
11. Was the leader able to complete the whole study in the given time?	Yes	No
12. Did the leader open and close the study in prayer?	Yes	No
Comments:		

**Checklist 2: Trainee Name \_\_\_\_\_**

Evaluation Questions	Evaluation	
1. Did the study follow the inductive method—observation, interpretation & application?	Yes	No
2. Were the questions clear and understandable?	Yes	No
3. Did the questions help you to understand the passage better?	Yes	No
4. Did the leader allow the group to answer questions, rather than answer himself?	Yes	No
5. Did the leader feed questions the group asked back to the group?	Yes	No
6. Did the leader rephrase questions that were hard to understand?	Yes	No
7. Was the leader able to help all the members become involved in the discussion?	Yes	No
8. Was the leader able to keep anyone from dominating the discussion?	Yes	No
9. Did the leader summarize the things the group discovered in the study?	Yes	No
10. Did the leader allow the group and Scripture to correct any wrong answers?	Yes	No
11. Was the leader able to complete the whole study in the given time?	Yes	No
12. Did the leader open and close the study in prayer?	Yes	No
Comments:		

**Checklist 3: Trainee Name \_\_\_\_\_**

Evaluation Questions	Evaluation	
1. Did the study follow the inductive method—observation, interpretation & application?	Yes	No
2. Were the questions clear and understandable?	Yes	No
3. Did the questions help you to understand the passage better?	Yes	No
4. Did the leader allow the group to answer questions, rather than answer himself?	Yes	No
5. Did the leader feed questions the group asked back to the group?	Yes	No
6. Did the leader rephrase questions that were hard to understand?	Yes	No
7. Was the leader able to help all the members become involved in the discussion?	Yes	No
8. Was the leader able to keep anyone from dominating the discussion?	Yes	No
9. Did the leader summarize the things the group discovered in the study?	Yes	No
10. Did the leader allow the group and Scripture to correct any wrong answers?	Yes	No
11. Was the leader able to complete the whole study in the given time?	Yes	No
12. Did the leader open and close the study in prayer?	Yes	No
Comments:		

**Checklist 4: Trainee Name \_\_\_\_\_**

Evaluation Questions	Evaluation	
1. Did the study follow the inductive method—observation, interpretation & application?	Yes	No
2. Were the questions clear and understandable?	Yes	No
3. Did the questions help you to understand the passage better?	Yes	No
4. Did the leader allow the group to answer questions, rather than answer himself?	Yes	No
5. Did the leader feed questions the group asked back to the group?	Yes	No
6. Did the leader rephrase questions that were hard to understand?	Yes	No
7. Was the leader able to help all the members become involved in the discussion?	Yes	No
8. Was the leader able to keep anyone from dominating the discussion?	Yes	No
9. Did the leader summarize the things the group discovered in the study?	Yes	No
10. Did the leader allow the group and Scripture to correct any wrong answers?	Yes	No
11. Was the leader able to complete the whole study in the given time?	Yes	No
12. Did the leader open and close the study in prayer?	Yes	No
Comments:		

**SUMMARY**

This has been an exercise to help give you a taste of the dynamics of an inductive Bible study. This should be the beginning rather than the end. Inductive Bible study is the *best* method for learning from the Scriptures. The process allows you to reach new levels of truth and understanding, with the help of the Holy Spirit. This method is valuable for:

- Personal study
- Sermon preparation
- Sunday School classes
- Small groups
- Multiplying churches
- Evangelistic studies with unbelievers
- Mid-week church services
- One-on-one discipleship
- And many other uses, limited only by your creativity

**QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- How were these studies different than the Bible studies you have attended in the past?
- Did this method help you personally to learn? Do you think it would be effective with those you teach or lead? Why or why not?

**ACTION PLAN**

It is up to you to take the tools you now have, along with the evaluation by the other trainees of your ability to lead a study, and use them to enhance both your personal spiritual growth, and your ministry.

**BIBLE STUDY  
APPENDIX  
7A**

# Passages for Inductive Bible Studies

*The following passages can be used to develop inductive Bible studies about basic concepts of Christian life and faith. The trainee may use them with new believers, church meetings, one-on-one, etc.*

<b>The Authority of the Bible</b> Re 1:1-3 Lk 24:27-48 Ps 119:94-118 Ps 119:159-168 2Pe 1:19-21 1Pe 1:24-25 2Ti 3:14-17	<b>Evangelism</b> Mk 5:1-20 1Pe 3:15-16 2Co 3:1-3 Ac 22:1-21 Ac 4:1-20 Ac 18:24-28 Mk 16:9-20	<b>Forgiveness</b> Ge 45:4-15 Ps 103:2-18 Mt 6:12-15 Lk 15:11-32 Eph 4:31-32 Mk 11:24-26 Mt 18:21-35
<b>Prayer</b> Ps 55 Mt 26:36-44 Mt 6:5-13 Mt 5:44-48 Jas 5:13-18 Mk 11:20-26 Ro 8:26-28	<b>Giving</b> 2Co 8:1-5 2Co 9:6-11 Mk 10:17-23 1Jn 3:16-18 Mk 4:24-25 Mt 6:1-4 1Co 16:1-2	<b>New Life in Christ</b> 2Co 5:16-21 Jn 15:5-8 Gal 3:26-28 Ro 8:1-11 Php 3:7-11 Ro 6:3-11 Col 3:1-4
<b>Bible Study</b> De 17:18-20 Ps 1 Lk 4:1-13 Lk 4:14-21 Jos 1:7-9 Pr 2:1-5 Pr 4:20-22	<b>Temptation</b> Ro 6:1-14 Lk 4:1-13 He 2:17-18 1Co 10:13 Gal 6:1-11 Rev 3:7-11 Jas 1:12-15	<b>Self Discipline</b> Pr 6:6-11 1Pe 1:13-16 Jn 14:21 Ro 12:1-3 Col 3:15-17 Jas 1:19-25 Lk 6:47-49
<b>God's Plan for Living</b> Php 4:6-7 Pr 3:5-6 Pr 16 Ecc 2:1-26 Mt 4:18-23 Lk 22:39-42 Jas 4:1-10	<b>Repentance</b> Lk 5:29-32 Lk 13:1-9 2Pe 3:8-9 Isa 1:10-20 1Jn 1:8-10 Ac 26:20 Jnh 3:1-10	<b>Christian Fellowship</b> 1Th 5:11-15 Lk 22:24-27 Heb 10:24-25 Eph 1:15-23 Ro 12:3-16 Ac 12:5-19 Ac 2:38-47