

Church Multiplication Guide

The Miracle of Church Reproduction

George Patterson and Richard Scoggins

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PART 1

Congregations Multiply as Believers Obey Jesus' Commands

Chapter 01 Reproducing Churches-- the Quickest Way to Win Many People to Christ

Jesus compares your church's God-given power to grow and reproduce to that of plants, Mark 4.

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01A. Let us Acknowledge that Church Reproduction Is Normal

The purpose of this chapter is to clear away hindrances and let your church--or the church of those you train--to reproduce in the normal way, for these reasons:

- Reproducing churches is the quickest way to win many people to our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Jesus compares your church's God-given power to grow and reproduce to that of plants, in Mark 4.
- He intends his kingdom to be reproductive, and has given us a part in this process. If your church--or the church of those you train--has home groups, this guide should help them multiply, too.

May God strengthen your vision and resolve to help your church--or the church of those you train--to multiply locally and in neglected fields.

Now, let us introduce to you a person from whom you will hear many times in the future— Mr. '**Traditionalist**'. He is fictitious but you will meet people like him often. He clings to old, man-made traditions. If he were standing nearby now listening to us talk about church reproduction, you would hear him scoff...

"What? Our congregation should start new churches? You're dreaming! That would bring about too many changes in our church routine and upset the smooth course we've been following for so long!"

But another voice interrupts him. Mr. '**Foresight**' loves to follow God's Word. He answers Mr. **Traditionalist**...

"Please don't tie us down with your old traditions! We have people in our congregation who have the apostolic gift. They are our 'sent ones' with itchy feet. God gave them to us to carry our church's spiritual DNA to reproduce it elsewhere! Don't clip their wings!"

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' continues arguing, "But it's our job—our whole job— simply to teach God's Word. If God wants new churches to be born elsewhere, He is all-powerful and will do it without our help!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' responds, "You just stated a serious error that many Christians embrace. They use God's Word only as the *content* of their preaching or teaching. They fail to use the New Testament as the norm for where to send our workers, how to evangelize, how to organize churches so that all believers use their gifts in some ministry, and how to train leaders. As a result, many clear New Testament activities that are vital for church or cell reproduction have been replaced by some spiritual-sounding tradition that stifles it."

"Tradition?" Mr. '**Traditionalist**' exclaims, " In our churches? Impossible! Only Roman Catholic churches have traditions!"

"No," Mr. '**Foresight**' clarifies, "All churches have traditions. The difference is that the Catholics admit it! We're human, too. A *tradition* normally begins for worthy and godly reasons. But in time, the need passes or a good thing is taken to excess. The tradition evolves into a gentle *sacred cow*. Then, as history shows, the cow becomes fertile and breeds a large herd with angry, bellowing bulls! The sacred cows now start to gore God's prophets who call His people back to New Testament norms! They trample biblical guidelines for normal church body life! But when we recognize the brutes for what they are, it's rather fun to slay the sacred cows!"

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' argues, "A church planting movement would require that we spend huge amounts of money to help churches or cells multiply. That multiplication happens only in other cultures, under rare conditions."

Mr. '**Foresight**' replies wisely, "Not so, friend. Let's uncover a truth about church reproduction that Satan tries to hide. It costs less money and effort to start the kind of church that multiplies, than it does to start a more traditional, sterile church! People who do not know church history argue that to multiply churches we must have a lot of money, higher education, big organization, highly experienced leaders, and many costly buildings. But observation of many church planting movements, in the past and also today, show that this is not so. Let us replace this fear with fact. In general, churches multiply more readily where money and other things men associate with power are lacking."

Churches that reproduce rapidly in daughter and granddaughter churches do so through the power that God gives them, and do not rely on money. Those who do most of the work seldom have academic degrees. Church multiplication requires no institutions apart from the churches. It does not depend on powerful leaders. Ordinary people can do God's work when they simply obey Jesus' commands in love and are enabled by the Spirit of God.

There are many examples of spontaneous church multiplication-- church planting movements--happening among people of all major culture groups. It happens by God's power wherever we find good soil for church growth. What is good soil? For genuine church growth—that is, growth through conversion—good soil is bad people! Where sin abounds, grace abounds even more (Romans 5:20). Church multiplication is happening, to some degree, within every major religion and cultural category, although some people groups within them are still highly resistant.

Please take a moment now to think and pray about how you will plan with your coworkers to help your people see that church multiplication--or a church planting movement--is normal in God's view.

01B. God Makes His Kingdom on Earth Grow by Both Addition and Multiplication

We see church growth by both addition and multiplication in the book of Acts:

- Acts 2:41 tells about growth by addition: 3,000 new believers were added by baptism to the new church in Jerusalem.
- Throughout the Book of Acts, growth starts with a small seed, a new believer or his family, or a few people who formed a powerful core.
- God soon enables them to spread the Good News through their network of relatives and friends. God then adds these new believers to the small core.
- Acts chapters 8, 10, 13, 14 and 16 tell about growth by multiplication. God causes small groups to multiply as nuclei around which addition easily takes place.
- The church—through its apostles or 'sent ones'—soon penetrates other social networks, near and far, to reproduce itself.

- This process leads to more and more increase as daughter and granddaughter churches were born and reproduced thirty, sixty and a hundred times, like the grain in Jesus' parable of the farmer.

Today also, a healthy church multiplies because:

- It is the living body of Christ and should normally reproduce as more churches are born.
- God gives to every obedient church his power to multiply, just as He gives it to all other living things that He has created the power to reproduce after their own kind.
- We emphasize the word "multiplication", because church growth by both addition and reproduction is more strategic and biblical than is growth only by addition.

Please take a moment now to think and pray how you will help your people to see that God uses growth by both addition and multiplication, to spread His kingdom on earth.

01C. Keep Church Planting Simple!

Lord, help us to discern between those things that are merely helpful and those that are essential!

Many traditions, especially Westerner ones, can hinder church multiplication:

- Often these traditions are activities that are beneficial under certain circumstances, but take the place of other activities that are far more important.
- We could list hundreds of helpful things to start churches, but we can count on our fingers and toes those few essential things that make the difference between reproductive churches and sterile ones. Blessed is the Christian worker who knows the difference!
- The purpose of this Guide is to help you to build your ministry on those universal New Testament principles that God blesses consistently in different cultures.
- These New Testament principles take on surprisingly different forms as the Holy Spirit leads workers to apply them in distinct ways, in different cultures, to multiply churches.

Lord, help us to discern what is truly important in your sight, to multiply churches among our people.

01D. Pray and Plan with Coworkers to Multiply

Picture how churches often grow, from this example of Kim:

First, Kim puts his faith in Jesus.

Then, with prayer support, he wins his parents.
Next, Kim's parents win his brothers and sisters.
Then Kim's brothers and sisters win their friends.
Soon these friends quickly win their family members.
Within a few weeks these family members win friends in other places.
From then on, those friends form new churches, and Jesus' work spreads.

Such natural flow of the gospel happens when certain conditions are in place. Some of these conditions are beyond our control; they are in God's hands alone. Other conditions are within our reach; they are the things that God has revealed in His Word for us to do. We must do what we can do and must leave to God his supernatural work. Among the things that we can do are to pray and to work closely together with others. Neither Jesus nor His apostles worked alone.

As you learn the New Testament principles presented in this Guide, please, share them with your coworkers, then pray and plan together. Plan activities that your coworkers and their churches will do, not merely what you personally will do. Prepare them to think seriously about church or cell multiplication. This Guide is designed for you and your coworkers to help you to apply principles to your ministries.

01E. Keep Records and Review Progress

Plan for church reproduction and chart your churches' progress. Know which of your churches or cells grow and reproduce, and notice what they do. Know which churches or cells fail to grow and reproduce, and find out why not.

Churches reproduce if their leaders make plans that are easy to explain and to implement:

- Man-made traditions are an enemy of church reproduction. Often church leaders respond to an urgent need by establishing programs or requirements that help for a time. But if they continue long after the need is met, then they become hollow traditions that absorb resources like a sponge and make church planting a heavy burden.
- Honest evaluation detects and eliminates from the church body these parasitic growths.
- Many pastors have greatly improved their ministries by spending a few hours keeping records and reviewing what has happened.

Lord, give us courage to examine our church's traditions and compare them carefully with the corresponding activities in your Word.

01F. Let New Church Planters Practice in the Mother Church the Skills They Will Need

Leaders acquire more church planting skills by working as a body with others, than from lectures or books—including this book. They cannot learn these skills in a classroom where you

use only the gift of teaching. They will best acquire skills within an obedient congregation. If you hope to be an exception, prepare for failure, for you might as well try to learn high diving in the same classroom.

You might find it helpful to train leaders to work another culture in a *temporary training church*:

- They practice doing things in the way they will need to do them in the other culture.
- To form a temporary training church, name temporary elders, lay hands on them and pray for them.
- Meet with these elders to plan the worship that they will lead in small groups.
- Then start doing the activities described in each chapter of this Guide, including celebrating Communion.
- Let everyone in the group serve one another in love with their different spiritual gifts.
- Let the Holy Spirit harmonize their gift-based ministries in a living church body in love, as described in 1 Corinthians 12 and 13.

Cross-cultural church planters need "stretching". God stretched Peter in Acts 10 by telling him to eat unclean food. This prepared him to spend several days eating food not allowed by Jewish law while in Cornelius' gentile home. Let the temporary training church stretch you and your apprentice missionaries. The strain of doing so will reveal tensions that everyone faces when adapting to another culture. Make your mistakes now where they will not do permanent damage!

Church planters who go to a different culture need to practice the *Essential Elements of Worship*:

- Prayer
- Praise
- Teaching the Word of God
- Confession of sins with assurance of forgiveness
- Communion, in Lord's Supper
- Giving
- Fellowship

These are dealt with in detail in Chapter 07.

Church planters need to know what these essential elements are, in order not to confuse them with external worship forms that have evolved in their own culture. They will learn to discern them in a temporary training church as they adapt worship to a small group without electronic sound, skilled musicians or a large sanctuary.

The value of church-centered training will become more apparent as you work with a training church. You will not only learn the skills for church reproduction but will also experience the kind of church life that sustains normal reproduction.

Lord, help us to take this training seriously, and have the courage to introduce new ways of learning.

01G. Recognize and Replace Traditions that Stifle Church Reproduction

Most traditions are good. We must recognize those that are bad. As you read this Guide, please examine prayerfully your church's traditions. You will probably find that some of them hinder what Jesus and His apostles require you to do. Those bad traditions may include the following church practices:

- organizational structures that hinder normal church body life and the harmony of gift-based ministries,
- evangelistic methods and follow-up procedures that do not lead to faith,
- Christian education methods that ignore families,
- worship practices that are impossible for small groups,
- worldly church spending priorities and attitudes toward money,
- an academically-oriented leadership training philosophy,
- resistance to formation of small groups and to their activities,
- ignoring the church's responsibility in missionary placement ,
- poor mission agency management as it deals with spiritual gifts,
- unbalanced ministry team or task group formation,
- lack of authentic inter-church cooperation,
- insensitive or unwise corrective disciplinary policies,
- leading in a way that is more culturally determined than scriptural.

Please ask God's help now for you and your coworkers, to courageously change any practice that is not His first preference.

Chapter 02 -- Obeying Jesus' Commands

Jesus says if we love Him, we will obey His commands (John 14:15)

Sections in this Chapter 02

02A. Why We Aim First for Childlike Obedience to Jesus

02B. Know and Obey Jesus' Commands before All Else

02C. Help New Believers to Obey Jesus Without Delay

02D. Measure Growth in Christ as He Did, By Loving Obedience

02E. Consider Man-made Church Policies to be Temporary

02F. Discern Three Levels of New Testament Authority for what Your Church Does

02A. Why We Aim First for Childlike Obedience to Jesus

Jesus said, "If you love me, obey my commands" John 14:15. (NIV)

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' complains, "Don't say that word 'obey!' That's legalism. You force us to live under law instead of grace. It's like training dogs to obey our commands. We aren't animals that need a whip! Don't cage me in!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' answers wisely, "Your own fear of rules will cage you in! Jesus' commands are liberating. If you neglect them, you will soon find yourself caged in by man-made laws that are really confining."

Find in Acts 2:36-41 what 3,000 new believers did in obedience to Jesus, before being baptized and being added to the church:

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." with many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (NIV)

Find in verses 42-47 of the same account what the new believers did in obedience to Jesus immediately after baptism:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (NIV)

Ask God now to help you and your coworkers to set an example of loving, childlike obedience to our beloved King and Savior.

02B. Know and Obey Jesus' Commands before All Else

The most important thing we can do to help congregations to multiply is to obey our Lord Jesus Christ in childlike faith and love. Church planters have often reported that obeying Jesus'

commands above and before all else makes their work easier and their congregations are stronger. God blesses our loving, faithful obedience more than He does anything else.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' doesn't like this. "Our organization's policies come first!"

"For you, maybe," Mr. '**Foresight**' answers. "We have a decision to make. It will determine whether or not God can use us to make our congregations healthy and to make them multiply. Will we put the Lord Jesus Christ and His clear commands before all else? Will we build our plans, activities, and commitments upon obedience to His will—to the things he taught us to do?"

Jesus ordered his followers to do many things; we can group them under seven basic commands. In Acts 2 we see the 3,000 new believers of the first New Testament church obeying all of them in their basic form. Please memorize these basic commands, because they are the foundation upon which we build our lives, our teaching and our ministry:

Basic Commands of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus commanded many things; we can summarize them as seven basic commands. In Acts chapter 2, read how the 3,000 new believers of the first New Testament church started obeying all of these commands in their basic form. Please, memorize these basic commands, because they are the foundation upon which we must build our lives, our teaching and our ministry.

- **Repent**, believe, and receive God's Holy Spirit (be "born of the Spirit"), Mark 1:15; John 3:5-7, 16; 20:22.
- **Baptize** new believers and teach them to live the new life it initiates, which includes our continuing transformation, Matthew 28:18-20.
- **Love** God, neighbors, fellow disciples and those in need in a practical way and enemies, by forgiving them, Matthew 22:36-40; John 13:34-35; Luke 10:25-37 and Matthew 5:43-48.
- **Break bread** (in Holy Communion) and do all that is related to worship, Matthew 26:26-28; John 4:24.
- **Pray** in Jesus' name in private and with family members and other believers, and do intercession and spiritual warfare, John 16:24.
- **Give**, practice stewardship of your time, treasure and talents, Luke 6:38.
- **Make disciples** (by witnessing about what you know Christ has done, shepherding God's people, studying and applying God's Word to people's lives, training leaders, sending missionaries) Matthew 28:18-20.

Please take a moment now to plan to obey these commands of our Lord.

We also obey Jesus when we observe His apostles' commands, for they spoke and wrote with inspired authority from Christ. The commands in their letters, however, are not basic in the same way as Jesus' commands are. They are for believers already baptized and under pastoral

care in a church. In this sense they are not the "rock" on which we build our lives. Rather they are expansions of Jesus' basic commands, written for leaders and believers who have already established the foundation of obedience in love to the Lord Jesus Christ.

You may discover, as many others have, that obeying Jesus first brings on painful controversy. When churches begin to multiply, more traditional leaders see it as a threat. Where the work begins growing and they cannot control it, they may criticize you vigorously. If you plan for God to use you as an instrument to multiply churches, then get ready to dodge darts!

You may feel insecure at first and be tempted to ask, "Are we doing God's will?" Some may say no. Who is to say what is right or wrong? Christian brothers whom we love may sometimes oppose us! Others will follow whoever shout loudest, have the most money or schooling, or are higher in the organization. If you find yourself in this shaky position, tell your critics, "We are obeying Jesus' commands and imitating his apostles--Do you prefer that we obey and imitate you instead?"

You can rest assured that you are on solid ground when you are obeying Jesus, the divine Head of the church, as in Colossians 1:15-20. Let the critics say what they may!

We obey our Lord because we love Him because of what he did and does for us. He said, "If you love me, obey my commands" (John 14:15). Consider Jesus' claim on our obedience. During His incarnation on earth He did so many miracles and good works that many people believed that He was the promised Messiah. A few ventured to say He was the Son of God. Because of this, the supreme court of Judea arrested Him and tried Him as a criminal for blasphemy. The high priest asked Him, "Are you the Son of the Blessed?"

Everything hung on Jesus' answer. Though he knew it meant death, he spoke the most earth-shaking truth ever uttered by a human on this planet—a clear "I AM" (the most holy NAME of the living God).

That ended the trial! The high priest tore his robes in fury. Immediately the council condemned Jesus to death. This made His resurrection doubly significant; it proved that He is who He said He is.

Shortly before His ascension to glory, on the basis of His proven deity, our risen Lord commanded His followers, "All authority is given to me.... Therefore make disciples of all nations.. teaching them to obey all that I have commanded" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Making disciples includes training new believers to obey Jesus' basic commands.

Healthy churches develop when we practice loving obedience to the commands of Him who has "all authority in heaven and earth." The apostles started the first New Testament church in Jerusalem while the master's great commission still rang in their ears. "Make disciples of all nations." That means all peoples. "Teaching them to obey all my commands." The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost and gave the apostles and new believers the power to obey; they did exactly what Jesus said to do (Acts 2). They started making disciples with a nation, a people group, their own Jewish countrymen, by instructing them to obey all of Jesus' commands. The 3,000 new believers in the first New Testament church started doing all that our Lord Jesus Christ commanded without delay:

- They repented, believed and received the Holy Spirit.
- They immediately confirmed this with baptism.

- They celebrated the Lord's Supper, in homes.
- They loved God and one another, with fervent fellowship.
- They prayed.
- They gave generously.
- They made disciples, devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and witnessed to others.

The new church—which was a cluster of house churches, or what some would call "cells"—was obeying all of Jesus' commands in their basic form. Such obedience did not occur by chance. The apostles taught the new believers from the very beginning to obey Him. This, then, must be our model for basic discipleship training.

The activities in Acts, like the commands in the Epistles, are built on the basic commands of our risen Lord. Our obedience establishes Jesus as the Head of our church. All ministries required by the New Testament build upon these commands of Christ. For example, Paul's command to Titus to establish elders in Crete (Titus 1:5), grew out of Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations; the apostle delegated it to his disciple Titus who then named and trained the new elders. Paul's letter to Titus gave him detailed instructions for these elders. No totally new commands appear in the Epistles; everything the apostles tell us to do grows out of Jesus' original commands, applying them to new situations.

There is no other foundation for Christ's church than obeying Him in faith and love, by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is what the Word of God requires. Jesus is the Rock. Only our loving, faithful obedience to the divine Head of our church lays the true groundwork for normal growth and reproduction of congregations of true believers.

Please take a moment now to memorize the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to plan to teach your people to obey all them.

02C. Help New Believers to Obey Jesus Without Delay

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' says, 'We can't baptize new believers until they are thoroughly grounded in all Bible doctrine.'

"No, friend," Mr. '**Foresight**' replies wisely, "That makes them 'hearers only' of the Word of God. James 1:22 tells us not to be hearers only but doers of the Word. For new, repentant believers, obedience starts with baptism, as in Acts 2:36-42."

Baptism has two dimensions; new believers enter into a new relationship with God and into a new relationship with other believers (Acts 2:41-47).

Baptizing adults initiates them into the body-life of the church; they become part of a loving body. An isolated hermit, although devoutly religious, cannot carry out the basic commands of Christ.

A heavy emphasis on doctrinal teaching as the initial foundation, without a corresponding application of loving obedience, reflects not Kingdom truth but the crippling rationalism of

Western cultures of the 20th century. Nothing must take precedence for a new believer over loving, faithful, childlike obedience to our loving Lord.

Without such obedience to Jesus Christ, Christian workers only follow church traditions, rules, and human scruples that stifle church growth and reproduction. Especially in new fields that lack a model for a well-organized church and mature pastors, inexperienced leaders often emphasize non-essentials. They seek subsidies and control God's people with non-biblical rules for ordination, baptism, marriage, evangelism, church planting and even pastoral training.

A church planter who emphasizes knowledge over obedience rarely cultivates church body-life, in which disciples serve one another in love. He looks for understanding rather than obedience. Seeing potential leaders' limited comprehension of the Word, he distrusts their ability to lead and over-controls the new church, stifling the local workers' initiative thereby creating a crippling legalism. Instead, he must have patience with new churches and new leaders, and let them take their "baby steps."

This means that you must make disciples in a New Testament way. If you teach new believers to obey Jesus, they will give major importance to love as Jesus and His apostles did. This enables their church right away to be healthy and to reproduce. It might not be easy; you may first have to overcome barriers to love in your own life. But if you trust the Lord, then He will empower you and your coworkers to reproduce churches and invade their area of world for the Lord Jesus!

Church reproduction in the power of the Spirit of God means that our churches' activities rest fully on the commands of Jesus. New churches simply and purposefully do what He said to do. They follow the example of His apostles, who taught their disciples obedience.

We endanger the spiritual life of a newborn babe in Christ, if we force upon him the "heavy meat" of detailed Bible doctrines before he learns basic obedience in love. Such doctrinal learning invites pride. It is like building a new house before laying its foundation! The Holy Spirit's power to transform the new believers in Acts 2 was evident in their immediate, loving obedience. To make loving and active disciples in a truly biblical way, you must teach obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ before all else. True disciples obey Him at once without argument or discussion. For example, baptism, as practiced by the apostles, came immediately after conversion. It was not a graduation ceremony following a long time of indoctrination and probation. Healthy, normal church reproduction results from disciples who, before all else, obey in love the commands of Him who has all authority in heaven and earth.

A church does not vote to see if it will obey one of Jesus' commands:

- To vote would put the authority of the majority in our church above that of Almighty God!
- His church is not a democracy; it is a monarchy—a kingdom.
- We obey Jesus' commands simply and directly, like a child would, in love. To obey for other motives is legalism, which God condemns in Romans 13:8-10 and 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.
- Jesus summarized the Old Testament law, including the Ten Commandments, in the dual command to love God and our neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40).

As disciples begin to obey the basic commands of our Lord, barriers to obedience appear in their attitudes and feelings. As they honestly face these, confess and repent, their obedience leads to deeper love for God and their neighbors. As we practice loving church body life, any lack of love becomes apparent, more evident toward our visible brothers than toward our invisible God, although our love for both grows together.

Please ask God now to give you the strength to overcome the devil's temptations to delay obedience to all that our Lord and Savior commands.

02D. Measure Growth in Christ as He Did, By Loving Obedience

You can evaluate the spiritual growth of a new church in two ways:

First, you can measure progress in obeying the commands of Jesus and His apostles, beginning with baptism of repentant believers, as in Acts 2:41 and Hebrews 5:11-6:12. Do not count non-baptized believers as church members. That would be contrary to apostolic practice and make it impossible to evaluate accurately our evangelism methods.

Second, you can measure progress in mobilizing more mature members for gift-based ministries, to edify each other in love, as in Ephesians 4:1-16.

The amount of Bible knowledge a believer has accumulated is not a valid measure of growth. Members of false cults sometimes know much of the Scriptures. True believers can also attend good churches and know the Word, but fail to live it as they should. Obedient new believers sometimes, after a few weeks, show more maturity in their understanding and conduct than others do who have heard the Word for years.

A healthy church body harnesses its different spiritual gifts to multiply daughter churches within a responsive people group. Trust God to give to your church people whom He has gifted to be apostles who will reproduce it. Others will have other gifts; an effective church planting effort will sooner or later need workers gifted for leadership, evangelism, training pastors, mercy ministry and healing.

Lord, help us to measure our growth not by people's praise for us or how well we speak, but by our obedience to your commands.

02E. Consider Man-made Church Policies to be Temporary

We must recognize which of the rules for our churches are of God and which ones are from men. Men need to make rules in order to work together, but these rules must not be confused with those that come from God's Word. If we confuse them, the resulting failure to obey God will keep a church or cell from reaching its maximum potential for shepherding and reproducing.

The reason for the church's existence, according to Jesus' mandate, is to make, in and be obedient disciples. This takes precedence over all other policies and plans. We need human rules, of course, to maintain order. We agree on temporary policies for orderly organization and

operation. A congregation needs to know where to meet and at what time, who will do this or that, and dozens of other routine decisions. We erase these human regulations, however, when conditions change or a need is dealt with. Otherwise they become permanent traditions—sacred cows that stand with their horns lowered, threatening simple obedience to Christ and the freedom that grows from it.

Three common but erroneous assumptions produce three paralyzing policies:

First is the myth that it is spiritual to delay the commissioning of new workers to start new churches or cells. The fearful ask, "Don't we need a strong home base first?"

Second is the temptation to focus all resources on that part of the Lord's work over which we have control. The shortsighted worry, "We lack funds to meet our own needs, let alone those of a new church!"

Third is the fear that love for Christ and doctrinal purity will gradually grow weaker in a chain reaction of new churches—daughter church, grand-daughters, great-granddaughters, and so on. The timid wonder, "Won't false beliefs creep in?"

This fear of corruption is normal. We want our children to be healthy; we want our new churches to be doctrinally sound. But the real source of sound doctrine is not human control but loyalty to Christ. Failing to see this, we organize so that any multiplication to extend from our own church reaches out like spokes from one hub—no granddaughter churches. We try to control it all. We assume that the church where we are in control is somehow superior to all later churches in the chain. We assume that God gives the Holy Spirit to other churches in a lesser amount! But Jesus reminds us that a grain of wheat produces a new plant with the same potential as its parent. The same principle of reproducing after its own kind applies to churches in His kingdom, as illustrated in Mark 4. New churches have the same potential, the same love for Christ and the Word. History shows that normal church multiplication in itself does not lead to doctrinal error, and that sterile churches and old seminaries far more often fall prey to it. Doctrinal error comes when churches put man's customs ahead of God's rules:

Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." (NIV)

Lord, help us to act not because of fear of men's criticism, but out of simple love for you.

02F. Discern Three Levels of New Testament Authority for what Your Church Does

There are three levels of authority for what churches do. They are:

- commands of Jesus and His apostles, which have highest authority,
- New Testament practices that were not commanded but are biblical examples, which we are free to follow,

- human customs, which have only the authority that a local congregation gives them.

Wise trainers discern these three levels of authority for church activities. They establish the authority for what we do. We help our people to discern these three levels of authority:

1. New Testament commands form the basis of discipleship training and ministry. We obey them above and before all else.
2. New Testament practices, though not commanded, serve as examples, which we might or might not follow, depending on circumstances. For example, Paul had Timothy circumcised in Lystra in (Acts 16) out of respect for Jewish culture, but spoke harshly to the Galatians against doing it, because in that Gentile culture it led to legalism.
3. Human traditions not mentioned in the New Testament should be followed with even more caution, because they can hinder obedience to real commands. Most traditions are sometimes good. A church cannot function without established customs. For example, a congregation agrees on when and where to meet; that is a necessary human regulation and therefore a good tradition. A problem arises when a church fails to see such traditions as man-made and temporary, or forces their own customs on other churches.

Most church divisions stem from power-hungry people who emphatically require a human tradition or an apostolic practice that was not commanded, in order to gain a following. They place it on the level of a command by emphasizing it more than God's commands, or over-emphasizing the organization's rules or bylaws. Painful divisions and discouragement grow out of dogmatic attitudes toward non-biblical requirements for worship, church procedures, membership, baptism, dress, ordination, pastoral training, and other things. A church or mission can cancel spontaneous, loving obedience to Jesus by confusing His authority with man-made rules.

Examples of 'second level' New Testament practices that were not specifically commanded for everybody include these:

Laying on of hands to confer the Holy Spirit,
 Speaking in tongues and the exercise of other sign gifts,
 Sharing material goods in common,
 Using one common cup at the Lord's Supper,
 Celebrating the Lord's Supper in homes each Sunday,
 Baptizing immediately.

Do not demand that everybody follow these apostolic practices; only Christ has the authority to make such universal laws for His church. However, since the apostles practiced them we cannot prohibit them to everybody. People are free to do as the apostles did, when it is practical.

Following are some common human customs or traditions, not found in the New Testament. These can help make disciples in some cultures but hinder doing so in others:

Christian education programs that segregate young people by age,
 Pulpits, loudspeakers, pianos, organs, televised worship,
 A public invitation to raise hands or come forward to accept Christ,
 Discipline of correction by exclusion from communion for a period of time,

Specific styles of pulpit lectures, sermons,
Preparing leaders in an academic institution outside of the church,
Professional, paid church staff members,
Highly-promoted, institutional mission agencies,
Ordination prerequisites that go beyond what Scripture requires,
Defining with a constitution and bylaws how many persons are to serve in certain offices and for how long.

Human customs should receive lowest priority. One must not demand them as a pagan king would by lording it over his subjects. We agree upon them in love. We follow them if they edify and discard them when they hinder obedience to Jesus. They become dangerous when they become institutionalized, achieve much popular attention, attract a financial contributions or are supported by civil law or the power of a large organization that seeks its own advancement.

Some Christian workers stifle spontaneous reproduction of churches in new fields when they embrace non-biblical policies for:

confirming conversion,
naming and training new pastors or elders,
the Lord's Supper, baptism, and marriage,
organizing new churches,
control from the outside, especially with foreign funds.

Please take a moment now to pray and plan how you will arrange with your coworkers to help your people to discern and obey the New Testament commands.

Chapter 03 -- Proclaiming Repentance--Dying to Sin to Serve God with a Holy Life

Our Lord Jesus Christ requires His followers to turn from their sins and follow Him.

Sections in this Chapter 03

03A. Help your People to See How Importance Christ and His Apostles Considered Repentance to Be

03B. Require What Jesus Said for Salvation, to Repent and Believe

03A. Help your People to See How Important Christ and His Apostles Considered Repentance to Be.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said. "The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" Mark 1:15 (NIV)

The purpose of this chapter is to show the importance that God's Word gives to repentance. Jesus requires His followers to have a change of heart--to turn from their sins and follow Him. This means to die to sin and serve God in holiness of life. You will learn why Jesus commands it and how people do it with God's help.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' does not like the word repentance. He complains, "Repentance is for people who want to save themselves by their own good works. Don't make it hard for seekers. A simple *decision* is enough!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' answers, "Then why does the New Testament not mention decisions? And why does Jesus, in Luke 24:46-48, command us to call people of all nations to repent in order to receive His forgiveness?"

The time has come," Jesus said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" Mark 1:15 (NIV).

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. You are witnesses of these things." Luke 24:46-48 (NIV). "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NIV)

"Receive the Holy Spirit." John 20:22 (NIV)

Find in Luke 24:45-51, which parallels Jesus' great commission in Matthew 28:18-20, answers to these two questions:

What two central historical facts are we to proclaim as we evangelize?

What requirement for forgiveness are we to proclaim to all nations?

He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 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. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." When He had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up his hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven. Luke 24:45-54 (NIV)

Jesus' resurrection, his return from death to life, is an essential part of the gospel proclamation, as is the need to repent. It is a mistake to omit any of these vital elements from a gospel presentation. Jesus explained His Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations in different words at different times before He ascended to glory. Find other vital elements of our witness for Him in John chapter 20 and Acts chapter 1: Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." and with

that He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." John 20:21-23 (NIV)

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 1:8 (NIV)

Take a moment now to consider how you will help your people to understand the importance of repentance.

03B. Require What Jesus Said for Salvation, to *Repent* and *Believe*

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' is whispering in your ear, "All you need to do to be saved is make a *decision*."

"Is it?" Mr. '**Foresight**' replies. "If so, then something so eternally important would be mentioned at least once in Scripture. But it is not. Jesus and the apostles emphasized in many ways for new believers of all nations, that they must repent. It is very specific in Luke 24:46-48 and Acts 11:18."

Some modern theologians weaken God's command to repent. They say that repentance is no longer required for salvation, that this would be salvation by works. We all agree that we are not saved by works. But we certainly are saved for works, as taught in Ephesians 2:8-10. Those theologians claim that where the Bible calls sinners to repent to be saved, it was for Jews in a "transitional age" shifting from the Old Testament to the New. But Jesus, in His Great Commission in Luke 24:46-48, commanded His followers to proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name to all nations. In Acts 11:18, Peter also said clearly that Gentiles must repent to be saved. He still taught this years later, in 2 Peter 3:9. Paul likewise required Gentiles to repent to be saved Acts 20:21; 26:20). He wrote to Gentiles, "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

One part of repentance is that we "die with Jesus to sin". Another part of repentance is that we participate in his new resurrection life by faith (Romans 6:1-14). Only to die to sin, even to arrive at becoming completely free of sin, would only bring us up to the level of a material object or an irrational animal, as a rock or toad is sinless! We would still need God's love and an ongoing transformation into the image of Christ.

Christian workers sometimes use traditional methods that are not taught in Scripture when doing personal evangelism or leading evangelistic campaigns with mass meetings. They report that it is easy to get people to make decisions but hard to find them afterwards. Evangelists cannot help churches to multiply after using such evangelism methods. They must rethink what conversion really is. In some cases they must ask their coworkers not to report as new believers those who had merely made a decision or raised a hand to "accept" Jesus. Such decisions seldom embrace real repentance.

According to the Bible, God forgives and saves people only when they obey the Lord's commands to repent, believe, and receive the Holy Spirit, as in Mark 1:15; John 20:22; Acts 2:38. These three things happen together:

- We cannot do one without the other two; they are all part of true spiritual conversion.
- To repent and believe means we turn from sin and follow our risen Savior Jesus in childlike faith. This requires the work of the Spirit of God within us.
- There is no other way to be saved from the consequence of our sin, which is eternal judgment (Acts 4:12; Revelation 20:11-15).

Pastors are to mobilize their people to witness for Christ with the power that Jesus promised (Acts 1:8). Upon receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the apostles witnessed with power. They called the people in Jerusalem to repent, to believe and to confirm it with baptism. Obedient missionaries and their disciples witness in a way that brings repentance and faith to those who have not yet believed the Good News. New believers must soon learn about the value of Jesus' death and resurrection for them and their families, as we see in Luke 24:44-48; John 11:25-26 and Acts 16:31.

What are the essential parts of our witness for Christ? What must a gospel message proclaim? What Good News brought faith and repentance by the power of the Spirit in the apostolic church? The apostle Peter proclaimed, as Jesus commanded in Luke 24:44-48, the following truths, when he witnessed for Christ in Acts chapter 2:

- Who Jesus is: a man accredited by God who did miracles; He is the Lord and Messiah, as in Acts 2:22-36.
- The value of his death for us: it brings forgiveness, as in Acts 2:23, 38.
- The value of his resurrection for us: it provides victory, life through God's Holy Spirit, eternal salvation, as in Acts 2:24-36 and 1 Corinthians 15.
- Our necessary response: repentance, faith in Jesus, baptism, being added to a community of believers, as in Acts 2:38-41.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will call unbelievers and people who are Christians in name only to repent--to die to sin and let the Holy Spirit bring Jesus into their hearts.

Chapter 04 -- Confirming Repentance and Salvation with Baptism

Jesus commands newborn believers to die with Him to sin and rise to new, holy, eternal life, by means of the ceremony of baptism.

Sections in this Chapter 04

04A. Baptize New Believers in Obedience to Jesus.

04B. Confirm Salvation with Baptism without Excessive Delay.

04C. Assure Newly Baptized Believers of Jesus' Loving Presence and the Indwelling Holy Spirit.

04A. Baptize New Believers in Obedience to Christ

When Jesus had risen from the dead, he came to his disciples 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." Matthew 28:18-20

The purpose of this chapter 4 is to explain why our Lord Jesus Christ commands us to confirm repentance and salvation with baptism, and why we must not add non-biblical requirements for it. He requires newborn believers to die with Him to sin and rise to new, holy, eternal life, by means of the ceremony of baptism.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' worries, "Do not baptize that new believer so soon! He may just fall away!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' disagrees, "He will more likely fall away, if we delay baptizing him as long as you want us to! It would discourage him!"

The apostle Peter told the seekers at Pentecost, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38

Find in Matthew 3:4-10 and Luke 3:10-14, below, what kind of people John baptized--those who felt they were good enough to deserve it, or bad enough to need it?

John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. (Matthew 3:4-10)

"What should we do then?" the crowd asked.

John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same."

Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

"Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?” He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely-be content with your pay.” (Luke 3:10-14)

Find in Acts 8:26-39 *who* was baptized, *how soon*, and *by whom*:

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road-the desert road-that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.”

So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

“How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. who can speak of his descendants? for his life was taken from the earth.” the eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?”

Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?”

Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.”

The eunuch answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” and he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

Please take a moment now if you have neglected baptisms, to plan to obey Jesus.

04B. Confirm Salvation with Baptism without Excessive Delay

Inexperienced pastors often delay baptism out of mistaken caution. They want to be careful. But if safety and care are our concern, let us rather be careful that new believers *obey* Jesus without delay. *Delaying* obedience in order to follow man-made rules sends a completely wrong message. The apostles baptized both Jewish and gentile believers without delay in Acts 2:41; 8:12, 36-38; 10:44-48; 16:14-15, 29-34; 18:8; 22:12-16. They had no other practice.

New leaders often worry too much that weeds will be harvested into the church along with the wheat, if we baptize too soon. Satan laughs at this, because he knows that baptism is the best screening process that God has given us. No man-made screening process, including waiting a long time, is as effective. Satan is expert at making counterfeits. Our strictest precautions with baptism and addition to the church will not stop him from making counterfeits. To keep the church pure, instead of requiring a long time of probation for baptism, we should practice church

discipline (Matthew 18:15-20). God himself did the first act of church discipline (Acts 5:1-11). Jesus and Paul taught that the church itself is to take responsibility for maintaining purity (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). Delaying baptism and therefore neglecting church discipline, forces new believers to be disobedient to Jesus' command and invites legalism.

Some leaders consider it spiritual to delay baptism until new babies in Christ are living a perfect life. They keep them officially outside the church body, until they can prove that they merit entry into the church. They call it being 'careful.' Patterson reports, "One of these 'careful' pastors criticized us, 'Oh, we could fill our churches also if we baptized just anyone like you do, without straightening out their lives first!' But our pastors helped far more sinners straighten out their lives than this one did. We brought the newborn spiritual babies into the body of Christ where the Holy Spirit gave them power them to work out their salvation."

Jesus instituted baptism to confirm one's salvation. Especially in new fields, we must not introduce man-made decision rites from other cultures to confirm it. The invitation of the apostles, for example, was not to raise one's hand or to "come forward." They simply told those who trusted in Jesus to show their repentance by being baptized (Acts 2:38; 22:12-16). The decision-making rituals that man has devised to replace baptism to confirm salvation has had a dismal record for determining who are sincere. The follow through, or conservation of new believers, has always been much higher when we confirm their repentance the New Testament way.

The church planting task group that went with Peter to Cesarea baptized the new believers as soon as they saw that they had received the Holy Spirit. They did not use baptism as a graduation ceremony following a long time of indoctrination. Peter considered it disobedience to God to delay baptism when he and his companions saw that Cornelius and his people had been received the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44-48).

We must never delay baptism so long that new believers become discouraged. In new fields Christian influences are lacking and new believers consider baptism both as identification with Christ and the confirmation of their acceptance by His people.

Churches that baptize infants do not normally rebaptize them when, as adult believers, they repent and receive Christ. Rather, they go through a process of *Confirmation*. The confirmation must be meaningful, to assure the new adult believers that God and His people have received them. Confirmation must not become mechanical.

04C. Assure Newly Baptized Believers of Jesus' Loving Presence and the Indwelling Holy Spirit

Baptism in the Bible is more than the moment of the ritual with water. It includes the continued new, eternal life in the risen Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 6:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:13). We should assure new believers, when baptized with water, of Jesus' presence in their hearts, and the Holy Spirit's spiritual baptism, sealing, and sanctifying.

Some task groups serve with a mission organization that is not itself a church and therefore do not baptize. They should separate new churches from the parent organization in order for them to baptize and serve as "mother" churches to start new ones.

If you have been delaying baptism for legalistic reasons, plan now to correct this.

Chapter 05 -- Making Disciples who Obey Jesus in Childlike Love

Our supreme Commander Jesus Christ orders us with all authority in heaven and earth to make disciples by teaching them to obey all His commands, Matthew 28:18-20.

Sections in this Chapter 05

- 05A.** Help All Believers to Be Obedient Disciples
- 05B.** Teach New Followers of Christ to Be Doers of the Word
- 05C.** Help New Believers to Become Disciples Within a Loving Church Body
- 05D.** Relate the Word to Life and Ministry as Jesus and His Apostles Did
- 05E.** Make Disciples at All Levels of Maturity
- 05F.** Teach with Loving Authority
- 05G.** Integrate Church Planting With Pastoral Training
- 05H.** Help New believers to Teach Their Families

05A. Help All Believers to Be Obedient Disciples

The purpose of this chapter is to show why our supreme commander Jesus Christ commands us to teach believers to obey him in childlike love, and explain to them how to do it. He orders us with all authority in heaven and earth to make disciples by teaching them to obey all His commands in Matthew 28:18-20.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' asserts, "Discipleship training is only for new believers, to make sure their beliefs are correct."

"That's only one part of it," Mr. '**Foresight**' clarifies. "Jesus didn't limit His discipleship training to new believers. During most of His ministry he gave discipleship training to his top-level leaders, the apostles of the church!"

Find in Matthew 28:18-20 with what authority Jesus orders us to make obedient disciples:

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." (NIV)

Find in John 14:15 the correct motive for our obedience to His commands:

"If you love me, you will obey what I command." (NIV)

Several pastoral ministries grow out of Jesus' general command to make disciples:

- evangelism,
- nurturing new believers,
- cultivating the spiritual life,
- teaching the Word and biblical doctrine,
- pastoral care and counseling,
- foreign mission work,
- pastoral training,
- children's instruction,
- shepherding in general.

Please consider now how you will help all those you lead or teach to obey Christ above all else.

05B. Teach New Followers of Christ to Be Doers of the Word

Jesus commands us to hold to his teaching and to make disciples, as in John 8:31, Matthew 7:24-29 and 28:18-20.

According to Acts 2:41-42, the new disciples in Jerusalem devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching from the beginning, starting immediately after their baptism. We must teach the new believer that God is bringing him into a family where we get to know each other intimately. We must live our new life with fellow believers, so that we can recognize barriers to the Spirit-filled life, repent and be renewed. Scoggins affirms, "The disciple's journey is difficult but fun. What a privilege to labor in Jesus' Kingdom! What joy! We were created—and re-created—for this! We help brand new believers to find real joy in serving our King. This joy of serving is not reserved for some elite clergy group."

As we grow in obedience, our actions and attitudes toward others keep on changing. In a church that makes true disciples, wrong motives for our behavior are exposed and new ones are developed in the power of the Holy Spirit. God keeps on healing us, freeing us disciples for more effective service, as explained in Galatians 5:13. We must carefully help new disciples to become part of the body and to enjoy its loving service. For adult believers discipleship normally starts with baptism. We should help them to covenant with other believers to obey Jesus Christ and his apostles together as a body. They will then become active in ministry and willingly accountable to their Christian leaders, as we read in Acts 2:41-37 and Hebrews 13:17.

James 1:22 tells us not be merely hearers of the Word, but doers, or we deceive ourselves. We do not use the Bible simply as content for our teaching; we use it to guide all of our steps, every day.

Please ask God to help you read the Scriptures not just as a religious exercise or to find things to teach, but to lead us in everything we do.

05C. Help New Believers to Become Disciples Within a Loving Church Body

If one merely makes a superficial, rational "decision" to "accept Jesus"—a concept foreign to the New Testament—chances of his remaining faithful are slim. Jesus told his disciples, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). Making disciples, from a biblical perspective, normally starts with witnessing to seekers. Those who put their faith in Christ become loving disciples, being added to the church through repentance, faith, and baptism, as reported in Acts 2:38-41.

As discipleship training continues, new Christians learn to obey the other commands of Christ and to serve their fellow Christians. Therefore, we must build all ministries on loving relationships.

Take a moment now to think how you will help people not only to come to Christ but also to come into His body the church, into deep relationships with other believers.

05D. Relate the Word to Life and Ministry as Jesus and His Apostles Did

Biblical truth is intensely practical. We must use it in teaching to build up the body of Christ, not just to impart knowledge. Good teaching applies God's Word to people's lives and ministries. 2 Timothy 3:14-17 reveals the purpose of biblical instruction: to equip believers for service. Biblical teaching has the clear objective of mobilizing church members for ministry, as explained in Ephesians 4:11-16.

God instructs us to use the gift of teaching in harmony with the other gifts given to the Body, in 1 Corinthians chapter 12.

Please take a moment now to ask Jesus to help you link your teaching with the other ministries of the church, and to apply it to your people's lives in a direct, practical way.

05E. Make Disciples at All Levels of Maturity

As churches mature, they make disciples on four levels:

1. The unsaved.

They make disciples of nations or peoples, the unsaved, non-Christians of all kinds, by bringing them to faith and repentance. Matthew 28:19,

2. New believers.

They give this obedience training for new believers: those whom we have baptized and now teach obedience to all Jesus' commands. Matthew 28:19,

3. Growing Christians.

They continue the work of disciple making for growing Christians. John 8:31 and John 21:16,

4. Leaders.

Biblical disciple making includes leaders such as pastors, elders and missionaries. Mark 3:13-19.

If you are neglecting disciple making at any of these levels, please take a moment now and think how you and your coworkers will correct this.

05F. Teach with Loving Authority

We must teach with Jesus' authority, not our own. Our authority as leaders and teachers is real, and comes from Christ. We are to command with the Word of the Lord (1 Timothy 4:11). Our discipleship training will become weak and legalistic if we depend only on the authority of a human organization. We must not insist, "Obey me, because I've been named to this position over you!" Rather we teach our people to obey Christ and His apostles because they love Him. Please remember that He said:

If you love me, obey my commands. John 14:15 (NIV)

You are my friends if you do what I command. John 15:14 (NIV)

Training with Christ's authority requires a loving, confidential relationship between the trainer and those whom he trains, especially if they are pastors or elders. Unless it builds on loving relationships, excessively authoritative discipleship training stifles initiative. A good teacher of pastors listens to his students and shares responsibility for their effective ministry. Pastoral students will eagerly follow the counsel of such a teacher and will imitate such a teacher's example.

We train leaders more effectively, when we look beyond them to focus on those whom they serve in churches and cell groups. Truly biblical teachers build up church bodies through their students, as we read in Ephesians 4:11-16.

We must not demand that our disciples do what we teach them because we are above them in the organization. Jesus condemned such leadership in Matthew 20:25-26.

They will obey us because we love them and they have confidence in us. They will see that we are helping them to develop a more effective ministry.

Please ask God to help you mobilize new workers, by building a loving relationship with those who are obedient disciples that respect our God-given authority as Christ's under-shepherds (Hebrews 13:17).

05G. Integrate Church Planting With Pastoral Training

On a new field that lacks reproductive churches in the local culture, prayer, pastoral training and evangelism together lead to church reproduction. A wise church does four levels of

discipleship training: the unsaved, new believers, growing believers, and leaders. Jesus spent most of His time giving discipleship training to leaders, to the twelve original apostles.

Training leaders the way Jesus and His apostles did almost became a lost art by the twentieth century. Church elders had come to see themselves as professional priests who did all aspects of church ministry; they were trained to do everything. This view contradicts 1 Corinthians 12 and other passages in God's Word about spiritual gifts. It cancels out the interactive life of the church body. It undermines the health of Christian organizations. Wise pastors are those elders who oversee ministries and delegate full responsibility to others. For example, an elder oversees congregational worship by asking others who are more musical than he is to do it. He makes sure that they do a good job.

Elders in a healthy church constantly reproduce themselves in all that they do. They equip others to teach, counsel, lead meetings and make disciples. Jesus equipped his disciples to carry on church reproduction after he left. Good elders likewise continually prepare other newer elders, as taught in Ephesians 4:11-13.

Church planting task groups that work in a new field need at least one gifted teacher who has shepherding experience, to train new pastors on the job. Like Paul, we must commission to serve as elders, the more mature men that God provides. Paul sometimes named as elders fairly new Christians where there were no experienced leaders available (Acts 14:23). Some call these new pastoral leaders "provisional elders." In this case we must explain to them that they are too new to be confirmed permanently as shepherds or pastors.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will train leaders the way Jesus' apostles did, on the job as they started churches.

05H. Help New believers to Teach Their Families

Dick Scoggins, who works with Muslims as well as with house churches in the West, reports:

During Sunday meetings, our churches help to families prepare for their home teaching times. The leaders provide a Bible reading schedule to use in homes. Even newly converted heads of families learn from the beginning to take responsibility for shepherding their households. This is often the first step in discovering and developing leaders, since leaders must be able to lead their own families. These reading schedules provide a few assigned verses for each day, and a question to start a discussion. They also contain stories for the children. The leaders encourage families to spend at least five minutes each day reading the passage and discussing the question. Often they do this at mealtime. Both adults and children take on an active learning role, and are no longer "hearers only" as so many Christians are. Doing this strengthens family heads and new leaders to apply God's Word first to their families.

This family focus is a powerful tool for training and mobilizing new leaders as pastors. Some churches have men who have been teaching their families. These men take turns teaching during Sunday worship on the same Bible passages that they have been discussing with their families.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will help new believers reach their families.

Chapter 06 -- Loving God and Men--the Basic Motive for All that Christians Do

Jesus commands, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."
Matthew 22:37-40

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06A. Teach Believers to Love God and Other People

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34-35 (NIV)

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why Jesus commands us to spur believers to love, and how to do it. Loving God and men is the basic motive for all that Christians do.

Find in Luke 10:25-37 what God counts as true Christian love:

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind;" and, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." (NIV)

Please ask God now to help you lead your people in being "Good Samaritans" by serving those who are in desperate need.

06B. Let New Leaders Develop Ministries Without Fearing Their Superiors

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' visits his coworkers in private to persuade them to elect him as chairman of the Mission Strategy Planning Group. At the group's next meeting he tells those who disagree with his policies, "Do what I say or you must resign from my Strategy Planning Group! Do not argue with me! I hold the highest position in the group!"

"At least you talk the loudest," Mr. '**Foresight**' laughs. "Enforcing rules by threat of force is not God's way to organize or to do His work!"

Churches reproduce much more readily in an atmosphere of freedom balanced with loving discipline. Perfectionism—excessive fear of making mistakes—paralyzes the Lord's work. Jesus warns us against excessive control in Matthew 20:25-28.

If you are a leader, please consider for a moment your methods of leading. God wants leaders who humbly encourage every member of the body to do ministry. Immature members will make mistakes as we give them opportunities to grow in ministry. New leaders, like new churches or cell groups, must learn to take their baby steps. We must not discourage them by pointing out every little mistake and putting unneeded limitations on them. Jesus allowed his disciples to make many failures. Parents all know the "ups and downs" of their own children as

they develop. Failure and experimentation are a natural part of growing up. A major cause of failure in leadership is to fear failure. If we let fear control us, it paralyzes the work. We should rather be concerned that we all learn from our failures.

Scoggins tells how his congregations discovered how to lead within the flock rather than by lording over it:

We had to make an important decision. Were we going to lead because we were seeking self-promotion, or because we were heeding the call of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Motives are central in Christian service, as we read in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 4:6.

We found that leadership from within the flock gives far better results. Servant-leaders die to self as they discern what is pleasing to the Lord. When pastors become servant-leaders within the flock—not over it—they get to know the people, as shepherds know their sheep. Then they can discern the spirits of the people as they seek the Lord's will for themselves and for the church. Close relationships are necessary in order to help members see the hidden motives of their own hearts. God then protects them from their selfish motives in "spiritual service." Many a sincere saint has been failed because of hidden, carnal motives in their service to the King.

We found that leadership from the top down controls and thus limits the avenues through which the Holy Spirit can speak and work. However, leadership from within the body encourages others to take initiative and broadens the avenues through which the Holy Spirit speaks and works. Leaders who stay close to the sheep discern the dangers that come through carnal motives. We can seldom predict far into the future the direction in which the Spirit is leading us, but leaders who work from within the flock soon detect dangers when they creep up. Such leaders enable workers more readily to help congregations reproduce.

The New Testament strongly emphasizes servant-leadership. Jesus warns us against exercising authority for the purpose of control; human authority exercised from the top down violates the command of Jesus recorded in Matthew 20:25-28.

Top-down Control often stifles church reproduction because it assumes that God will lead the church only through those presently in leadership. It leaves the so-called laity behind. Laymen must wait passively until their leader comes down from the mountain with a revelation from God about what they should do. That kills individual initiative and narrows the avenues through which the Holy Spirit can speak to the church. Servant leaders help others to take responsibility before the Lord and to do their part.

Patterson tells how, while writing Train And Multiply™ materials for new pastors, he learned by painful experience to build organization on loving relationships:

Missionaries in Honduras urged our first few churches in the larger cities, to organize a national association of churches with Hondurans elected as leaders. For the first few years, the Honduran leaders felt that they had authority simply because they were above others in the organization. They ruled like dictators. This caused friction with the rural churches where I was working. I asked other workers about it and found that they had the same problem. They said it was because of the Honduran culture and that there was nothing we could do about it. However, when we trained leaders on the job in our area,

giving them the same attention that Jesus and the apostles gave to their trainees, they did not act like dictators. Rather they took on the role of servant-leaders.

The reason was simple. Our Honduran work was new; we had no mature, well-organized churches nor experienced leaders. So the only model of leadership that they saw for the Lord's work was that which we gave them as they were being trained. The pastors from the larger cities received their training almost exclusively in the classroom and followed the leadership style of their professors—dictatorship! But those that we trained on the job by extension saw a different kind of leadership model. We listened to them as they talked about their infant congregations before we suggested what to do or what to study, to help them edify their churches according to current needs and ministry opportunities. I found that, if my students knew that I was helping them to develop a more effective ministry, then they were intensely loyal to me. They normally did what I suggested even though I had no organizational authority over them. They quickly adopted this servant leadership model with their own churches and apprentices.

My need to serve as a model servant-leader became compellingly evident. My authority had to be exercised through loving relationships, in order for the churches to work together in loving harmony and to reproduce normally. We needed organization for order, but taught our people to consider our organization's authority to be lower than that of Christ and His apostles' commands. We taught our leaders to build their authority on loving relationships, as Jesus did. That is why He Jesus told the new leaders that he trained, "If you love me, obey my commands" (John 14:15).

We taught our people that for the sake of order, activities might be defined by the bylaws of our churches and their regional associations, but authority was not to be based on the bylaws. Authority was to be based on our love for Christ and each other. The more traditional pastors kept rewriting their constitutions and bylaws to maintain control. They constantly feared that things might grow out of their control.

The question of authority came to a head when we organized regional associations of churches to coordinate inter-church projects for evangelism, fellowship, pastoral training and community development. The more traditional leaders in our national association of churches complained that these new regional associations would undermine their authority and church discipline. They accused us of undermining national church unity. They insisted on conformity to their way of doing things and called that "unity". They warned local pastors, "Things will grow out of control; you will only have confusion".

Our workers grew weary of such attacks, so we held a meeting to decide what to do. We prayerfully examined the Word to find God's guidelines for churches to relate to each other. We found that in both Jerusalem and in Ephesus, the congregations were meeting in homes and formed one citywide body that was called the church of that city. Today those churches would be considered clusters of house churches or cells. The New Testament commands Christians to work lovingly with one another between congregations as well as within them. We agreed to do what the apostles taught to their new churches and began to cultivate loving fellowship between the churches, caring for each another in practical ways. We developed working relationships and mercy ministries rather than a politically oriented bureaucracy with man-made bylaws. Of course, we

wrote brief bylaws based on Scripture, to define how our servant-leaders could maintain this loving inter-church cooperation in our region.

This regional organization among churches did not cause the confusion that our critics had prophesied. Rather, it built bonds between churches and strengthened their ministries. Our regional leaders had more influence and discipline by building their authority on loving relationships, than did those at the national level who at that time still ruled with a clenched fist.

Please ask the Lord to help you and your coworkers to lead with a humble spirit, encouraging others to serve not out of fear but out of love, inspired by your example.

06C. Give New Believers Much Loving Care While They Learn Discipleship

New believers feel that God accepts them, when we who are in the church accept them in love. A newborn infant thrives on its mother's love, but if its mother's love is lacking it becomes socially impaired for life. Likewise, newborn Christians in the church may be impaired spiritually, often permanently, if they fail to receive loving care.

Scoggins learned from experience the need for loving care for newborn believers:

We saw in some churches that it takes months or years for newcomers to feel that they have become a real part of the church body. For a church to grow and reproduce the way God wants it to do, it must integrate newcomers into its life and heart. One way is to teach people to see each newcomer as a door to a new social network that God might add to the church. The person who brings a newcomer should immediately begin to shepherd that person in the basics of the faith. If people do not know how to do that, then we must show them how. We must train newcomers to share their faith at once with their social network to penetrate it for Christ. In some cases, a whole network of friends and relatives is harvested for the kingdom. Sometimes new churches are born because of such a harvest; others times an entire social network joins existing churches with dynamic results. We must avoid extracting a person from his or her social network and to "hiding" them in the church before we try to penetrate their network for Christ.

Since some newcomers simply show up at the church, we should ask volunteers to watch for them and begin at once to befriend them and to shepherd them in the basics of the faith. Such a ministry, like that of Barnabas, is essential to the healthy growth and reproduction of the church, as we read in Acts 9:26-28.

Stop a moment to think how you can help your people to serve and embrace new believers more fervently.

06D. Encourage New Believers at Once to Care for the Needy

The church in Jerusalem took care of its needy people from the beginning (Acts 6:1-7). As the church grew in numbers, they found that they had to name workers to coordinate and carry out this work. Servants like them are what Scripture calls deacons. From the beginning we must teach new believers to obey the greatest commandment, to love God with all our heart and our neighbor as ourselves. We are to do good to all kinds of people, starting with the family of God, as we read in Galatians 6:10 and 1 John 3:16-18.

We should teach new believers to begin at once to show their love for God and their neighbor in a practical way, as taught in Luke 10:25-37.

Believers have been saved to serve one another, as revealed in Galatians 5:13. Each one has something to offer to the believing community as well as other neighbors.

We must avoid a self-centered approach to discipleship that tells new believers that God's main interest is to meet their needs and make them more prosperous and comfortable. Jesus did not promise to us material riches on earth; he promised a painful cross for us to carry. Our daily bread, yes, but a big house and large bank account, no. God promises gifts that in this life are designed to serve others. Everyone who has the Holy Spirit has something to give others.

We receive much when we become part of God's living community, but then our motive should be to give, not to get. Anything we receive should be seen not as what we deserve but as a gift by pure grace. Our responsibility, then, is to give freely. Caring for the physical needs of others is a basic way to show our love for God, as we read in Luke 10:25-37 and 1 John 3:16-18.

We should provide new believers with opportunities to practice simple acts of love and mercy before entrusting them with more influential leadership. A church's foundation crumbles when human "termites", that lack loving compassionate, "worm" their way into positions of power. God gives to believers spiritual gifts to help them to cultivate practical love, to heal broken relationships and physical sickness, to deal with poverty, and to develop edifying relationships between workers. These include the gifts of compassion, giving, helps, service, and hospitality.

Please think now of new believers in your church--or the churches of those you train. Do they need encouragement to serve others who are in need, perhaps among their family members or friends?

06E. Where There is Poverty We'd Church Planting to Development Work

Good development requires persons with different spiritual gifts. Depending on the needs of the community, need, these needed gifts might include:

- **Compassion.** In poverty areas church planting should incorporate mercy ministries or small businesses. We must not confuse mercy with mere pity that gives help in a way that creates dependency upon the givers. Workers accustomed to doing emergency relief must be retrained to avoid simply giving things away in long-term development projects.

- Prophecy. This gift enables creative, powerful and artistic ways to communicate God's messages to others "for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort" (1 Corinthians 14:3). The Hebrew prophets often used poetry and powerful symbolism.
- Giving. Your coworkers in mercy ministry might include a businessman whose business provides employment for fellow workers or for nationals. The business might also enable workers to reside in areas where the government refuses residence to conventional, full-time missionaries.
- Healing or casting out demons. In new fields where Satan has had complete control of the people's minds for centuries and they hold a world view totally incompatible with Christianity, God often confirms the gospel message with healing and signs, as He did under similar circumstances in the book of Acts. Missionaries from churches in the West that do not emphasize these sign gifts also report such "power encounters" when they work in these areas.

If there is serious poverty, disease or injustice in your area, take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers can deal with it firmly, in love.

06F. Let the Holy Spirit Harmonize Gift-Based Ministries in Love

To mobilize believers in ministry, we must help them to work together with their different ministries in love, by the power of the Holy Spirit. We must not isolate the different gift-based ministries as separate programs or departments. Scripture urges us to use the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to us to serve one another in love as a closely-knit body, as we read in Romans 12; 1 Corinthians chapters 2-13 and Ephesians 4:11-16.

During the 20th century Western churches compartmentalized ministries, creating separate programs for evangelism, Christian education, community development, worship and pastoral training. Such Western style of organization leads to a bureaucracy in which individuals gain influence and power. The church body breaks up into separate programs with little cooperation between them. Often simply maintaining one's position of power within that program becomes one's objective. Attempts to remove a grasping person or to reduce his budget results in verbal combat. Once a person becomes jealous of his position and protects it, he resists change regardless of what the Holy Spirit might try to say. Such fragmented organization hinders the Holy Spirit's work, since "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Fragmented, program-oriented organization fails to promote humility, forbearance, or cooperation on the part of every member of the body. We need these virtues to edify the body by harmonizing its gift-based ministries in love, as we read in 1 Corinthians 13.

The 20th century Western tradition of compartmentalized organizations may bring efficiency, but it fractures the church body. To foster church reproduction in poor, new fields, the biblical style of organization allows church planting to go hand-in-hand with poverty relief and pastoral training as an integrated effort. This interaction between persons of different gifts produces balance and a healthier church body. Nor can such networking be controlled from the outside and still allow the churches to meet needs as they arise. Leadership must come from within the churches themselves.

Please ask God now if your church--or the churches of those you train--have organized in a way that helps believers to talk with one another to find out their needs and interests, and to serve one another with their different gifts.

06G. Select 'One Another' Activities that Need Attention

Galatians 5:13 reveals the reciprocal nature of Christian ministry:

You, dear friends, have been called to live in freedom, not to satisfy your sinful nature, but to serve one another in love. (NIV)

There are many such "one another" verses in the Bible. We can practice them both within congregations and between them. Believers encourage one other, pray for each other, confess faults to one another and in many other ways serve one another. Since they cannot do this in large meetings, churches must also organize small group meetings, home groups or cells.

'One another' church body life cannot be confined to one's own group or congregation. Believers also practice it between congregations, because a group small enough to do it with all of its own members is too small to have all the spiritual gifts, since God gives so many spiritual gifts! For example, if your congregation is weak in evangelism, do not go looking for another method to witness. Rather look for people with the gift of evangelism, who enjoy witnessing for Christ who can help you. Perhaps someone in another congregation is willing to help you, as you in turn help them in some way. Almost nothing is more powerful to build ministries than voluntary, loving interaction between congregations. We must constantly build loving fellowship between persons and between congregations. We organize this interaction way by building on relationships, so it will happen easily and joyfully. Let the congregation talk over which items they currently need to study and apply. Mark the items that they choose.

New Testament "One Another" Commands

Commands For Building Joyful Relationships

Love:

- Love one another, John 13:34-35; 5:12, 17; Romans 12:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 3:11,14, 23 and 4:7, 11, 12; 2 John 1:5; 1 Peter 1:22
- Love one another to fulfill the law, Romans 13:8
- Increase our love one for another, 2 Thessalonians 1:3
- Abound in love for another, 1 Thessalonians 3:12
- Love each other deeply, to cover a multitude of sins, 1 Peter 4:8

Build caring relationships:

- Have fellowship one with another, 1 John 1:7
- Forgive one another, Ephesians 3:13 and 4:32 and Colossians 3:13

- ___ Greet one another with a holy kiss (an embrace in some cultures), Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12 and 1 Peter 5:14
- ___ Wait for one another to break bread, 1 Corinthians 11:33
- ___ Bear one another's sufferings, 1 Corinthians 12:26

Commands for Serving One Another, Within and Between Congregations

Serve:

- ___ Serve one another with the gifts each person has received, 1 Peter 4:10
- ___ Serve one another in love, Galatians 5:13
- ___ Be kind to each other, 1 Thessalonians 5:15
- ___ Care for one another, 1 Corinthians 12:25
- ___ Bear the burdens one for another, Galatians 6:2
- ___ Wash one another's feet as a sign of a humble servant's heart, John 13:14
- ___ Work with one another, 1 Corinthians 3:9 and 2 Corinthians 6:1

Teach :

- ___ Teach one another, Colossians 3:16
- ___ Instruct one another, Romans 5:14

Encourage:

- ___ Encourage one another, Colossians 3:16 and Hebrews 10:25
- ___ Exhort one another, Hebrews 3:13
- ___ Speak the truth to one another, Ephesians 4:25
- ___ Lay down our lives one for another, 1 John 3:16
- ___ Spur one another to love and good deeds, Hebrews 10:24

Edify:

- ___ Edify, in strengthen, build up one another, 1 Thessalonians 4:18 & 5:1, 11
- ___ Edify one another gathering together each one with a hymn, a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or its interpretation, 1 Corinthians 14:26

Give spiritual care:

- ___ Confess our sins one to another, James 5:16
- ___ Pray for one another, James 5:16

Commands For Cultivating Unity one With Another

Act with humility:

- ___ Honor one another, Romans 12:10
- ___ Be of one mind one with another, 2 Corinthians 13:11 and Romans 12:16; 15:5

- __ Do not criticize one another, Romans 14:13
- __ Do not speak bad one of another, James 4:11 and 5:9
- __ Submit to one another, Ephesians 5:21
- __ Be clothed with humility toward one another, 1 Peter 5:5

Live in harmony:

- __ Have patience one with another, Ephesians 4:2
- __ Live in peace one with another, Matthew 9:50
- __ Receive one another with hospitality, Romans 15:7 and 1 Peter. 4:9
- __ Glorify God together, Romans 15:6

Please take a moment now to plan how you will help your people obey any of these 'one another' commands that they may be neglecting.

06H. Detect Spiritual Gifts by Releasing Leaders to Work with New Congregations or Cells

Find in Exodus 18:14-24 a reason to establish small groups and prepare their leaders:

When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?"

Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will. Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and laws."

Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to Him. Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform. But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied."

Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. (NIV)

The "love chapter", 1 Corinthians 13, should be read together with chapter 12 to appreciate its significance. It is part of Paul's exhortation to use different spiritual gifts in loving harmony. Gifts used without love possess no value for God. We can enable most of the believers in a

church to serve in a ministry if we help them discover their gifts in a small group where loving relationships are easier to form.

We can help members to detect and use their gifts in a small body in several ways:

- Arrange for them to join ministry or evangelistic groups to use their spiritual gifts to minister to the unsaved community and to each other. Seekers are easier to bring to faith and to follow through in small groups.
- Start new home groups or churches in which they can be active. They will find it difficult to do a ministry in an older group that has others who are already doing it.
- Help existing groups to add ministries in which new workers can participate. Deal with felt needs and opportunities for witnessing or serving others. Shepherding groups minister to communities or families with different needs and bring together different gifts (Romans 12:3-8).
- Develop children's ministries and show them how to serve their parents and each other. Help older children to give discipleship training to the younger.
- Name persons with a loving, helping disposition to give discipleship training to newer Christians or families. Discipleship training is easier in small groups, especially new small groups. The apostolic churches did it in homes, as seen in Acts 2:46; 5:42; 20:20; Romans 16:3-5 and Philemon 2.
- Awaken and practice the most edifying gifts. What will be most edifying depends upon current needs and circumstances.

We seek people with the following gifts to help a group build its organization on loving relationships, rather than on abstract policies or mere position:

- Leader. Healthy groups need a leader who inspires the people with the vision, who knows what God wants His people to do, and who can coordinate their gift-based ministries.
- Evangelist. Healthy groups "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Timothy 4:5) and need a person with this gift to stimulate and furnish a model for the others.
- Pastor. A pastor is a shepherding elder. Healthy groups need at least one shepherd. This person is not always a teacher and is not always the leader. He has a shepherd's heart and watches over the flock, ready to give loving care to any member who needs it.
- Teacher. The group will be healthier if its teachers can teach the way Jesus and His apostles did by listening to those they teach, to help each person to apply the Word of God to their life. The gift of teaching, as Scripture demonstrates it, is sometimes absent in traditional church classrooms where someone stands in front of a group merely passing on information. That is a form of teaching but is not what Scripture reveals that teaching should do.

The teacher's task is to mobilize others for different ministries, as we read in Ephesians 4:11-16, and to apply Scripture "for every good work", as we read in 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

- A traditional teacher who cannot teach this way should name helpers who will do so in smaller groups.
- Traditional teachers sometimes take the title of leader but do not really lead; they just teach.

Scoggins discovered the value of teaching in the home and wrote:

"Our experience shows that as a head of a family carries out his God-given responsibility to teach, his giftedness becomes apparent. Even if he is not gifted as a teacher, he is still required to teach his family, for which task God will give him grace. Because of this, we train our members who are heads of families in the basics of teaching, at least for family devotions."

One person might have more than one spiritual gift, but no one has all of them. Even if they did, they would not have time to exercise them all. And if they tried, they would only hinder others in the group from developing their own gifts.

In addition to the gifts of leader, evangelist, pastor or elder, and teacher, other gifts yield more specialized ministries. Some groups specialize in marriage or family counseling. But they must not neglect other ministries. Others deal quite successfully with drug or alcohol abuse recovery, and they, too, must deal with the other gift-based ministries as well. Other groups offer grief counseling; they must not focus exclusively on this ministry, or they will rob their members of a balanced Christian life. A struggling group's greatest weakness is often its greatest strength taken to excess.

- Some groups focus on the needs of the unmarried or the elderly; these groups also need persons with gifts of exhortation, discernment, compassion and helps.
- Most groups pray for the unsaved, the sick and the hurting. Those who take the lead in this may be people with the gifts of faith, healing, or freeing those who are oppressed by demons.
- Groups doing community development need persons with the gifts of discernment, giving, and compassion. But, to maintain balance, they also need persons with the other more common gifts of teaching, shepherding and evangelism.
- For groups meeting in homes, someone must have the gift of hospitality.
- Groups ministering cross-culturally need persons gifted as apostles (sent ones) or missionaries, along with the other common gifts. In new mission fields, task groups must train pastors and therefore need at least one instructor having a gift of teaching.

If you are a leader, then please fix in your mind the Bible passages that explain how to harmonize spiritual gifts in love: Romans chapter 12; Ephesians 4:11-16 and 1 Corinthians chapters 12 through 14.

Take a moment to think of potential leaders whom you should ask to lead new churches or cells. Let the Holy Spirit guide you in this, as He did for the leaders of the Antioch church in Acts 13:1-3.

06I. Review the Spiritual Gifts Revealed in the New Testament

We must help everyone to know and to use their spiritual gifts to serve one another in love. Most church ministries require several gifts working together. For example, an evangelist should work closely with teachers and leaders to follow up new believers. To help your people understand the different gifts, you might relate to them some examples for gifts that they do not understand. Biblical examples are mentioned beside each gift named below. Some passages may be too long to read during a meeting, but you can relate from memory the important parts of the story.

Mark the gifts listed below that need to be developed in your group or church. You may have to arrange for help from other groups or churches that have people with gifts that your congregation lacks. You should also give help to them in areas in which your group is strong.

Spiritual gifts listed in Romans 12:4-8:

- Serve—Samuel, 1 Samuel 1:20-28; 3:1-21; Deacons, Acts 6:1-7; Dorcas, Acts 9:36-41.
- Prophecy—Isaiah, Isaiah 55; In the New Testament prophecy refers primarily to messages from God for strength, consolation and encouragement (1 Corinthians 14:3)
- Give—Abigail, 1 Samuel 25; guidelines: 2 Corinthians 9
- Teach—Ezra: Nehemiah 8; purpose, Ephesians 4:11-16.
- Encourage—exhort: Paul with the Ephesian elders, Acts 20:17-38.
- Lead—lead as a servant leader who helps others to minister: Moses, Exodus 18:13-26.
- Show mercy—The sheep and goats, Matthew 25:31-46; the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:30-35; David with Saul, 1 Samuel 24

Additional gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 7-30.

- Counsel with wisdom—Solomon, 1 Kings 3:5-28
- Base decisions on knowledge, in facts—Bereans' searching the Word, Acts 17:10-12.
- Help—Aquila and Priscilla, Acts 18:1-5, 4-28.
- Go, as an apostle, a sent one, having itchy feet, a spiritual entrepreneur—Romans 5:20-21; Paul and Barnabas, Acts chapters 3-14.
- Discern—Nathan, 2 Samuel Chapters 1-12; Paul, Galatians 2:6-21
- Heal—Jesus and the paralytic, Mark 2:1-12; Peter and John heal the crippled man, Acts chapters 3-4
- Administrate—Nehemiah: Nehemiah chapters 2-3
- Do miracles—Elijah: 1 Kings 18:16-46; Elisha: 2 Kings chapters 2-5
- Speak in tongues—Cornelius' household, Acts 10:44-48.
Use this gift with the gift of interpretation, which follows:
- Interpret tongues—see cautions in 1 Corinthians 14

- __ Use—faith the leper and the centurion, Matthew 8:1-13 and Old Testament faithful, Hebrews 1. All need faith but some with this gift strengthen exercise it more effectively and awaken it in others.

Additional gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11:

- __ Announce the Good News, Evangelist—Philip; Acts 8:26-40.
__ Pastor, shepherd — Acts 20:28-34 and 1 Peter 5:1-4

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will harmonize the believers' spiritual gifts:

Arrange for believers to serve each other with their different gift-based ministries.

Help them to serve in love and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Arrange for mutual serving, both within your congregation and between congregations.

Aim for as many believers as possible to have an effective ministry.

Plan this with your coworkers if possible.

06J. Detect and Deal with Personal or Family Needs of Small Group Members

Cell groups or house churches should take advantage of their small size to deal with personal and family needs as well as ministry opportunities as they arise, as taught in Exodus 18:24-26.

Home groups enable elders to listen to everyone in their group, to know their personal needs, to pray for each one, and to help all to participate. Shepherding elders should enable all members of the group to have a ministry of caring one for another. Mobilize as group leaders those persons who will take the time to give loving care. If they are already quite busy, they can name helpers.

Scoggins relates how house churches enable listening and caring:

Men who will take time to listen to folks and care for them will volunteer to do that when given a chance to do so. Some will come of their own will, even though we did not think that they would. With proper discipleship and care, many who are at first reluctant to lead will make radical changes in their lives to become effective elders. Others will require a challenge to consider if God has indeed called them to be a shepherd. Do this with great care and prayer, realizing that the call must be from God. Individual must weigh the cost and the call before the Lord, to determine if they are willing and able to respond. Their response often begins in their home; so, detect potential leaders by seeing how they

shepherd their families. A call to shepherd the church normally shows itself first with one's own family.

Please pause now to consider family needs among your people, and how you or your coworkers will deal with them.

06K. Keep in Balance Three Vital Components of Disciple making

Some teachers with an academic orientation to ministry will focus only on the content of their teaching, neglecting the task and the people. Correct this imbalance by working closely with others who apply the teaching to the people's lives, families and ministries.

Picture a triangle. One side corresponds to the Father, another to the Son and the third to the Holy Spirit; the Three are one God. Think about how the Persons of the Trinity relate to each other; none exists or works without the others. Similarly, the three primary ingredients of discipleship training harmonize with each other to form what we call balanced discipleship. These three ingredients correspond somewhat to the roles of the three Persons of the Trinity. These are:

loving Father authority,
the Word made alive in our lives through Christ's presence in us,
Spirit-empowered ministry.

Let's examine these three ingredients of discipleship training that you must keep in balance.

Loving father authority leads to proper relationships and enables us to submit to proper authority. Love emanates from God the Father. "God is love." Believers receive His love and pass it on as they submit to His Father authority.

The eternal Word becomes incarnate in our believers' lives as they abide in Christ. God the Son is the eternal, living Word, the very image of the Invisible God. He is transforming us to conform to the image of Christ. The written Word, the Bible, likewise takes on flesh as we apply it to our lives and ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Spirit-empowered ministry focuses on the task. God the Holy Spirit empowers us for our work.

The three Persons of the Trinity are One. They are never separate. They always work in perfect harmony. Likewise the three ingredients of balanced discipleship should harmonize in joyful equilibrium. By building on loving relationships (side one of the triangle) we teach the Word (side two) for service empowered by the Holy Spirit (side three).

Just as Jesus the eternal Word took on flesh to make the invisible God known to us, in loving obedience to the Father, the written Word the Bible also takes on flesh as the Holy Spirit enables us to apply it in our lives and churches. Discipleship with this balance greatly strengthens our pastoral ministry. Here are some areas in which many of us can improve the balance.

Some teachers emphasize the Word so exclusively that, unlike Paul, they pay little attention to their students' present pastoral work. They fail to make a meaningful effort to adapt their teaching to the current needs of the students' flocks. They do not share responsibility for their students' effectiveness in ministry. However, their ministry would be greatly improved if they listened to their students to learn their needs, interests and ministry opportunities. It also helps to communicate with the churches in which their students work, so they can coordinate their teaching with their students' ministries.

Some churches and organizations emphasize loving relationships so exclusively, that they neglect the Word and other pastoral work, thereby becoming ingrown and sterile. Their ministry would be easily improved by their focusing on the tasks that the New Testament requires for a church, and by cooperating closely with other churches whose gifts and ministries complement theirs.

Some churches and organizations put unbalanced emphasis on the task. Pastors, missionaries and other workers sometimes neglect their families, bruise one another in their drive to achieve, and burn out. However, their ministries would be strengthened significantly by their making a prayerful effort to keep in balance by developing relationships, teaching the biblical basis for all they do, and cooperating more closely with churches that provide strength in the areas they lack.

Blessed is the Christian leader who understands why making disciples begins with baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus commands in Matthew 28:18-20.

Balanced discipleship training, starting with baptism, brings the new believer into a proper relationship with each person of the Trinity, laying the groundwork for integrating the three essential ingredients. One cannot simply add equal portions of all three, for they produce one another as in the following manner:

- Good relationships based on loving authority will lead to powerful teaching of the Word and effective task-oriented ministry.
- Teaching the Word in balance with the other components of discipleship training, will mobilize your disciples for the task and will build relationships based on loving submission to God's authority.
- Task-oriented ministry empowered by the Holy Spirit will lead to both good relationships and doing the Word.

Conscientious Christian workers will recognize areas in which they are weak and will work closely with others who are strong in those areas, seeking to keep the balance. No one, working alone, can keep this balance.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will help your people to serve one another and other congregations in love. Include:

Strengthening loving family life,
forgiving and seeking reconciliation with enemies,

Balancing discipleship training by developing loving relationships while developing ministries and applying the Word to all that you do.

Chapter 07 -- Breaking the Bread and Drinking the Cup of the New Covenant in Jesus' Blood

"Unless you eat my flesh drink my blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:53-54

Sections in this Chapter 07

07A. Break Bread Together Often

07B. Glorify Jesus by Remembering His Sacrificial Death the Way He Said to Do

07C. Avoid a Purely Rationalistic View of Communion

07D. Let God Work Through the Lord's Supper to Make It Truly Holy Communion

07E. Practice All Vital Elements of Worship

07F. Celebrate Sacred Seasons and Holidays

07A. Break Bread Together Often

The purpose of this chapter is to explain our Lord Jesus' command to break the bread and drink the cup of the New Covenant in His blood.

Jesus said, "Unless you eat my flesh drink my blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:53-54.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17 says that we participate in Christ's body and blood as we celebrate the Lord's Supper.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Matthew 26:26-28 (NIV)

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' complains, "Those believers are too new to break bread. They'll assume it's magic or something!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' corrects him, "It is more important that they obey Jesus than have perfect understanding at this time. They don't need wise scholars to see that God's work is not superstitious magic! Be careful about warning them too much against over-emphasizing the mystery. Do you want them to take a purely rationalistic view that throws God out altogether? That would be far worse!"

Find the importance Jesus attached to our participation in His body and blood:

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."

He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. who can accept it?" Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before? The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are life." John 6:51-63 (NIV)

Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 (NIV)

Find in Acts 2:41-46 where the new believers in the first New Testament church broke bread:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts. (NIV)

Find in 1 Corinthians 11:27-34 why God punished the Corinthians who failed to discern and respect the mystical presence of the body of Christ:

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if

we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. (NIV)

Find in Acts 20:6-7 how often the new churches broke bread:

But we sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed seven days. On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. (NIV)

If you are not celebrating the Lord's Supper as often as you should, please ask God now for forgiveness and make plans to do so.

07B. Glorify Jesus by Remembering His Sacrificial Death as He Said to Do

Regularly celebrating the Lord's Supper helps keep a church body healthy and disciplined. In new fields where inexperienced workers lead tiny churches in homes. It also makes their worship more serious and authentic.

Patterson struggled to enable new churches to benefit from the Lord's Supper:

At first, our new churches in Honduras seldom celebrated the Lord's Supper; they did so only when a missionary or ordained pastor was present. Thus they missed God's fullest blessing, because they disregarded Jesus' command about breaking bread. Conscious of this shortcoming, they did not take their church and its worship very seriously, because they felt that they were second rate Christians. So we adapted ordination requirements to the culture, authorizing new elders in our pastoral training program to officiate the Lord's Supper, under the authority of more experienced pastors. We asked only that they meet biblical requirements for a pastor, nothing more.

Some of the leaders of our national association rushed to our area for an emergency session. They voted not to recognize the lay pastor's licenses that we gave to biblically qualified elders. They prohibited these men from serving the Lord's Supper. When one lay pastor stood to defend his pastoral role, tears filled his eyes and he could not speak. He then took his lay pastor's license from his pocket, tore it up, threw it on the floor, and walked out of the meeting, crushed.

I determined that it would never happen again. We met again with our workers and affirmed in prayer that we would obey Jesus and break bread in spite of the ruling of our national association of churches. Our churches continued to obey Jesus' command: "Do this in remembrance of me". Some used a free and spontaneous style in breaking bread; others kept part of the classic liturgy. All took it seriously. I rejoiced to see them discover profound communion with God and the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

Please think and pray for a moment concerning how you and your coworkers are making it possible for any leader who meets God's biblical requirements to serve as a shepherding elder, to do so. Ask for

courage to do away with any man-made requirement that keeps such leaders from serving as God wants them to.

07C. Avoid a Purely Rationalistic View of Communion

Some evangelicals, in their zeal to avoid any association with the Roman Catholic dogma of transubstantiation that says the bread and wine become the physical body and blood of Christ, disallow any supernatural work. They leave God out entirely; they permit no mystery of any kind.

The mystery of communion is the invisible work of the Holy Spirit. The miracle is His transforming work in us, the church body. There would be no benefit in transforming inert pieces of bread! The Holy Spirit strengthens our unity with Christ and his Body as we partake worthily of the bread and cup. Out of respect for Christ's body we should examine ourselves first, as Paul directed, and confess our sins to God.

Some churches in new fields neglect the Lord's Supper, because, for whatever reason, their missionaries fear letting new Christians obey Jesus by "breaking bread." Contrary to Scripture, they start a "preaching point" and provide a long time of doctrinal preparation before new believers are allowed to obey Jesus. This fear—whether fear of too much emphasis on the sacraments or too little—breeds human rules, limitations and rationalistic definitions that weaken the celebration of communion. Other churches fail to obey Christ because they lack clergy who have been approved to lead the ceremony. Others, with roots in rationalistic cultures, neglect it because, having denied any supernatural work by the Holy Spirit in the Lord's Supper, they see little value in it. They fear that the people will take a medieval, magical view still held by traditional Catholics. Satan uses these fears to prevent their obedience.

Among Evangelicals there are two common views of the Lord's Supper:

- Some evangelicals defend the mystical view of the real presence of Christ. They say without hesitation, "This *is* the body of Christ."
- Others defend the rationalistic view that the ceremony with the bread and wine is only a symbol, a visual aid to memory and nothing more. They are more comfortable saying, "This *represents* the body of Christ."

Unfortunately some missionaries, fearing they will offend one or the other of these parties, simply avoid the sacrament.

Fear is contagious. Can we trust the Holy Spirit to illumine the minds of believers as they prayerfully examine what God says about the Lord's Supper in John 6:26-69 and 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:23-34? Or must we give them reactionary formulas that often appeal to philosophical explanations of symbol and sacrament, rather than to God's Word?

If you have been a victim of rationalistic Western thinking, please take a moment now to ask God to free you from this bondage, and to embrace the mystery of participating in the body and blood of our Savior in His sacred supper.

07D. Let God Work through the Lord's Supper to Make It Truly Holy Communion

Some Christians need to learn to keep quiet and let the bread and cup do the speaking, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us not turn this most sacred ceremony into merely another teaching time! If believers seldom shed tears of repentance or joy during the Lord's supper, it is because we are not letting God make his intended impact. Jesus ordained communion for us to remember His sacrifice and our oneness with Him, and thereby to encounter his presence in a stirring, edifying way. He enables us through our physical senses to recall our sins and his blood that was shed to forgive them.

Patterson found that he had to escape from his own prejudices against "liturgy":

I winced when a poorly educated village pastor handed to each person for Communion a full glass and a whole tortilla, without the usual admonitions and explanations. "I shall have to straighten him out," I thought. The people slowly took small bites of the tortilla and sips from the glass. They lingered, holding the glass as though it contained priceless diamonds, eyes closed in meditation. I squirmed, fearing that it would take forever. These poor, illiterate peasants! Then I noticed the tears. I had never seen such a united, contrite spirit around the Lord's Table! Everyone was in rapt communion with Christ—except me. What had I missed?

I returned home humbled and prayed as I looked again at what the apostles taught. Like many whose churches avoid the word "sacrament", I felt uneasy when someone expressed anything mystical, for I feared that superstition would distort the ceremony instituted by Christ. But was it not I with my rationalistic background, who was in the greater danger of resisting the supernatural work of God? Define the mystery in human terms and you kill it.

I compared churches in Honduras that enjoyed the mystery of the Lord's Supper with those that neglected it or resisted anything supernatural. Worship was definitely richer in churches that celebrated the drama of communion and embraced its mystery.

Long after the Protestant Reformation even non-liturgical churches kept the table for the Lord's Supper in the central position in the front of the sanctuary, and some had a kneeling rail at which they served it. The pulpit was off to one side. During the last two centuries, with the rise in education and the growing need to correct false doctrine, many churches gave the central position to the pulpit. The altar shifted to a lower position, with flowers on it three out of four Sundays. Now contemporary churches have no pulpit at all, and the worship team is the center of focus during the praise time. In contrast, I have found that for new churches on new fields with new workers, regular celebration of the Lord's Supper improves church discipline, deepens the worship, and keeps everyone focused on the central theme—Christ.

How often should a church celebrate the Lord's Supper? Liturgical churches normally celebrate it the first day of the week, as in Acts 20:7. Virtually all churches for at least three centuries after the Reformation celebrated it as the high point of weekly worship. Churches in new fields without experienced preachers and worship leaders will do well to celebrate it weekly to ensure that the people experience serious, edifying worship and encounter God together as a body.

Please consider for a moment how celebrating Communion can deepen the worship of your church--or the churches of those you train--and strengthen discipline and fellowship.

07E. Practice All Vital Elements of Worship

Missionaries to new fields must practice small group worship. For this they need to discern the essential elements of group worship:

- Prayer
- Praise
- Teaching the Word of God
- Confession of sins with assurance of forgiveness
- Communion, in Lord's Supper
- Giving
- Fellowship

House churches or cells should have a definite beginning and end for the worship time. Let the people know the moment when the living room in a private home becomes a sacred sanctuary, and also when it becomes an ordinary room again.

These elements of worship take on various external forms. For example, Praise may be sung, read from the Psalms or a liturgical manual, chanted, prayed, dramatized, shouted or meditated in silence, standing or lying facedown. God accepts all such forms as long as they come from our heart.

The elements of worship may be combined. For example, we might do three of them at once by reading the Word as a prayer to praise the Lord. Many of the Psalms combine several elements.

A new church in a new field must set apart a definite, regular time for serious worship, especially if it meets in a home with only a handful of members. Here is how Patterson discovered the importance of countering the informality of a private home:

When meeting in a home that lacked the worship atmosphere of a chapel, we wanted to convert the room into a temporary sanctuary. It helped to have a definite beginning and ending for the worship. Often we started with a call to worship during which we stood while someone invoked the Lord's presence and blessing. Sometimes we stood in a circle while the hostess brought the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper and placed them in the center. It helped to arrange the chairs in a circle. Sometimes we started in a home with only three or four new believers for several weeks before inviting the public, to make sure that the new leader could direct things with confidence when visitors arrived. On occasion, only one or two new believers and I were present when a church in embryo first met to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Ask yourself now, "How can we improve our worship and do it the way that God wants?"

07F. Celebrate Sacred Seasons and Holidays

Liturgical churches follow a church calendar that provides for a variety of teaching, celebration and use of symbols. Non-liturgical churches sometimes rob the children of a blessing and powerful teaching tool by neglecting the sacred seasons. Often adults also receive Christ more readily or make serious commitments during Advent (the fourth Sunday before Christmas until Christmas), Lent (the 40 weekdays before Easter) and Easter. National holidays also offer occasions for special celebrations. We should keep an eye on the church year with its seasons, as well as national holidays, for opportunities to edify people.

Both the Old and New Testaments affirm seasonal celebrations. We should not over-react in an effort to avoid too much emphasis on non-biblical holy days, by unnecessarily emptying our calendar of valuable seasonal celebrations, especially in cultures with Roman Catholic or Orthodox backgrounds.

Some legalistic churches avoid happy celebrations, because they hold expressions of joy in suspicion. Most people are repulsed by unnatural asceticism. Our Lord took the Jewish festivals seriously and enjoyed happy celebrations. The legalists sneered at Him for being a partygoer and for drinking wine. Those with mature faith have reverent and sober moments as well as times of joyful celebration on earth as in heaven.

Some churches enhance special occasions with feasts, like when a new church begins or when a new member is brought into the church body. Weddings and anniversaries of key dates in the life of the churches or their members also offer occasions for celebration.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will enable your people to celebrate sacred days and seasons in a way that honors God and edifies His people.

Chapter 08 -- Praying in Jesus' Name

"Pray continually" 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Sections in this Chapter 08

08A. Pray Using Jesus' Name

08B. Seek the Holy Spirit's Ongoing Renewal

08C. Practice Personal and Family Prayers and Intercession

08D. Pray Constantly for the Lost and for Spiritual Growth and Reproduction

08E. Plan Prayerfully for Reproduction

08A. Pray Using Jesus' Name

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." John 16:23-24

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why--and how--our Lord Jesus Christ wants us to pray.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' asserts his view of prayer, "It has great psychological benefits. It lets you soar. It gives you a happy spiritual experience!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' has a question about that. "Is that the only reason you pray? To feel good? You clip your spiritual wings and set yourself up for a fall if that's the only reason you pray!"

Jesus tells us:

This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Luke 11:9 (NIV).

Find in Genesis 18:16-33 what Abraham did to move God to save his relatives. His prayer of intercession was like an argument. He started by asking God if he would spare the city of Sodom if there were 50 righteous people in it.

The LORD said, "If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake."

Then Abraham spoke up again: "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city because of five people?" "

If I find forty-five there," he said, "I will not destroy it."

Once again he spoke to him, "What if only forty are found there?"

He said, "For the sake of forty, I will not do it."

Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?"

He answered, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

Abraham said, "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?"

He said, "For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it."

Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?"

He answered, "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it." (NIV)

Find in Matthew 26:36-46 our greatest example of submission to God:

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!" (NIV)

A strengthening, life-giving discipline stems from Jesus' command to pray, as in John 16:24; we develop regular prayer by the church as a body and daily personal and family prayer.

Cases abound in which through prayer Christian workers have overcome otherwise impossible hindrances to the work, when Satan has aimed his most powerful artillery at new churches, especially to keep them from multiplying. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 assures us that the weapons for our spiritual warfare are powerful to demolish evil strongholds. These evil strongholds include bad habits that cripple believers' spiritual lives and keep them from loving one another. They also include doctrines of demons and even some church traditions that defy God's Word. The newest and oldest believers all need to keep the weapon of intercessory prayer in their hands, heads and hearts by praying continually for others. Prayers of praise, repentance, healing, and petition also sustain our churches' health. We pray both in public worship, in private, as a family and in the quietness of two or three 'prayer warriors' gathered together.

Take a moment to think about things in your church or your community that need urgent prayer.

08B. Seek the Holy Spirit's Ongoing Renewal

God multiplies churches in what men call a people movement, revival, restorations, renewal or outpouring of the Holy Spirit; in all cases known to history God has moved this way only

when His people prayed and let Him renew them day by day. This daily renewal that 2 Corinthians 4:16 promises is not a temporary experience but an ongoing, daily refreshing. When we let the Holy Spirit work actively in a church, He enables the members to do their different gift-based ministries. Humans often try to focus renewal on one or two spiritual gifts such as healing, evangelism, prophecy, tongues or Bible teaching. In true renewal, however, the Holy Spirit integrates many gifts in loving harmony in the body.

The Holy Spirit renews apostate, stagnant or sterile congregations that fail to reproduce when they pray and repent, and glorify Jesus by simply doing what He says. We limit this renewal, however, by applying it only to one area of the Christian life or ministry. True freedom in the Holy Spirit releases people to use all the gifts that He has given to a church body. These include the main gift for reproducing the church. He leads a church to separate its 'sent ones', in gifted as apostles to start daughter churches in distant fields, as in Acts 13:1-3. Those with other gift-based ministries cooperate to prepare and send them. We do this out of love for Jesus and each other, not out of guilt, ambition, or a desire to achieve goals as we chase our own vision.

Unfortunately, many with the apostolic gift must go outside of their church body to find appreciation for their calling, prepare, and learn church multiplication. This fractures the body of Christ. Teachers and leaders in these fractured bodies seldom use their gifts to mobilize those with the missionary gift. Their churches fail to reproduce consciously and purposefully as a body through their gifted apostles. We should pray for God's power to keep reproducing as a church.

Church planting task groups in areas where Satan has held total control over the people's minds for centuries, also need people with the gifts of faith and healing, who encourage others also to pray.

Patterson found the importance of prayer in his early Honduran ministry:

I wanted church growth to be seen as the result of my ministry. God, however, had different plans. It would be the result of His work. So He let me fail. And fail. I wanted control and recognition. God gave me failures. I finally prayed—and meant it—"Lord, I'm tired of failing. I don't care any more about my own ministry. Just let me help my pastoral students have a good ministry."

He answered that prayer. When my pastoral students saw that I was no longer using them to build my own empire but trying to help them have an effective ministry, they took my training seriously. I discovered a power and influence that I had lacked before; I found it when I did not seek it.

Paul associated the pains of starting churches with those of childbirth. Many times I prayed to escape the worries caused by new churches. I had to keep giving the churches back to God. I had to see how church growth came not from my strategies and teaching. God simply waited for us to ask Him for it! Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. He does not bless methods as such, only loving obedience supported by prayer.

Ask God now, to help you and your coworkers to unleash the power of the Holy Spirit for ongoing, daily renewal that spreads to the new churches also.

08C. Practice Personal and Family Prayers and Intercession

The prayers of Jesus and His apostles always had purpose. We are to pray without ceasing; we teach our people to do the same, as in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. New believers should see family devotions modeled. We may need to ask people in a church or small group to show new believers and families how to have personal and family devotions.

Stop and think now, if your people are having family prayers and if they need help.

08D. Pray Constantly for the Lost and for Spiritual Growth and Reproduction

The all-powerful God limits what He does on earth to our weak faith. If we want sinners to be converted, we ask Him to transform them. We should pray with our coworkers that the church would use its God-given power to reach the lost and reproduce. Jesus illustrated this potential for spontaneous growth and reproduction in his parables about sowing, the mysterious spontaneous growth, and the mustard seed in Mark 4. To make disciples of a large population or people group, we sow and cultivate the gospel seed so that churches, like plants, reproduce spontaneously in daughter and granddaughter churches.

Look at a grain of corn or rice; consider its miracle. We cannot make it grow; we can only cultivate it, water it, and protect it so that it germinates and reaches its God-given potential. Calculate what will happen if we sow a single grain of rice, corn or wheat in "good soil" and it reproduces to its potential as Christ said, up to a hundred times. Then we sow these 100 seeds for the next harvest, multiplying the amount by 100 and so forth for several harvests. In a very few years we could feed the entire human race with the grain reproduced from that one first seed! Jesus assured us that this is the way His church would grow and reproduce. Like all living things that God has created, an obedient church has within itself its seed to reproduce after its own kind. Rice reproduces rice; birds reproduce birds; churches reproduce churches. A healthy church is a vigorous, reproducing organism. It is Christ's living body on earth. By faith we tap a church's God-given power to reproduce in daughter and granddaughter churches.

We must teach our people to ask for God's power, which He has promised, to reproduce as a mother church and send out workers to sow our church's seed to raise up daughter churches. Abraham, our model for saving faith, believed God's promise that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars, in Genesis 15:6 and Galatians 3:6. We join our faith to his, believing in the miraculous reproduction of God's people.

You may need to plan with your coworkers how to make sure that your people continue to pray and intercede for the lost.

08E. Plan Prayerfully for Reproduction

Prayer is a vital part of our life and ministry. By faith we plan with our coworkers to let our churches and cell groups multiply. Church reproduction is supernatural, so prayer is part of our

planning. A pastor who trains newer pastors or elders within his congregation taps God's power to reproduce by releasing them to pastor new churches. In a new field the first tiny congregation will grow and reproduce if the people learn from the missionaries to ask God for a widespread harvest. Plan for it! Pray for it! Practice it!

Some forces beyond our control can limit church growth and reproduction. Factors that determine a church's potential to multiply include:

- God's sovereign election,
- people's responsiveness,
- population trends,
- materialism,
- laws,
- persecution,
- mission policies,
- gifting,
- health,
- family responsibilities,
- weather,
- wars,
- difficulty in traveling.

Most of these factors lie outside of our control. That is why we must pray. Then God deals with those forces that we cannot control. Without prayer we struggle futilely against them. God sometimes answers our prayer when we are willing to change our approach. If a new congregation prays for help because it has outgrown the home it meets in and cannot afford to rent or construct a building, they should be willing to let God answer in His way. He may, for example, simply help them multiply tiny house churches or cells.

Growth is easier when seekers can join very small groups. Effective church planters in new fields pray for God to multiply these small nuclei; they are churches in embryo.

"Good soil" for starting and multiplying churches is bad people. Romans 5:20 reveals, "Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound". Missionaries often justify a poor response by claiming that the people are hard, saying that the soil is poor. In reality they usually need simply to be more flexible. So we pray for wisdom to see how to multiply the kind of small nuclei around which normal growth can easily take place.

Does this multiplication seem like an impossible leap for you? Good! Then you know you must pray and ask your people to pray, so that God will bring to your side those whose help you need. Many churches need to cooperate with other churches in order to multiply and this kind of cooperation also needs prayer.

Once believers are praying and witnessing for Christ, multiplying churches is almost synonymous with multiplying leaders. This means praying for workers and preparing those that God sends in response to our prayers. Jesus said in Matthew 9:37-38 "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." This is our prayer.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will help your people to practice effective prayer for each other and for God's work to grow and spread.

Chapter 09 -- Giving Cheerfully

"God will give to you in the same measure that you give to others" Luke 6:38

Sections in this Chapter 09

09A. Obey Jesus' Command to Give

09B. Escape Poverty by Practicing Stewardship

09C. Avoid Causing Dependency and Resentment when Funding Work Among the Poor

09A. Obey Jesus' Command to Give

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." Luke 6:38 (NIV)

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why our Lord Jesus Christ wants us to give cheerfully.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' complains, "Let those with money give to support God's workers! We poor folks need what we have just to exist."

Mr. '**Foresight**' replies, "Jesus didn't feel that way about the poor widow's gift."

Find in 1 Corinthians 9:3-15 an important purpose for giving:

This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me. Don't we have the right to food and drink? Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas? Or is it only I and Barnabas who must work for a living? who serves as a soldier at his own expense? who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? for it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. Don't you know that those

who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me. I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of this boast. (NIV)

Find in 2 Corinthians 8:1 -5 what God expects the poor to give:

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. (NIV)

Find in Corinthians 9:5-12 guidelines to determine the amount to give:

So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. (NIV)

Find in 2 Thessalonians 3:5-10 Paul's reason to serve without pay:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." (NIV)

The first new believers in Jerusalem started giving generously from the very beginning, as Jesus commanded (Acts 2:45). This did not just happen. Like believers today, they needed instruction, and the apostles taught them to give. The ministry of stewardship grows out of Jesus' command to his disciples to give generously.

Scoggins relates how he and his coworkers introduce Christian stewardship in new churches:

We challenge new believers who have worshiped at the altar of materialism to repent and consider that God has a lower view of money than they do. We have seen men change their highest priority from making money to making disciples. The result is often a decline in their standard of living and also in their giving to the church.

We point out to them that we should look for ways to give rather than to receive, as we read in Acts 20:35 and 2 Corinthians 9:7. In the West, Christians tend to define giving only in terms of money. In extending God's kingdom, money may be the least important thing we give.

2 Corinthians 8:5 and Ephesians 4:11-16 teach us to give ourselves. We also point out that the Lord dealt severely with those who gave for selfish motives, as reported in Acts 5:1-11. If God dealt with this sin so severely, how much more will He judge those who infiltrate the church with selfish motives, looking to receive rather than give? Church discipline is necessary in such cases, in order to protect the spirit of generosity, as we see in 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15.

Take a moment now to pray about your practice of giving. Are you setting an example for your people of giving joyfully and sacrificially?

09B. Escape Poverty by Practicing Stewardship

Patterson struggled to teach Christian stewardship among the very poor. He related:

Like many American missionaries, I started out being carelessly generous in giving to the poor. Even though the amounts were small, they thought they could depend on me indefinitely, which robbed them of their self-reliance, dignity and desire to give. It also created resentment among my closest coworkers. We did not pay pastors but we subsidized extension teachers and other projects with funds from America. One of our most skilled workers began to demand financial help from us for some very poor village pastors whom he was training. His demands became forceful; he told some of them that they could get money from me if they also insisted strongly enough. This seriously impaired their sense of stewardship and made it almost impossible for me to work with them because my presence often invoked their greed.

A showdown came when he demanded money for a pastor to help him train others in our extension program. I refused. He became furious and shouted, "If those new churches fall, it will be your fault! I know you can get the money from the U.S.A. It will be your fault before God!"

I knew that being poor did not excuse the new churches from obeying God's command to give. I had seen that those who gave sacrificially in love in spite of their painful poverty, eventually escaped from poverty. But those who gave little, because of their poverty, remained poor. I replied to the angry worker, "If the churches' life depends on American money and not the Holy Spirit, then let them fall! The sooner the better! If our work is built on American dollars, then we are deceiving ourselves." Soon after, the worker abandoned his own very effective ministry to seek higher-paying employment.

In very poor areas, those who gave sacrificially in spite of their poverty were able after a few years to buy shoes for their children, educate them and live healthily. However, God

did not enable them to live in luxury, for He did not want to corrupt them. Others who did not give to God's work because of their poverty remained poor. Still, in time, even the poorest believers who gave sacrificially or tithed were able to meet their basic financial needs and escaped from their extreme poverty. We helped churches to develop a realistic budget, teaching that the treasurer could pay out only what was authorized in the budget. Thus, I learned that you rob the poor of a blessing, if you fail to encourage them to give what they can. If they lack money, then they can give products of the field or labor.

Are you encouraging the poor among your people to give? If not, plan now to do so, so that God will lift them out of extreme poverty.

09C. Avoid Causing Dependency and Resentment When Funding Work Among the Poor

Nothing can stifle the reproduction of churches in other cultures more than outside funding. Foreign money creates a subtle form of control. Those who receive it feel morally obligated to do what the outsiders want them to do. Even paying a pastor with inside funds can stifle church multiplication, if that pastor is not a good steward. Paid pastors often discourage starting new churches nearby even in affluent societies, for they want the resources for their own programs. Patterson recalls:

Seeing the stifling effect of foreign funding, a perceptive Honduran pastor warned me about helping too much with building programs and workers' expenses. He said, "A demon rides in on every dollar that comes from the United States!"

Subsidizing new churches in any way from the outside stifled giving by the local people. The really poor pastors soon asked for more. And more. Satan must have whispered in their ears, "Why plant more churches? You do not receive enough help as it is." Church multiplication dwindled and become paralyzed in poor fields where Americans and Europeans were generous with outside funds.

Working as a "tentmaker" and being supported to work "full-time" both have the blessing of Scripture in Acts 18:1-5. We must discern where each applies. For church reproduction among very poor people, workers should use non-funded, low-budget or no-budget approaches, limiting expenses to what local participants can provide. Let pastors start out as bivocational workers, supporting themselves. Let poor churches name several unpaid elders as co-pastors who share shepherding responsibilities. Avoid institutional programs for churches and pastoral training. Avoid budget-oriented planning, high administration costs, dependency on buildings and paid workers. Encourage volunteers.

Scoggins cautions church planting teams in a poor North African field:

Poverty in many fields creates painful tensions for Western missionaries who receive a much greater income than do local believers. If they begin sharing Western money with the church, where will it end? A church that becomes dependent on missionary money will attract "rice Christians" who come not to give but to receive. They undermine the cross-bearing discipleship of the church.

We found a similar problem in the United States among affluent Christians. Since we were starting house churches with unsaved people, normally with two or three families, it usually took some time for their wallets to "get sanctified." If the church planters gave to the infant church at that time, it got a false sense of the financial resources available to it, and the church became dependent on outsiders. We encouraged the church planters always to take a long-range view of what was best for a new church.

Missionaries working in the third world often feel guilt about having so much money in comparison with their local brothers in Christ. Some missionaries may be moved by the Spirit to identify more closely with the local people by forsaking their higher standard of living. We have found it better in house churches not to support the elders financially. However, we encourage the support of itinerant workers who serve with a network of house churches. This requires faith on the part of the worker and does not put a financial burden on any one church.

Giving for God's work is an act of worship. To avoid the awkward situation of asking believers to give when visitors are present, some churches say nothing about giving and provide an offering box, usually placed by the door.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will Implement Stewardship without causing dependency that robs your people of their dignity, initiative and dedication to God's work.

PART 2

CHURCH MULTIPLICATION SEEN FROM VARIOUS VIEWPOINTS

Chapter 10 -- Helping People Find Christ

Jesus says, "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." John 2:35

Sections in this Chapter 10

- 10A. Deal Wisely with the Seeker who Is Not yet Firm in the Faith
- 10B. Aim for a Widespread Movement to Christ by Working through Existing Relationships
- 10C. In Pioneer Fields Do Evangelism in a Way that Fits the Culture of the Working Class of People
- 10D. Help Believers to Recount the Great Redemptive Events, in Stories of Scripture
- 10E. Help New believers to Pass on the Good News at Once
- 10F. To Enter a Neglected Community Seek a Man of Peace and Work Within his Social Web
- 10G. Form New Churches or Cells Inside One's Network of Friends and Kin
- 10H. Where Large Meetings Are Illegal, Form Tiny Groups
- 10I. Give Ample Time for the Holy Spirit to Convince an Entire Family
- 10J. Help Seekers to Affirm Verbally the Essential Gospel Truths
- 10K. Avoid Manipulating People into Making Emotional Decisions
- 10L. Count New Believers as the Apostles Did, After Being Added to a Church by Baptism
- 10M. Follow Up Conversion with Baptism and Communion as Soon as Is Practical
- 10N. Assure New believers at Once that You and God Love and Accept Them

10A. Deal Wisely with the Seeker who Is Not yet Firm in the Faith

Jesus says, "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." John 2:35

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how Jesus wants us to deal with persons who are seeking faith but have not yet found Him. Let us consider evangelism from the viewpoint of those who have the most to gain or lose, the seekers or pre-Christians, to help them find Christ.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' has taken a course in systematic theology and tries out his new vocabulary on his non-Christian neighbor. He speaks with big Latin words that almost no one understands, in a voice that sounds like he was giving a sermon to a huge crowd.

Mr. '**Foresight**' hears him and comes to the rescue, "Please. We ordinary mortals do not understand a bit of what you are preaching. Let folks learn in a language they understand."

Find in John 4:25-42 a clue to the type of people that are most likely to respond to the gospel

The Samaritan woman said, "I know that Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us."

Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am He."

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find Him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?"

They came out of the town and made their way toward Him. Meanwhile his disciples urged Him, "Rabbi, eat something."

But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought Him food?"

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.."

Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to Him, they urged Him to stay with them, and He stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world." (NIV)

The religious Jews despised the Samaritans who had less economic and political power. But Jesus found them to be more responsive than the rich and powerful people of Jerusalem.

Find in Luke 10:3-7 a clue to the type of person to seek first when penetrating a new community:

Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to

you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. (NIV)

From its outset, a movement to Christ among a neglected people requires evangelistic methods that fit the local culture. A wise missionary will be sensitive to anything that needlessly offends the people, especially in the way that believers worship and witness. Patterson learned this by observation:

At first we found it hard to get Honduran men, especially heads of households, to attend the new churches or to trust Christ. The mature men would come and observe the worship through a window, which showed a hunger for spiritual things, but seeing only women and children, he would shrug and walk away. How could we get these mature heads of families to give us a hearing? How could we get them to talk about it with each other and with their families? We met to discuss this and the Hondurans gave the answer.

We asked our wives and other women not to take highly visible positions of leadership, and we made it a point to talk first to the male heads of households. Soon the men started attending services. After a few years more men than women were attending, and it became a men's movement, something new for Honduras. We dealt with heads of households as Peter did with Cornelius and Paul with the Philippian jailer (Acts 10 and 16:22-40).

Even before the men knew Christ, we would help them to tell Bible stories to their families and friends. The stories spread among the people.

Take a moment now to think how you can help your people win more people for Christ.

10B. Aim for a Widespread Movement to Christ by Working through Existing Relationships

The fact that Jesus is knocking at people's door becomes good news and travels along the same lines as gossip, between family members and close friends. Churches reproduce spontaneously wherever there is popular interest in the gospel of Jesus Christ. "Popular" does not necessarily mean that the people like it, but that it is of the people. People are interested in it, talk about it and even about it. The common people—not just religious types and clergy—are concerned about the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. Some will reject it, but everyone is nevertheless concerned about it.

God does not view persons as isolated individuals. He sees a seeker as part of a wider network of friends and relatives. Except for hermits who isolate themselves from the world, every person has such networks. To imitate Jesus in His incarnation, believers must step outside their church buildings and missionary compounds to work with the people, rather than developing ever-bigger programs to attract people to the church. You must work within family and social structures, rather than always bringing new believers into our own organization to find Jesus. You must spend time with them in their homes, listening to them and giving to them a model for evangelizing that they can imitate at once and pass on to their people.

Such "incarnational" evangelism imitates Jesus who emptied Himself of His divine glory and power to become a man, to experience things from our viewpoint, to identify with Jewish culture, and to draw near to "tax collectors and sinners." Similarly, you must empty yourself of your cultural prejudices and draw near to those of other cultures. You must work within existing webs of relationships, within families and with new believers' and seekers' networks of friends. Patterson explains how he used such a community approach:

When we penetrated a town for the first time with the gospel, we found it unwise to rent a room for meetings and invite the people to come where we were in control of everything. We could feel secure but they could not. On one Christmas Eve, for example, instead of inviting them to a celebration in a rented hall, we visited them in their homes and joined in with them in their festivities. Well, not in all their festivities! We made ourselves "vulnerable". We took them baked goods or some other small token of friendship, rather than inviting them to an "outsider" meeting without their friends and family, where they would have felt uncomfortable.

An enemy of this kind of incarnational evangelism is the missionary's desire to control the process, mistakenly wanting to evangelize where he feels secure and can do everything his own way. He wants to invite seekers and new believers to his house, or to place that he rents or to a restaurant where he can pick up the bill, so that he remains in control. The missionary may feel at ease, but the seekers feel insecure. Thus he extracts them from their network of friends and family and brings them into a new social network of his making. Such evangelism by extraction was neither Jesus' way nor that of His apostles. They evangelized where they were not in control. Peter evangelized Cornelius' social network under Cornelius' roof. Cornelius was Italian, so Peter and his Jewish coworkers had to eat non-Jewish foods for several days in Cornelius' home. The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem scolded Peter for that (Acts 11:1-18). God had given to Peter a disturbing vision to prepare him for that.

Ask God how you can help your people to see how He wants the gospel to flow through them to their relatives and friends.

10C. In Pioneer Fields Do Evangelism in a Way that Fits the Culture of the Working Class of People

Workers must popularize the gospel so that its message can flow from friend to friend and from relative to relative. One way to speed the process is to use creative, artistic methods of communication among the people. Find Christians who are artists, story-tellers, writers, jokesters, dramatists, poets, interpretive dancers, painters or journalists who can put the good news into a medium that will help the message to flow from one person to another. Patterson recalls,

We sometimes used poems to spread the gospel. It was not always good poetry, yet even the toughest men liked it anyway. We also used skits and simple dramas. No one memorized dialogues; they simply acted out the ideas or read their speeches directly from the Bible. We would get non-believers to take minor parts, in order to get close to them and to build relationships. In a reenactment of the parable about a prodigal son, we let

local volunteers play the fattened calf. Another read a poem that might have been spoken by the father as he stood scanning the horizon, waiting to see if his son would return.

We also put biblical doctrines into simple, affordable comic books that reached many people. That does not work for every culture and is no longer as useful in Honduras as it once was. But for the initial penetration of the gospel, it got us past our first barriers to the people.

Today, they have also developed their own style of sacred music and have composed many dozens of sacred songs, which greatly enrich their worship.

If you are an evangelist or you train evangelists, you should master the apostolic practice of incarnational evangelism. Since it is universally applicable, missionaries should try it before using Western or institutional approaches. Few people come to Christ or form new beliefs through the written page or from preached sermons. In most cases the Spirit of God uses friends or relatives.

Ask yourself honestly if you are relying too much on methods of evangelism that are difficult for the average believer in your churches to imitate and pass on. If so, ask God to help you embrace ways that are simpler and easier to use.

10D. Help Believers to Recount the Great Redemptive Events, in Stories of Scripture

All religions of the world—except Christianity and original biblical Judaism—start with a philosophical view of God and ethics. Confucius, Buddha, the holy men who wrote Hindu beliefs, Joseph Smith and Mohammed were all mystics who meditated. They contemplated the cosmos and life, then came up with new ethical and metaphysical systems. Over time those systems evolved into widespread religions. Christianity's origins are the opposite. No major doctrine originated simply out of some mystic's mind. All basic truths of Scripture have grown out of historical events, including the following:

- Creation
- The fall
- The flood
- Babel
- The pact with Abraham
- The miraculous escape from Egypt
- The giving of the law
- The breaking of the law
- The promise to David that an heir would sit on an eternal throne
- The division of the kingdom
- The exile and protection through Esther's diplomacy
- The return from exile
- Jerusalem and the temple rebuilt
- The expulsion of idolaters and reform under Ezra
- Jesus' birth and childhood,

Jesus' baptism, temptation and calling His disciples
Jesus' miracles, teaching and transfiguration
Jesus' arrest, trial and death
Jesus' resurrection and ascension to glory
The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
The new church in Jerusalem and its witness
The Jewish persecution and birth of Jewish churches
The conversion of gentiles
Churches multiply throughout the Roman Empire
Paul, John and Peter, imprisoned, write letters to new churches

As you recount to others these historical events and the facts about God and His work that are evident in them, the Holy Spirit will use these truths to bring people to repentance and to transform them. The inspired applications of those events written by the biblical apostles and prophets should form the basis of your theology. First, tell the stories; later tell the doctrinal meaning that builds on the historical facts. This is how the prophets, psalmists and apostles wrote their poetry, prophecies and New Testament letters.

The more distant a culture is from the Christian world-view, the more we have to tell Old Testament stories to prepare the people to understand Christ's redemptive work. Old Testament stories enable potential believers to grasp the following truths, among many others:

- There is only one all-powerful God who is above all created spirits.
- He is absolutely holy and punishes sin.
- He exercises His will in His election of His people,
- He makes and keeps His covenants with humans,
- He is faithful and demands our faith,
- He requires a blood sacrifice for our sins,
- He requires servant leadership in His kingdom,
- He responds to our prayers and intercession,
- He often deals with whole groups of people, viewing persons in sets like marriages, extended families, nations, and the whole human race in Adam.

Recount a story from the Old Testament to introduce a concept in its earthly form. For example, to teach the need for a sacrifice for sin by a substitute, recount Abraham's offering up of Isaac or the sacrifices required in Leviticus. Then add the corresponding spiritual application from the New Testament. Church planters should develop an extensive repertoire of Bible stories that furnish biblical foundations for every major Christian truth and duty.

If a people group already has a worldview with one all-powerful and perfectly just Creator, then you can start with the basic stories of redemption in Christ. Recount Bible stories about the gospel. Oral communication of the gospel, including stories about conversions and healing, is normally the cutting edge of people movements to Christ.

Where the people have a purely pagan worldview, they need a more basic preparation. Begin with Old Testament stories that reveal the holiness of the supremely powerful God.

Recount events of Scripture that the people can begin at once repeating to their families and friends. In most cultures, people will repeat these stories, provided you tell them in a way they can imitate. Do not start with a philosophical explanation of the gospels. That will come later.

Stories that are easy for new believers to repeat as they witness in turn, include key historical events of Jesus' life:

- Jesus raising Lazarus, John 11
- Jesus' death, Matthew 27
- Jesus' resurrection and appearances, John chapters 20 - 21.

Other stories that help new Christians to grow in the faith are:

- Jesus' baptism, Matthew 3
- Jesus' temptation, Matthew 4
- Jesus' miracles, Mark chapters 1-10 and John chapters 2; 6; 9; 11
- Jesus' parables, Matthew 13 and 25 and Luke 10; 15

Stories that reveal the historical foundations for the holiness of God include:

The flood. Genesis, chapters 6 - 9, teaches God's holiness as seen in his sending of the flood. The ark can serve as a picture of Jesus' salvation. By faith we enter into glory by being with the risen Christ the same way that Noah's family and the animals entered into the ark with Noah in order to be saved from God's punishment, as described in 1 Peter 3:18-22.

Allow the Holy Spirit to use this story from the Word of God to convince people of the danger of their sin before God, and of the power of Jesus' death and resurrection to save them.

- Elijah and the false prophets of Baal. 1 Kings 18 emphasizes the unity of the one true God and His wrath against idolaters. Point out to people some aspects of modern idolatry, greed and lust that correspond to the idolatry of the prophets of Baal.
- The escape from slavery in Egypt. Exodus chapters 11 through 15 teach the Holy One's desire to separate his people from the godless world around them. It recounts His great power demonstrated in the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea.

If people believe in Jesus in the same way that Buddhists or Muslims believe in their religion, — for cultural reasons without repentance — then they lack the Spirit of God. The best evangelists, those most often used by the Holy Spirit to bring others to Christ, are usually new believers. Show them how to explain to their family and friends that Jesus is God's Son and that he died and rose again to save us.

New believers do not need at first to understand detailed doctrines about how Jesus' death and resurrection save them and their friends. They need only to repent and trust Him. They will do that when the Holy Spirit stirs their hearts through your witness about Christ. Witness by the Holy Spirit's power, and He will use your words to convince people of their dangerous estate. The infinitely holy God will not tolerate sin forever. Do not teach about holiness as simply another item in a list of God's attributes. Rather let the Holy Spirit use it to awaken the fear of God in them. He is so good, and humans are so evil by comparison, that He must punish their sins. Seekers will see this, if we will recount Old Testament stories in which God punished men's sin.

Stop for a moment to plan in a definite way how you will use stories and help others also to do so.

10E. Help New believers to Pass on the Good News at Once

You must witness for Christ in a way that the gospel will flow easily from friend to friend and from family member to family member. To make the gospel easy to pass on requires several things:

- Communicate the basic proclamation of the gospel message, which is the sacrificial death of the Son of God, His life-giving resurrection, forgiveness and life for those who repent and believe, as Jesus explained in Luke 24:46-48.
- Pray regularly and fervently for those we witness to.
- Testify to what Christ has done for you, your family or friends.
- Befriend and win the confidence of respected heads of households and help them evangelize their family and friends. Teach them from the beginning to take responsibility for shepherding their families and social networks. Help them to continue drawing near to the lost, showing them love and faith as Jesus did, to reach their wider social network. Younger church planters tend to reach the youth first. Sometimes that is all they can do. Other times they fail to reach entire families, because they do not try to do so. It is usually wisest to start with heads of households, as the apostles did.

If the people lack an understanding of one all-powerful God and Creator, or that He is absolutely holy and must punish evil, then we must lay a foundation. We must help them to understand these realities by recounting Old Testament stories.

Use a method of witnessing that new believers can easily imitate and pass on as they witness for Jesus. Help them to relate in a simple, direct way the good news of their conversion as well as historical Bible accounts. Story telling is a popular medium in all cultures, and almost anyone can do it.

Scoggins discovered how to let the gospel flow freely among friends and relatives:

We learned the need to focus on a particular people group and subculture. Good things happen, when you keep new believers in a loving relationship with their unsaved, pagan friends, and when you take Christ to others instead of inviting them to come to us you. Then you can start a new congregation within their social network. We stopped removing new believers out of their social network and transplanting them into one made up of the church planting team members who are outsiders from the new believers' viewpoint. We now help them to tell Bible stories about salvation and to witness to their unsaved family members and friends about what Jesus has done for them.

Plan now to think who are the newest believers in your church. How will you help them to share their new faith with others, without further delay?

10F. To Enter a Neglected Community Seek a Man of Peace and Work Within his Social Web

"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house." Luke 10:5-7 (NIV)

The 'man of peace' is any respected person whom God has prepared to help you enter the community. God will channel His good news through this contact, as he did with Cornelius, Lydia and the jailer, as recorded in Acts chapters 10 and 16. Such persons of peace can put you in contact with their family and friends and help you to pass the gospel on to them immediately. Sometimes the persons of peace do this even before they know Christ, as in the case of Cornelius.

We must not separate new believers from their friends or relatives, except in the case of drug addicts or alcoholics whom you must help to keep away from those who abet their addiction. Do not alienate them from their unbelieving friends by forcing them to identify socially only with a congregation made up of outsiders from your church planting team.

Think now about the new area that you are working in, or soon will. Who are people of peace? Do you need to search more?

10G. Form New Churches or Cells Inside One's Network of Friends and Kin

Keep the church planting task group members and other outsiders a minority at meetings during the birth phase of the new church. If a husband reads and discusses the Bible and prays with his family, encourage him to bring in neighbors and friends to take part with them. A missionary or member of the church planting task group might attend this "gathering meeting" to help them get started, but often it is better not to do so. Let the new leader do as much as he is able, and meet with him and other new group leaders at another time to prepare them to lead their own meetings. Older mature believers should not come to these first "gathering meetings" unless they bring along unbelieving friends or relatives.

Do not be afraid to start small. When two or three people in a social network come to Christ, encourage them to meet as a "community" on Sundays or on a day more appropriate in the culture. As their group grows, it will practice church body life in these "community meetings," centered around the Lord's Supper. Later they will add other vital activities.

Stop and think--what heads of families should begin now to gather their loved ones and friends to pray and talk about Jesus?

10H. Where Large Meetings Are Illegal, Form Tiny Groups

To get started, two or three persons can meet for worship and Communion (Matthew 18:20 and Acts 2:46-47). Such tiny groups normally grow quickly.

The size to which you can let groups grow depends on the degree of security needed. Some governments set a limit to the number of people whom they permit to attend an unregistered meeting. Where many people come to Christ in tiny gatherings, extensive growth comes by letting such tiny groups keep multiplying.

Do you need to hold meetings secretly? If so, ask God to help you keep meetings small and multiply tiny groups.

10I. Give Ample Time for the Holy Spirit to Convince an Entire Family

Present the gospel in a meaningful way several times before asking for a commitment or suggesting baptism. Most seekers need to hear about Jesus several times, often over several weeks, while the Holy Spirit illumines their hearts. Scoggins found the need for perseverance in evangelism:

For Muslims conversion sometimes takes years. This fact requires our persistence. We pray for wisdom for how to continue with a contact that is open. We avoid "shaking the dust off our feet" until a person has obviously rejected the message. As long as we see progress we persevere. Even when they appear to fall back, we patiently explain the way back through repentance. To evangelize Muslims, we pray to discern their spirit. We also pray that they will see true Christians as the 'sweet fragrance of life' to those who are saved and the 'stench of death' to the lost, in (2 Corinthians 2:14-16).

Pray for a moment for unsaved family members among your people, and ask God how you can help your people better to reach them.

10J. Help Seekers to Affirm Verbally the Essential Gospel Truths

Help seekers to grasp and repeat the basic historical facts of the gospel. Especially do so with heads of families who will communicate the gospel to their wives and children. These essential historical facts are:

- Christ's death and its value for us: forgiveness,
- Christ's resurrection and its value for us: new, pure, eternal life.
- Our necessary response: faith and repentance.

When a seeker believes, you should try to reach and baptize the entire family. A husband normally precedes his wife and children. In some churches elders authorize him to baptize the others of his family.

Stop and think if your people are communicating the essential truths of the gospel, as well as their own testimonies of what Christ has done for them. Do they need help?

10K. Avoid Manipulating People into Making Emotional Decisions

Western evangelists sometimes manipulate individuals into making a logical, emotion-laden, personal decision. Few such individuals show evidence afterwards that the Holy Spirit brought them to repentance—usually less than five percent. A harvesting method that produced 95% weed seed would yield too few true believers to sustain church multiplication. Individualistic decision-making rituals, although they have limited effectiveness in some democratic, educated cultures, are foreign to Scripture and cause missionaries to waste time and energy. True conversion is not the result of a mere decision but comes from the repentance that the Holy Spirit gives to new believers. Conversion is moving from one kingdom to another, from darkness to light, from death to life. The consequences of such radical emigration normally are too important for a person to do all alone. A family should weigh and discuss them at length.

In Honduras Patterson first tried to evangelize with a Western decision making ritual:

We began witnessing in the common Western way, without lasting results. Evangelists who were effective in the United States came and held campaigns during our first years of work, and we arranged their meetings. But their methods proved ineffective in Honduras, and the seekers did not follow through. This forced us to look again in Scripture at what the gospel was and how the apostles presented it. We did not find there the Western emphasis on individual, crisis decisions. Rather, we found a strong emphasis on Jesus' death, resurrection, and repentance, and on entire families coming to the Lord.

Think for a moment about the way you help people to receive Christ. Do many fall away afterwards? If so, you may be pushing them instead of letting the Holy Spirit draw them to Christ.

10L. Count New Believers as the Apostles Did, After Being Added to a Church by Baptism

Do not count the number of converts until they have done what Jesus and the apostles require from them. The apostles counted them only after they repented and were baptized into Christ and His body, the church (Acts 2:38-41 and Luke 24:46-48).

Much mischief occurs when evangelists count hands prematurely and report such as conversions, so they can raise more funds. Patterson reports:

After showing a film about Jesus in several Mexican villages, a mission agency claimed five thousand conversions and eleven new churches in their fund-raising brochures. I visited the area and tried to help follow up the new believers, but there were none. There were no churches. The evangelists had only held meetings to give away cassettes with gospel music to individuals who had "made a decision". When confronted with the facts,

the organization's officials refused to discuss them or to stop making the exaggerations. Such dishonest use of statistics by evangelicals reinforces the use of bad evangelism methods.

We taught our Honduran evangelists not to count converts until seekers had done what was the apostles required, as recorded in Acts 2:37-41, to repent of their sins, to be baptized and to be added to a local community of the people of God. Peter commanded this in answer to the question that faith begs, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Of course, the mechanical performance of these activities alone does not save people; they only ratify by concrete actions the faith in Christ by which God saves people.

Stop and plan how you and your coworkers will discern biblically which converts have truly been born again, and count them accordingly.

10M. Follow Up Conversion with Baptism and Communion as Soon as Is Practical

The apostles gave extensive instruction to converts after their baptism, not beforehand. An evangelist's job is not done until a new believer is baptized and starts obeying the commands of Jesus. As seen in Peter's actions, as recorded in Acts 2 and throughout the book of Acts, an evangelist's duty is more than witnessing about Jesus Christ. Peter did not consider his work to be done until the new believers had repented, that is, turned from unrighteousness to new life in Christ, and were added to Christ's church by baptism. Somebody's mere acknowledging of gospel facts is a poor criterion by which to distinguish those in the Kingdom from those who are outside of it. Persons who have heartfelt belief in Christ and in Scripture start doing righteous works because of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, as demonstrated in Acts 2:37-47.

Some churches require seekers to complete a doctrinal course before their baptism. Doing that is an error, for it excludes illiterates and makes of baptism a graduation ceremony rather than the initial confirmation of repentance and salvation, as it is in Scripture.

New believers should begin celebrating the Lord's Supper as soon as possible, even if they are only one, two, or three new believers in a new church. Since saving faith *results* in good works, they will have a desire at least to try. Make sure new believers do not confuse the cause and the result. A new believer obeys because he has been saved, for salvation does not result from his obedience but leads to it. We can expect growth—though not perfection—and obedience from the beginning. A true believer will joyfully obeys out of love for Jesus, not out of a legalistic sense of duty (John 14:15).

Stop and think about how long new believers must wait in your church--or the churches of those you train--to obey Jesus and receive the benefits of baptism and the Lord's Supper. If it's too long, plan now to do it the way the apostles did.

10N. Assure New believers at Once that You and God Love and Accept Them

New believers will find it easy to obey Jesus when they know He loves them; and they will believe this when His people in the church body show love for them. Assure them immediately of the Holy Spirit's regeneration, sealing, and presence in their life. Do not wait until you take them through a course of systematic doctrine about the Holy Spirit. Physically embrace the new believer immediately after baptism, and assure them with simple words such as, "You are risen with Jesus for all eternity, by the power of God's Spirit in you!" Some pastors lay hands on new believers when they baptize them, as the apostles did in Samaria, as a physical sign and assurance of having their having received the Holy Spirit, as described in Acts 8:14-17.

Wait until a believer has repented and been baptized before you offer formal acceptance into the church body as an adult member. Doing so will protect the assembly from "rice Christians" who, like ticks on a dog, are parasites on the body of Christ. Left unprotected, both ticks and dog will die, which is good for neither of them. However, true believers should be included as soon as possible, lest they die like abandoned babies in an indifferent world.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will assure new believers that God and His people have received them in love.

Chapter 11 -- Doing the Work of an Evangelist

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 1:8

Sections in this Chapter 11

- 11A.** Bring Christ to the People--the Role of the Evangelist
- 11B.** Aim for Repentance and Faith That Are Born of the Holy Spirit, Not for Mere Decisions
- 11C.** Focus on Neglected People
- 11D.** Use the "Keys" to the Kingdom of God that Jesus Promised to All Disciples
- 11E.** Help Family Heads who Are New in the Faith to Lead Gathering Meetings
- 11F.** Where Society Is Hostile, Let New believers Decide How to Testify for Christ

11A. Bring Christ to the People--the Role of the *Evangelist*

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why Jesus wants us to do the work of an evangelist, and how to share the Good News with our friends, relatives, neighbors and all neglected people.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' asserts, "If people are saved by faith, then a simple decision is enough. Do not offend them by talking about their sin."

"Wrong!" Mr. '**Foresight**' answers, "People must repent and trust Jesus to forgive and change them from within. Merely *deciding* to accept Jesus because of social pressure is a *cultural faith*, like a Buddhist's."

Find in Acts 9:10-27 things that were done after Paul's conversion, to bring him into fellowship with other Christians:

In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

"Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord-Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here-has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him. But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. (NIV)

Ask yourself the question, "Am I doing the work of an evangelist?" If not, please pray and plan for it.

11B. Aim for Repentance and Faith That Are Born of the Holy Spirit, Not for Mere *Decisions*

Evangelism is complete when new believers repent from a life of sin, receive baptism and become part of a church body with which they practice the new life by the Holy Spirit who dwells in them. A church planting task group, or small group in a cell church, needs people who have a spiritual gift of evangelism. Such a gift is active wherever people turn from their sin to follow Jesus. The gift of evangelism, like all other spiritual gifts, should be used in harmony with the other gifts found in the body of Christ.

Evangelists who work independently from churches usually contribute little to church planting and sometimes cause damaging confusion in a new field. They often push people to make decisions, then leave them without pastoral care. They are like a farmer who scatters seed recklessly on a mountainside then returns years later looking in vain for a crop. Such irresponsible ministry seldom adds anything lasting to a church planting movement, except confusion. Such evangelists usually present Jesus merely as a ticket to heaven or a cheap answer to every their problems, making out Jesus to be a mere servant at people's service.

Evangelism that offers such cheap grace can inoculate people group against the kind of discipleship that Jesus commands and that results in a Spirit-led movement to Christ. The evangelistic messages in the book of Acts proclaimed Jesus as both Lord and Savior. True evangelists proclaimed God's command to leave the things of this world and to follow Him under His Kingship. Call people to change loyalties, to turn from serving themselves to serving the living God, as described in 2 Corinthians 5:14 and Galatians 5:13.

Some modern evangelists neglect repentance. They justify this omission by saying that repentance would be "salvation by works". Even some theologians have claimed that salvation does not require repentance, only faith. They reason that repentance would be a 'work' and that works do not save us, supposing that the repentance mentioned in the New Testament was only for a transition age for Jewish Christians who still followed the Old Testament. Such theologians perhaps mean well but obviously lack experience in church planting on new fields. If you overlook repentance when calling people to Christ, you will not get healthy churches. Jesus commanded all of His followers to repent in order to enter His Kingdom (Matthew 3:2 and 4:17; Mark 1:15; 2:17; Luke 13:3,5 and 24:46-48).

Jesus and His apostles emphasized repeatedly that repentance is for both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews), in (Luke 24:47; Acts 11:18; 17:30; 20:21, 1 Peter 3:9 and Revelation 2:1).

Jesus taught repentance in various ways. He called it being born again spiritually, dying as a grain of wheat to bring forth new life, receiving God's indwelling Holy Spirit, entering His kingdom as a little child, leaving one's sins and turning to God.

Repentance means turning from sin to God. This transformation includes receiving His Holy Spirit who produces in us what the Bible calls the fruit of the Spirit. He brings love, joy, peace, patience, goodness and other virtues. Such fruit is not of one's own making; it is the result of the Holy Spirit producing holiness in believers, making them holy. Believers bear fruit because God's Holy Spirit enters their hearts and begins an eternal transformation process; it is His fruit

in them. Thus, biblical repentance requires God's work; we humans must let Him do it. Thus, repentance cannot be construed as humans saving themselves by their good works.

Have you put too much emphasis on merely making a 'decision?' If so, please plan now how you will explain the need to repent to coworkers and sinners.

11C. Focus on Neglected People

Jesus said to his followers, "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest". John 4:35

The apostle Paul sought to evangelize where Jesus had not been preached, where he would not build on another man's foundation, in (Romans 15:20-22).

Jesus still requires that some of His apostles, or missionaries serve on fields that are neglected, for the church is to go to all nations, as commanded in Matthew 28:19; John 4:35 and 2 Corinthians 10:15-16.

The word "nations" in Matthew 28:19 means specific people groups. Help your churches to look at people groups—not just nations in the political sense. China, for example, has hundreds of people groups, or nations, in the biblical sense of the word.

Who are the most neglected people in your area? Does God want you to reach them? If so, stop for a moment and think how to get started.

11D. Use the "Keys" to the Kingdom of God that Jesus Promised to All Disciples

Use the promised "keys" to witness with power. We receive this power from the Holy Spirit who anoints us for the specific purpose of witnessing for Christ, as promised in Acts 1:8. This power to witness includes the authority to bind or loose, that is, to hold people accountable for a sin or to forgive it. Jesus symbolized it with the phrase "keys to the kingdom." He promised this power to bind or forgive first to Peter and later to all of His disciples, as recorded in Matthew 16:16-19, in 18:18 and in John 20:23. Jesus related the binding and loosing to forgiveness and to building His church through witnessing. The Matthew 16 text relates this power of binding and loosing to invading Satan's kingdom in this world, promising that the "gates of hell will not prevail".

The Matthew 18:15-22 passage relates it the power to correcting sinners in the church, thereby keeping the kingdom of this world from infiltrating His kingdom. In 1 Corinthians chapter 5, the apostle Paul instructed a congregation to exclude, that is, to "bind" an unrepentant offender and exclude him from fellowship. In 2 Corinthians 2:4-10 it appears that the offender had repented in response to the congregation's discipline, and the apostle urged them to forgive him, to "loose" his sin. Whether binding or loosing, God authorizes His church to act on earth in Jesus' all-powerful Name to deal with sin in the power of the Holy Spirit and with His guidance.

Keys, then, are a symbol of authority to forgive, and are related to witnessing for Christ with the power of the Holy Spirit, as we read in Matthew 16:15-20; 18:18 and John 20.23.

Read Acts 3:1 - 4:13 to find an example of how the apostles witnessed with power.

- What act of power did the apostles do in Jesus' name?
- What, besides Jesus' death, did they proclaim in their message to the people?
- Whom did the apostles' teaching disturb and what did they do?
- Before whom did they stand trial the next day?
- Why were those who sat in judgment over the apostles surprised at their defense?

When Westerners begin working in other cultures, they usually find that they have to simplify their gospel presentation. The essential gospel message is about:

- The death and resurrection of the Son of God,
- Eternal forgiveness of sins for all who repent and believe in Him,
- Our entrance into the new Kingdom, into a new, eternal, loving society of believers filled with the Spirit of God.

Western missionaries must not export their individualistic approach to witnessing. Also, Westerners often neglect Jesus' resurrection. The apostles preached about the resurrection more than do most Western preachers. Throughout the book of Acts, it was the main point of their witness. Indeed, Jesus died for people's sins; he was also raised back to life to give life to those who believe in him. The same emphasis appears in the Epistles. God raised Jesus from the dead and promises to raise believers with Him. This is history's most powerful, triumphant event, the supremely good news that the Holy Spirit uses, along with the promise of forgiveness through Jesus' sacrificial death, to convert those whom he has convicted of their sin.

Some Westerners, armed with a logical "plan of salvation," stress almost exclusively the legal value of Jesus' death to forgive sin, neglecting His resurrection. Believers are risen in with Christ in the same way that they died with Him: by faith. His resurrection is the vehicle that raises believers to new life, to eternal life. Believers' participation in His resurrection is the only way for humans to receive the gift of eternal life, as affirmed in John 11:21-26 and 1 Corinthians 15:12-26. Believers receive this life together with others in a united body, as taught in Ephesians chapters 2 and 3.

Christ's sacrificial death and forgiveness for sinners are precious truths, but they are not the whole gospel. Those truths underscore our justification by faith as taught in Romans chapters 1 through 5. But those chapters do not prepare a new believer to understand the Spirit-filled that he will live in the power of Jesus' resurrection, as taught in chapters 6 through 8. These chapters reveal the new life believers have by participating in Christ's resurrection. To proclaim only that by Jesus' death sinners are justified tells only half of the truth. Such a deficient gospel proclamation leaves seekers without the good news about the new resurrection life in Christ, unaware that believers should be practicing the righteousness that is imparted to us through our participation in Jesus' resurrection. Biblical evangelism proclaims not only justification but also the power to live a new, holy life. Evangelism that fails to bring people to repentance and the new life creates churches that are too weak to multiply.

In many cases, witnessing for Jesus with power includes praying for people's physical healing. Salvation should result in spiritual and emotional healing, but does it guarantee complete physical wholeness in this world? Is physical healing also a result of saving faith during one's earthly life? 1 Corinthians 15:53 affirms that "this corruptible must clothe itself with the incorruptible" as part of Christ's redemptive work. Isaiah 53:5 assures that "By His wounds you are healed." But can complete healing from all corruption take place before our resurrection? That is not what 1 Corinthians 15 promises. If that were the case, then few faithful believers would ever die and go to heaven, for there would be perpetual healing on earth. The biblical truth is that Jesus rose from the dead and the same power that raised Him works in us to give us new life, which starts by faith at conversion, as taught in Ephesians 1:18-23.

Some theologians assign the power of the keys only to the original twelve Apostles; others include only the bishops who followed them. Most evangelicals agree that all true believers that are filled with the Holy Spirit can use the keys. Thus, all Christians have the power to bind or loose sins as they witness to an unsaved person or correct a disorderly Christian. What specifically is the power that the Holy Spirit gives to believers, so that they can witness effectively for Christ? Is it courage or a loud voice? No, although there may be times that call for courage and speaking with force. The power is the anointing from God's Spirit on believers and their testimony as they we declare a person's forgiveness in Jesus. Believers must trust God to convince sinners by His Spirit to repent and believe through their faithful testimony. The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus in the heart of new believers, not only by convincing them of sin and the need for salvation, but also by loosing (forgiving) their sin before Most Holy God. His work of converting a sinner often depends as much on the faith of the one who witnesses as on that of the new believer. The paralytic lowered through the roof to be healed by Jesus was first saved from his sins because of the faith of his friends (Mark 2:1-12; compare Acts 16:31).

Highly educated people often find it hard to witness with this kind of confidence, to believe for people who are still unable to believe for themselves. Too often they view their witness as mainly a process of transmitting information. They rely more on their logic and the accuracy of their witness, than on God's power to convey Jesus' actual forgiveness and life. Less-educated believers often witness more fervently, because they rely consciously on the Spirit's anointing as they announce the news of forgiveness with supernatural power.

Pray now for power for you, your coworkers and your people, to witness and boldly proclaim forgiveness of sins.

11E. Help Family Heads who Are New in the Faith to Lead Gathering Meetings

In some cultures, you can ask a new believer to invite unbelieving friends to an informal gathering. Missionaries might lead such a gathering at first to show the new believer how to do it. Then let him lead similar meetings for friends, coaching him from behind the scenes. These are not worship services or detailed Bible studies. They are simply a means of sharing Christ, like Levi, Zacheus, Cornelius and others did (Luke 5:27-32; 19:1-10 and Acts 10).

What family heads in your church--or the churches of those you train-- could start gathering their friends for prayer and to discuss God's promises?

11F. Where Society Is Hostile, Let New believers Decide How to Testify for Christ

Let the new believers decide if they want to be baptized publicly or in private as the Ethiopian eunuch and the Philippian jailer were (Acts chapters 8 and 16). It is their life and jobs that are in danger, not the missionary's, so let them make the decision themselves. In hostile areas believers should meet secretly "underground" in clusters of tiny house churches or cells. Muslim follows of Jesus may decide to continue going to a mosque to pray, as Paul continued to go to Jewish synagogues. This should be their decision, so let the Holy Spirit lead them.

Please take a moment to plan how you and your coworkers will help new believers to witness wisely for Christ.

Chapter 12 -- Working Together to Reproduce Churches

The Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off . . . John was with them as their helper." Acts 13:2-5

Sections in this Chapter 12

- 12A.** Commission Task Groups to Go to Distant Fields with a Serious Ceremony
- 12B.** Prepare a Progress Chart for New Churches
- 12C.** Plant Churches the Way the Apostolic Task Groups Did
- 12D.** Help Churches to Prepare and Send Mission Task Groups to Neglected Fields
- 12E.** Help Married Task Group Workers and New Pastors to Agree on their Spouses' Ministry
- 12F.** Outsiders Form Temporary Rather Than Permanent Teams to Multiply Churches
- 12G.** Before Joining a Task Group Going to a Distant Field, Decide Carefully who your Coworkers Should Be
- 12H.** Appreciate the Variety that God has Put into Different Cultures
- 12I.** Examine Carefully a New Field and Plan How to Penetrate It
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12K. Give On-the-Job Training to Untrained Workers who Join the Task Group on the Field

12L. Find the Responsive Segment of the Population

12M. Help New Leaders to Take Pastoral Responsibility as Soon as Possible

12N. Avoid Overwork by Turning Problems Over to New Elders

12O. Recruit Workers Who Will Finish the Job

12P. Avoid Unnecessary Equipment and Methods

12Q. Select Coworkers who Qualify for Your Task Group's Particular Field and Ministry

12R. Discern and List Necessary Activities for a Church Planting Task Group

12A. Commission Task Groups to Go to Distant Fields with a Serious Ceremony

The purpose of this chapter is to prepare, or serve as, an effective mission task group. The church in Antioch separated Paul and Barnabas to make disciples of the nations with prayer and fasting (Acts 13:1-3). Churches today likewise should send workers through the power of the Holy Spirit. This will assure workers of their church's prayerful support and will ensure better accountability to the church. Doing so also encourages workers on the field during hard times. Churches should separate workers for church planting in another field both physically and emotionally from their home church, family, mission base, and friends. Weeping relatives and friends often need this separation ceremony also, to help them release loved ones and coworkers for the job to which God calls them.

Some organizations lay hands on workers for blessing and power for ministry. The separation ceremony should be a very serious and special event. Everyone should see that the church body through the power of God's Spirit has truly sent its apostles, that they really are 'sent ones.' That is why the church in Antioch fasted first.

"Why work as a group?" Mr. '**Traditionalist**' asks. "I prefer to work alone, so that nobody holds me back. I have my own ideas and ways of doing things."

"That's arrogant," Mr. '**Foresight**' replies. "Jesus and His apostles always worked as a team. No one alone has all the spiritual gifts needed to help a healthy church to develop."

Find in Mark 3:13-14 what Jesus did before naming his disciples, and what he appointed them to do:

Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. (NIV)

Find in Acts 10:23-24 who served with Peter's task group that started the church in Caesarea:

Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests. The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa went along. The following day he arrived in Cesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. (NIV)

Find in Acts 13:2-3 how the church in Antioch formed a task group for distant fields:

While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (NIV)

The apostle Paul's cross-cultural church planting task groups furnishes us a model to imitate:

- God sent Paul to make disciples of neglected people groups. He and his coworkers established or strengthened churches that multiplied wherever they worked,
- He worked with temporary task groups that focused on the task of discipling local people rather than on building permanent missionary organizations,
- They immediately sought and worked with seekers' families and friends,
- They started clusters of small congregations that multiplied,
- They willingly worked in dangerous fields with hostile authorities,
- They worked with their hands to support themselves in jobs that kept them close to the people,
- They prayed fervently for the sick and for those whom they taught to be disciples.
- They trained local leaders on the job without delay and left them in charge.

Does your church--or the churches of those you train--need to form a task group? If so, plan now.

12B. Prepare a *Progress Chart* for New Churches

Both the team members from the outside and the new leaders in a new church usually find it helpful to have a checklist for their church or group to follow. Here are activities that you might include in a progress chart for new churches. Mark items that you plan to give special attention.

Make Disciples at All Levels

- New believers learn and observe all of Jesus' basic commands, as they review the Gospels
- Leaders mentor newer leaders, including those who lead daughter churches and new home groups.
- Pastoral trainees (elders) take on more and more pastoral responsibility in new churches or groups and train newer leaders. They can study the book of Titus.

Pray

- ___ Pray and praise God daily, privately and as a family.
- ___ Practice regular congregational prayer. They can study the Psalms that are prayers.

Evangelize

- ___ Witness to friends and relatives; converts are baptized. They can study Acts chapters 1-2 and 8.
- ___ Send out task groups to evangelize.
- ___ Leaders help daughter churches' members to witness for Christ. They can study Acts 2:36-47; Acts 10 and Acts 3-14

Worship

- ___ Celebrate the Lord's Supper.
- ___ Practice all the essentials of corporate worship, which are praise, confession and assurance of forgiveness, the Lord's Supper, application of the Word, prayer, giving, and fellowship. Celebrate sacred seasons of the church year.

Fellowship

- ___ Develop loving fellowship, forgiving and asking forgiveness for all offenses, build all organization on loving relationships. They can study passages dealing with love, unity and fellowship.
- ___ Maintain loving, cooperative inter-church or inter-group relationships, including regular united celebrations with sister churches or groups.

Shepherd

- ___ Watch over the spiritual life of the flock.
- ___ Help parents and new teachers relate Bible stories dealing with vital doctrines, family and church needs. Give spiritual care; correct personal or family problems patiently and humbly without condemning.
- ___ Small group leaders train assistant group leaders who form new groups. They can study 1 and 2 Timothy.

Reproduce Daughter Churches or Cells

- ___ Pastors mentor newer pastors for new churches
- ___ Mother churches help daughter churches and new groups to multiply. Help daughter churches to start granddaughter churches. (Study Acts chapters 13 - 14.)

Teach to Edify and Equip for Ministry

- ___ Teachers and pastors teach in a way that their disciples can imitate their teaching style and teach others.
- ___ Believers study the Bible carefully and learn to interpret correctly and apply God's Word to their lives and ministries.

- ___ Teachers prepare assistants on the job as new Bible teachers for new small groups and daughter churches.
- ___ Pastors train newer pastors.

Grow in Christ, Develop Christian Character

- ___ Strengthen the hope that purifies, for new life in Christ, and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).
- ___ Leaders seek daily guidance by the Holy Spirit.
- ___ Family heads shepherd their families for growth in Christ.

Practice Christian Stewardship

- ___ All members give in faith, trusting in our Father's heavenly reward.
- ___ Elders discern worthy projects and workers to support, channel giving through the church, develop a budget and teach members to give generously.
- ___ Give sacrificially to reproduce other churches at home and abroad.

Organize

- ___ Elders develop these ministries in one loving body, and practice the New Testament verses with commands for behaving toward one another, both within small groups and between groups and churches. (Study the verses in the New Testament that mention how we are to behave toward 'one another.")
- ___ Group leaders and new elders provide total pastoral care, not just preaching.
- ___ Small groups multiply themselves and their ministries.

Mobilize for World Outreach

- ___ Leaders teach to discern and pray for neglected fields around the world.
- ___ Churches recruit and prepare missionary task groups.
- ___ Churches send task groups to start churches in responsive but neglected fields.

Strengthen Families

- ___ Families develop loving communication between spouses and children.
- ___ Parents practice loving Christian discipline in the home.
- ___ Elders and older Christian women counsel spouses, couples, or children with problems and help fathers to shepherd their families.

Serve the needy

- ___ Believers and the church as a body obey Jesus' Great Commandment to love our neighbor in a practical way.
- ___ Deacons or deaconesses develop ministries that mobilize many to help the sick and needy.

- ___ Churches or groups alleviate injustice and poverty in other communities and fields, including through daughter churches there.

A good pastoral training program will provide such a progress chart, a menu for selecting studies and activities to deal with the immediate needs and ministry opportunities of a new church. A progress chart for a new church should list Jesus' commands and other ministries required by the New Testament. Chapter 17 of this Guide explains the duties of church leaders relative to those activities. You should add activities to the progress charts as needs and opportunities for serving arise.

You might provide another progress chart for a church planting task group. Key activities are listed below. Add activities as you see the need or as opportunities for serving arise. Mark items that you plan to give special attention.

Progress Chart Items for a Church Planting Task Group

Focus on a Definite Cultural Group

- ___ Prayerfully select and focus on the neglected people that you plan to disciple. Study a people group to determine its most responsive segment. Normally this is a segment of the working class.
- ___ Focus on people who are culturally similar to you and your task group members—if you have a choice. Or add to your task group workers from other fields that are culturally closer to the people. This is especially important at the start when outsiders who are new to the local culture and society must do the evangelism. Introducing a church style that is too Western can delay church multiplication for many years. If possible find helpers from other, closer cultures who do not have to make as large a cultural leap. If your church 'adopts' a neglected people and prays for it, God will give members the apostolic gift to send to disciple them.

Recruit

- ___ Recruit task group members committed to complete the job. Workers must commit to do simply as Jesus says, to disciple a people group, no matter how long it takes or what sacrifice is needed. Short-term service is helpful for temporary specialized service, enrichment and to discern one's gifts and calling, but not for permanent church multiplication.
- ___ Work together with other churches to form a task group, especially if your church is small.

Penetrate the New field

- ___ Bond with the people and their culture. Workers should live with the people they are discipling and identify socially with them--not with other missionaries or foreigners. The missionary's deepest social needs, apart from his own family, should be met by the people.
- ___ Bind Satan. Pray in Jesus' all-powerful name to bind Satan and his demons in your area. Our Lord defeated them utterly by in His death on the cross and in His resurrection.

- ___ Filter out nonessentials. Avoid methods, attitudes, and equipment from your own culture, including ways to teach, witness and worship, that people would find strange or hard to imitate and pass on in the other culture.

Evangelism

- ___ Maintain fervent prayer for the unsaved and for converts.
- ___ Bring God's hope to those who suffer from brutal class discrimination. The oppressed in most fields are the most responsive, but avoid messy politics. For the initial penetration of areas with hostile authorities, seek to live among people who want change and do not cling to the status quo. Also, seek to reside where authorities do not watch closely.
- ___ Seek the 'man of peace' that Jesus mentioned. Look for responsive heads of families and friends or relatives of believers, who can introduce you to the community and provide contacts.
- ___ Witness for Jesus. Begin, if possible, with heads of families. Help seekers to repeat to their families Bible stories that show Jesus' death and resurrection, through which we gain forgiveness and eternal life. Tell what Jesus has done for you and your family also.
- ___ Baptize. Baptize entire families without unnecessary delay.
- ___ Keep doing evangelism in the homes after starting public worship services.

Make sure before all else that new churches obey Jesus

- ___ Teach new believers to obey the commands of Jesus and apply the Word of God to their lives.
- ___ Break bread. Celebrate the Lord's Supper with the new believers in regular worship. Do not require them to go to a distant church for it.
- ___ Make worship an edifying, meaningful celebration. Prepare well, planning well ahead of time, even for a tiny group.
- ___ Teach Christian stewardship from the start. Avoid permanent subsidies from the outside for pastors. Let the people support their leaders. Let leaders serve voluntarily as Paul did (2 Thessalonians 3:6-12).

Organize

- ___ Organize. Name elders, train and mobilize them to shepherd their people (Acts 14:23). They are to help their people use their God-given gifts in the different ministries that the New Testament requires.
- ___ Agree on each worker's spouse's ministry. Couples talk it over now and again when a change in status follows birth or children or when they develop into a less dependent stage of maturity.
- ___ Give responsibility to local leaders. Avoid over-control or ongoing control from the outside.
- ___ Arrange for each new worker to report regularly to a capable mentor, perhaps to more than one, who sincerely cares for the worker and his ministry.

Train leaders

- ___ Mentor new leaders as Jesus and His Apostles did. Imitate their model. In a pioneer field, do not send inexperienced leaders out of their community to receive pastoral training. Disciple them on the job.
- ___ Let more experienced pastors train newer ones. Use materials geared for this.

Some missionary teams fail because their members focus too much on what they will do as a team and on each other. They plan only what they will do. They fail to plan what the new believers and churches should do. Thus, they cannot lead the new leaders because they have no clear vision of where they are going—so they only teach them. They may do good teaching but bad leading.

Some missionary teams make the fatal mistake of pulling new church leaders out of the churches to serve with the missionary organization in less productive roles. Do not forget that a foreign team or task group is merely a scaffold—like the temporary structure that construction bricklayers set up around a tall building. The national congregations are the only ‘building’ that God tells us to construct. Missionaries avoid this mistake by drawing up and following the progress chart for new churches described above. It lists what the disciples and new churches should do, to will help the task group workers to focus on the people and on the people’s tasks rather than on themselves.

Is your task group ready to list its duties? If so, plan now to meet with coworkers and do it.

12C. Plant Churches the Way the Apostolic Task Groups Did

Please read Acts 10 and 11:1-18 to find guidelines for church planting. Notice things that God, Cornelius, Peter, or Peter’s task group did to give birth to the new church.

Did you find the following? Mark those that you found.

- ___ What first prompted God to move? What were both Cornelius and Peter doing at first?
- ___ What did workers from the mother church in Joppa do? How was a church-based task group involved?
- ___ How did God cure Peter’s cultural prejudice?
- ___ Who was invited to the exclusive meeting in Cesarea, apart from Peter and his companions?
- ___ What reputation did Cornelius have with relatives and friends?
- ___ What was the content of the Peter’s message?
- ___ How did the task group confirm the new believers’ salvation?
- ___ How much time did they spend with the new church?
- ___ How did Peter deal with the Jewish Christians’ objection to his cross-cultural approach?

Note that Peter took other Christian brothers from Joppa to plant the new church in Cornelius' house in Cesarea, as seen in Acts 10:23. As always, they related the essentials of the gospel, as summarized in verses 6-43:

- Who Jesus is. He is Lord of all, anointed by God to do good and to heal (Acts 10:36-38),
- His sacrificial death. By His death God provides forgiveness of sins (Acts 10:39),
- His resurrection. He rose from death (Acts 10:40-42).
- How we are to respond. We are to believe with repentant hearts (Acts 2:38; 10:43)

Are you keeping church planting as simple as the apostles did? If not, pray for guidance now.

12D. Help Churches to Prepare and Send Mission Task Groups to Neglected Fields

You can eliminate a major cause of missionaries burning out by having churches send task groups. Neither Jesus nor His apostles worked alone. They formed task groups, as seen in Mark 3:13-15 and Acts 10:23-24 and 13:1-3. The apostolic bands that accompanied Peter and Paul were spiritual "midwives" who enabled churches to produce daughter churches. This church reproduction is a function of the body of Christ, not of individuals laboring alone.

Some Western missionaries show excessive individualism, failing to understand ministry teams. They came to Jesus as individuals and now serve with an organization that deals with them as individuals. They work alone on a mission field until they learn—if they ever do—that it is far easier to plant churches working as a team. They must learn to work with others who have gifts that balance theirs. It is foolish and sometimes dangerous to do God's work alone.

Sending out church-based task groups as the Antioch church did (Acts 13:1-3) has several benefits. Task groups can work on fields that they chose, among a neglected people, whether or not a mission agency is cooperating with their project. A church body can take the responsibility of sending task groups rather than a mission agency. When church members participate in sending their own people as missionaries, the sending church will have much more concern for reaching the nations. So doing makes it easier to raise support for the workers, creates opportunities for training in the sending church, can provide for better accountability, and can provide a more balanced distribution of spiritual gifts in the task group. Finally, a church-sent group can avoid much of the stress that causes missionaries to burn out.

Church planters do better work when they coordinate their spiritual gifts with the ministries of other workers. For example, the Holy Spirit normally works far more powerfully through a task group of four than through four persons working alone. The church is repeatedly represented in Scripture as an active army and as a united body—never as a school or as several individuals.

A church-based task group does not join an existing "team" already put together on a field by a mission agency for its own administrative convenience. Rather the missionaries' home church will form a task group as an extension of its own church body. The church will see the missionaries' work as a branch of their ministry. Sometimes, several sister churches will form

such the task group in cooperation with each other and send it through a mission agency. When a congregation loves its missionaries, it will more readily see the need for a church-based task group as opposed to the tradition of sending their people to the mission field only as individuals or family units.

When the task group arrives on the field, it should reform into several task groups that include national workers. These may be new believers or evangelists from another field that are culturally closer to the local people group and will help to start the work.

Churches that form apostolic task groups, even though they work through a mission agency, must take responsibility to support them and to hold them accountable to plant new churches. In the New Testament, churches are viewed as living bodies that reproduce by giving birth to new living bodies. They bear daughter churches through task groups made up of members from different churches.

Pray now for God's help to focus on a neglected people group. Then plan for it with your coworkers.

12E. Help Married Task Group Workers and New Pastors to Agree on their Spouses' Ministry

A married couple should agree on what the wife will do in ministry, in order to avoid tension in the home. Misunderstanding about what the wife should do causes stress. Wise couples will discuss this frankly. A husband and wife may have quite different roles, and those roles can vary as family circumstances change. If a couple has no child then both may give more time to evangelism and to making disciples. When children arrive, the mother will give more time as a homemaker, as taught in Titus 2:5, and will give up some ministry activities.

Dedication to her home and family can make a wife feel unimportant if her husband does not value her role as a wife and mother. Also, her dedication to a ministry can lead to frustration if her husband perceives her role to be a wife and mother. This confusion creates severe tension in the home, especially if neither partner understands the source of the tension. They need to talk it over.

Missionary couples from Western societies that minimize the differences between the sexes, sometimes fail to respect their God-given roles of husband and wife with disastrous results. Sometimes an unwise mission field supervisor expects women to consider their God-given role as mother and wife to be secondary or inferior. William Carey, one of the first English-speaking missionaries to India, felt it was spiritual to neglect his wife in order to serve God. This was common thinking among ministers of that time. Consequently Mrs. Carey had a nervous breakdown. Carey had violated the command to husbands in Ephesians 5:25-29, that tells husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the church and treat them as they would their own bodies. Women missionaries, both single and married, often need encouragement to live out God's calling, rather than to fulfill the expectations of their college professors, friends, or a misguided spouse.

Those who would deny women missionaries a significant role as leaders, should note that Priscilla, a woman, helped to train Apollos as a leader (Acts 18:1-4). Philip's daughters

prophesied (Acts 21:8-9). Apostolic instructions forbidding women to teach or to lead men in the church are not absolute prohibitions, for God enabled women to lead under male authority. Christian work around the world would be very small indeed if God wiped out all that has been built on foundations laid by women missionaries.

On the other hand, those that place women on the same level with men in every way, denying any significant differences in their respective God-given roles, should note that extremely few cultures in the neglected fields of the world want women in high profile positions of leadership. Sometimes workers will often respect a foreign woman because of her education and professional poise, but not their own women. In Honduras, Patterson had to establish strong male leadership in order for churches to multiply healthily in that male-dominated culture.

Talk with your spouse about her part in the Lord's work. If any of your coworkers have tension with their spouses, plan now how to deal with it.

12F. Outsiders Form Temporary Rather than Permanent Teams to Multiply Churches

No permanent missionary teams appear in the New Testament, only temporary task groups. A task group made up of outsiders will normally phase out as local or inside leaders take on responsibility. Do not let your church planting task group become an end in itself. Remember it is only a midwife. It is a temporary scaffold that enables a local mother church to reproduce. If no mother churches exist yet on a new field, then raise them up as soon as possible. A new church on a new field might have as few as two or three new believers. Yet even during this formative phase, task group members from outside the culture must not outnumber new believers in the regular meetings, lest the new church fail to keep its identity with the local community. Some task group members may need to make themselves absent from some meetings until the newborn church senses its identity within its own culture, and the surrounding community sees it as a part of its own society. Otherwise, new believers may feel that they are joining a group of outsiders and the church may take on a distinctively foreign quality that will fail to reproduce within the culture. The best church planting team normally is a group of workers from a nearby mother church having the same culture as the daughter church, and the workers have friends or relatives in the local community.

Plan now how you will help your churches to form simple teams of volunteers for specific church planting projects.

12G. Before Joining a Task Group Going to a Distant Field, Decide Carefully who your Coworkers Should Be

Except for short-term service, seek to serve under a task group leader who wholeheartedly encourages you to minister in a way for which you are gifted and where God has called you. Seek to serve with a task group that puts loving obedience to Christ ahead of all other rules, including its own policies. Join an existing task group only if its leader assures you that your gifts and ministry are needed, wanted, and likely to be productive. Make sure you will not be

sent aside into a ministry for which God has not gifted you. That happens often in mission organizations. Avoid leaders who, for the sake of control, force you to follow human policies, especially if they confuse conformity with "team spirit" or "unity". Power hungry leaders show contempt for New Testament, Spirit-empowered unity in Christ. Biblical unity avoids blind conformity, values workers' differences and frees them in love for distinct ministries in the united body, as seen in 1 Corinthians 12 and 13.

Are you joining a team or task group that will work in a distant field ? If so, pray for God's guidance. He often made changes in the apostles' task groups.

12H. Appreciate the Variety that God has Put into Different Cultures

God loves the distinctive features of different races and cultures. He created the nations, tribes, tongues, and people groups. All these will be recognizable in glory with their wonderful differences, in foreseen in Revelations 7:9. All of God's creation displays a magnificent variety. Heaven certainly will not be a boring place!

Workers violate God's plan when they force two cultures or sub-cultures to integrate in the name of Christian unity. When they force two cultures to mix in one church, the cultures never integrate. Rather the stronger one with more money and political power, even though it may have fewer people, suppresses or cancels out the weaker one. True unity in Christ retains cultural differences in loving harmony with each other. Sister churches with different customs can love one another and can cooperate in God's work. Trying to integrate two cultures rarely unifies them; doing so brings about the death of one of them. Forced unity destroys something that God loves. How ironic and tragically sad that some missionaries, in the name of Christian unity, have led cultures into extinction!

Do you plan to work in a different culture for the first time? If so, pray for God to help you adapt to their ways, as He did for Peter and Paul, and not try to change their customs.

12I. Examine Carefully a New Field and Plan How to Penetrate It

Before planning in detail how to reach a culturally distant people group, you must discern what are its main culture and subcultures. Then recruit from the same class of people, or a very similar society, persons who can witness for Christ, matching church planters with people of similar background and culture. Except in tribal work, if you violate this rule you will cause a delay of many years, while the new churches overcome the stigma of having a foreign religion and break loose from your foreign methods to start working in a way that fits their culture.

The first question to ask about a neglected people group might well be, Who can easily reach them? The most effective witness comes through people who are culturally near to them. This does not rule out the participation of a foreigner in evangelism. Patterson discovered when working in remote villages that:

It was effective for me to accompany Hondurans to evangelize. My being a "gringo" (foreigner) attracted the people. However, it was better for the Hondurans to do the talking. This worked well only to get things started. After that, it was imperative for new believers to witness to their friends and relatives, so that the gospel could flow freely.

Ask for God's help to discern the best way to penetrate the new areas that you and your coworkers are planning to penetrate.

12J. Focus on a Specific People Group or Subculture

To enable church reproduction, you must work within a people group. By "people group" we mean the largest number of people among whom the gospel can spread without being hindered by barriers of any kind, including class or cultural differences. Missionaries seldom plant a national church that reproduces spontaneously in a new field unless they focus first on a specific class of people. When workers of another economic level, social class or subculture outnumber the new believers in their meetings, the local people fail to see the church as theirs.

On a new field, the most responsive people are normally of the working class, but not necessarily the poorest. For example, the apostle Paul at times worked with people of a socially rejected middle class, that is, hard-working folk who had been successful economically but who could never raise their social status. These included freed slaves like Onesimus, merchants of non-aristocratic birth like Lydia, and exiled Jewish merchants like Aquila and Priscilla. The most responsive people in a new field are those who not only are open to change but earnestly seek change.

Decide now with your coworkers precisely to which people group or subculture God is leading you.

12K. Give On-the-Job Training to Untrained Workers who Join the Task Group on the Field

You will need workers who are of the same or a compatible culture as the people group you are evangelizing, or are willing and able to adapt to it. Workers from another country or race who join your task group will nearly always need help to gear their communication methods to the local community, even if they come from a culturally-near people. They will always find some significantly different customs that they must learn to respect, and they often find that they lack experience in evangelizing families. Even if you mobilize for a task group workers from another country who are culturally nearer to the local people, they will almost always need some orientation. The first thing you must explain is that they will not be preaching in the churches. They will train the local nationals to serve as pastors and to preach. You may be surprised at how many volunteers suddenly forget their "call" when they hear this!

New local workers joining your task group might need vocational training to learn skills needed for self-employment or for operating small business, especially for where authorities prohibit missionary work. Do not expect outsiders to reproduce churches, even if they are culturally nearer than you are. The impulse for spontaneous multiplication will come from the

Holy Spirit to the local people. Outsiders from any culture must train local leaders from behind the scenes.

Does your task group have new local workers who need training? If so, [if so, plan now with your coworkers to do it.](#)

12L. Find the Responsive Segment of the Population

Jesus did not send His apostles only to people who responded to the gospel. He did tell them, however, to ‘shake the dust off their feet’ as a sign of God’s judgment against those that did not respond (Luke 10:4-16). He told them to open our eyes and see the fields that were ripe for harvest, that is, responsive (John 4:35). On most neglected fields, this means that you must carefully search for those who will respond and not waste your time with the others. Do not expect that the first people you meet will be responsive, for they might not be. You need to find those who seek God’s forgiveness and will trust Him for it. Faith faces facts and does not pursue empty dreams. Some unwise missionaries stubbornly persist in working with people whom God has not chosen for salvation, neglecting others nearby whom God has prepared. This waste of time—sometimes years—sometimes becomes evident when others start working with another community or people group nearby and see fruit after only a few weeks.

Are the people responding to Christ? If not, after a reasonable period of time--and you are sure that you are communicating the Gospel in a culturally correct way--then you know what Christ orders you to do. Start shaking the dust now.

12M. Help New Leaders to Take Pastoral Responsibility as Soon as Possible

As soon as you start training a pastor or elder, give him more and more responsibility as he grows. A church seldom reproduces if it depends on outside control or subsidy. The Holy Spirit will move local leaders to start daughter churches, if they will freely take the initiative to do so. New pastors in a new field should be trained on the job to ensure church multiplication. New leaders in new fields who are trained in traditional, classroom-only institutions almost never think in terms of church growth by reproduction. This weakness of institutional training is a danger everywhere, but not as serious on fields where there are mature churches and elders.

What new responsibilities can you give some of your trainees now?

12N. Avoid Overwork by Asking New Elders to Deal with Problems and Pastoral Tasks

When churches begin multiplying, task group workers will have to deal with more and more stressful situations. All effective church planters experience pressure. Likewise, new pastors and elders will try to solve all their problems by themselves instead of sharing their burdens with

others. Problems always accompany new churches, just as they did in New Testament times. Paul agonized over the infant churches in Galatia, writing "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth" (Galatians 4:19). After listing perils and painful adventures experienced in his church planting work, he added, "Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?" (2 Corinthians 11:28-29).

To avoid too much stress, the task group workers, especially their leader, must do what Jethro advised Moses to do, as recorded in Exodus 18:13-27; they must share the pastoral care with other trustworthy men. Paul advised Titus and Timothy to do the same (Titus 1:5 and 2 Timothy 2:2).

New leaders usually try to deal with too many minor problems. One of the best ways to prepare new elders is to let them deal with the small problems. The more experienced shepherds should have to deal only with the harder problems. Let the new leaders make some mistakes. Do not ask an elder to tackle a stressful problem alone; rather arrange for him to handle it with help from other elders, including from other nearby churches. Some churches avoid inter-church organization, but newly born churches in a new field need it, just as a newborn baby needs a lot of attention.

Patterson explains how he learned to deal with stressful situations and too much work:

When a new church still lacked mature elders to handle a bad situation, we helped them to call together a temporary committee of elders from nearby churches to deal with the problem. For example, when some leaders tried to steal sheep from another pastor's flock, we invited pastors from churches in another fellowship to examine the problem, interview the persons involved, and give their recommendation to the suffering church. In every case the church heeded their advice. Because I was a foreigner, I avoided attending these meetings when possible, although I helped arrange them.

At first, workers came to me with too many problems. I felt the strain and so did my family. To protect my health and my family, I began visiting the new churches less often. I also took more short vacations with my family. This lessened the strain considerably. The pastors and elders saw me less often and took on more responsibility. This helped them to grow.

Often, when problems and opposition seemed to be overwhelming, I prayed, "Lord, these are your churches, not mine. If you want them to keep growing and reproducing, then you must do the work of grace needed to overcome their problems." Many times I had to rededicate myself to simply teach and obey God's New Testament commands and leave the rest to Him, trusting Him to help the inexperienced elders to deal with their problems.

I also asked my wife to schedule all my appointments, which resulted in less time spent with stressful problems. This helped me to delegate responsibilities to others and to pray more.

Very few national workers failed when I let them deal with their own problems. Those were the complainers who seemed to live in chronic crises, enjoying the attention that their problems drew. God gave me the assurance that a leader that depends too much on outsiders' help deserves to fail. Such leaders become parasites on the body of Christ, sponges that absorb all our time and seldom develop healthy churches

God knows that a church planter lacks time to worry about all the problems that new churches have. That is why Paul told Titus to establish elders in all the churches, so that he could turn over the pastoral work to them. Things that you cannot do without neglecting your family, or that burn you out physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually, are not God's will! Delegate them to others or simply drop them! Do not "dance with the devil" by running to put out every fire that the old dragon ignites!

Which of your responsibilities should you turn over to others now? To whom will you delegate them?

12O. Recruit Workers Who Will Finish the Job

Effective church planters aim simply to do what Jesus said: to make disciples of a people group, no matter how long it takes or what sacrifice God requires. If your church has adopted a neglected people group and prays for it, then God will raise up people with apostolic gifts whom your church can send. If your church is small, it can cooperate with sister churches to put together an apostolic task group. To help foster cross-cultural church reproduction, especially in difficult new fields, it is essential to have a strong determination to do what Jesus said. For persons who know that God has given them the apostolic "sent one" gift and has called them to make disciples of a particular people group, a commitment to serve only for a limited number of years is usually futile. The only commitment that God can bless is to commit to go and do just as He says--make disciples of the people. Short-term service in a distant field is good for gaining information, for testing one's spiritual gifts, for confirming a call from God, and for gaining experience that will enrich the home church—but seldom results in church reproduction.

Does your task group have workers that will finish the task? If not, pray to the Lord of the Harvest for dedicated workers.

12P. Avoid Unnecessary Equipment and Impractical Methods

Lay aside methods, attitudes, and equipment—including the ways we teach or preach—that are not easy for the new workers to imitate and pass on at. Patterson explains this filtering process to church planting task groups in a rural part of Asia:

I asked the Asians to describe what kind of churches could reproduce easily among their people in their culture. They started to define a church theologically, describing the ideal church in abstract terms. Doing that did not help them. I then asked them if these churches would start with the people sitting on benches as we were doing. They said no, that most churches would start in poor homes where they would sit on the floor. So we moved the benches back and sat on the floor for worship. Again I raised the question as to what a church that fits the local culture would look like and they said to take off our shoes. The women sat to one side and men to the other. They took a few minutes to compose a praise song from a line in the Psalms and sang it in their local musical style. The cook and a neighbor rushed into the room, happily surprised to hear praises in their own music form!

In many of the remaining, neglected fields in the world today, only criminals can plant churches, because their laws make it a criminal offense. On these fields, you must work secretly. There your methods must be radically different from those used on fields having freedom of worship. You must be stricter in filtering out unnecessary traditions when you move into cultures that are very different from our own. What you must filter out will become obvious if you use the New Testament as your filter. When going into a very different culture for the first time, filter out whatever is not required by the New Testament. The greater the cultural difference and the more hostile the authorities, the more carefully you must filter out what the New Testament does not require. Later, as the new believers mature, they may add new forms of worship, teaching and organization that are peculiar to their culture, as churches have always done all over the world.

What equipment or methods are you using that should be set aside for now?

12Q. Select Coworkers who Qualify for Your Task Group's Particular Field and Ministry

When seeking or recruiting new coworkers, look for persons who:

- Work well together without letting Satan tempt them to have long disputes about philosophical issues,
- Are willing to work in a secular job when necessary as bivocational workers like Aquila and Priscilla, especially if working in very poor fields or in fields with hostile authorities,
- Are recommended by those who know them well and who pray continually for them in their home church,
- Are called by God to start churches,
- Readily bond in love with the people of a new culture,
- Submit willingly to their task group leader,
- Agree on objectives and general methods,
- Agree on basic doctrinal and church practices,
- Accept ongoing training and evaluation,
- Can teach the way Jesus and His apostles did, delegating responsibility to new local leaders,
- Pray and resist Satan, recognizing that the ultimate battle is not against culture, Islam, or other religions, but against the devil and his demons who corrupt culture, as revealed in Ephesians 6:11-13.
- Are willing to "carry a cross", that is, to suffer and give their life if necessary to extend the Kingdom of God among the people, as Jesus taught in Luke 9:23-24.

Do you need to be more careful in selecting coworkers? No one is perfect, but avoid a person who is weak in several of the above areas. Sometimes people join a task group hoping to preach somewhere else because

nobody wants to listen to them in their own church. Prayerfully consider being more selective..

12R. Discern and List Necessary Activities for a Church Planting Task Group

Ask the Lord to help you see what your churches will be doing in the future, so that the task group members know how to prepare the believers. If you lead a church planting task group, then a Progress Chart or checklist will make doing that easier. It should include these activities for task group members:

- Prayerfully select and focus on the specific people you seek to make disciples, preferably people who are culturally similar to you or to some of your task group members.
- Separate the task group for their task with a serious ceremony with laying on of hands.
- Bond with the people and their culture.
- Maintain constant, fervent prayer for the unsaved and for new believers.
- Seek good contacts, in persons of peace.
- Witness for Jesus in a way that new believers can immediately imitate and pass on to others.
- Baptize without undue delay. When possible, baptize entire families as the apostles did.
- Break bread. Celebrate your participation in Christ's body.
- Teach in a way that new leaders can immediately imitate and will pass on to other new leaders.
- Organize by building on relationships, not just following rules.
- Let worship be an edifying, inspiring celebration.
- Give responsibility to the local leaders and avoid the over-control that often comes with subsidies from outsiders.
- Arrange for clear, regular accountability for everybody.
- Arrange for new churches to start evangelizing in new areas, to start their own daughter churches, without delay. The longer you wait the harder it will be to reprogram their thinking.

Please take a moment to plan how you and your coworkers will mobilize a church planting task group that will joyfully carry out its God-given tasks.

Chapter 13 -- Supervising the Lord's Work in a Large Area

(Church Multiplication from the Viewpoint of a *Field Supervisor*)

"Titus, my true son in our common faith, grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you." Titus 1:4-5

Sections in this Chapter 13

- 13A. Oversee God's Work in a Large Area the Way Christ Says
- 13B. Help Those with Apostolic Gifting to Choose Their Field Wisely
- 13C. Evangelize Victims of Brutal Class Discrimination in Resistant Fields
- 13D. Help Task Group Members from Another Culture to Bond with the People and their Culture
- 13E. Help Task Groups to Make New Disciples the Way Jesus Commanded
- 13F. Train New Leaders the Way Jesus and His Apostles Modeled it
- 13G. Make Realistic Plans to Help Believers Do Effective Ministry
- 13H. Use Time Wisely as You Serve in Ministry
- 13I. Organize to Reproduce Congregations

13A. Oversee God's Work in a Large Area the Way Christ Says

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why--and how--God wants a field supervisor to oversee God's work in a large field.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' complains, "I need no supervisor! Do not treat me like a dumb sheep! I go where the Holy Spirit leads me!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' corrects him, "You forget that the Holy Spirit gives the gift of shepherding to our elders, so they can keep us out of trouble."

Find in Matthew 20:20-28 what a leader does in God's Kingdom:

The mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom."

"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (NIV)

Find in 1 Peter 5 what church leaders are to do:

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 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; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. 1 Peter 5:1-4 (NIV)

Does God want you, or one of your coworkers, to be a 'Titus' to establish new leaders in new churches in a large area? If so, confirm this calling with prayer and proper commissioning, as in Acts 13:1-3.

13B. Help Those with Apostolic Gifting to Choose Their Field Wisely

A cross-cultural church planting task group working on a new field, needs workers who have the apostolic gift and calling to work where the gospel has not yet entered, as Paul taught in Romans 15:20-22.

Help them to find the receptive people group within a field and to trust God to lead them to those whom He has prepared, whom He has chosen from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4).

The most receptive folks in a field with no churches are usually among the poorer working classes. Many fields and all large cities have a variety of people groups or subcultures that are hard for an outsider to identify. Common workers and people who feel oppressed are often the most receptive but are also hardest for an outsider to feel at home with. Jesus said that He came to proclaim the gospel to the poor. He began His public ministry among the poorer working class in Galilee. Had He begun with the rich and powerful in Jerusalem or another influential city, then they would have crucified Him prematurely. The satisfied middle classes that wield power, resist change and seldom respond during the first generation of disciples. They will occasionally come to Christ as individuals, especially students, but in a new field they rarely join together for a grass-roots people movement for Christ.

When missionaries first penetrate a new field, they may form friendships with people who have money and education. Often that is a mistake. It is difficult to begin a movement among neglected people by first working with the most wealthy and powerful unless they are a small,

closely-knit tribe. Middle class people sometimes become receptive, if they are second or third-generation Christians. When you first enter a new field, look for a responsive subculture within a people group. Economic and racial differences often define such subcultures.

Missionaries sometimes say that the people are hard to reach, when in fact the people would receive Christ if He were presented in a way that made sense in their culture. Church planters sometimes needlessly provoke a negative response by prematurely attacking or over-reacting to idolatrous practices and other sins of the society. You must exercise as much patience with them as we expect others to have with the shortcomings of our own culture.

Make plans now to select a people group to work with, that is:

- **receptive** (they respond to the Gospel),
- currently **neglected** (churches are not yet reproducing there),
- **reachable** (you have the ability and means to work with them).

13C. Evangelize Victims of Brutal Class Discrimination in Resistant Fields

To penetrate restricted areas like North Africa and much of southern Asia, wise workers serve where they have access to people who want change, and where authorities do not watch them closely. In such fields you will always find some people who are painfully oppressed by political, racial or social discrimination. These are generally more receptive. But take care not to engage in messy foreign politics.

If you work where authorities are hostile, pray now for God to lead you to those people who are ready to bear the cross of persecution.

13D. Help Task Group Members from Another Culture to Bond with the People and their Culture

Church planters must feel God's call to a people and dedicate themselves to make disciples of them as Jesus commanded, not simply to do a project among them. You must live among them and appreciate their distinct ways. No matter how corrupt a culture may be, God has planted some good things in it. Ruth bonded with the Israelites and their culture because of her loving relationship with her mother-in-law Naomi and later with Boaz. Our social needs should be met by our immediate family and by the people we bond with, not only by other foreigners.

Are you working with a very different culture? If so, pray for God to send you workers who are of the same or a similar culture, who can initiate evangelism in a way that the people won't think you bring a 'foreign' religion.

13E. Help Task Groups to Make New Disciples the Way Jesus Commanded

Jesus told His apostles to:

- Fish for men (Matthew 4:19).
- Be witnesses of what He has done for us by His death and resurrection, to people who are lost. Remember Jesus with Nicodemus, with the Samaritan woman.
- Teach everyone in all nations to obey all of His commands (Matthew 28:19-20). We must go to neglected people and form them into obedient congregations. New believers need to obey Jesus in order to become the loving, active disciples that Jesus seeks.

Let us review Jesus' commands:

- Repent, believe, and be filled with the Spirit; turn from sin and serve God,
- Be baptized and continue to lead the new, holy life that baptism initiates,
- Celebrate Communion in union with Christ and His Body, the church,
- Love God and others in practical ways, by forgiving them and showing mercy,
- Pray using Jesus' name,
- Give,
- Make disciples by witnessing, shepherding, training, and bearing your cross.

Jesus told His disciples to bear their cross (Luke 9:23). This requires total commitment, living sacrificially, accepting death if necessary, and aiming to carry out His Great Commission. Concerning such dedication Patterson confesses:

While studying in seminary, I felt that such sacrificial discipleship was fanatical. I sought security and position with an established church or mission agency. Later, when the first person that I won to Christ in Honduras was hacked to death by machete the day after his baptism, God forced me to think about my commitment. I came to see that my security-minded attitude would stifle church reproduction. A limited commitment is contagious, for other workers will soon begin to vie for comfortable positions. With my change of attitude the leaders whom I was training also became more sober. A new group of dedicated church planters emerged that left behind the semi-committed ones.

Are all your coworkers dedicated to making disciples the way Jesus says to? If not, plan now how you will help them to see how important it is.

13F. Train New Leaders the Way Jesus and His Apostles Modeled it

Jesus and His apostles showed us how to give discipleship training on a pastoral level. You must train new pastors and missionaries the same way that Jesus trained His twelve apostles.

That was also the way Paul trained Timothy and Titus, and that Aquila and Priscilla trained Apollos. Those leaders personally mentored new leaders, modeling skills for them and sharing the new leaders' burdens.

In foreign fields you must aim to mobilize local nationals for ministry. Healthy churches need local elders without undue delay. In the beginning of a new church plant, you can use the home of a new elder as a classroom. His congregation may be only his wife and children, who often do a good job of exposing his flaws as a leader! He will practice his shepherding skills with his family, including teaching and discipline. Normally other friends and relatives will soon join the flock. One's home is an ideal place to learn basic shepherding skills. Some leaders fail in ministry because they cannot lead their own families. See 1 Timothy 3:5.

New leaders learn new insights along with their congregations. The church planting task group should help local leaders to begin immediately shepherding and training other leaders. Train new leaders in a way that they can imitate. Today, in most of the remaining neglected fields, you must avoid "classroom-only" teaching in which professors take little personal responsibility for the present, effective ministry of their students. In hostile fields where growth comes through multiplying clusters of tiny home-based churches, God's sheep need many more shepherds than the number that traditional churches could provide. New pastors of tiny house churches should begin training "Timothies" to lead daughter churches, as soon as possible.

Let us examine some of the things that one who trains new leaders should do:

- Maintain a caring, personal relationship with those you train, spending time together and giving attention to each one of them. Listen to each pastoral student to learn the needs of his flock. For a beginner that flock may be his household or family, which may soon become a cell or church. Share the responsibility for the discipline and effective ministry of each pastoral student.
- Train more than one apprentice at a time. Personal discipleship training on the pastoral level is not one-on-one tutoring. It may be with one person, but tutoring is not its main purpose. Jesus trained twelve leaders; sometimes he dealt with only three; on rare occasions he worked with only one. Paul normally had a small apostolic band that he was training.
- Model ministry skills. New Testament discipleship training on a leader level requires that you accompany leaders in their fieldwork. Planting churches by making forays out of a mission station or base is rarely effective. You must live among the people, bond with them, and work closely with the new leaders.
- Share responsibility for the effectiveness of each pastoral student's current ministry. Your pastoral student serves his cell or church under your guidance. He meets regularly with you to report progress, to plan activities, to discuss the Word and to pray.
- Relate the Word directly to each pastoral student's fieldwork. Adopt the "menu" approach:
- Listen to each pastoral student report what his flock is doing. Like a waiter in a restaurant, first listen to hear what a pastoral student's group or church is "hungry for".

- Plan. Help each pastoral student to plan what his group will do for the next week or two. Write down those plans and hold him accountable for them. Pray for God'
- Locate the corresponding studies on the menu. The menu is a checklist or Progress Chart listing ministries required by the New Testament, key doctrines, Bible passages, and commands of Jesus. Provide the studies that support what your pastoral student has planned to do.

Please make definite plans now for you and your coworkers to train leaders on the job

13G. Make Realistic Plans to Help Believers Do Effective Ministry

If you help plan field strategy, you must envision the various categories of persons or groups at work. Wise mission planners, like military strategists, begin the planning process by stating their long-range objectives so clearly that the preparatory steps are obvious, almost self-evident. To plan strategically for a specific people group, envision the results that God will produce 20 years from now. What will the churches look like? How many? What size? Led by whom? How will they reproduce?

Keep these objectives for new mission work in view along with important facts about the people such as their resources or freedom limits, as you plan how the work should develop. Then focus on the intermediate steps, projecting what must happen to reach the objectives. Envision preparatory steps that only require resources that the new believers and leaders possess, to avoid programs too expensive or too technical for them.

The fourteen mobilization categories listed below appear in backward order. Counting down from 14 to 1 helps to think strategically. Reason from the farthest future objectives back to the present. Envision by faith with God's help the final objective, then reason carefully the steps you must take. Starting with our final objective, ask what has to happen prior to each step. For example, in order to see churches multiplying in a chain reaction, what has to happen first to prepare leaders to coordinate such a movement for Christ?

When you focus on an objective in the list below, and the realities of the field that bear upon it, consider what must happen first, the prior step, then plan those earlier steps that lead to it.

Before defining in detail what the task group will do, you should determine what the new believers should do. With this in mind, most of what the task group will do becomes evident. Before you try to define how to prepare the task group, you need first to have a fairly clear picture of what the new believers will be doing.

After you know what kind of task group you need and how to prepare it, you will be ready to define the methods by which those who work at home will prepare and send the task group.

Take a moment now to do some *backward* planning. Examine below the "backward" list of steps for mobilizing categories of people who may have to participate. As you work through the backward list, start with your final objective, then reason back to the present. Define for each step what must happen prior to it.

To help you think 'backwards' this list starts with final objectives and works back. That is why the numbering starts with 14 and works down to 1. Make a note of any items that require special attention.

Planning Activities in Advance for Opening a New Field

(14) Churches organize on a national or large regional level for fellowship, inter-church projects and continued reproduction.

Ask yourself and your coworkers the questions for which you need answers before you can wisely plan details for this stage of the work. Verify before planning:

- How will organization on this level happen?
- Who will be able to take the responsibility for it?
- What must happen first?

Reasoning backwards, strategic planners see what must happen prior to widespread church multiplication:

(13) Workers prepare to serve with humility at a regional level to coordinate inter-church cooperation.

Servant leadership on the regional or synod level requires that local leaders mobilize and humbly oversee newer pastors or elders. They will acquire this skill from their "apostles" who take personal, caring responsibility for their fruitful ministry, as the Apostle Paul did for his new workers. Otherwise, the first local leaders, lacking maturity for work at this level, might easily become grasping and demanding.

Verify before planning:

- How will pastors learn to become regional servant leaders?
- Who will model servant leadership for them?
- How? Where?

Next, strategic planners envision what must happen first, to prepare regional level servant leaders as pastors of pastors:

(12) Local churches mature and bring transformation to their surrounding communities.

New churches grow in Christ and practice all vital New Testament ministries, being led by caring servant leaders. These new pastors not only shepherd their flocks with loving care but also mobilize other newer pastors for ministry. They acquire this skill on the job, not in classrooms. In new fields, it will be missionaries who demonstrate those skills to the first new leaders.

Verify before planning

- How will we ensure that churches practice all essential New Testament ministries?
- How will we make sure that their shepherds learn servant leadership?
- Who will model servant leadership for them and how?

To prepare shepherds that will be servant leaders, strategic planners must first envision the kind of pastoral training that can ensure it:

- (11) Training must be made available for many new leaders—as many as will be needed to continue church reproduction. Older ones during the first few years will guide them while they still lack experience. Leaders will learn to shepherd their people with loving care and not just to preach and to enforce rules.

Pastoral trainers do not simply pass information on to their students. They train them to edify and equip their local body of Christ for ministry. To do that, trainers with the gift of teaching must work in harmony with others who have different spiritual gifts, as God requires in 1 Corinthians 12 and 13. Good leadership training requires balanced discipleship training that relates the Word to Christian work through loving relationships in the power of the Holy Spirit. Trainers in a new field, where new shepherding elders cannot neglect their flocks to go study elsewhere, must avoid requiring impractical formal institutional training. Youths hoping for a paid church job would eagerly go attend a school but, lacking experience in well-established churches, they would fail to assimilate the intensive classroom teaching and apply it in their minds to an active church body. They lack models of effective shepherding and cannot realistically relate what they learn to their future ministry.

Verify before planning:

- How will we prepare the people and their future pastors to appreciate and understand loving servant leadership?
- What kind of discipleship training will lay a foundation for it?

Strategic planners, reasoning backwards, see that we must model loving discipleship training first on a more basic level:

- (10) New Christians learn through caring, relational, discipleship training, to exalt Jesus by obeying His commands in love.

Disciple makers must teach new believers to obey Jesus' commands before and above all else. Jesus requires us to believe, repent, be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit; then to love, break bread, pray, give, and make disciples. You must avoid long indoctrination before obedience training; detailed indoctrination at this stage would stifle loving discipleship. Students learn to be passive hearers; later it would be harder to mobilize them for ministries other than for teaching. Building on obedience, the new believers will practice New Testament church body life, serving one another with their God-given gifts in the power of the Holy Spirit. They will observe their trainers forming the loving relationships needed for this type of obedience. They see their trainers make disciples in a way that they can imitate at once with their family and friends.

Verify before planning:

- Who will give this kind of discipleship training to new believers during the initial stages of evangelism, when there are no new local leaders yet?
- What kind of churches will provide the right environment for it?
- How will the trainers learn to do it?

Strategic planners recognize that relational discipleship training requires that trainers spend time with people, especially right after they come to Christ. This requires a much more relational form of evangelism than what Western traditions offer:

(9) Seekers take their first steps of faith with the help of a caring church body.

When seekers repent and discover the new, holy, eternal life in Christ, their conversion must be confirmed by being added to a loving church body by baptism, as Acts 2:38-41 reveals. Help seekers see the crucified and risen Christ living in among you, as affirmed in 2 Corinthians 5:15. Model a sacrificial pilgrim's life in a hostile world.

Verify before planning:

- How will we assure that a caring church body will exist so soon in the church-planting project?
- Who will lead the infant churches?
- What will they do to lay a foundation for loving discipleship training?

Reasoning backwards, strategic planners will see that evangelism brings not only to God's forgiveness but also health, peace of mind, relief from extreme poverty, and freedom from demonic oppression. This requires that we first form a church planting task group skilled in relational evangelism and discipleship training:

Strategic Objectives for "Outside" Workers

(8) Workers penetrating a new community or field must identify with its social life and culture.

Workers from the outside must bond with the people and culture, and must learn the language. They will discern and use methods of evangelism and teaching that the people can afford, imitate and use without delay with others. They will focus on a specific people group and seek ways to penetrate it. They will use different spiritual gifts to deal with the diverse needs of the people group. They will ruthlessly screen out technology, equipment, and methods that are beyond the reach of the people, so that they can carry on the ministry model. They will recruit coworkers from among the people or from a very similar culture who can readily identify with the local culture.

Verify before planning:

Who will join a task group that can embrace the local culture?

How will they make sure they have truly bonded with the people and culture?

Strategic planners will see that they may need to arrange for a partnership with workers from another culture:

(7) Task group leaders or mission agency leaders must arrange for workers from the same or similar cultures to join the task group, at least during the initial evangelism.

In fields having a very different culture you must partner with missionaries from churches that are culturally near to the people on whom you will focus, and who can relate readily to them. No amount of anthropological training to adapt to a new culture is as effective as being born in into or into a similar one. The most effective evangelists for starting the kind of churches that

will multiply freely within a different culture, are those with similar background, politics, race, language, economy, social status, education, family size, rural or urban life-style and world view.

Verify before planning:

- How will missionaries from churches with limited resources be mobilized?
- Who will provide a bridge to the other culture?
- How will you avoid forcing your culture and values on workers from another culture, and avoid making workers from a poorer society dependent on you?
- How will workers from other cultures get training for service in fields with hostile authorities?

Strategic planners must see that workers first need training and deployment as bivocational "tentmakers" who, like Aquila and Priscilla, have two vocations. (Acts 18:1-3). One is church planting; the other is a job that is acceptable to local authorities:

(6) Bivocational workers start businesses or other means of support to reside in fields where authorities forbid people to enter as missionaries.

Today, only bivocational missionaries can reside in many of the remaining neglected fields long enough to bring about church multiplication. Like Paul, they need to get cross-cultural church planting experience, to form task groups, have a formal commissioning and find employment like a small business that will enable them to mix with the working class.

Verify before planning:

- How will bivocational workers be trained?
- Who will develop the bivocational work?
- Who can help us do the things for which we lack experience?

Strategic planners must help sending churches to envision how to adjust their mission approaches and to prepare and send the kind of workers who can help churches to reproduce in today's neglected fields:

Strategic Objectives for Sending Churches and Agencies

(5) Workers must practice ministry skills and receive training in their sending churches, to prepare to help churches to reproduce in other areas.

The skills needed may include those required for bivocational work, language learning, incarnational evangelism, small group worship, organization of a congregation for organic body life, training leaders behind the scenes and church reproduction.

Verify before planning:

- Who will serve as model of the needed ministry skills for workers who are to enter other cultures?
- Where?
- How?

Strategic planners must recognize the importance of those skills for work on the remaining neglected fields and must make plans for the preparation of missionary trainers who can impart them:

- (4) Missionary trainers must learn to prepare workers in a way that will transfer to fields where institutional methods are impractical.

Those who train missionaries must keep in touch with workers in the field in order to learn what skills the new missionaries need. They also get practice with non-formal training methods, cooperating with experienced trainers who will prepare leaders the way Jesus and His apostles did.

Verify before planning:

- Who will train the missionaries?
- How will those trainers be prepared?

Strategic planners must recognize that to train for specialized ministries is useless if a mission agency fails to implement them. Therefore, they must also plan to seek a working relationship with agencies that can deploy workers having right methods and right coworkers in the right fields:

- (3) A cooperating mission agency must deal realistically with today's world and its neglected fields, including those in which bivocational workers must make disciples secretly.

By the time a mission agency is in a position to orient new workers, it is often too late to begin the training they need. The workers may have been exposed for years to methods and attitudes in a local church that hardly resemble those needed in the field.

Verify before planning:

- How will sending churches cooperate with mission agencies to see that workers are prepared wisely?
- Who will orient mission agency leaders who lack these strategic perspectives?
- How?

Strategic planners see that, in order for an agency to develop an effective working relationship with sending churches, they will need preparation and a challenge:

- (2) Sending churches that embrace these guidelines must make their people and mission agency personnel aware of them also when necessary, and follow them to equip workers.

Churches must cooperate to prepare missionaries; many of the skills that missionaries need cannot be acquired in institutional classrooms. So, they cooperate with training institutions and mission agencies to provide experience that teaches needed skills.

Verify before planning:

- What leaders in sending churches know and follow these guidelines, or are willing to learn to follow them?

- How will these leaders in sending churches communicate these guidelines to missionaries and their agency leaders, without appearing to be telling others how to do their job?
- How will these leaders learn to discern things that only experienced field workers in other cultures can understand, to avoid meddling in areas beyond their grasp?
- Who will motivate and orient these leaders in sending churches? How?

Strategic planners recognize that much advice for missionary training and field selection comes from organizations and individuals who have an agenda that serves only their own organization. Therefore, they must seek unbiased mission career advisors. They must discern between mere mission agency "recruiters" and unbiased career counselors who have no agenda of their own for missionary candidates. Both kinds of advisors are needed, but unbiased coaching must come first in order to avoid workers being trained in wrong ways, getting lined up with the wrong coworkers, or being sent to the wrong place.

(1) Unbiased mission career advisors help churches and missionary candidates to think through their plans.

Mission counselors should keep in mind all fourteen of these ministry areas, so that they can enable potential workers to explore all options for serving to see where they might best fit in. Many counselors fail to do so; unwise career advice abounds. Good career counselors will prepare carefully, in order to honestly present the options. They will help workers keep their final objectives in mind as they examine their gifts, experiences, resources, plans and working relationships, in order to help them to plan for their future ministry.

Verify before planning:

- Who will serve as mission career advisors?
- How will they prepare themselves?

Strategic planners must train or serve as unbiased mission career advisors who can counsel church leaders and missionary candidates.

Please take a moment now to arrange to meet with your coworkers to plan strategically, keeping your final goals in mind, then listing the preliminary steps needed to reach them.

13H. Use Time Wisely as You Serve in Ministry

We must manage our limited time in a way that will honor God. Church multiplication requires that many people give much time. To establish daily priorities to use our time wisely, as Ephesians 5: 15-17 requires, you must keep in mind Jesus' commands as the foundation of your God-given priorities. You should also help coworkers to evaluate how they use their time in ministry. Mark the following guidelines that you aim to deal with to improve your use of time.

___ Delegate pastoral and evangelistic responsibilities to other leaders.

___ Let new workers do things. Once volunteers agree to do something, avoid too much control of their work. Do not expect coworkers or your spouse merely to run errands for you.

___ Start immediately preparing new workers and leaders, in order to turn over the most important leadership responsibilities to local leaders.

___ Train all adults who are potential leaders, giving to them more and more responsibilities as they prove capable of handling them. Let new leaders make mistakes. How they handle mistakes is crucial. If they learn from their mistakes, then their mistakes become blessings. If they try to cover them up, then look elsewhere for leaders.

___ Spend ample time each day, and a whole day each week, with your family.

Take "Sabbath" days or weeks of rest. There was a time when you would have been stoned to death if you did not do so. Do not let your family have to compete with your ministry for your time. If circumstances force you to miss your day with the family, then make up for it without failure the next week.

___ Discuss your ministry regularly with your spouse and children, so that they appreciate it and will not begrudge time you spend away from them.

Talk and pray with them about your and their plans before you travel, and review with them what happened in both places when you return.

___ If you are an excessively hard-working husband, then ask your wife to schedule your appointments.

Does your wife feel insecure at times because of your time commitments? Must she or the children compete with the Lord's work for your attention? If you are unsure, then they probably must—ask her about it! If the answer is yes, then authorize her to schedule your time, especially for activities that take you away from your home overnight or longer. If you often feel pressured or driven by guilt to fill with work every hour of your time, then you have taken on too many responsibilities. Discern which things that you are doing are not God's will.

Give your wife authority to schedule regular days and times of rest, the equivalent of at least one day a week spent with the family. Celebrate special events together.

___ Avoid spending time arguing or discussing controversies.

New missionaries, seeking hasty friendships, often "cast their pearls before swine", as Jesus warned. They give the wrong people too much time discussing controversial doctrines or church practices. One may enjoy an occasional theological argument with friends, but one must not get caught up in never-ending issues. Discipline yourself to avoid non-edifying details of theology. Remember Paul's warnings about foolish questions and genealogies (1 Timothy 1:4; Titus 3:9). Sometimes you cannot avoid a controversy, but you can avoid giving it too much time. You must keep doing the ministry work that you know God wants us to do. Do not feel that you always have to prove yourself right. Always to be "right" is dangerous.

___ Analyze often how you have spent your time during the day or previous week.

Be ruthless in cutting from your work schedule all ministry activities—no matter how enjoyable they may be—that do not move you or the churches towards your God-given goals. Avoid excessive television and entertainment that fails to edify or unite your family.

___ Ask another person to help you keep track of your progress.

Perhaps no one effectively evaluates the use of their own time; all need someone to hold them accountable to carry out their plans and God-given objectives.

Pray for daily self-discipline to follow God's priorities.

13I. Organize to Reproduce Congregations

Leaders must organize the body of Christ to enable it to reproduce normally, following the guidelines listed below. Mark those that need your further attention:

___ Trust the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom to organize well and to motivate new leaders.

Do not fear that false doctrine will automatically creep into rapidly reproducing churches. History shows otherwise. Healthy, reproductive churches or cell groups are far more loyal to their teachers and obedient to Christ than are sterile, non-reproductive, older churches.

Some missionaries fear that false doctrine will creep in, if they let new leaders take responsibility. This causes resentment, which opens the door to all kinds of error to enter, including the same errors they fear.

Every newborn church has the same Holy Spirit, the same love for Christ, and the same devotion to the Word of God. We must make sure to train the new pastors and elders in the Word of God. The only sense in which newer churches are necessarily weaker is immaturity. They are baby churches, so let them take their baby steps!

___ Build organization on relationships and on workers' strengths.

If a worker wins people to Christ, they will bond to him. So, arrange for him to give discipleship training to them, or for them to join a small group in which he is active. If a worker does a good job at giving discipleship training to new believers, then let him shepherd or teaches them in a new group. If a worker trains newer workers well, then let them continue in a group or in projects that he leads or in which he takes an active part.

Let a worker earn "promotion" by releasing his disciples and pastoral students for responsible ministries in a training "chain reaction" (2 Timothy 2:2). A worker who trains two others, who in turn train still others, creates a chain in which he will be respected as the primary trainer. If he has the gift of leadership, then let him lead the new network; if not, then let him work closely with a leader.

___ If you are a missionary from the outside, then you must edify the growing body of Christ through your pastoral students.

Do not do all the teaching, shepherding, and decision-making. Rather model it, then step back and let your "Timothies" do the work in freedom as you coach them from behind the

scenes. Enable others to begin discipleship training and shepherding in their homes. Provide Bible study guides and reading schedules that are simple and easy to use in their homes or small groups.

Aim to create training "chains", in which you will train persons who will train others in turn. You might help each Timothy to set up a regular time for discipleship and Bible study with you in his home and encourage him to help another newer believer do the same. These "links" in the chain will keep multiplying, as long as you pray and work hard to forge loving relationships. New congregations will grow weak and wither if all the believers are linked directly to only one overworked pastor or church planter. They would only watch the church planter do all the work until he collapsed exhausted.

___ Train able, mature men, who will qualify as biblical elders.

In new fields avoid training unmarried young men as pastors. Rather train as shepherds those who qualify as elders. Paul lists their qualifications in Titus 1:5-9. In a new field, few men fully meet all those requirements, so train the best ones that God gives you, using scriptural guidelines as your criteria. They must be sober and able to teach. A new church in a field with no experienced pastoral leaders normally gets along better if several elders lead it.

___ Organize in a detailed way after you and the people know the specific things that they need to do. It is foolish to try to organize them before you and they know what they are to do.

Avoid policies and bylaws that do not come directly from Scripture, unless they obviously need them for the sake of order. If a problem keeps recurring, then form a policy to deal with it. If it happens only once or seldom, then simply take care of it and do not worry further, as Jesus cautioned about being too anxious about what might happen tomorrow (Matthew 6:34). Discard rules and policies as soon as you see that they are no longer necessary.

___ Keep evaluating your progress ruthlessly.

We keep our eyes fixed on your distant goals. Also focus on the path as you go along, constantly evaluating our progress toward the goal. Pray and plan for breakthroughs whenever snags block progress. Explore new ways to move around the obstacles.

___ Let workers do ministry that uses their spiritual gifts and strengths. Do not assign them to do work just to meet a need that other over-worked leaders want to see done.

Avoid assigning new workers to a task simply because there is an unmet need. Where is there no need? Let them minister where they can use their gifts and talents freely. Do not place them in a position simply to maintain the smooth operation of programs. Mission agency field supervisors sometimes fail to mobilize missionaries and local workers according to their gifts and experience. This error causes many to "burn out" and resign.

___ Follow the biblical pattern of organization, arranging for loving cooperation among those with different gifts.

The Western institutional pattern of specialization separates persons having different gifts or ministries. Westerners often form independent and competitive commissions, departments, or programs. Thus Western organizations can stifle church reproduction.

Rather you must help people with very different gifts to find ways to cooperate in ways that open new vistas for effective ministry.

___ Keep the vision alive and growing.

Workers in a task group or a church need a vision of what they believe God desires them to accomplish. Once the vision is clear, help all members to find their place. The vision will have to be adjusted as people come in with new spiritual gifts, thereby enabling them to practice their gift-based ministries. Thus, the vision will grow and shift as you travel from one horizon to the next. God will not let you see the whole future but will lead you from one horizon to another.

___ Help volunteer workers to set their goals and tell you what they expect to do.

Encourage self-initiative, rather than pushing people by offering rewards to those who out-do others, by threatening with organizational rules or by competition; rivalry is condemned in Scripture. Help workers to define their own jobs and goals.

The underlying motive for true Christian service is love for Jesus. When a mentality of loving obedience is established in a church body, then volunteer workers can more easily visualize and achieve what God wants them to do.

___ Let mature shepherds with a servant's heart make crucial decisions for a church or group, rather than always taking a democratic vote or seeking a consensus.

God requires obedience to the shepherds that He has given us (1 Peter 5:5; Hebrew 13:17). Never decide spiritual issues by majority rule. Vote only on transactions requiring it for legal reasons, after listening to the shepherding elders' advice.

Scripture and history show that the majority seldom votes for a cross-bearing, faith-stretching disciple's route. The majority typically chooses a more secure, traditional, less demanding path that leads away from Scripture and from Christ's guidelines. The Kingdom of God on earth in the church is not a democracy; it is a monarchy. That is the meaning of "kingdom"! Jesus is our King. Reproductive discipleship requires loving authority, by which the strongest leader is a humble servant, as seen in Matthew 20:25-28.

Sometimes sound discipleship programs fail, because participants submit to majority rule within their church or denomination. Rule by the majority means that the sheep lead the shepherd. It requires the abdication of godly, New Testament leadership. Let Jesus reign; human overseers are His "under-shepherds".

___ Develop church body life between new churches and groups.

Church multiplication thrives on loving relationships between churches. Scripture reveals nothing of the independent spirit and autonomy that some American missionaries teach to a new church. They may mean well, but they come from a culture that idealizes individualism and personal rights above the welfare of the community.

As soon as possible, leaders should set up fellowships consisting of several congregations. These are not for heavy-handed control but for fellowship, to help one another and to coordinate ministry projects in which more than one church participate. The churches' leaders should meet together regularly for fellowship, training and

counsel. They will discuss decisions that might affect the other churches in the fellowship. Their congregations should also meet together if possible, from time to time. Working in this way with other churches will prevent a congregation from developing a self-centered mentality or excessive devotion to one strong leader. It will also enable more experienced elders to train younger ones. Such congregational relationships reduce the number of failures.

The New Testament letters reveal a cooperative, edifying body life between churches. For example, Ephesians 4:11-16 urges interaction between the churches in a cluster of closely-knit house churches that made up the church in Ephesus. Christ's body is seldom a single local congregation. In many of the remaining neglected fields, you should not try to form large congregations but an underground network of tiny, unauthorized, house churches. Healthy churches grow in clusters through multiplication, avoiding limitations imposed by physical facilities or legalistic control.

- ___ Do not always fear a new leader's weaknesses, for we all have them. Rather, build on his strengths.

Trusting the Holy Spirit, build on what a potential leader can do; release him to do it, instead of building rules around him to make him do every detail the way you want him to do it. King David was a great leader, because God built on his strengths, not on his weaknesses. Strong men often have strong weaknesses. Give responsibility to the men that God gives to you. There is no perfect leader this side of heaven. However, if you will develop good relationships between leaders, then God will use some to give strength where others are weak. In so doing, a strong leader will not become independent and proud; rather, he will recognize his need of his fellow elders and will appreciate them.

Whether serving on a task group or in a church, leaders must set the pace in relying on others to help them in their weaknesses. As you become more aware of your own weaknesses, you will become more willing to mobilize other leaders who also have weaknesses. You will find more and more that you need to rely on others' strengths.

- ___ Delegate pastoral responsibilities.

Let men with pastoral potential develop their gifts while you model pastoral skills for them. Give to them tools to study the Bible and to teach its truths to others. Help them to make disciples at all levels, to multiply themselves and their church or group.

- ___ Help potential leaders to set clear objectives.

Enable them to define their God-given goals for themselves and their people, to identify the little, intermediate steps and keep walking toward their goals.

- ___ Evaluate your progress by measuring results, not efforts.

Define goals in terms of the concrete results that you expect. Help the leaders of each task group, or church body, to evaluate progress in terms of results. Measuring efforts does not tell one if one is progressing toward one's goals. Loving obedience leads to efforts made in the power of the Holy Spirit, which bring the results.

Efforts are the things we do to win people for Christ and to edify the church, through meetings, classes, lessons, reading and ministries. Results are outcomes like these:

- new believers receive baptism,
- churches give birth to daughter churches or cells,
- workers start new ministries,
- families practice daily prayer,
- believers practice regular, sacrificial giving,
- new disciples take on ministry,
- new teachers apply the Bible.

___ In new fields, use a simple worship form that new leaders with limited training can imitate at once and pass on to others whom they train.

Use a worship style that fits the local culture. This makes it easy for new elders to lead others without a lot of supervision. If they are inexperienced, then they should not do formal pulpit oratory. Do not even model formal preaching for them, if avoidable, lest they will try and it makes them proud. Let them celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly, read Scripture, exhort, and tell Bible stories or lead discussions about a Bible text that their teachers have helped them prepare.

___ Serve as spiritual "midwives" for churches that reproduce.

If you work in a different culture, then help new churches to reproduce at their own initiative, trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit. You cannot cause churches to reproduce. A new congregation should take responsibility, as soon as possible, for giving birth to other churches and for training their new pastors. Ironically, the stronger an expatriate church planting team is organizationally, the harder it is to keep its hands off the infant church and to let it grow and take initiative. Beware of protecting new churches too much!

___ Accept ongoing accountability only to those who encourage you in a ministry that uses your gifts and strengths, in fulfillment of what God is calling you to do.

Before committing your life's career to a particular project or organization, prayerfully verify the attitudes and practices of those who oversee it.

___ Learn to make disciples on all levels:

- evangelize seekers,
- teach loving obedience to new believers,
- shepherd growing Christians,
- train leaders on the job.

The world's remaining neglected fields need church planters and evangelists who are skilled in training leaders the way Jesus and His apostles did. On Muslim fields and others where Christian gatherings are restricted—about one-third of the world's people groups—you must work without classrooms and pulpits. A church that practices biblical discipleship training will not need a special program or department for evangelism.

Evangelism will be integrated into every aspect of the church's life, just as Paul included it in the normal work of a pastor (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

Please plan prayerfully now to give attention to any of the above items that need it.

Chapter 14 -- Multiplying Many Small Churches or Cells Instead of One Big One

"Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets in their house." 1 Corinthians 16:19

Sections in this Chapter 14

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14C. Take Advantage Small Groups to Practice Reproductive Disciple Making

14D. Be Spiritual Midwives; Assist with the Birth of Churches or Cells

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14F. Verify Whether House Churches or Cells Are Needed

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14L. Leaders from each Church Meet Often to Coordinate Area Activities

14M. Multiply Wisely

14A. Keep Churches Reproducing by Starting Cells or House Churches

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why and how God wants us to develop small churches and cell groups. "Cell groups" are tiny churches that often are part of a larger church.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' complains, "Why even bother to mention house churches? How primitive! I want a large, beautiful temple, with comfortable, padded seats!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' answers, "You forget that not everyone has your tastes. On many fields of the world, people can worship Christ only in homes or other private places. Even where they can worship openly, many Christians prefer to meet in small, closely-knit churches for other reasons. Will you deny them that freedom?"

Everywhere the apostles made disciples the way Jesus said, small churches multiplied.

Please pray now for God's help to convince your coworkers that God wants small groups to multiply.

14B. Keep Groups Small to Practice "One Another" Body Life

Both house churches and cells tied to a larger body should stay small. Home groups and "cells" should serve as small churches within bigger ones. They are not viable cell churches if their small groups are only "Bible studies", simply "fellowship groups", or merely "ministry teams". To be authentic small churches, both house churches and cells must obey all the commands of Christ and do everything any obedient church would do.

Both house churches and home cell groups must take advantage of the smallness of their group to practice New Testament "one another" body life. Both aim at church or cell reproduction. Both normally train most of their leaders on the job.

The basic difference between house churches and home cell groups lies in how they identify with a larger body. House churches normally identify with a cluster of sister house churches, and have occasional united celebrations. Home groups and cells that are satellites of one larger body, identify mainly with it. They may also hold frequent, united celebrations with the other home cell groups, often weekly, perhaps a traditional Sunday Morning worship.

Christians in a conventional church can also enter into the dynamic church body life of a small group in two ways. One way is by divorce. People grow tired of institutional, impersonal programs and leave to find or to form a house church. These often take with them painful feelings and a reactionary spirit. The other way avoids such painful division. A traditional church may honestly face up to its lack of relational, and form many vital groups that are small enough for interactive church body life.

Both cell groups and house churches must partner closely with their sister groups in order to meet New Testament requirements and to stay healthy. Groups that are small enough to practice effective "one-another" ministry are also too small to attain all of the vital spiritual gifts and gift-based ministries. Therefore, they must practice "one-another" interaction between groups.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' complains, "I don't trust home groups! Being small, they'll attract wolves. And they'll invite *division!*"

Mr. '**Foresight**' replies, "We risk division even more if we suppress those to whom God gives pastoral gifting. Let them lead their small flocks within our larger one. Your fear is simply lack of faith. You should rather fear not doing what God's Word requires!"

To fix Bible references about meeting in homes or houses in your mind, find in these verses where you find them mentioned:

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts. Acts 2:46 (NIV)

Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ. Acts 5:42 (NIV)

From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them: "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house". Acts 20:17-20 (NIV)

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia. Romans 16:5 (NIV)

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Philemon 1-3 (NIV)

Patterson found a culturally relevant way to encourage reluctant pastors to name home group leaders:

At first, forming small groups in Honduran churches went against their tradition of favoring the authority of one strong man. The leader in a community was responsible to care for his people. Ranchers provided for the spiritual care of the village located on their land and would build a small chapel. Leaders at all levels exercised very strong control over their people, and seldom shared their authority with anybody. Thus our pastors also instinctively feared that small group leaders would usurp their authority. As a result, their churches would grow no bigger than what one man could group around him. Churches led by one part-time lay pastor reached a plateau at around forty to fifty members.

A group of pastors gathered to discuss this. I lit a fire on the dirt floor of the primitive chapel; the flames represented hell. I placed paper "sheep" on several chairs a few feet apart and asked a pastor to guard them against "wolves". I then named some as wolves that sought to steal the paper sheep from the chairs one at a time and throw them into the fire. The shepherd had to remain behind the chairs but could "kill" a wolf simply by touching him. While the shepherd guarded one chair, a wolf would rob a sheep from another. Soon nearly all of the sheep were cast into hell. John Calvin would have winced at the theology, but it did make a point. I asked the pastors, who had the greater value, sheep or human souls?

We then asked the pastor to name an elder for each chair, to help him shepherd the sheep. When we turned the wolves loose again, they stole no sheep; instead, all the wolves met death. We then read together Jethro's advice to Moses recorded in Exodus 18. Next, they named group leaders, as Jethro advised Moses, and prayed for God's leading. Soon small

groups appeared in churches with renewed growth in numbers, service and spiritual virtues.

Pray now for God to help you and your coworkers to develop interactive church body life in small groups.

14C. Take Advantage Small Groups to Practice Reproductive Disciple Making

If you plan to form or lead a small group in which reproductive disciple making takes place, then you must plan activities that enable it. Mark the discipling activities listed below that your house church or home cell group might practice:

Activities for Small Churches and Groups

___ Evangelize in homes of friends and relatives.

The best evangelists are new believers. Mobilize newborn Christians to tell to their unsaved friends and relatives what Christ has done for them. Keep the network of communication spreading. The most effective evangelists to children are their fathers, mothers and siblings, in that order. Mobilize parents to disciple their children. Mobilize children to evangelize younger children.

It is easy to mobilize new believers to evangelize their friends through small, family-oriented groups.

___ Confirm each new believer's salvation without delay.

Scoggins reports:

We teach new believers from Acts 2:37-41 three steps to confirm their salvation: repentance, baptism, and being added to the body of believers. We teach older believers their responsibility to shepherd new believers into the body. Since converts are being shepherded individually in love, we can encourage them to do the same with those that come to faith through their witness. In some cases an older believer who leads another to faith will get to baptize his "disciple". When a husband comes to faith some time before his wife, we will encourage him to baptize her. Often it is fathers who lead their children to faith who will baptize them.

Mentors teach their disciples to become a part of the body. Since we emphasize the relational aspect of being part of the body of believers, we use a written covenant to explain the responsibility that believers have to one another, as they become members of the church body. When new believers understand that they are joining God's covenant people, their respective mentors recommend them for membership. The mentors affirm before the church the faith of the new believers and their readiness to contribute to the life of the body. The new believers then affirm their desire to abide by the covenant, and the body affirms its desire to receive and nurture its new members. We pattern the covenant ceremony after the vows in a wedding and follow it with a feast and celebrate.

When those who lead people to faith also disciple them into the body, discipleship "chains" form among new believers. Those who need help naturally go to their mentor. Likewise, mentors feel more responsible for new believers when "their" believers gets into trouble.

Patterson observed how the Honduran churches effectively confirmed a new convert's salvation:

New believers readily trusted that God had accepted them when God's people, the church, formally accepted them. They heeded His Word more eagerly after baptism. Normally the main pastor of the church or an authorized elder baptized them. This was followed by a joyful reception. We tried to give the same importance to baptism that the apostles did (Acts 2:37-42).

___ Mobilize fathers to shepherd their families.

Fathers should pray with their wives and children, read the Word with them, and tell their children Bible stories. Churches can offer daily family reading schedules with questions about what they have read. Practical questions help people to see how the Word of God applies to them, to their family, and to their group needs.

___ Help mentors and fathers continually to apply the Word of God to their loved ones.

Give them tools with which to discover the meaning of a Bible passage instead of simply telling them what it says. They should study it and explain at the next discipling session what they found. For example, do not simply assign Exodus 18 to your group leaders, but ask them to examine it to find out why group leaders were necessary in Moses day, and why our church needs them today. (All the Bible studies recommended in this book ask you to look for something.)

___ Help members of the group to obey all the commands of Jesus, including that to celebrate the Lord's Supper regularly.

You can serve Communion in small groups or together with the entire church. Small groups become stronger if they celebrate Communion as a group. Group leaders should see to it that all the members take part in the Lord's Supper regularly. Celebrate it with the solemnity it deserves, following a time of self-examination and confession of sins. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through it us and to strengthen you through its God-ordained drama and mystery.

___ Leaders of the group train apprentices as assistant leaders.

The assistants help to lead the groups and to start new groups. Churches grow by addition and by multiplication. Growth by addition adds converts to the existing body; growth by multiplication creates small center groups, sometimes only two or three people, around which new members are easily added. A new daughter church or a newly formed home group will attract seekers more readily than will a large group of mature Christians. The easiest way for a new group leader to get started is to serve as an apprentice to a more experienced leader.

___ Arrange for new leaders to gain experience by leading group discussions.

Inexperienced leaders can start teaching in an effective way simply by asking relevant questions about a Bible passage after their group reads it.

Some questions to apply a Bible passage to our lives:

- What does God want us to do?
- What promises does the text have?
- How can the text help us to be more like Jesus?
- How will we put the text into action? With whom? When?

___ Form a new group each time an old one grows too big.

A group is too big when it can no longer give attention to each member's needs and ministry. Most groups become too big somewhere between seven and fourteen adults, depending on the number of leaders and how the people relate to each other.

___ Group leaders meet regularly with a trainer who oversees them, perhaps weekly

Their trainer helps the leaders to plan their next meetings. He does not force all groups to follow the same path or to teach the same material. That would hinder the leaders' ability to meet needs and to seize opportunities as they arise. He holds them accountable to carry out evangelistic and edifying group activities, and to see that all their people receive discipling from someone.

___ Cultivate loving fellowship within the group.

Give personal, loving attention to seekers and to new Christians. Deal with them with their family when possible.

___ Deal with common personal needs and apply the Word of God to specific individual and family problems.

Within the groups, arrange counseling for personal or family problems, such as grief after a death, drug or alcohol addiction, broken family relationships, divorce, or injured emotions.

___ Help members to discover and practice their various spiritual gifts, such as evangelism, prophecy, mercy, giving, faith, healing and others.

Scoggins relates:

We emphasize to small house churches that not all the spiritual gifts needed for effective nurture of the body are available in a single church. As a result, our house churches network together, so that the churches can serve each other with their different spiritual gifts.

___ Pray for one another.

Pray especially for the lost, the sick and those oppressed by demons. Give personal attention and pray for any person present that might feel left out. This may require forming still smaller prayer groups during part of the meeting time.

___ Give offerings for special projects.

For a small satellite group that is not a house church, its bigger church should normally do the accounting of its funds.

Plan now to deal with items above that need attention in order to see groups multiply.

14D. Be Spiritual Midwives; Assist with the Birth of Churches or Cells

Give lots of loving help to very young groups or churches. Like newborn infants, they need much tender care.

Neglect of items listed below commonly aborts groups and churches before they can achieve normal birth. Mark any to which you plan to give attention:

Visualize a clear model for the kind of church body you want and what God wants it to do.

Ask God to help you visualize by faith the new body doing these activities. Otherwise, you cannot lead the people, because you do not know where God wants them to go.

To start a healthy church or cell, begin at once to act like a church. Obey all of Jesus' commands. Do not simply have a Bible study. You may deal mainly with the Word, but the group exists to do the other ministries that the Word requires. Plan for a definite, formal beginning and ending to each worship time. Celebrate the Lord's Supper regularly with solemnity. Give offerings.

Scoggins found how to share and to confirm a church's vision:

Each of our house churches develops a vision statement that attempts to see about six months into the future. They write it with specific goals for starting new evangelistic gathering groups and reproducing disciples, leaders, and new congregations. They include activities that enable their churches to progress towards those goals. Several times in the course of the six-month period, the group will have a "health check" to evaluate both its progress and its vision and then bring new members up to date with the vision.

In Rhode Island, we found that men tend to warm up to a vision. There seems to be a pioneer spirit in men that needs to be stretched. Even during evangelism, we try to explain to seekers the vision that God has for His Kingdom, its expansion, and their place in it. Men tend to be strongly drawn to such "Kingdom" evangelism. Perhaps this is the response Jesus points to in Matthew 11:12, "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force".

Keep evangelizing after the birth takes place.

Do not stop harvesting when you begin public worship services! Do not count on your newly begun worship services to bring in outsiders. Aim to gather people from the same culture and social level through evangelism.

Share pastoral responsibilities and hold volunteer workers accountable to do their jobs.

Keep training new leaders on the job as assistants. Follow the guidelines in Titus 1:5-9 to discern if assistant leaders are ready to lead their own groups.

New believers can also lead new "gathering groups" made up of their friends and relatives, provided that a more experienced believer coaches them behind the scenes.

If you detect competition between the elders, workers or trainees, then deal with it firmly at once before it creeps any farther. Help them to apply the teaching on humility from Philippians 2:1-18, to show respect for other workers.

Help each leader and his wife to agree on her role in the ministry.

___ Avoid discouraging new workers with too many chores.

In small groups, limit refreshment foods to something simple; do not make it hard to host meetings. Avoid serving meals, except for special occasions. Take turns caring for the children if they distract the adults.

Hold small group meetings in the house of someone other than the main leader, so that no one will think that the host owns the group.

Scoggins cautions against meeting too often. "By keeping meetings to a minimum, we avoid overstaying our welcome in a particular home. We try to have only one community meeting weekly in a central home. We hold gathering meetings for evangelism and other ministry in other homes as the Lord directs."

___ Be creative in how you apply the Word to the needs and the spiritual maturity level of small group members.

Be sensitive to the fears and doubts of new members. Bring assurance of God's grace and forgiveness.

Do not simply study the Bible. Apply it also. Let God's Word guide you as you deal with specific current needs and ministry opportunities.

Avoid long sermons. Encourage group participation in the studies. Include children and young people if they are present.

Use other ways of teaching God's Word than lecture. Encourage spontaneous discussion, telling of stories, simple drama, composing of poems or songs about the topic, and words of exhortation.

Try interpretive reading; assign the conversation corresponding to different people in passages with dialogue to as many readers.

Scoggins found a way to teach in small groups, "Lectures are counterproductive to learning. Our people learn far more by interacting with the Word in a discussion. This works especially well when they have followed a reading schedule in their homes during the week. However, a lecture is sometimes called for in larger meetings to instruct more mature believers in matters of general concern."

___ If you meet in homes, avoid meeting too often or too long in one home.

Do not wear out your welcome. But avoid moving so frequently from one house to another that people forget where to meet.

___ Avoid too many outside speakers

Regardless of how good they may be, outsiders who come with objectives foreign to your group can erode the will of your people to persevere in their God-given tasks.

___ Prohibit business dealings and political discussions during meetings.

___ Impart a vision for reproducing home groups, especially to new believers.

___ Imitate the example of the apostolic church in its use of homes.

Ministry in homes, including the celebration of the Lord's Supper, appears in Acts 2:46; 5:42; 20:20; Romans 16:5; and Philemon 2.

Plan now to deal with items above which need attention, for your workers to the birth of new groups painless and easy.

14E. Offer "*Gathering Meetings*" for Seekers

A "gathering group" normally has one or two families or a few singles. It is for seekers, not for worship or in-depth Bible studies. Older Christians who know their Bible well and have overcome the problems common to seekers can make seekers feel ill at ease. Christians should not come to a gathering meeting unless they help in some definite way or they bring unsaved friends.

New leaders, even new converts, who are mentored behind the scenes by a more experienced believer, can sometimes lead temporary seeker groups. Simply mobilize converts to witness for Jesus to family and friends, and to follow them up in small gathering groups. We keep holding these informal gatherings until the "vein of gold" runs out. That is, when a convert's entire network of friends and relatives has heard the Good News and they either respond or reject it.

Sometimes a gathering group is born when an unconverted seeker, who is the head of a household, begins reading Bible stories to members of his family or in some other way teaches the Word or prays with them. Usually this occurs under the guidance of a disciple maker.

Those who receive Christ in a gathering group may form a regular home group or new church, or they may join an existing home group, as circumstances allow. They may merge with other gathering groups to form a home group or new church.

An "outside" church planter may lead gathering meetings at first. But an outsider must turn leadership over to a new local leader as soon as possible. It normally works better if the new leader is the head of a household and receives coaching behind the scenes.

Do not extract converts from their social circle by turning them over to a congregation that fails to relate well to their community. Keep discipling them in gathering groups until they are grounded and can form a group identified with their local neighborhood or social network. This new group might be part of a larger church or become a separate house church, as conditions warrant.

When heads of households come to Christ, Help them to start new gathering meetings for their family and unsaved friends. Do everything in a way that a newer leader can imitate at once,

to keep the process flowing. Do not stop holding evangelistic gathering meetings in order to ground or consolidate new believers. They have the best contacts with whom to start new gathering groups.

When you lead a gathering group, serve as a model for servant leadership in a way that new leaders can imitate. Before a convert's social network becomes "mined out", start another gathering group with those converts who have connections in an entirely new "vein of gold."

Who in your church--or the churches of those you train--has friends with whom they can easily start a 'gathering group?'

14F. Verify Whether House Churches or Cells Are Needed

When would one start a house church with the intention that it remain indefinitely as a house church and not seek to start meeting in a building?

When would one purposefully aim to multiply small churches? A common Western assumption is that not having lot of people in one building means failure. That belief is not from Scripture. The early church in Jerusalem, like that of Ephesus and other cities, was a cluster of many tiny house churches. So, where do those Western assumptions come from, that you must have a building with a large crowd in one place, that you must pay at least one professional pastor full time, and that he must be trained in an institution outside the church? Those are culturally based traditions. The assumption that the Spirit of God needs those things is contrary to faith, often damages the Church, and frequently stifles growth and reproduction in Christ's body.

Your decision to form a house church, remain as one, or discontinue it, should not come from feelings for or against having a church building. No inherent virtue or evil attaches either to church buildings or to house churches. Scripture mentions that the early Christians met both in houses and in the Jewish temple, in its outer courtyard, as only priests were allowed into the inner holy place. God gives us liberty to meet in either place or both. Your motive should rather be to obey Jesus and allow God to keep the work growing and reproducing, without restricting it in any way.

Under some circumstances, house churches offer more freedom to mobilize new leaders and put into practice spiritual gifts. In other circumstances, church buildings offer an opportunity. In some societies churches reproduce more rapidly when they have buildings. In some third world countries believers build humble chapels at very little cost out of materials available locally, involving no limitations or delay. On some fields when a church outgrows a small chapel, its members build another nearby, often with a style that is more acceptable to the culture than the structures put up at first by foreign missionaries. Churches normally multiply this way more easily where they have a plurality of elders and sister churches remain in close contact with each other. This maintains relationships between brothers in Christ when a new church forms.

Scoggins learned from experience the value of having shepherding elders:

The plurality of elders enables older leaders constantly to train younger ones. When new churches begin, older elders, perhaps in a different church, still serve as disciple makers for younger men. This networking of leaders between churches serves to give stability to

both the leaders and the congregations in which they serve. It will also counter the independent spirit that often fosters competition between churches. Where the leaders network closely together in a cooperative spirit, there is less sheep stealing. People can move from one church to another with their leaders' encouragement and blessing as they see God's hand employing the resources of one church to edify another.

Our goal is to remove all barriers to what the Holy Spirit might desire to do. If He desires to bring explosive growth and reproduction, then we want to use ministry methods that are flexible enough to grow with Him and not restrict His blessing. Such methods need plans for multiplication and not simply for addition. We want to give liberty to the Spirit of God to mobilize workers to evangelize and edify, without restrictions imposed by buildings or by the lack of them. In some cases, a rapidly growing house church may see a building as a detriment to growth; later they might decide that a building would be helpful. Unfortunately, many Western churches seldom consider alternatives to having a building; their cultural inertia moves them towards centralizing rather more than towards decentralizing.

How can one discern the circumstances that favor house churches over erecting, expanding or renting a building? People often overlook objective criteria when they decide to build or to meet indefinitely in homes. Now, the indications of a need for house churches vary from culture to culture. Listed below are some common guidelines to recognize when to opt for house church multiplication. Mark items that apply to your church:

You lack funds for a building.

As obvious as this is, the house church option is often overlooked, when money is lacking to rent or to build. The financial burden very often causes new churches to fail, especially in urban areas, where a house church cluster could have cheerfully and easily solved the problem. Scoggins recalls:

A driving force in our decision to start house churches was our limited resources for renting or building in an urban area. Most people living in urban areas have limited resources, and land costs are high. As a result, we settled on a house church strategy to keep financial pressure from dictating the policy of the church. Too often, money becomes the deciding factor in what a church will do or not do. In our house churches, the financial question became irrelevant.

Hostile authorities persecute churches.

Where churches must gather underground, house churches often thrive. In Muslim fields, China and southern Asia, millions of believers meet in tiny house churches. The most widespread people movement of all history, the rapidly multiplying unregistered churches in China, takes house churches for granted.

You lack funds for full-time pastoral leaders.

Western Christians often associate salaried, professional ministers with church buildings and the larger congregations that meet in them. They also associate costly centralized organization with a building. Decentralized organization with strong inter-church organization often yields a vital network of house churches. When money is lacking for to pay a ministry staff, prayerfully consider the house church option.

You lack the number of people needed to launch a growing church in a building.

Churches that opt for centralized organization, paid leadership from the start, and a building, must have around fifty committed adult believers to begin holding public worship services. A smaller number would lack enough personnel to maintain the image and programs needed to attract more people to that kind of church. In contrast, HOUSE churches can start with any number of believers. A house church often starts with only two or three families.

___ You have the vision to form a cluster of house churches.

An isolated house church seldom survives long. Scoggins observes:

Independent house churches are surrounded with dangers. They easily develop cultic tendencies that go unchecked, since there is no accountability beyond themselves. They usually become ingrown, focusing all their attention on themselves, and fail to reproduce. They often become so self-centered and elitist that God's Spirit is no longer able to use them. They collapse, leaving behind discouraged and bitter people. For these reasons, we focus on starting networks of co-operating house churches rather than isolated house churches. Interaction between house churches brings stability and perspective. In times of blessing, we can share resources with others that are struggling. In times of trial, others are there to help us.

A church's capacity to multiply depends on its leaders' ability to train new elders as co-pastors to keep up with the growth and multiplication. A church planting task group lacking this ability cannot provide leadership for an ongoing movement of church multiplication. An effective task group thinks in terms of reproducing house churches. Just one house church is like one soccer player facing alone an opposing team's players. A house church needs the warmth and identity of a cluster of sister house churches in close fellowship with it. They meet together for a united celebration, perhaps once a month, and their leaders meet even more frequently to co-ordinate their work.

___ You have the ability and desire to form an inter-church network, keeping relationships intact as churches multiply.

Women generally feel threatened when continued church growth by multiplication forces them to break existing relationships. However, they can maintain their relationships through an inter-church organization. To do so, a mother church must have available members, including women and teenagers, who are experienced or can be trained to disciple newer Christians and leaders in the daughter churches.

___ You have the ability to keep children actively participating in worship, or to take care of them in some way.

Sometimes several house churches or home groups will cooperate to provide childcare.

___ You can arrange for teenagers from several churches to get together.

This, too, may require inter-church cooperation.

___ Your leaders can resist opposition to house churches.

Where traditions are very strong in favor of buildings, people sometimes stubbornly assume that a building is necessary, regardless of obvious, compelling reasons to the

contrary. Leaders must not allow the two philosophies to clash. If they open the door even a crack to consider a larger building, then such people will insist on it without thinking it through.

Deeply embedded traditions sometimes keep people from feeling that they have worshiped seriously unless they have done so inside of a church building. In spite of conscientious biblical instruction on the true meaning of worship, some people simply cannot adapt to a house church. A church planter must be sensitive to this mentality. If his flock will not follow him into a house church, then he must choose between keeping his flock or his ideal. He may have to allow the church to move into building, even though circumstances indicate that doing it could hinder the work later on. This is better than losing his church in its infancy. In more traditional societies, a cluster of house churches needs at least one strong, popular leader who successfully stems this tide.

- You recognize danger signals that warn when keeping people as one church centered in a building is stifling freedom in the Spirit.

Let us look at these danger signals that may be warning that your people should not be confined to one facility. Put a mark by those that apply to your work:

- **Warning!** Maintenance activities are replacing outreach.

You will smell danger when you have to give more thought and energy to keeping existing programs running smoothly, than to reaching out to the neglected community. Dangerous programs are those that exist without a termination date or a commitment to evaluate their effectiveness. A church's activities can simply take on a life of their own, whether or not they accomplish the purposes for which they were initiated. When someone suggests scrapping a program, more noise is made about who might be offended and whom we might lose, than about how you can better win the lost!

- **Warning!** People complain about investing tithes and offerings in material buildings.

Sometimes, even though funds for buildings are available, a congregation places higher priority on giving to ministries or workers, than to maintaining church buildings. Their conviction is often due to a healthy reaction against excessive institutionalization. House churches would allow them to achieve continual church growth and to maintain non-institutional priorities at the same time. Scoggins advises:

Generally in a house church, money collected as offerings is allocated to help or to support people. Most of our house churches use only about 20 percent of their giving for administrative purposes. The rest goes to benevolent needs and to missions.

- **Warning!** New workers must use caution to avoid offending others, in order to develop or expand a ministry.

An organization is too big or too centralized when newer members — or older members desiring to do something new — have to play church politics to avoid hurting feelings, breaking rules, or offending powerful persons. This condition is also common in house churches whose leaders are legalistic or hungry for power. Sadly, there may even be a lack of interest and fervor in following up newcomers who might want to join the church.

Often, in large churches with attendance of a thousand or more, the amount of evangelism done outside the church in the community drops practically to zero. This also happens in some older, ingrown house churches.

- **Warning!** People express frustration, because their ministries are being restricted or they are not allowed to do what God has gifted them to do.

Such complaints from otherwise non-critical persons may indicate that a building — or the centralized organization associated with it — is restricting freedom in the Spirit to serve and exercise spiritual gifts. These complaints may be God's voice to you, urging you to consider starting more daughter churches or cells in houses.

- **Warning!** Leaders complain of exhaustion, and ministry is a chore rather than a joy.

- **Warning!** Planning sessions revolve more around keeping the organization running smoothly than around spiritual and pastoral concerns.

Leaders spend more time discussing how they can improve or protect the image of the church, save or raise funds, maintain programs or avoid problems, than making pastoral plans for edifying specific people and dealing with new opportunities.

- **Warning!** Rules proliferate.

Staff members spend too much time revising constitutions, bylaws, or other policies, in order to maintain control, to safeguard from possible dangers, and to avoid problems. Leaders rush to surround innovators with rules to protect the smooth-running machinery of existing programs. Non-leaders complain to each other that the church is run by human policies instead of being led by the Holy Spirit; they fear to suggest changes lest they be called divisive.

- **Warning!** Innovations take too long.

It takes too long to launch new ministries; channels for decision-making become bureaucratic; and leaders are more concerned with how things operate than with why or for whom. Decisions made from the top downwards discourage individual initiative. Leaders often make great decisions that never get implemented because of apathy on that small part of the congregation which cries aloud, "We don't want to make a mistake!" as if no decision or delayed decisions were not mistakes.

Others cry, "We don't want to move too fast" as if it were never wrong to move too slowly. The book of Acts shows that the Spirit of God often moves rapidly. What would happen if 3,000 were added in one day as occurred in Acts 2? Sometimes older members who have had influence in a church complain when a lot of new people are added. They feel that they will no longer be in control and want things to get back to 'normal.' The unrest that they create causes many to leave, including young leaders.

- **Warning!** Potential leaders compete with one another.

New workers must "fight to the top" for a position in which their spiritual gifts can be used freely — a complaint also heard in house churches where leaders exercise too much control.

___ **Warning!** The percentage of members in places of leadership declines.

___ **Warning!** A chronic shortage of leaders in touch with the local community stifles outreach.

A church fails to train and reproduce enough effective leaders for its own essential ministries, especially ministries that mobilize new believers for evangelism of their friends and relatives.

___ **Warning!** The church must rely more and more on paid staff.

Paid workers complain that volunteer workers or leaders can no longer be counted on to fill key positions.

___ **Warning!** Programs receive more attention than people do.

___ **Warning!** Funds for buildings and paid staff are becoming a major concern and topic of discussion among leaders.

___ **Warning!** People feel that they are being driven by force into giving more and more. Other areas of pastoral concern get less attention in business or board meetings.

___ **Warning!** Unsaved visitors seldom return.

Non-Christians and visitors seeking a new church sometimes fail to meet friendly people who readily receive them into their group, or they feel that their spiritual gifts are not wanted. This is also a problem in house whose members focus too exclusively on themselves and each other, failing to reach out in love to unsaved people, other churches and the community.

___ **Warning!** Sterility replaces reproduction.

New small groups and daughter churches are a thing of the past or never happen.

If many of the above danger signals apply to your church, then prayerfully consider and plan to start cells for those who want them. Do not push those who cling to their old ways. Let them lie beside still waters. Work with other sheep that will follow you.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' worries out loud, "Hey, some of these dangerous menaces appear in home groups and house churches, too! So, stop complaining about us."

"Of course", Mr. '**Foresight**' responds, "But we can often deal with these menaces easier in small flocks. And if a leader falls from his high perch, he won't drag as many other down with him".

Plan now to deal with items above that need attention, to determine if you need to multiply house churches or cells.

14G. Be Content with Being a House Church if That Is how God Leads You

Be happy with the goal of multiplying a cluster of small churches, and do not try to act like a big church, or plan secretly to become one big church. A cluster of house churches can rent a building, if God so leads them, and meet as often as they would like in united celebration. They might pay a pastor to help coordinate the entire network of churches and to help train leaders. In the meantime, be content to be a good house church. Act like a small congregation and enjoy the close fellowship of a little community.

House churches are devastated when a leader uses them as a stepping stone to a bigger church. He might secretly aspire to become pastor of a big church that will pay a good salary. Such a pastor would inevitably lead a house church into an impasse: they could not grow big enough in a house to afford a building, but would become too big for the house. This becomes impossibly painful, if their leader discourages the starting of new house churches, fearing that members will leave his congregation to join a new church, leaving him even farther away from his goal of having a traditional church.

Such a leader would try to push a house church into a building before it can afford it, and would fail to use a style of teaching, worship, or organization that fits small churches. He would use a style of leadership that is not appropriate for small churches and that other potential leaders cannot imitate, making it difficult to multiply more churches.

Do you have people who feel uneasy about having a simple, small church? If so, pray for God's help to enlighten them to understand the true meaning of 'church.'

14H. Prepare New Leaders on the Job as Apprentices, so that Groups can Multiply

We prepare new leaders more easily if we enable all heads of families to pastor their spouses and children. This family approach produces new leaders who are overlooked in traditional churches. Many new shepherds emerge, making it possible to multiply churches.

Who can begin serving as an apprentice to you now? To your coworkers?

14I. If you Meet as a House Church, Be Affirmative Toward Other Churches

Some house churches hurt themselves by showing an independent spirit. They assume that not having a building makes them more spiritual. This attitude commits the very same error for which they criticize others. It assumes that a building somehow makes a significant difference in their relationship with God. It does not. Our attitude toward other Christians, however, makes a crucial difference.

Whether one relies on having a building or no not having one, instead of relying on the Holy Spirit for power in ministry, one falls into the same error. Spirituality comes from God alone. He can walk through church walls or break them down as He pleases.

If people in house churches criticize larger churches, it helps no one and weakens God's work. If this is happening, pray for guidance to correct it.

14J. Help Entire Families to Participate in Small Groups

Here are some ways in which families can worship together in a small group. Mark those that apply to your ministry.

- Prepare younger children before worship time to sing, recite poems or Psalms, read or recite verses or act out Bible stories.
- Prepare older children to take part in Bible study discussions. Have them find things ahead of time in the passage to be used.
- Help adults to act out Bible stories; this will have a great impact. Adults can also give testimonies, pray for one another, share experiences, ask and answer questions, exhort and admonish.
- Do not force shy newcomers to participate. If you do, then some will not return. Overly eager leaders will make them participate before they are ready to do so. Spontaneous participation must be learned—often slowly.
- Arrange chairs in a circle or horseshoe. Doing so helps people to sing and discuss the Word of God more freely.
- In new churches or cells, study and practice the biblical "one another" ministries between members and with leaders.

The carnal attitudes, ambitions, power struggles, selfishness and indifference found in larger churches also arise in small churches. In fact, they arise more readily, for the intimate, family atmosphere makes it harder to hide them! The increased opportunities to lead and to serve also bring them out more quickly. Let this happen, because the intimacy and flexibility of the small congregation facilitate correction of problems as they arise.

Much of the Bible teaching done during a church's first year, and certainly as long as new leaders are developing, should deal frankly with carnal attitudes in a family atmosphere of loving acceptance. New groups may spend weeks applying the New Testament "one another" verses to their group life, especially to relationships between members in preparation for covenanting together as a house church.

Plan now to deal with items above, which need attention, to have a proper attitude toward God's people in different churches.

14K. Affirm With a Covenant the Church's Loving, Family-like Body Life

A covenant affirms briefly what the group is and does. Small churches should covenant together to love, forgive, nurture and minister to one another as a family. Scoggins used a covenant to confirm a new church's birth:

When a new group prepares and signs their covenant, we consider the church to be born. The covenant — call it what you may — is not a traditional constitution with legal overtones. Rather, it defines how members will live and serve the Lord as a caring body. The emerging group will write every detail of it, analyzing each point slowly from Scripture, discussing it openly and prayerfully, before asking every member of the group to agree upon it. Make sure a new starting church understands God's covenants in the Old and New Testaments, so they can covenant together to define the kind of church they will form, and how they will behave toward each other as members.

The covenant's purpose is neither to define doctrines nor to prohibit sins. It is positive, emphasizing their love, forgiveness and ministry to each other. As mentioned above, the churches should study and discuss the "one another" passages in the New Testament for several weeks while they are learning to work together and recognizing their new leaders. During this time, as they make decisions and explore their gift-based ministries, the carnality of the members and the weaknesses of their leaders always become apparent. This helps them to discuss and write their covenant in a context of reality, struggle and progress, which makes it practical for future guidance. The house church, thus born through a process of joyful and tearful struggle, continues as a closely-knit family type community.

Your group members might enjoy writing a covenant. If not, then provide a model covenant that they only need to study and affirm. Some groups write this agreement as poetry; others have set it to music. Some people consider it legalistic to have to sign pledges; in that case, avoid signing it and simply ask them to join in the discussion to affirm their agreement in any way that they want.

Here is a sample or model covenant. Some churches write it in the form of a poem or song.

Our Group Covenant

We join our hearts together to pledge in love to be a spiritual family.

We promise our Lord Jesus Christ and each other that we will obey Him.

We praise Him because He forgives, heals, unites and uplifts us.

We pledge to use the spiritual gifts that He has given us to serve each other in love and be served.

We affirm that we will pass the joyful news to those who still lack faith, so they also will have eternal life.

The first line of the covenant is, "We join our hearts together to pledge in love to be a spiritual family."

This affirms that the group is making this agreement together, as a spiritual family. Discuss this with your people. We need each other to do His will; we do not only approach Him as private individuals. We walk together with God in joyful harmony. Explain what a Covenant is. The group should study and agree as a body on each phrase of the Covenant. You or one of the older children might tell the story from 1 Samuel 18 of David and Jonathan who formed a covenant of lasting friendship. You or another adult might also relate how Israel entered into a covenant with God when they agreed to obey the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20).

The second line of the covenant is, "We promise our Lord Jesus Christ and each other that we will obey Him."

This affirms that we will obey Jesus. Go over His basic commands. Discuss and pray about them as a group. You might ask someone to read Acts 2:37-47, then ask your people to name things that the 3,000 new Christians of the first New Testament church did in obedience to Jesus. The new believers repented, were baptized, received the apostle's teaching and shared it with others to win them to Christ, broke bread, had loving fellowship, gave generously and prayed. Then, agree as a group to obey and help each other to obey Jesus' commands.

The third line of the covenant is, "We praise Him because He forgives, heals, unites and uplifts us."

This affirms things that Jesus has done for us. Discuss them and praise Him for them.

The fourth line of the covenant is, "We pledge to use the spiritual gifts that He has given us to serve each other in love and be served."

This affirms that Christ gives us different spiritual gifts, to serve one another in love. Discuss and pray about how to help each other to use our gifts to minister to others. You might study Romans 12:4-10, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 or Ephesians 4:11-16.

The fifth line of the covenant is, "We affirm that we will pass the joyful news to those who still lack faith, so they also will have eternal life."

This affirms our intention to witness to others about the Good News. Discuss and pray about how you will help each other to do this, what you will do and to whom you will witness. If you write your covenant, let it contain a pledge to obey Jesus' commands, and to serve one another with your different God-given gifts. Keep it brief. Go over each part of it as you form the group. When new people join, someone must review it with them. For a new group it might be the basis of Bible studies for the first few weeks.

Consider for a moment the best way for your people to make a Covenant with each other. It may be in a way quite different from the example given above.

14L. Leaders from each Church Meet Often to Coordinate Area Activities

Arrange for leaders of the churches in your area to form a regional "oversight board" (call it what you want). It should meet often, to coordinate cooperation between the churches. In some cases a network includes both house churches and conventional churches in a friendly, mutually helpful alliance. Their elders arrange for their churches in their network to meet together regularly at convenient intervals for united worship and celebration, community projects and to serve one another as needs and opportunities arise.

Plan now for your next meeting.

14M. Multiply Wisely

Discuss reproduction from the beginning of a new church's life, especially with new leaders.

When a house church grows too large for good interaction, usually around four or five families or 14 adults, let those that want to start a new group do so. Pray for them and send them with a serious ceremony. Do not force people to join the new group. The new group should also covenant together to confirm the new house church or cell. Call it multiplication, not division.

Do not simply divide the original group into equal halves. Usually only a small part of the original group will go with a new group. Perhaps only one couple will serve as the nucleus of a new group. Others might help them do evangelism but will remain with the original group. Let everyone pray for the new group. Seek agreement among the members, including the wives of the main leaders.

Sometimes a gifted church planter who is not from the original group comes for a short time to furnish initial leadership.

During the birth stage and maybe for more than a year, the new group will receive intensive, loving nurture from its parent church, which gives this care as long as the new groups needs it. The more experienced members of the mother church may keep mentoring the leaders and workers of the daughter church. Women in the mother church keep discipling women in the daughter church.

For rapid house church reproduction, aim for more than one leader, elder or co-pastor in each church. Normally, a more experienced man will have helpers who are his apprentices. If an experienced church planter leads the group at first, he will turn over leadership to new, local leaders as soon as possible. The longer he waits, the harder it will be to do so. He and every elder he trains should always be training "Timothies" as apprentices. Each trainee should also begin soon to train his own Timothies in the same church or in daughter churches.

Often two or more church planters will work together to start a new church. After the initial gathering stage, sometimes all but one of the original workers will move on to serve in another area. The one who stays will train the first new leaders, and then he also will move on. When leaving a church in the hands of new leaders, a church planter should make a clean break from

any public leadership, so that the new leaders will feel free to take full responsibility. He should continue, however, to mentor them behind the scenes as long as the need it.

Please take a moment now to pray for wisdom, to think of easy ways to keep your groups multiplying.

Chapter 15 -- Let your Church Becoming a *Sending Church*

(Church Reproduction from the Viewpoint of a Sending Church or Mission Organization)

"We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith" 1 Thessalonians 3:2

Sections in this Chapter 15

- 15A. Let your Church Become a Sending Church
- 15B. Form Task Groups of Those who Have God's Apostolic Gifting
- 15C. Arrange for Bivocational Workers to Serve with Task Groups
- 15D. Provide Unbiased Mission Career Counseling
- 15E. Help Workers to Love and Esteem God's Church
- 15F. Pray for God's Help and Plan to Grow by Multiplication as Well as by Addition
- 15G. Give Missionary Trainees Practice in Effective Witnessing
- 15H. Arrange for Activities That Will Help Your Church to Reproduce

15A. Let your Church be a 'Mother Church'

The purpose of this chapter is to explain why and how God wants your church to serve as a 'mother church'.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**', startled, asks, "Start daughter churches? Not now! First, let's help our own church to grow bigger and bigger. That's success! Let's not even think of starting new churches until we've built a strong home base here!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' sighs, "But we've been building our home base here for 38 years! You'll never think it's big enough! We would never do what Jesus says in Acts 1:8 if we did as you say!"

Find in Acts 13:1-3 how God moved a "mother" church to send a church-based missionary task group:

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (NIV)

Is your church--or a church of those you train--ready to reproduce? If not, pray for God to help you and your coworkers to deal with what is lacking.

15B. Form Task Groups of Those who Have God's Apostolic Gifting

God promises to give to a church people gifted as apostles, that is, the missionary gift (Ephesians 4:11-12). You must mobilize those people to use their gift to help churches to reproduce. Put them to work using their gifts. Release them to disciple neglected nations and people groups. Help them to train new workers by first working with neglected ethnic groups nearby.

You may ask how to help a "sending church" to prepare and send a task group that will reproduces their church in a neglected area. If you follow New Testament guidelines while helping a church to multiply, then the reproducing church does not need many of the things that people often assume they need.

These are *not* needed to be an effective sending church:

- large membership Small churches can partner with sister churches,
- a paid "missions pastor" He could help, of course,
- an experienced "mission committee" It also can help but is not essential,
- much money Although it helps in budget-oriented societies, or
- a high-powered executive to recruit folks and motivate them to work.

Churches in every major culture group often multiply without any of those things. However, a reproducing church does need:

- A firm vision of itself belonging to the living, reproducing body of Christ and, therefore, receiving from God all that it needs to reproduce. He gives all living things the power to reproduce.
- Determination to discover members who have the needed spiritual gifts, especially the apostolic gift, to lead a church planting task group. As you nurture these gifts within the body, the Spirit of God will let you know when to separate a task group, as He did for the Antioch church as recounted in Acts 13. Any obedient, healthy church body will reproduce normally when it uses of the spiritual gifts God has given to it in ways that the Bible approves.

Patterson found how to convince the Honduran churches to reproduce:

At first, our Honduran pastors insisted that it was the missionary's job to start new churches. But at the rate we were going, that would have taken two or three thousand years to plant churches in all the villages in our area. So we had another meeting with those pastors.

I explained that a mission agency is not God's choice to make churches reproduce. He wants churches to produce churches. I told them that I was not going to plant any more churches, and that I would help them do so.

The pastors drew on a large piece of cardboard a rustic map of the villages and cities in the area. Each worker signed his name beside those towns for which his church would be responsible. Each worker prayerfully committed himself to mobilizing a church-planting task group from his church. That proved a turning point in the work; God used it to give to the pastors a vision for church multiplication. The national workers were in charge, and I would be their servant.

How can you help your home church to develop a task group with a mentality for church reproduction? Church-based task groups sent by a loving, caring church, or by several churches working together, usually have a high view of their church's ability to reproduce. They see reproduction as normal. If task group members will work together before going overseas, harmonizing their gifts and building relationships, then they will have an advantage. Workers sent out by their church usually maintain strong accountability to it. Even in Western churches, God is awakening a vision of church reproduction that take Acts 13:1-3 seriously. Mission agencies can more easily mobilize for church reproduction those workers that are sent as task groups from a church or from several churches in partnership.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers with the task group will expedite your plans.

15C. Arrange for Bivocational Workers to Serve with Task Groups

Paul the apostle, like his employers Aquila and Priscilla, worked with their hands to support themselves. Aquila and Priscilla were permanent 'tentmakers' and had churches meeting in their home in at least three cities--Rome (Romans 16:5), Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:8, 19) and Corinth (Acts 18:).

If your church cannot support members who are gifted as apostles, this does not mean that it has to stop sending them. Neither does it mean that you must seek financial aid from other churches. Self-supporting, bivocational work is an option for those who are gifted as apostles. Having secular work is the best way to work among many, perhaps most, of the remaining neglected peoples of the world. Therefore, consider asking businessmen in your church, together with others who have had cross-cultural experience, to develop plans for your "tentmakers" to support themselves fully or in part while on their mission field. Be creative!

Be wise when combining business with church planting. As a general rule, pastors and missionaries make poor businessmen. Likewise, businessmen often make poor pastors and church planters. One solution is to work as partners in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 12, not alone, each one doing what God has gifted him to do. They may both work in the church as well as the business, but the main overseer of each activity is the one with the corresponding ability.

Does your church--or a church of those you train--commission bivocational workers? If not, please think now of people who might serve effectively this way, and pray for guidance. Let your people know that the option is biblical.

15D. Provide Unbiased Mission Career Counseling

Help your home church to arrange career counseling to be done by a mentor who is unbiased. A career mentor must be one who has no motive to recruit for his favorite agency, training approach, method or field. Otherwise, missionary candidates, advised only by recruiters and promoters of mission agencies and training institutions, will continue to be channeled by default into existing programs and will be sent to fields already well evangelized.

Do not perpetuate the present imbalance. Most new missionaries go to fields that already have indigenous, national churches that are fully capable of reaching the rest of their people. Too few missionaries enter those areas where authorities are hostile, even though that is where the greatest need is, where the response is often greater, and where most of the remaining, totally neglected populations dwell. A career advisor must honestly inform potential missionaries of all options. For more about this see Chapter 18 Mentoring Potential Church Planters, Evangelists and Missionaries.

Stop a moment to think about who might serve as an unbiased mission career counselor for your workers. Who in your area has knowledge of the different avenues of service, and is not merely recruiting for their own organization or field?

15E. Help Workers to Love and Esteem God's Church

Church planters must love the church and its ministries in order to plant healthy daughter churches. Some workers have had a negative experience in a stagnant church, or have never attended a warm, active church. They lack a clear concept of what they are planting. Other workers in church planting task groups come from Christian organizations that are not churches; some of these workers have a strong anti-church bias and fail to recognize it. These need serious training for church planting and need to experience a good church model. They cannot gain all the necessary church planting skills in a classroom.

For people who lack solid experience in a loving church with normal church body life, you can create a temporary training church. Let them practice leading small group worship including the Lord's Supper, family-oriented evangelism and apprenticing leaders on the job.

Some schools provide lectures on different aspects of church planting. If their students lack experience in a reproductive church, then lectures alone will not prepare them. The teaching may be excellent, but a live model is also essential for workers who will help churches to reproduce. Practicing one's spiritual gift — in this case the gift of teaching by a lecturer — without harmonizing it with the use of other gifts given to the church body, is a bad model that hinders church reproduction. Speakers who present evangelism, community development, or other

ministries without integrating it in the church body as 1 Corinthians 12 requires, can make it harder for students to plant churches, even though their teaching content is accurate.

If there are several people in your church, who have had sad church experiences or have been taught to distrust the church, you may need to form a special group for them. You might do the following:

- Put the chairs in a circle, and let them talk to and serve one another,
- Let them all help to prepare the meetings and participate in some way, in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 14:26,
- Celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Do your people and coworkers love the church? If not, pray and plan now how you will help them to practice and enjoy loving church body life.

15F. Pray for God's Help and Plan to Grow by Multiplication as Well as by Addition

Most church planters find it helpful to draw a map showing their vision. Please, fetch a large piece of paper and do so right now.

- Identify on the map the location of churches that already exist.
- Write on the map also the location of churches that you envision for the future, that do not exist yet.
- Write beneath each church, including those that you envision, the names of workers who you hope will cooperate.

Find how the mother church at Antioch commissioned its apostles and how they remained accountable to her:

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. Acts 13:2-3 (NIV)

From Antioch they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there a long time with the disciples. Acts 14:26-28 (NIV)

Church planting is essential to accomplish widespread evangelism for several reasons:

- Most populations are best evangelized by planting many small churches that bring the gospel to many parts of their city.
- People in small, new churches do more personal evangelism. After a congregation reaches a comfortable number for its routine ministry, further growth in numbers causes a decrease in evangelism in proportion to the amount of members.

Do not be tempted by the false success syndrome that shouts "bigger is better." The hard fact is that the percentage of ministry time given to evangelism and other shepherding ministries in proportion to the membership decreases drastically as churches grow larger and become well funded. The average member of a very large church with hundreds or thousands of members does almost no evangelism. Most people who join a very large church are already Christians, being attracted from smaller churches that cannot compete with the bigger church's expensive, more attractive programs.

- When a new church is planted near another church, generally both churches gain more new people, provided they respect biblical ethics and do not "steal each other's sheep".
- God blesses churches that make a sacrifice to reproduce. Churches often weaken themselves temporarily when giving birth to daughter and granddaughter churches. Others resist reproducing, because they think it is too difficult. Once they make the sacrifice, however, they usually find it easy and joyful!

Missionaries with ample training and resources sometimes hesitate to start a new church, because they feel the need for more money, educated workers or official backing. They are suspicious when they see uneducated converts start churches without those advantages. New believers who simply trust the Holy Spirit to convert their friends in another neighborhood or town often give birth to new churches quite apart from any missionary's efforts.

A church that gives a good part of its time, ministry, prayer and funds to give birth to daughter churches will, within a generation, easily win ten times as many people to Christ than if it had concentrated all its energies inward. Multiplication is exponential, like a chain reaction. It can create a movement of people towards Christ. Multiplication happens where pastors let it happen with a sacrificial spirit, begging their strongest tithe-payers and worship leaders to leave the mother church and help to start a daughter church nearby.

Please take a moment now to ask God to show you how you can help your church, or other churches in your area, to reproduce in the normal way.

15G. Give Missionary Trainees Practice in Effective Witnessing

A sending church must prepare its missionaries to witness for Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit. It perseveres in intercession for the unsaved, trusting God's power to transform those who will receive His forgiveness (Romans 1:14-17). It communicates the essential points of the gospel. This is the Good News, the historical facts about Jesus' miraculous life, sacrificial death, and life-giving resurrection. These are the truths that the Holy Spirit uses to bring people to faith and repentance in all cultures (Luke 24:44-48; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

A sending church can train its foreign missionary task groups by planting churches among nearby ethnic groups, thereby fulfilling the Great Commission in its own "Samaria" (Acts 1:8).

A sending church should look among its members for those with the itchy feet, their apostles who are gifted to go across cultures and multiply churches. They may be businessmen, engineers,

teachers, or common laborers. A congregation should imitate the Antioch church which recognized and sent out the first long-range apostolic task group, Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark, with prayer, fasting, and laying on of hands (Acts 13:1-5).

A good sending church will seek a healthy balance between career workers and short term ones. A short term is good for testing workers' spiritual gifts, enriching their vision and surveying a field. Short-term workers can also help with temporary projects that do not require much language and cultural sensitivity. But career workers are needed to foster a movement of church reproduction, workers with the commitment to go and do what Jesus says, no matter how long will take.

Take a moment to think about the workers that your church plans to send to another field. Are they witnessing effectively? If not, plan now how you or your trainees will help prepare them.

15H. Arrange for Activities That Will Help Your Church to Reproduce

It helps to develop a checklist or Progress Chart of key activities for a sending church. Do that together with your coworkers. The list below is just an example; your chart will have more items that fit the particular circumstances of your church and of some neglected people group. Mark items to which you aim to give more attention.

Inform the church body of its God-given task.

Instruct the entire congregation to obey Jesus' Great Commission to disciple all nations, by cooperating in some way. Ask all teachers and small group leaders to help communicate this duty.

Mobilize the church to reach Jesus' four areas of focus.

Arrange for people in all ministries, classes, departments or groups to pray, give and share information for their missionary outreach. Help them to identify the areas where Jesus says to be witnesses (Acts 1:8), Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth.

Jerusalem = our own local race and culture.

Judea = people of our culture in nearby communities.

Samaria = peoples of other cultures nearby.

Ends of the earth = distant, neglected people groups.

Adopt a neglected people group.

Study neglected fields to adopt, to pray for, and in which to start churches.

Recruit workers for home and overseas ministry.

For example, encourage businessmen to start, advise or serve businesses that provide entrance and residence in otherwise inaccessible fields.

Train workers.

Mobilize missionary candidates in local cross-cultural church planting and New Testament mentoring. Help all ages to participate in some kind of mission service. Children, too, can learn about, pray for and prepare for future mission service of some kind. Let them participate frequently in mission related projects.

___ Send out missionary task groups.

Task group members must remain accountable to their church to help churches to reproduce in their chosen field and to serve in a ministry that utilizes their spiritual gifts and natural strengths. A church-based task group might include members from like-minded sister churches.

___ Commission missionaries for apostolic ministry.

After prayer — with fasting if you like — lay hands on those whom the Holy Spirit separates for foreign outreach, as the Antioch church did in Acts 13:1-3.

___ Pray.

Continually pray for the task group and the people it trains.

___ Support the mission work.

Keep giving sacrificially to support missionaries and meet needs as they arise.

___ Mobilize bivocational workers.

Fields of restricted access need career "tentmaker" church planters who are experienced in cross-cultural church planting, including businessmen. Small businesses especially can enable church planters to be in touch with the common people who are generally the most responsive. Self-employment makes the missionaries believable with the local people. If they see you living comfortably without earning your living, then they will assume you are a secret agent, or are paid to make proselytes from their religion, a racketeer or simply lazy.

Are there items above that need attention in your church, or the churches of those you train? If so, please take a moment to plan how you and your coworkers will deal with what is lacking, to help your people to mobilize their church as a sending church.

Chapter 16 -- Training Pastors and Church Planters

(Church Reproduction from the Viewpoint of Trainers of Pastors and Church Planters)

"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 Timothy 2:2

Sections in this Chapter 16

- 16A. Train Pastors and Church Planters in the Same Way that They can Train Others
- 16B. Train New Pastors on the Job by Mentoring them the Way Jesus and the Apostles Did.
- 16C. If There Are Few Experienced Workers, Then Name 'Provisional Elders'
- 16D. Chart a Church's Progress in Developing the Ministries that the New Testament Requires
- 16E. Apply what you Teach to the Life of Your Apprentices' Churches or Ministries
- 16F. Build Up Your Student's Churches, Not Just the Students
- 16G. To Train Pastors on Another Field, Get the Skills You Will Need Before You Go
- 16H. Use Progress Charts as You Train Leaders
- 16I. Help Your Apprentice Pastors to Train Newer Pastors
- 16J. Help Participants to Make Commitments Needed For Churches to Multiply
- 16K. Follow Biblical Guidelines for Mentoring Leaders-in-Training
- 16L. In Training Sessions, Respond to Each Apprentice's Needs
- 16M. Assign Reading That Supports an Apprentice's Pastoral Work
- 16N. Use Materials on the Apprentice's Level, that Deal with His People's Needs
- 16O. Evaluate Training in Terms of Apprentices' Current Ministry Effectiveness
- 16P. Be Creative in Communicating God's Word
- 16Q. Demonstrate Skills for Your Apprentices
- 16R. Use Equipment that Is Available to Those for Whom you Model Skills and Methods
- 16S. Avoid Modeling Values Rooted in the Paganism of Your Own Culture
- 16T. Develop a Caring, Long-lasting Relationship With Pastoral Apprentices
- 16U. Augment Mentoring with Teaching in Larger Groups
- 16V. When Planning Ministry Activities, Keep Apprentices of the Same Level Together
- 16W. Reviewing a Church's Activities Helps to Connect Doctrine and Duty

16A. Train Pastors and Church Planters in the Same Way that they can Train Others

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how God wants us to train pastors, evangelists and church planters.

Mr. '*Traditionalist*' asks, "Why train so many leaders for our congregation? They will challenge our leadership. Then we will lose out to those who can gather a following!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' disagrees, "Let us lovingly mentor new leaders as Jesus did. Then they will be loyal to us current leaders. But if we distrust them as you say, then they will be suspicious and disloyal."

Find in Titus 1:5 principles for mobilizing a church planter:

To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. (NIV)

Find in Acts 18:24-28 an example of mentoring behind the scenes and the results:

Meanwhile a Jew named Appalls, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. When Appalls wanted to go to Ache, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. (NIV)

Find in 2 Timothy 2:2 what we do to keep the training chain reaction reproducing itself, to start many new churches and cells:

"That which you have heard of me among many witnesses, commit to reliable men who are able to teach others also."

Who among those you train should be training others? What do you need to do to make it possible?

16B. Train New Pastors on the Job by Mentoring them the Way Jesus and the Apostles Did.

There are two training efforts that can help leaders to mature. First, new churches or leaders need intensive, time-consuming mentoring with much personal attention in regular, frequent meetings. But this is only during their beginning phase. As they mature, you can replace or supplement mentoring with larger classes or conventional courses, while you keep mentoring new workers.

To help churches to multiply in pioneer fields, train local men as pastoral leaders within the movement itself within the churches. New churches and workers require much personal mentoring. As churches mature, however, they will need less attention. Jesus left his twelve apostles on earth to serve without His personal presence, as Paul left Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete. Likewise mentors should taper off their intensive, time-consuming, personal help to a worker as he matures. More mature workers for well-established churches can benefit from more formal, classroom training.

You should require new pastoral students to serve in a serious shepherding ministry during their training. They must lead and disciple others, edifying their small groups or congregations as

Ephesians 4:11-16 requires. A leader might start by leading his family. Then, as they mature, also train them in a more formal way. Thus church multiplication requires two training efforts, one for new trainees, and another for mature ones.

Patterson observed problems in training programs on a pioneer field that relied exclusively on formal institutional teaching. In developing countries with few churches, when missionaries sent potential pastors away for training, few of them would return. The few who did return made these errors in their ministries:

- ___ Most of them failed to relate to their people because of a condescending attitude.
- ___ Most insisted on the same unrealistic training for other pastors.
- ___ Most failed to build the Paul-Timothy relationships with those whom they taught, trying to repeat their own "classroom only" experience.
- ___ Most failed to help local believers to use their gifts. Their churches neglected mercy ministries, church planting and disciple making.
- ___ Most came back with a domineering leadership style acquired in the classroom where their teachers had often ruled with total control.

If you work in a pioneer field, someone in your church planting task group must have the skill to train pastors to lead the kind of churches that can multiply. A church-planting task group should have at least one worker having the gift of teaching by mentoring and who was also trained on the job. He should plan to stay on the field as long as it takes to equip national pastors to train the newer pastors.

Mr. '**Traditionalist**' complains, "Training by mentoring is only for lay leaders. To keep real theological students' undivided attention and train *real* pastors, you must have an ivy-covered campus separated from the evil world and its distractions."

Mr. '**Foresight**' asks, "Do you want us to take pastoral students *outside* of the Body of Christ and away from the community where real life goes on, to *shelter* them?"

Patterson discovered the need for pastors to mentor newer pastors on the job in a pioneer field:

Our new Honduran churches urgently needed pastors. For a missionary to train all the pastors on the job was too slow. So, we arranged for more experienced pastors or elders from nearby churches to train others. When we yielded to tradition and imported pastors from the outside the region, they slowed things down. Some of them had excellent Bible schooling, but they lacked ideas and skills to train pastors on the job for church multiplication. Most of them resisted starting daughter churches. They argued that converts from other villages had to come to their churches, even if the converts had to walk many miles.

Some also argued that the available funds would be spread too thin, if we started more churches.

Others argued that they would lose control if new pastors worked beyond where they could supervise them. They said that they feared that they would teach false doctrine.

In reality, the only serious doctrinal problems occurred in churches led by those formally trained pastors that resisted church multiplication. Not satisfied with our local, non-formal training resources, they sometimes read the wrong books.

More significantly, they hindered their churches from reproducing. Whenever a new pastor came from the outside, we had to fight the same battle again! We learned the hard way that, to multiply churches, you must train leaders within the movement. Do not import them!

Scoggins also discovered the value of training leaders on the job:

One of the first responsibilities of our church planters is to seek out those men who are already leaders, then to mentor them in the skills of pastoral leadership. Usually, the church planter starts by teaching to potential leaders the basics of the Christian walk. Next, he helps them to pass it the teaching on to other newer believers. The church planter must immediately set up such discipleship chains from the moment there is more than one male believer. The same is done with women; older women teach the younger. Leaders must be trained to shepherd others by doing it, as opposed to studying about it only in books.

If we are starting a cluster of house churches in a new area, and there is already another house church nearby, then we often will ask the leaders of the existing house church to train the emerging leaders who serve in the new house churches. In this way, the churches themselves will develop strong relationships and greater stability over the long term. Thus, we develop leaders on the job; more experienced leaders mentor newer ones, who begin at once mentoring even newer believers. (Their difference in spiritual age may be more one of character than actual duration of their faith.)

Churches in pioneer fields can grow and reproduce more rapidly if you train leaders on the job. Bible Institutes and seminaries have their place, but that place is not on most pioneer fields that still lack well established churches with mature, experienced pastors. Formal training should be provided only to workers who are experienced and know what to do with their training. Formal training should be offered only if the economy is affluent enough to allow mature "elder types" to leave their jobs and go study. In poor economies, men will often send their teenage sons to Bible school and the schools therefore train youths that are too immature to meet the biblical requirements for a pastor. Also, the students' level of education should be high enough to receive intensive training.

New churches often grow out of small evangelistic groups or home Bible studies that have an evangelistic thrust, provided their leaders receive pastoral training in the process. If a church will train leaders of evangelistic studies who will shepherd those who come to Christ through the study sessions, then it is far easier to grow and reproduce churches or cells.

To reach a large urban population, an inner city church often needs to reproduce many small groups or cells. These should be tiny churches within the larger one, rather than isolated house churches. It is easier to multiply cells within the people's own ethnic group, economic level, and subculture. In a multi-ethnic area, people are also to witness for Jesus in their "Samaria" (a different ethnic group nearby).

To work with another ethnic group, it is normally better to plant a separate church or cell having its own elders. If one ethnic group meets in the same building with another ethnic group, then they must have a clear agreement for its use, and they should be sure to discuss their arrangements with people who enjoy working cross-culturally. Otherwise, the potential for misunderstanding is so great, that one cultural group will start bullying the other. Offended people may not complain about it; they will simply stop coming or stop bringing their friends.

If you bring people from a different culture into your congregation, then conflict will often arise from their cultural differences. Inevitably, the more dominant culture will cancel out the other. This is why the apostle Paul complained so vigorously in his letter to the Galatians. To require converts of one culture to assimilate into a different culture would make it impossible to have a strong movement for Christ in their original culture. That is because the methods of evangelism done by the other culture are so different that it creates a wall and arouses suspicion. You must not extract people from their culture, but help them set up a sister congregation that can reproduce within their culture.

The need of more experienced leaders to train many apprentices, becomes obvious when one seriously tries to reproduce himself. As you organize to train leaders, aim for their church to grow not only by addition, by bringing converts into an existing body, but also by multiplication, by starting new bodies. Let each trainee form a small nucleus or core group to which converts can easily be added. Converts are far more likely to follow through, if they are assimilated at once into a new group or church with other new Christians with whom they readily identify.

As you train leaders, help them to work closely with others leaders whose spiritual gifts are helpful for enabling churches to multiply. These include:

- Faith—for the vision to see churches multiply.
- Evangelist—for personal and family evangelism, like the evangelist Philip who presented Christ to people on a personal level,
- Apostle—for cross-cultural church planting, like Barnabas the "sent one" who equipped leaders in other cultures (Acts chapters 13 - 14)
- Pastor—for elders to shepherd the flock,
- Teacher—for disciple-makers who equip the saints for the ministry.

Whom should you mentor now, and whom should they mentor? Pray for help.

16C. If There Are Few Experienced Workers, Name 'Provisional Elders'

Find in Acts 14:21-23 how soon Paul established leaders in new churches on pioneer fields:

They preached the good news in that city (Debra) and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconic and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. (NIV)

Find in Titus 1:5-9 how Paul delegated the naming and establishing of elders, and what kind of man an elder was to be:

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. (NIV)

In pioneer fields, missionaries frequently serve churches that lack experienced elders and need to be protected from wolves. The Apostle Paul also had to name relatively new believers as elders and quickly to train them in the new Galatian churches (Acts 14:23). Some churches call such new leaders "provisional" elders, meaning that they are temporary because they have not yet been proven, as Scripture requires.

Scripture warns not to lay hands suddenly on new leaders, that is, not to name someone to a position of pastoral leadership while he is still weak in his Christian life (1 Timothy 5:22). To define the word 'suddenly' let us recall the practice of Paul whom God inspired to write it. He commissioned elders in Galatia where there were none yet, far sooner than would have been prudent in his mature home church at Antioch that had an ample number of experienced leaders (Acts 13:1).

Naming provisional elders is appropriate for churches or fields having no experienced leaders available. Remember, spiritual responsiveness can be seen in persons whom the Holy Spirit has prepared even before they know Christ, such as God recognized in Cornelius in Acts 10:1-5.

Do your new churches lack experienced workers? If so, whom might you name as provisional elders?

16D. Chart a Church's Progress in Developing the Ministries that the New Testament Requires

To train pastors to be shepherds, it helps to use a Progress Chart as a checklist to record vital church activities that their people are practicing. The elders of a new church in a pioneer field should normally mentored behind the scenes by members of the church-planting task group, by a pastor or by an elder from a mother church. A Progress Chart for a new church might include the following activities:

- ___ Witness for Christ and call people to repent and believe,
- ___ Baptize converts and receive them in a loving way into the body,
- ___ Celebrate the Lord's Supper and worship as a body,

- ___ Pray and develop personal and family devotions, intercede for the lost, the sick and the needy, and wage spiritual warfare,
- ___ Give and practice joyful stewardship of all God has given to you—your time, talent and treasure.
- ___ Teach the Word of God, and also church history and doctrinal studies that help interpret and apply the Word,
- ___ Cultivate loving relationships among members of the body.
- ___ Cultivate loving relationships with other churches and cells.
- ___ Show love to needy neighbors in a practical way,
- ___ Organize ministries in a way that all members can easily serve with their spiritual gifts,
- ___ Form special ministry groups when needed as ministry opportunities arise,
- ___ Watch over the flock, drive off wolves, correct the unruly, and rescue straying lambs,
- ___ Administrate with order. For example, set up a church budget and authorize a treasurer to pay monthly expenses,
- ___ Start new churches,
- ___ Counsel those with personal or family problems; bring reconciliation, healing and forgiveness to limping lambs,
- ___ Strengthen marriages and family life,
- ___ Send missionaries to neglected fields.

Which of the above items need more attention now, so that your church-- or the churches of those you train--will be doing all the ministries that the Lord requires for a church?

16E. Apply what you Teach to the Life of Your Apprentices' Churches or Ministries

Scripture requires that you apply the Word to your work. Workers must both hear and do the Word (Matthew 7:24-27; James 1:22-25). Teachers can apply the Word at once if they:

- ___ Listen first to those whom they teach, to learn the needs and ministry opportunities of their churches. If a teacher does not have time for this, then he must name helpers who will do so.
- ___ Select teaching content that supports your apprentices' churches' current needs and opportunities, which you heard about when you listened. Jesus said that you are to bring forth from your treasure of knowledge things old and new (Matthew 13:52). That means that you do not use the same lesson plan with every apprentice as you would with students in a more formal, academic institution.

- ___ Assign reading or other studies that support the activity that the student's congregation or small group is developing.
- ___ Provide Bible reading schedules for families to follow in the home, with practical discussion questions.
- ___ Teach with the specific purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12).

This requires you to be communicating with the members of the church body, especially the new ones, and on their God-given gifts, duties, needs and opportunities for serving others. That is not possible if all leadership training takes place in an institution apart from the student's church work.

Supplement church-based pastoral training with formal theological education where conditions warrant it. Conditions favorable to institutional theological education exist where...

- There is a high enough level of education. Uneducated students cannot assimilate intensive study.
- There is a high enough level of affluence. In poor societies' the "elder types" whom you should train as pastors, cannot leave their jobs, families or fields, so they send their sons and daughters who are too immature to serve as pastors.
- There are enough well established churches. Unless students have a model of a well-organized church in mind, they cannot associate classroom theory with church life and pastoral work.
- There are experienced pastors or shepherding elders who can model servant leadership. Pastoral trainees must also serve as models of a godly life to their flocks, for. The congregation is to imitate them. A classroom professor alone is not an adequate model of the pastor or elder.

Scoggins discovered the need to model the pastor's heart and work:

Pastors prepared in formal, resident seminaries often do serve as an effective pastoral model, but sometimes they do not, especially if their only training was in a seminary. Most formally educated pastors show that they still need to learn how to do careful, personal shepherding, in order to add pastoral skills to their knowledge and theory.

A low ratio of shepherd to sheep helps to maintain spiritual vitality. Jesus worked with a ratio of 1 to 12; our experience seems to confirm this to be a practical proportion.

To find tools assembled by George Patterson for Christian mentoring that applies the Word of God to believers' lives, visit the web site <http://.MentorAndMultiply.com>.

Do you ask those you train about their churches before you teach them? If not, ask God to help you to listen first, so you can select what you teach so that it applies to their immediate needs and ministry opportunities.

16F. Build Up Your Students' Churches, Not Just the Students

Trainers teach to edify the body, to convert sinners, to equip and lead believers, not just to communicate the Word because one loves to teach (Matthew 7:24-27; Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). This requires that one use their teaching gift in harmony with the other gifts given to the body by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:31-32).

Scoggins explains how his churches help their people to use their gifts:

Pastoral teaching must equip the saints to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). We begin preparing our leaders by explaining our vision statement about growth and reproduction. From there our trainees figure out what equipping will be necessary to carry out the task. Reading schedules and teaching plans grow out of this assessment. Since God's purpose is to extend His Kingdom, our teaching must not only be theoretical but also practical and be applied to the building of the Kingdom.

During the 20th century, teachers were probably more careless than were other types of ministers, in failing to harmonize the use of their spiritual gift with other gift-based ministries. They often neglected to coordinate their teaching closely with evangelism, caring for the need, spiritual care for those with problems and other essential ministries. They used the Bible primarily as a source of content for their teaching and preaching, rather than as the norm for how they ought to teach and preach. Most teachers ignored the Bible's teaching on the need to minister in an interactive, highly relational and experiential way within the church body (Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:1-12, 18; Ephesians 4:1-13).

Patterson found that simply to teach the Word without relating it to the people in a relational way is seldom productive:

While teaching in Uhrsleben, Germany, shortly after the fall of communism, I asked residents one Sunday afternoon why they did not attend their town's church. A friendly man invited me into his house, pleased that I cared about his spiritual life. I remarked, "I visited your church and saw very few people apart from the pastor's family," then asked, "Is it because they destroyed your faith during the communist regime?"

"*Ach! Nein!* We Germans are too stubborn to let them destroy our faith! They only proved that their atheistic beliefs debase and destroy a healthy society. The problem is that the church people do not minister in a relevant way to today's Germany. They still live in the days of Luther."

"So what should they do? I'm teaching pastors here this week and I want to deal with the realities of these communities."

"Tell them to do what you're doing now. Listen to us. Talk to us. Love us. Do not just sit in that chapel and prepare irrelevant sermons."

The chapel was over 800 years old. We discussed the needs of the village and I commended him, "You seem to be genuinely concerned for this town."

"I had better be," he revealed. "I am the mayor."

Another case is similar. A church planter explained why he was starting churches in northeast Portland where many churches already served the population.

"I evangelize postmodern youths," he explained. "When they come to Christ, if I take them to the church down the street, then they do not continue. Unless they have a church background, they do not form friendships easily with people in traditional churches. The preacher preaches down at them from a huge pulpit in a non-relational way that is alien to them. They love Christ but fail to find the friendship they seek."

He cited some examples of converts who could not bear more than one or two visits to a church that offered little care, social interaction or personal discipling.

Some modern cultures emphasize that the only true reality is one's present experience and relationships. This thought entered Western Europe a generation before it came to America. Many churches, concerned with countering liberal theology, failed to reach out to those who embraced this philosophy of life. The new generation wanted a more relational and experiential church life, which God also demands in the New Testament, but they did not find it. Thousands of churches became nearly empty. Whereas half of the people attended church after World War II, a generation later less than five percent did so. Now this modern way of thinking is hitting American churches like a tidal wave. It is emptying many of them and will continue to do so until the churches provide a more relational experience. With God's help, many churches are making a healthy shift toward small groups that allow greater interaction and a more loving, family atmosphere. Perhaps more than anyone else, those who train church leaders must model the humility and love needed to harmonize different gift-based ministries in a relational body.

Do you need to teach in a more relational and relevant way? If so, pray for God's help to discipline yourself to do so.

16G. To Train Pastors on Another Field, Get the Skills You Will Need before You Go

Learn to mentor leaders by being mentored. If you do not have this experience and need it, then arrange to meet regularly with a mentor who has experience in the type of ministry that you pursue. Do not try to learn reproductive mentoring only from books or lectures. While being mentored as a leader, you should also mentor other potential leaders. Do as Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2, "That which you have heard of me among many witnesses, commit to reliable men who are able to teach others also."

The 2 Timothy 2:2 Mentoring Chain Reaction

Paul. The 2 Timothy 2:2 Mentoring Chain Reaction started with Paul.

Timothy. Paul mentored Timothy (also Titus, Luke and others).

"Reliable men." Timothy mentored reliable men.

"Others also." These reliable men mentored others also.

Many Western pastors and missionaries lack the skill of mentoring new leaders as Christ and His apostles did. You may have to look around for someone who can mentor you. You may find more than one who can help you in different ministry areas. You should arrange this with a pastor or worker who will:

- model skills for you,

- meet regularly with you,
- pray with you,
- listen to your reports,
- help you plan what your people will do immediately,
- help you strategize for long-range objectives,
- recommend studies that support your plans,
- help you network with other leaders.

A mentor need not be very experienced in your field but must agree with your objectives and help you to:

- use your spiritual gifts,
- discern new or better ministry opportunities,
- build on your experience and strengths,
- think through your plans,
- monitor your progress objectively.

You may need two or more mentors, each for different needs. Avoid mentors who try to fit you into their program, agenda or agency!

To train pastors in a field that outlaws missionary work, you will have to mentor them behind the scenes, privately or in very small groups. To go the field without first acquiring this skill is as about as wise as trying to fly a jet fighter without any training.

In our zeal to help our trainees gain skills, we must not neglect the need to build Christian character in practical ways. Scoggins advises:

Wise church planters know that God's call is to be faithful—not always productive. Faithfully walking toward the goal is as important as achieving it, for it is the process that shapes and molds us. Good works, as seen by God, proceed from a transformed heart and life. Thus family activities, which appear to have no direct relationship to your official church ministry, may be more important than your official ministry, perhaps when your lonely wife or child asks you to do something with them.

If you train pastors in a different culture, or plan to do so, begin practicing educational methods that will work in that culture. Consider its resources and level of education of those you will train, and the need for one pastor to train other pastors, and pass it on to still others.

16H. Use Progress Charts as You Train Leaders

A Progress Chart lists and describes briefly the competencies, aims and activity plans for each person whom you will mentor. The chart will help you and the apprentice leaders whom you train to evaluate their progress and to see at a glance what they still lack. The Train And

Multiply™ Student's Activity Guide can serve as a progress chart. For a description see <http://www.homestead.com/mentorandmultiply/TandM.html>.

Meet regularly with your trainees and help them to use their Progress Charts. Share responsibility for their effective ministry. They, in turn, may help you in your ministry. You might ask your trainees to give spiritual care to some people in your church or group.

A Progress Chart should include not only what your trainees will do but also what those whom they shepherd or train will do. They can use the same chart to guide others toward their God-given goals, short-range plans and long-range objectives.

Why should a leader list what his people are to do? Because he cannot be a leader unless he leads. He cannot lead unless he takes people from one place to another. Their task may be to start a new ministry or to improve an old one. Moses received a list of activities from God that He wanted His people to do. Moses used it not only to lead the people to the Promised Land but also to equip elders and help the people to obey God's laws.

Some teachers mistakenly think they are leading when they only teach them. But if one only passes on information, then one does not lead. Others think they lead when they only enforce rules. But in God's kingdom, simply enforcing rules is not leading, according to Christ (Matthew 20:25-28).

The only way one leads His people is first to know where God wants them to go, and secondly to help them get there. It helps to have a Progress Chart that clearly sets forth what God wants one's flock to do. Joshua was a great leader, because he knew exactly what God wanted His people to do and he led them in doing it.

To help your trainees plan activities for their people, you must ruthlessly eliminate vague, spiritual-sounding activities that do not move people toward their God-given goals. For example, it would be too vague to list as an objective to "build spiritual character." All leaders want to build character, of course, but the wording is too general. Ask how to build character; flesh it out. For example, you might include in your activity list to work on each aspect of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23.

In a mentoring session, you might ask, "How will you build patience in your people? Whom do they need to have more patience with? Who can help them to do so?"

Your trainee may reply, "I shall practice on my teenage son by not getting angry the next time he forgets to turn the lights off upon leaving a room. My wife will pray with me about it and help me."

In less literate societies, a Progress Chart might not be a written checklist but something else that serves the same purpose. Patterson helped the nationals make plans without writing them on paper:

Rural leaders, especially uneducated village elders, hated paperwork. They did not care to check off ministry activities on a written list. So I helped them to learn about key Bible persons and activities that are associated with them. The leaders focused on what the model person did. Examples:

- Abraham was faithful in prayer,
- Peter was an effective evangelist,

- David was a poet and singer, who inspired people to worship and serve God,
- Priscilla was a house church hostess, servant and disciple-maker,
- Lydia was businesswoman and hospitable hostess,
- Barnabas was an understanding caregiver,
- Dorcas was a compassionate helper of the poor,
- Timothy was a shepherding pastor and trainer of other shepherds,
- Titus was a trainer of new elders for new churches,
- Philemon hosted a church in his home and welcomed back his runaway slave as a free brother,
- Abigail was a giver, who contributed material goods to meet an emergency,
- Elijah was a prophet who challenged the people to turn from idolatry,
- Paul was an exhorter who corrected erring Corinthians without condemning them.
- Elisha was a healer who prayed effectively for people's healing.

Some found it easier to imitate the activities and virtues of these biblical models.

If you train new pastors for new churches, do they have some way to monitor their progress? If not, prepare something for them. You might do it together with them.

16I. Help Your Apprentice Pastors to Train Newer Pastors

Find in 2 Timothy 2:1-4 some principles and examples of reproductive mentoring:

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 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. Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer. (NIV)

Before you start to train pastors, seek out mature men, elders, as the Bible describes them. Look for mature, serious heads of families who will begin at once to shepherd their people. Elders are to be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). This includes the training of other pastors, who will train still others (2 Timothy 2.2; 3:14-17).

Scoggins diagramed the 2 Timothy 2:2 chain for his leaders:

We use a diagram of "links" based on 2 Timothy 2:2 to keep track of our mentoring chains. ("And the things that you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.")

Link 1: Missionary Paul teaches ...

Link 2: Timothy, his trainee, who teaches ...

Link 3: 'Reliable men,' who teach ...

Link 4: 'Others also.'

We use this model to organize mentoring chains, to keep track of relationships within the body, and to see how far the training extends down the chain. To foster multiplication-type growth, the chain must extend at least to a third link.

Are you getting at least three generations of Paul-Timothy training relationships? If not, please pray for wisdom to do whatever needs to be done.

16J. Help Participants to Make Commitments Needed For Churches to Multiply

Churches multiply when the persons who participate in pastoral training make their corresponding commitments:

- The churches' commitment is to reproduce in daughter churches
- The pastors' commitment is to train their 'Timothies' (new pastors, leaders)
- The pastoral students' commitment is twofold: to shepherd others while they study, applying at once what they learn, and to train their own pastoral 'Timothies' to keep extending the training chain reaction.
- The pastoral trainers' commitment is to require students to be active in pastoral work while they study. He requires that each pastoral student start a church or home group, or help to shepherd a congregation, applying what they learn at once. To do this, the trainer must listen first as students report their people's progress or problems, to relate the Word and other teaching to their work and their flocks.

Do your people need help to make any of these commitments? If so, please take a moment now to think how you will help them do so.

16K. Follow Biblical Guidelines for Mentoring Leaders-in-Training

To imitate Jesus and His apostles in the way you train leaders, you will:

- Require obedience, above all else, to Jesus' basic commands and to the other requirements of the New Testament,
- Train leaders on the job while they start or develop churches, relating theory to what they are doing to start a church,
- Harmonize gift-based ministries, including that of training pastors, by cooperating closely with those who have other spiritual gifts and ministries,
- Foster loving relationships between teachers and their trainees.

The truly biblical pastoral trainer, like our Lord and His apostles, shares responsibility for the effective ministry of his students and gives personal attention to the details of their ministries. The trainees should give something in return to their trainer. Their trainer is to be open to receive as well as to give (Galatians 6:6). The Western concept that maturity in Christian service means attaining financial independence is an idea foreign to Scripture.

Do any of these guidelines for mentoring leaders need more attention? If so, pray and plan now for how you and your coworkers will do them.

16L. In Training Sessions, Respond to Each Apprentice's Needs

The essentials of a training session include...

- Listen
- Plan
- Evaluate
- Assign
- Pray

Listen	Listen to each trainee report on progress and problems in his church.
Plan field work	<p>Help him plan fieldwork that fits the current situation, that he or his people will do before the next session. Keep a copy of his plans, to evaluate results next time.</p> <p>You might do role-plays to prepare trainees for new situations. They act out how they will confront, correct or shepherd, before doing it. They discover and deal with their weaknesses before dealing with others.</p>
Evaluate reading	Verify reading done. Ask questions about it or look over answers written in a workbook. Ask trainees to tell you about what they studied, and to summarize what they will teach their people.
Assign	Assign reading in Scripture or textbooks, etc., that supports trainees' immediate plans for their church, cell or task group, or their trainees.
Pray	Each participant prays and is prayed for. Ask God for guidance and power to carry out the plans made.

Do you have experience in leading mentoring sessions? If not, ask God to help you do this kind of teaching.

16M. Assign Reading That Supports an Apprentice's Pastoral Work

Assign readings for Bible knowledge, doctrine, church history and any other area, that correspond to each activity that a trainee is to develop with his people. Record this assignment in his Progress Chart under the corresponding activity. For example:

- When the student is to help his people to obey the commands of Christ, assign reading about our Lord's deity. Jesus requires our obedience to His commands precisely because He is all-powerful in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18-20).
- When assuring believers of God's grace, assign readings dealing with justification, the promise of eternal life and Christ's intercession.
- When naming deacons to care for the needy, assign reading about the social duties of the church.

If topics in a theological textbook neglect how to relate them to people's lives or pastoral ministry, they probably are not worth assigning, no matter how interesting.

Reports on reading are usually better done orally than in written form. Trainees should relate how the material applies to their spiritual life, family, church, and ministry. Oral reports develop verbal skills; and trainers can respond at once to things that need correction or comment. Good mentors ask questions that enable trainees to grow in their ability to think and to respond quickly, as well as to reflect on the principles behind their plans. (For example: Why do you want your people to do that? What biblical principle does it follow?)

Are you accustomed to assigning reading that relates to a new church's current needs? If not, ask God now to help you and your coworkers to develop this discipline.

16N. Use Materials on the Apprentice's Level, that Deal with His People's Needs

Most theological training programs started by Western missionaries, including Theological Education by Extension (TEE), begin on an educational level that is way too high. Use materials that thoroughly integrate pastoral training with church planting and the other New Testament ministries. These materials include:

Train And Multiply™ (T&M) is especially effective on fields where institutional training is impractical. For information on how to obtain the 65 small study books, contact Project WorldReach: <http://PWR@TrainAndMultiply.com>.

Pastor's Storybook is shorter (one small book, free) and follows the same New Testament guidelines as T&M. It conveys biblical truths and pastoral tasks by means of Bible stories. It is good for starting while T&M is being translated. Download it from <http://www.Paul-Timothy.net>.

Paul-Timothy Training Menu is a longer program, written for more educated people. You can get seminary credit for it from Western Seminary, Portland, Oregon, USA. Download it free from <http://Paul-Timothy.net>.

For training missionaries for church multiplication in today's neglected fields: *Disciple the Nations*, an interactive e-textbook on CD-ROM by Patterson and Currah. It is written in the form of a novel and the reader competes with an adversary to work through increasingly difficult skill levels. To order: <http://AcquireWisdom.com>.

Do you want to look over any of these materials? Send questions about any of them to George Patterson, Gpatterson@CVImail.net.

16O. Evaluate Training in Terms of Students' Current Ministry Effectiveness

Rate your training by results, not by your efforts or by your students' efforts. Help your students to measure their progress not only by the amount of new knowledge gained but also by converts baptized, lives changed, and new churches and ministries. You should record progress in their pastoral work and the studies that they complete.

Scoggins discovered the value of good evaluation of teaching:

Good teachers are brutal in their self-evaluation, so they listen well to the input from others. Once an elder in one of our churches complained about his congregation, "I preached one of the best messages of my life, but the people slept through it!" He had failed to make a brutal self-evaluation from his congregation's perspective.

If students are not producing the results you believe God wants them to have, then you may want to change your method of teaching. Pray for the self-discipline needed.

16P. Be Creative in Communicating God's Word

Jesus and the Old Testament prophets used creative ways to communicate God's message. They used symbols, vivid illustrations, poetry, drama, questions, narrative, parables, irony, pithy proverbs and riddles. Try different methods of teaching. Do not overlook story telling, drama, dance, music, poetry, ritual, and symbolism.

If working cross-culturally, avoid importing evangelistic and teaching methods from other cultures or educational levels. Use methods that converts and workers can immediately imitate in passing on the teaching to others.

A form of story-telling that is easy for most literate people is that of dramatic Bible reading. When reading Bible stories that have dialogue, ask persons to stand and read the conversation of the people in the story. A narrator reads the portions that are not spoken as dialogue, skipping phrases like "and he said."

For example, in reading John chapter 9, six readers can voice the conversations of the following persons in the story:

- the disciple who asks Jesus why the man was born blind,
- the Lord Jesus,
- the blind man,
- the Jews (those in authority who rejected Jesus),
- the parents,
- a narrator reads text that is not dialogue.

Should you or your coworkers include more stories, drama, poetry or role-plays in their teaching? If so, take a moment now to pray and think how you can encourage this.

16Q. Demonstrate Skills for Your Apprentices

Jesus commanded His disciples to do only what they had seen Him do first, in a way they could imitate. To train pastors, imitate Jesus methods, so that pastors can reproduce. No one individual can model all the skills that students need, so seek other mentors who will model the skills that you lack. Arrange internships or apprenticeships that will enable students to serve as "Timothies" so that they can observe good models. To enable churches or cell groups to reproduce spontaneously, do everything in a way that students can imitate at once. Paul told the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitated Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Some churches train bivocational church planters by starting daughter churches within a different, nearby culture. Workers who have cross-cultural experience are more apt to multiply churches when they go abroad. Sometimes businesspersons take on apprentices in order to help prepare them as bivocational workers for a field that needs "tentmakers".

Be a model of vital ministries in a way that new shepherds can imitate you. Jesus, Paul and his coworker Barnabas all modeled pastoral skills for their students who included Luke, Mark, Titus, Timothy, Aquila and Priscilla, Philemon and many more. Plan and arrange for new leaders to observe you or another worker doing the common pastoral tasks listed below.

Check the ministries for which you or another trainer aim to model skills.

To extend Christ's Kingdom on earth:

- Evangelize, reach converts' family and friends
- Help the needy with material needs, as you make disciples
- Reproduce cells or daughter churches
- Penetrate neglected fields and people groups

To enrich your prayer life and deepen your personal relationship with God:

- Intercede, pray for healing, and wage spiritual warfare
- Watch over and develop member's spiritual life and character

To help lame or straying lambs:

- Counsel and encourage any who have personal or family problems
- Strengthen marriage and family life
- Correct without condemning, watch for straying lambs and wolves
- Deal with demonic oppression and influences

For edification of the church body and training:

- Teach in a way that equips doers of the Word.

- __ Disciple on all levels--seekers, new believers, growing believers and leaders.
- __ Practice stewardship for wise use of the material goods that God gives us.
- __ Train leaders and help them to train others.
- __ Lead worship.
- __ Cultivating fellowship within the church body.
- __ Worship and do Communion in a way that engages everyone in active participation.

After modeling these skills and activities, give your trainee the freedom to do so in turn. Trust the Holy Spirit and let them make mistakes. Let new leaders take their "baby steps, and get out of their way! It is their own inner motivation that counts, not perfection in their efforts.

Reproductive training requires materials that students can study and use with their own trainees who will pass them on to others in a 2 Timothy 2:2 chain reaction. Many Western missionaries use materials that do not help reproduction, that are written on an academic level that is too high, are too expensive, too abstract, and too Western or that contain an unbalanced emphasis on knowledge that cannot be related to other gift-based ministries.

Scoggins [explains how churches use](#) materials in a way that facilitates a reproductive chain reaction:

We provide small, portable paper booklets having four, five or six separate studies that fit neatly inside a Bible. When we do a study with one person, we can give the booklet to that person and ask him or her to present the same study to another person. We had to develop methods of discipleship that were easily transferred and did not have to be presented by a seasoned professional teacher or pastor. Disciple making is an art, and disciple-makers improve our ability with practice. It is easy to sound like an expert whom others will admire, but if an expert does all the discipling, then there will be no reproduction.

If your main spiritual gift is teaching, then you must work closely with others who can model other skills. Simply teaching in the traditional way, by itself, does not show others how to use other gifts. Blend your gift with others whose gifts include leading, helps, discernment, compassion evangelism and *etc.*

Do you need to model, or ask someone else to model certain skills?

16R. Use Equipment that Is Available to Those for Whom you Model Skills and Methods

Except for special, occasional events, avoid high-tech, expensive projectors, computers, or any other equipment that your people lack. Reliance on technology provides a wrong model, robs national workers of initiative, and thereby kills spontaneous reproduction. In most pioneer fields, when leading worship, Western missionaries must discipline themselves to avoid expensive, entertaining musical instruments and dependency on budgets and technology. Some short-term

Westerners take along so much musical equipment that they give the impression that the power of the Holy Spirit extends only to the end of their electrical cord!

Do you need to stop using some method or technology that your trainees lack, while you are training them?

16S. Avoid Modeling Values Rooted in the Paganism of Your Own Culture

"Paganism!" exclaims Mr. '*Traditionalist*', "Surely that means other cultures. Not ours!"

Mr. '*Foresight*' replies, "You've gotten used to the paganism of our culture, that's all. Do you think we're immune to it?"

Missionaries to other cultures must avoid exporting to churches of other lands all their cultural values. Many things that are held in high esteem in the industrialized West, for example, weaken God's work on other fields. Some Western values that can be dangerous when exported include the following.

- Western Values and their Effects on Non-Western Societies
- Entertainment—it leads to entertaining worship with music that is considered frivolous by mature people in some societies.
- Tolerance of bad influences—it leads to obscenity, violence, fornication, homosexuality and nudity in the media, all of which has come to be tolerated by some Christians.
- Size—it leads to superficial evangelistic methods, excessive fear of offending people with teachings the truth as God has revealed it.
- Instant gratification of desires demanding availability of commodities and consumer-oriented marketing—it leads to immediate acquisition of the latest things and fads offered in the Evangelical market.
- Financial success—it leads to commercialization of church programs, commercialization evangelism, healing campaigns, sacred concerts and seminars.
- "Official" credentials described in superlative terms of excellency, highest standards, or the latest this or that—it leads to sophistication that replaces sincerity and obedience to Jesus.
- Compartmentalized organizations—it leads to excessive control by the main leaders and splits the church organization into isolated programs that fail to harmonize gift-based ministries.
- High technology—it leads to contented enslavement to electronic equipment and media.

- Hedonism (‘What feels good is good’)—it leads to easy toleration of sexual liaisons that destroy families, and to drug abuse.
- Equality of the sexes—it leads to disparaging the biblical male role in marriage.
- Democratization (all govern)—it leads to lack of oversight by a group of godly, mature elders as taught by the New Testament
- Individualism—it leads to keeping one's relationship with God excessively private, failing to deal with converts' relatives and friends.
- Independence—it leads to doing evangelism in a way that extracts individuals socially from their relatives and friends whom God wants them to love and reach, in violation of Acts 16:3.
- Unity based on conformity—it leads to a Babel-like passion for unifying cultures, at the expense of destroying the weaker ones.
- Rationalism (the idea that faith is the same as understanding)—it leads to a rationalistic approach to sacraments and to the Word, doubting any immediate work of the Holy Spirit.

These and many other Western values restrain and sometimes paralyze church reproduction when exported by insensitive missionaries. This is a modern version of the Galatian error of forcing elements of one culture on Christians of another. Such legalism hinders the free flow of God's grace. The effect is that seekers must experience two conversions, one to Christ and another to values and practices of a foreign culture. Meanwhile the old dragon laughs!

If you are not Western, you might have escaped some of these errors, but probably not all of them, because Western forms and values have been taken to most areas of the world. Also, satan sows erroneous values in all cultures--including yours--that need correction.

What values prevail in your society, for which you need to provide a positive biblical alternative?

16T. Develop a Caring, Long-lasting Relationship With Pastoral Apprentices

Coaching people in Christian love for serious ministry motivates and mobilizes them more powerfully than do organizational rules. Coaching also provides a channel between a mother church and her daughter church through which love and power flow, helping new churches to grow and develop.

Such mentoring is not always done one-on-one. Jesus personally trained twelve disciples at a time. It is personal in the sense that we share personal responsibility for our student's effective ministry, and talk with each student face to face.

Please take a moment to ask God to develop the relationships you have with those you train, and think about things you and your coworkers can do to improve relationships with trainees.

16U. Augment Mentoring with Teaching in Larger Groups

To personally mentor leaders requires a group small enough for you to give careful attention to each one. Such discipling takes too much time for you to continue indefinitely with each trainee. Your trainees can also meet in larger groups for common issues and encouragement. Classrooms can also be effective for the on-going training for mature leaders. Keep your training balance in by providing both types of meetings. You can combine both by first meeting together as a class and then separating into smaller groups for mentoring sessions, if you first prepare the mentors.

Plan for balance in training, by using both methods--mentoring with a few, and teaching many at once--when needed and practical.

16V. When Planning Ministry Activities, Keep Apprentices of the Same Level Together

In small mentoring groups, do not mix students of different social, economic, or educational levels, unless they already mix socially with ease. In less-educated societies uneasy mixing can seriously stifle the initiative of less-educated and poorer workers.

Do you or your coworkers need to reorganize training sessions?

16W. Reviewing a Church's Activities Helps to Connect Doctrine and Duty

Jesus and His apostles applied at once what they taught to the life of their disciples, to the community and to the church. Wise teachers relate the Bible and their teaching at once to practical duties.

The following list is a review of some of the guidelines presented above. They are important enough to warrant a second review. Mark items to which you aim to give more attention in order better to apply your teaching to your students' ministry. Skip the rest.

- ___ Help new leaders of a church or group to envision activities that God wants their people to do. Plan these activities, then add studies that support them.

People of faith look ahead, focusing on where God is leading them and planning accordingly. Set realistic goals and plan the little, easy-to-take steps to reach those goals. Stagnant churches live in the past; any plans that they make for the future are too vague.

When you meet with students first pray, then listen to their ministry reports, next help them plan ministry for the next week or two, and assign studies that support their plans. Lastly, pray for them and their flocks.

___ Give priority to Jesus' foundational commands and provide biblical studies that will help your people to obey them.

___ When you help trainees to plan activities for a church, also provide studies that support them.

___ Add to activity plans supporting biblical studies, doctrines, history and any other study material.

Paul-Timothy Training, like Train & Multiply curriculum, thoroughly weds evangelism, church multiplication and pastoral training.

___ Keep revising the Progress Chart or checklist of activities that you use to monitor a student's flock's progress toward its objectives.

___ Frequently revise your progress chart to deal with new needs and objectives. Doing so makes it easier to select supporting studies.

___ Emphasize the New Testament guideline of teaching or assigning reading in response to the immediate needs and ministry opportunities of your student's flock.

___ In training sessions, let communication flow two ways.

Trainees report what their people are doing, and the trainer responds with biblical counsel that applies immediately to the needs and opportunities facing the students' church or group. Scoggins found it helpful to encourage students to develop their own plans:

As students progress in their understanding of ministry and of church or cell reproduction, they eagerly develop their plans for training others. Normally this occurs when they begin reproducing themselves in their Timothies. As they develop another leader, they add a link to the discipling chain. They promote themselves by becoming a mentor and developing still more leaders.

___ Deal frankly with a student's shortcomings and poor attitudes.

Mistakes due to inexperience are a normal part of learning and are often better overlooked. But mistakes due to bad attitudes or pride are another matter completely. Scoggins deals with bad attitudes at a deeper level:

Problems often appear at the behavioral level when a new leader begins practicing a new ministry. Errant behavior is often only symptomatic of deeper problems at the motivational or affective level of one's personality. You must teach pastors to be sensitive to motives rather than merely to behavior. Pastors must change the affections of a congregation, not just their behavior. A good parent is not satisfied with a child whose behavior conforms to the code; one wants their children's character, their affections and motives, to embrace the code. Jesus pointed out that the source of sinful behavior is the heart. It is our heart that needs regeneration and then must start going through the normal cycles of repentance and renewal.

___ Help new leaders to define their vision, plan what to do to reach it and move ahead on their own initiative.

Help students to define their long-range goals and to list the steps that will lead to their fulfillment. Do this as you would place stepping stones across a shallow stream, near enough together that one will not have to leap too far and fall.

Help students to trust the Holy Spirit as they plan to deal with obstacles, and not to come to you for help every time. Do not fear that you will lose control, for you are more likely to lose control of those whom you "keep on too short a leash".

To help new leaders to envision reproduction, teach the parables of Jesus, which illustrate how the Kingdom grows and multiplies similarly to grain. In just a few years of reproduction, one rice grain planted in good soil will multiply enough to feed the entire human race. Remind them that every time they look at grass, trees or flowers, or eat a meal, they enjoy the fruit of God's miraculous, reproductive power. All creation reminds us daily of how our Father makes every living thing reproduce! Like grain, the church has its own God-given power to grow and multiply.

We humans cannot make a church grow; we can only sow, water, and cultivate it in faith; it is God who gives the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6). When it comes to reproducing His living Body on earth, Christ limits His infinite power to our weak faith! So, ask him often to give the increase, to bring people into His kingdom and grant you the Holy Spirit's power to do your part.

- ___ Train new pastors to solve problems by dealing with root causes rather than with their symptoms; and discern the difference.

Patterson observed how detecting underlying causes rather than external symptoms helped to cure damaging behavior:

A devout Honduran pastor was disturbed because the teenage girls in his church kept running off to live in "common law marriage" without the blessing of church or state. He failed to discern the real cause, however, which was poverty and despair. In his area the girls of marriageable age were often underfed, unwanted and miserable in the little village huts they shared with oversized families. They saw no hope for a better future. But the pastor, looking only at the external symptoms of the problem, assumed erroneously that the girls were motivated by sex. He preached incessantly against the sin of fornication.

The pastor's scolding only dealt with symptoms and did not deal in love with the underlying and painful cause. It had the opposite effect from what the pastor wanted. He unwarily kept before the girls' troubled minds the idea of a possible way of escape from their plight. It became evident that his church was having more cases of fornication than other churches in the same depressed area, whose pastors did not make it a major point in their preaching.

The other pastors noticed the root cause of the problem and took a more positive approach. They helped the youth visualize a better future, to work together to create, train for, or find better employment. They helped them ponder how to achieve wholesome marriages. The result was far fewer cases of promiscuity.

- ___ Do not so fear false doctrine or bad practice creeping in, that you chain leaders to needless rules and policies.

Rules growing out of fear stifle spontaneous growth and development. They also provoke a subtly rebellious spirit in your trainees and coworkers that will eventually open the door to the very errors that one fears. When you establish for a church a permanent rule having

no explicit basis in Scripture, you will probably find later that it limits the free working of the Holy Spirit.

Patterson recalls a case in which a person did not let fear deter her from breaking with church policy:

A devout Roman Catholic girl and her boyfriend were attacked by a shark while swimming off the coast near where we lived. She dragged him ashore and saw that he had only moments to live; he was losing blood rapidly from large gashes. She asked him if he wanted to affirm his faith in Christ, then took seawater and baptized him in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. She feared that her church might disapprove, but faith overrode her fear.

Some Protestants and Roman Catholics questioned the validity of that baptism. The bishop, however, declared the baptism valid even though not done by an ordained priest. The girl believed that the Holy Spirit led her and felt the freedom to do it, uninhibited by tradition, unlike many would have been, including some evangelicals.

___ Find textbooks geared to the local needs and educational level of your people, or write them.

Textbooks written by less educated writers can be very effective if they are prepared for a specific people's needs and on their level of reading comprehension. Such books can help more than books that erudite scholars have written for another time or culture.

___ Mobilize for ministry the members of a church or small group.

Normally it is easier to mobilize people for ministry if their group is small. It is easier yet, if it is also new. Scoggins found ways to mobilize people for ministry:

When new believers understand that they have been saved to serve as Galatians 5:13 reveals, we help them to learn how spiritual gifts apply in the body. We help them to pray and seek how God has equipped them to help the body attain its vision. This reinforces the on-going teaching about the church as a community of people who have been given something by God to pass on to someone else.

When a church reaches an unwieldy size and becomes too big to effectively mobilize most of its members, reorganize it. The congregation should either separate some members to start a daughter church nearby or it should form small ministry groups or sub-congregations. Then members can better be mobilized to help give pastoral care to each other on a personal and family level. We found that for good shepherding, an ideal group size is from eight to twelve adults. Some groups may serve more for outreach and others for edification.

___ Base training at all levels on loving obedience to Jesus Christ.

To lead people into loving obedience, establish obedience to Christ from the beginning as the foundation for all discipleship and ministry. Obedience comes before discernment (John 7:17). If you teach heavy Bible doctrine before new believers have learned simple, loving, child-like obedience, then you will jeopardize their commitment to Christ.

Scoggins described the beauty of obedience in action:

Maturity comes through practicing obedience (Hebrews 5:12-14). Try to avoid the paralysis that arises from teaching heavy Bible doctrine to potential leaders before they can apply it and learn to live in simple, loving, child-like obedience. The Western tradition seeks to develop leaders by preparing theological students for every contingency. In the process, they sometimes get the idea that professional proficiency comes from ever-higher learning rather than from following the Master.

___ In uneducated societies, mobilize non-academic pastors or shepherding elders.

The working classes of the world need hundreds of thousands of non-academic lay pastors who are trained on the job. Churches among the poor and uneducated can thrive and reproduce better with non-academic pastors and elders who are trained by godly pastor-mentors. Many such movements stagnate or decline when they start to depend on outside institutions to train all their pastors. A similar problem would develop if all the soldiers in a military campaign were prepared by the military academies to be generals but none were riflemen. We need both in a sane proportion. Among the apostles, the ratio was one in twelve; only Paul had had formal academic training, and that was with Gamaliel in Judaism. In most pioneer fields you can meet this need by training new pastors by extension education that follows biblical discipling principles.

Let us clarify this point. The authors of this book approve of formal academic training, and teach in formal institutions. But they lament the lack of balance and the damaging assumption that all pastors need seminary. Both history and contemporary observation show that formal training can provide only a small fraction of the shepherds needed now. They also insist that if institutional training is the only preparation one has, then his pastoral work will be deficient. That deficiency is even more noticeable in pioneer fields.

Institutional training contrasts with the on-the-job training that Jesus gave to His disciples. He sent His apprentices out where they often failed; he then evaluated their learning of both doctrine and pastoral skills while they worked. In Jesus' model, leaders learn by both doing and studying rather than by theoretical instruction about the doctrines of the faith in a classroom. Paul's attitude toward his own teaching echoes this approach; he acknowledged that his instruction was to be evaluated only by the lives and work of those he trained (1 Corinthians 3:1-9; 2 Corinthians 3:1-6).

Leaders often seek more training because they feel inadequate. Before giving detailed doctrinal training, as important as that is, first train them to depend upon the Lord. Sadly, some seminary-trained leaders rely upon their theology books more than upon the Book and its Author.

In rapid reproduction of churches, traditional seminaries cannot keep pace with the need for more leaders, especially for more lay elders. Nor do most seminary-trained leaders have the flexibility to disciple new leaders on the job, keeping up with the moving of the Spirit. Rather they prefer to train others the same way they were trained, in classrooms by lecturing. I was trained within a church in a personal discipleship relationship and therefore rely upon this method. Some seminarians have insisted that my training was inadequate. They encourage men in their churches who are called to ministry to go away

to seminary, thereby failing to train a large numbers of elders at the time they are needed to shepherd reproducing churches.

— Keep gearing the training—week by week and month by month—to current needs and opportunities.

Patterson saw missionaries overly educate new pastors in some ways and neglect current needs in other ways:

A Honduran pastor working with another denomination had been extensively educated in Guatemala. He heard about the little picture-strip books that we had developed to teach serious theology on a pastoral level to less-educated people. He called on the phone to ask me to mail him some of these training booklets. He explained, "In seminary I learned wonderful things from the Word of God. The only problem is this: having returned to my church of semi-literate peasants, I find I can no longer communicate to them."

He read a few of our booklets and later wrote, "This is what I want. Send me the rest of those booklets." Later he thanked us for helping him get back on the same cultural level as his own people.

Some churches, too, often follow the only training model they know—the traditional classroom. They aim to teach more and more doctrine, without practicing the ministries that correspond to those doctrines. You must avoid creating the long-eared "hearers only" that James 1:22 warns about. Rather you must train people to be doers of the Word.

Teaching theory without enabling students to apply it immediately, will numb the discipline of church members and stifle their mobilization in ministry. The fact that many do training wrongly does not justify your doing it the same way. Wrong training sidetracks sincere workers who fear feel that they cannot obey the Word until they have learn all the theory. In truth, believers are always learning more, and will do so for all eternity!

Our trainees should learn and should serve at the same time, as the disciples of Jesus and Paul did. To combine learning and serving reinforces true humility, because trainees will not rely only on previous learning but will also trust the Spirit of God who is at work in the body of Christ.

Which of the above items for relating doctrine and duty need attention now from you or your coworkers?

Chapter 17 -- Leading by Serving

(Church Reproduction from the Viewpoint of the *Church Leader*)

Jesus "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."
Ephesians 4:11-12

Sections in this Chapter 17

- 17A. Oversee, Equip and Plan in a Way that Mobilizes All Church Members for Active Ministry
- 17B. Help your People Do Gift-Based Ministries
- 17C. Let Organization Grow out of Relationships and Goals, Not the Other Way Around

17A. Oversee, Equip and Plan in a Way that Mobilizes All Church Members for Active Ministry

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how Jesus wants His shepherds to lead.

Mr. "**Traditionalist**" complains, "I don't like this talk about reproduction. If I were leader of the biggest church in town, I would hardly enjoy dividing it up to form another church!"

Mr. '**Foresight**' explains, "That depends on your motives. If you only want to rule over more people, then you are not a true leader in the Kingdom of God, according to Jesus. And do not call it "dividing" the church. That sounds so negative! Say "multiply." Let those who are eager to start a daughter church or new cell group carry out the mother congregation's vision, faith and life to form a new tiny group of people to furnish the core for a new church to grow around.

If want to understand church life and reproduction from the viewpoint of a church leader, please find in 1 and 2 Timothy what shepherds are to do with their people. This is a long assignment but worth the time.

To embrace church multiplication, your people and their leaders need preparation. This preparation is not only intellectual but includes attitudes toward leadership. Scoggins dealt with attitudes of many new leaders when churches started multiplying:

At the early stage of planning for multiplication, a pastor or church planter must deal with his "flesh." Western culture worships success and efficiency. We fear failure and try to avoid it at all costs. As a result, some new leaders tend to over-control, inhibiting the spontaneous leading of the Spirit through the flock.

How many churches simply keep walking in circles because they fear to try new directions? Some cling blindly to existing programs for no reason at all other than that they exist. Too often pastors support this paralyzing routine, even praising it. They fear to give the congregation the flexibility to try new things by faith, to risk failure, in order to restore their walk of faith. Let us allow the Holy Spirit, the supreme agent of change on the earth today, to lead us!

Do you or those you train need to develop oversight of the Lord's work, to do it in a more biblical way?

17B. Help your People Do Gift-Based Ministries

How can one measure the health of a church? Ephesians 4:15-16 reveals that church health fosters the "proper working of each individual part." Leaders sometimes assume that they cannot mobilize more than a minority of their people for service. But balanced, obedience-oriented discipleship, especially in small groups or house churches, often leads to a high percentage of members in active service. At first, many people come to church only to get their needs met. So, you must help them to graduate from this infant stage in their spiritual life. Jesus and His apostles called their pastoral students to a life of unselfish, sacrificial service. Service like that comes from one's love for God and for others, as revealed in Galatians 5:13. As their love grows, so does their service. Effective service also grows out of the assurance of a clear conscience through Christ's sacrifice, according to Hebrews 9:14.

Scoggins learned from personal experiences to encourage people to serve:

Discipleship, which is to follow Christ in service to His Kingdom in such a way that believers become like Him, is progressive. Some new believers respond immediately and make rapid progress, entering quickly into service. Progress can happen so rapidly that a man can go from being saved to being a strong leader in less than a year. God begins to prepare such persons for service in His Kingdom even before they are saved.

Others bring with them many scars from this world, which must be healed through illumination by the Holy Spirit, by repentance, and with the renewing of their mind. These folks stumble forward with fits and stops, requiring much healing before they can contribute significantly to the Kingdom. But even during this crippled stage, they can be serving in some way, and their contribution should be recognized and appreciated. They can pray for the leaders and the needs of the body, and they often will have words of encouragement for the downhearted. Some of their healing will come only as they contribute their part in the kingdom. I have a retarded brother who, despite his mental handicaps, has been quite a challenge to me. One day he asked me who would preach the gospel to people like him? His concern moved me.

Children who know Christ also need to see themselves as contributors to the Kingdom. A Jewish boy in Jesus' times was considered a man at age twelve and was expected to carry out his religious duties in the synagogue. Some churches have no place for children to serve until after they graduate from college! Maybe that is why so many of them stray from the church. They do not see service in God's Kingdom as a part of their life. Instead, they see church as a place where they are to be entertained and served. When the world offers better entertainment and more attractive opportunities to do things, they are seduced by it.

Our house churches sometimes hold "affirmation meetings", at which members of the congregation mention how they have seen others minister in the body. This encouragement helps to spur others to greater ministry. Little teaching is done at such meetings, but the ministry of helps, encouragement, reproof, and compassion are made more visible; otherwise they often go unnoticed.

All of us ought to keep progressing measurably in our walk with the Lord. If our children stop growing, we take them to see a doctor. Likewise those who have experienced new life in Christ ought to keep growing. Do not accept nominal growth as normal in a reproducing church.

Disciples who show progress need to be encouraged to go forward and be given more responsible ministry, on the principle that "he who is faithful in little will also be faithful with much" (Luke 19:17). Include them in your meetings when you initiate ministry, plan, and set objectives, so they will not feel like incapable underlings to the elders and paid staff. The primary goal of leadership should be to equip believers and to coordinate efforts of the members of the body for its edification and reproduction. Leaders who simply enforce rules rather than help others to minister, hinder normal reproduction.

Some churches find it hard to turn over key positions to volunteer workers. Staff members complain, "You cannot count on them." Yet other large churches enjoy an abundance of reliable volunteer workers. Why the difference? The leaders of churches with many volunteer workers do not hesitate to challenge members to loving obedience to Christ. They praise their efforts and are patient with new workers. They do not let an elite paid staff do all the work and simply lord it over their inferiors.

How many of your people are actively using their spiritual gifts in ministry? If not many, pray now for God's help to mobilize them.

17C. Let Organization Grow out of Relationships and Goals, Not the Other Way Around

Determine first what God wants your people to do, then organize to do it. Do not reverse this order lest impersonal structures dictate how you will do ministry. Good church organization is flexible; like a living body it continually adapts. It must conform to our understanding of what God wants our people to do. In a healthy church our understanding grows and changes as we grow in knowledge of God's Word and observe changes in our community. We invite failure when we pour new plans into the "old wine skins" of an organization originally set up for by-gone times and people. A shepherd who does not know the activities that God wants His people to do in the future cannot lead them toward their fulfillment; he can only teach information and enforce rules.

Common enemies of reproductive organization include:

- ___ Obsolete methods and organization. The church set up its organization to do things that were needed a long time ago, rather than to do what needs to be done now. We should verify at least every three months which ministries need attention. Wise leaders will keep an eye on all vital ministries.
- ___ Over-control. Workers do not feel freedom to do what needs to be done,
- ___ Too many safeguards. There are so many rules and policies that no one can take a risk to try doing something new.

- Purposeless work. The organizational structure creates jobs for church members to do, rather letting the work that people do depend on ministry goals, available spiritual gifts or needs of the people.
- Uninformed leaders. Church workers in highly-reproductive churches are placed under the supervision of traditional church leaders who know little about it, in instead of under overseers who understand church reproduction and desire to keep it going,
- Lack of loving interaction between churches or small groups. Those who start other churches and small groups fail to maintain vital relationships with people in the mother church and sister churches. Wives and teenagers are often more motivated by relationships than by a vision for reproducing groups, and need the assurance of ongoing relationships.

To allay fears of breaking relationships, maintain them by holding occasional, united celebrations and fellowship activities for members of all churches and groups. Arrange for leaders of the parent group to provide personal discipleship training for members and leaders of the new groups. Arrange for older women to give discipleship training to the younger women, as commanded in Titus 2:3-4. Arrange for young people to give discipleship training to those in the new groups who are newer in the faith.

Scoggins found how to keep church organization fluid for house churches:

House churches can reproduce rapidly, thus requiring regular changes in organization and fresh relationship building. Monthly meetings of members of the entire network of churches help to maintain relationships. We also hold weekly men's prayer meetings, women's meetings, and youth meetings. Discipleship chains often extend from one church to another, especially when a new house church begins.

Organizing for normal, spontaneous reproduction requires flexible organization in which churches and groups are free to reproduce themselves without being tied to rules made by people who do not know what God is doing in the area. Each new church is entitled to make its own rules for its own ministry--and to make its own mistakes. For the multiplication and continued fellowship of churches and groups, the best organizational structures grow normally out of the loving relationships that develop in the process of training assistant pastors in the churches or groups.

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will let organization grow out of relationships, needs and ministry opportunities, rather than forming the organizational structures first, then doing only the ministries that they foster.

Chapter 18 -- Mentoring Potential Church Planters, Evangelists and Missionaries

"When Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately." Acts 18:26

Sections in this Chapter 18

18A. Provide Wise Career Counseling for New Workers

18B. Make Sure that Mission Career Counseling is Unbiased

18C. Keep Reviewing Mission Outreach to Prepare for Current Needs and Opportunities

18D. Let People Serve out of Love for Jesus

18A. Provide Wise Career Counseling for New Workers

The purpose of this chapter is to see church reproduction and pastoral work from the viewpoint of a Christian career advisor, and explain how to mentor the missionaries and other serious workers that your church sends.

Mr. "**Traditionalist**" complains, "I have a problem with career advisors. Don't take this church and mission career guidance so seriously! Just go where the Spirit leads you."

"The Holy Spirit uses godly advisors to guide us," Mr. "**Foresight**" replies. "That's why the Lord established pastors, prophets and shepherding elders with the gifts of wisdom, discernment and exhortation."

Find in the book of Jonah both good and bad attitudes for a cross-cultural missionary. Wise advisors help new workers adapt to the culture and avoid the wrong attitudes.

Do your people have someone to go to for wise career guidance-- someone who will listen, find out their spiritual gifts and strengths, and present all options that are open for serving the Lord? If not, pray for the Lord to give you or a coworker this wisdom.

18B. Make Sure that Mission Career Counseling Is Unbiased

Churches, schools and mission agencies should provide unbiased counsel, so that workers can follow the Holy Spirit's leading with freedom. If counselors only try to recruit for their own organization, then they do not leave other doors open for the person seeking guidance. Such biased counseling gives an unbalanced focus. Wise counselors will not overlook fruitful ministries and fields by channeling workers into their own favorite or familiar programs, thereby clustering them in fields with excessive concentrations of workers.

An unbiased career advisor will bear in mind the entire scope of mission work from sending churches to neglected fields. Patterson observed cases of grief caused by poor career counseling. He cautioned:

The need for unbiased, comprehensive training for new missionaries is clear when I began mentoring missionaries who had problems. As students or when they are nearing the time to go to the field, they receive counsel from recruiters representing mission agencies or training institutions. These counselors mean well, but their advice is often biased. Many are only allowed to recruit for their own organization, field, or ministry. Sometimes they know little about the student's calling and gifts. The family disasters and career failures that resulted from following such counsel are heartbreaking. Students need recruiters, but not until potential missionaries have accurately assessed their gifts and the options in view of the entire scope of mission work.

If you are providing career counseling, please take a moment to reflect on it. Is it truly unbiased. If not, you are limiting the options that the Holy Spirit might want to keep open, so that He can lead without restrictions from men.

18C. Keep Reviewing the Mission Outreach of the Churches to Prepare for Current Needs and Opportunities

Advisors in a local church or mission organization should review their missionary outreach at least annually, to assess progress and make suggestions. If you mobilize persons or groups in a sending church, then consider these activities and mark those that you plan to deal with.

— Train potential missionaries. Missionaries, including short-term workers, bivocational workers and partners from churches, need special training. For many new fields, someone in the task group needs the following skills:

- Business or other vocational expertise. They may do an apprenticeship to gain the skills.
- Training pastors on the job rather than in an institution.
- Non-public, family oriented evangelism.
- Giving new Christians discipleship training for obedience.
- Leading worship in small groups. On new fields most churches start as small home groups.
- Training new missionaries on the job.

— Normally missionaries from the poorer countries should receive training in their own country or in their new field rather than in the industrialized West. Serious problems often result when training in the West moves missionaries from poorer economies into a higher income bracket than what their churches can pay, or higher than that of their compatriot coworkers. It also often weakens the advantage they otherwise would have of being culturally closer to the people than Western missionaries are. Make an exception only for

experienced, mature leaders who are authorized by their church or denomination to receive higher education in the West for specialized work.

- ___ Mobilize missionary trainers. Many trainers need more experience in order to gain the training skills required in today's neglected fields. These skills include the giving of help to small churches reproducing cross-culturally, and the preparing of leaders through discipleship training on the job. They may also have to learn how to deal with two-thirds world workers and with cross-cultural entrepreneurs.
- ___ Explain to your church how to prepare and send church planting task groups. Leaders of a sending church should plan for their church body to adopt a neglected people group and to make disciples among it.
- ___ Help mission agencies to send task groups that are equipped with the needed pastoral and vocational skills. To reach many of the remaining neglected fields, mission agency administrators must bring together small business managers, entrepreneurs, pastoral trainers, and workers from other places in the world, all in the same task group. They should do this in cooperation with sending churches.

Do any of the above tasks to facilitate career guidance need more attention? If so, please pray for guidance and wisdom.

18D. Let People Serve Freely, out of Love for Jesus

Make sure career workers serve out of a desire to obey Christ, not because their organization demands it. If they aim to serve overseas, then verify their commitment. Is it to go and simply do what Jesus says? Or is it to spend a limited amount of time overseas to satisfy their conscience, to please people of influence in their lives, or to fulfill a desire for adventure?

Please take a moment now to plan how you and your coworkers will provide mission career guidance for those whose motive is love. Arrange for an unbiased mission career advisor—one who is not trying to recruit for a certain program or organization—to help new workers think through their plans. Plan this with your coworkers, if possible.

End