

MentorNet #28
Adding Action to Mission Courses
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“I have finished learning about missions. What should I do next?”

After learning about missions in ‘Perspectives’ or similar courses, students often ask how to apply what they learned. Sending churches, instructors, organizations and field workers can take actions like these.

1. Course coordinators in churches, schools and mission conferences create a ‘launching pad.’

Mission course coordinators urge all participants not only to learn or teach, but also to help launch the real work that alumni are only beginning when the course ends. Alumni or their volunteer helpers, who receive guidance from course coordinators, keep moving and influencing others to fulfill our Lord’s Great Commission. Without guidance few alumni stay focused on strategic and reproductive mission work.

2. Instructors link theory to action, always. Patterson recalls a fictitious tale that portrayed a savage splitting a soldier’s skull with a hatchet. “The soldier kept fighting bravely for several agonizing moments with the embedded hatchet neatly dividing his brain in two!” Do mission instructors split brains? Do we pour data into one part of a student’s mind to be stored, without linking it to the part that moves muscles in purposeful activity? Let us remove the hatchet by helping students to define action plans for every applicable item that we teach. Let us not only load the truck but also start the motor!

3. Sending churches adopt neglected peoples, preferably in partnership with culturally-near workers. Then, they plan to take action to reach them. This may require research.

- To learn mobilization guidelines, see *Activating Invisible Resources*, by Carol Davis.
- To become familiar with basic research guidelines download the free *Dawn Research Handbook* from http://www.dawnministries.org/resources/downloads/download_files/dawn_research_handbook.pdf

4. Mission course alumni, missionary trainees and volunteers who help with mobilization form small mission activity cells. Form (or reform) a small group in a sending church — or among several churches —

pray, plan, and practice skills needed to carry out any of these activities that apply:



- *Secure and enhance staff support and zeal*, without which little can be done.
- *Integrate mission* into congregational plans, prayers and budget.
- *Provide materials and information* for churches, agencies and field workers.
- *Provide brief, poignant reports* to pastors, to announce to the congregation.
- *Promote Perspectives* or similar mission courses, among churches.
- *Prepare church planters* to work where authorities are hostile. Let the cell be a tiny training church that does all the ministries that the New Testament requires of a church.
- *Practice* skills needed to worship, teach, evangelize, train leaders and organize in a different culture. (New missionaries on the field seldom do what they have read in books or heard in lectures; **they mostly do what they have done before**, in their home church.) Skills that need practice may include:
 - a. *Integrating* evangelism, church development and mercy ministry.
 - b. *Evangelizing* through families and networks of friends.
 - c. *Organizing* so that believers and congregations serve one another.
 - d. *Interacting* with highly relational small group ‘body’ life.
 - e. *Including children* as active participants in worship and teaching.
 - f. *Building a foundation of obedience* to Jesus’ commands.
 - g. *Adapting worship*, including Communion, to tiny groups.

- h. *Mentoring* leaders the way the apostles did, to reproduce churches.
- i. *Language acquisition* and *bonding* in love with the people and their culture.

To download free training materials on these topics, visit <<http://www.Paul-Timothy.net>>.

To obtain proven materials on learning a language and bonding with a people group, visit <<http://www.instantweb.com/l/linguahouse/How-to.html#LAMP>>.

5. Mentors in churches and agencies mobilize bi-vocational ‘tentmakers’ who support themselves (without merely pretending to do so).



- Most of the remaining neglected people groups (about 1/3 of the world’s population) live where authorities ban professional missionaries. The Lord uses workers like Aquila and Priscilla who have vocations that officials permit.
- Consult with Christian businessmen and other experienced persons who might advise and expedite the small businesses or other viable vocations.

6. Students gather at the end of the course to agree on a final objective

toward which all activities move, to harmonize the focus of workers at home and abroad.



- Find resources to train pastors while planting churches <<http://www.MentorAndMultiply.com>>.
- “Come, Let Us Disciple the Nations,” an interactive CD-ROM missionary training course, can be downloaded from <<http://www.AcquireWisdom.com>>.
- Here is a *sample statement* of final objectives, with explanations:

Our final objective: Indigenous churches¹ multiplying² within a people group³ that is currently neglected, receptive and reachable⁴, led by local leaders at all levels⁵, obeying Christ⁶ and doing the ministries that are required by the New Testament⁷.

Explanation of the above *Statement of Objectives*

¹ “**Indigenous churches**” = congregations of any size of genuinely-repentant believers in Jesus (not mere ‘preaching points’ or ministries operating outside of the Body of Christ), rooted in the culture of the field and sustained by nationals without outside funds or control. Exceptions include emergency relief and specialized ministries. Related activities might include the following:

- **Alumni** enlist prayer partners to intercede for a specific, unreached people group.
- **Missionary trainees** in big cities seek to work with people of the same culture, if possible, before they go to the field.
- **Sending churches and agencies** 1) Send short-term workers to gather information and prepare for more serious work. 2) Include on teams field workers who are culturally near to the adopted people. If culturally-distant workers present Christ initially, they can stigmatize Jesus as foreign and stifle the work for years.
- **Missionaries** 1) practice and impart to national workers culturally relevant methods and appropriate technology that allow churches to multiply without outside funds or control. 2) Teach Christian stewardship to national believers from the beginning.
- **National leaders** quickly take the initiative and responsibility for leading their flocks, coordinating regional work and training newer leaders.

² “**Multiplying**” = national churches reproducing in daughter churches in a church planting movement, with the Holy Spirit’s power, as illustrated by Jesus in Mark 4:1-32.

- **Missionary trainees** 1) practice multiplying small groups. 2) Carry their church’s spiritual DNA to reproduce daughter and grand daughter churches on the field. 3) Equip new national churches to reproduce rapidly.

- **Sending Churches** 1) pray fervently for workers and people who need Jesus. 2) Commission with laying on of hands, praying for the Holy Spirit's power.
- **Emergency relief and development workers** initiate such movements by integrating mercy ministry with evangelism, church planting and leadership training.
- **National workers** participate in planning to phase out outside help and control.
- For guidelines: *Church Multiplication Guide*, Patterson and Scoggins.

³ **“Within a people group”** = the largest number of people among whom the gospel can spread unhindered by barriers of government, economic differences, worldviews, race, mountains or anything else that might stop the flow.

- **Sending Churches** 1) work with mission organization that shares the objective. Avoid selecting an agency simply because it is familiar. 2) Recruit workers who will see the task through to completion.
- **Missionaries** avoid destroying cultures by forcing them to mix in ways that cancel out weaker cultures.

⁴ **“That is currently neglected, receptive and reachable** = lacking a movement capable of reaching a receptive people group for which your organization has the means to initiate.

- **Sending churches** gather information to send workers where these conditions exist.
- **Field workers** ‘shake the dust’ (leave a neighborhood) if people fail to respond to Jesus in a reasonable time. Most workers who do this do not have to change their place of residence but simply shift down to a lower economic level or sub-culture. Caution: lack of bonding by missionaries causes most failures, *not* rejection of Jesus.

⁵ **“Led by Local Leaders at all levels”** = nationals of the local culture lead the work.

- At first outside workers train, mentor and model vital skills for new leaders, in a way that the new leaders can easily repeat as they mentor newer leaders in their congregation and in daughter churches, as seen in 2 Timothy 2:2.
- Classroom teaching alone does not achieve this type of reproductive mentoring.
- Arrange for Bible translation if needed.
- Demonstrate humble servant leadership for nationals who serve as regional overseers.
- For help to train leaders and multiplies churches, see <<http://www.MentorAndMultiply.com>>

⁶ **“Obeying Christ”** = making disciples the way Jesus said, by teaching them to obey all of Jesus' commands (His Great Commission, Matt. 28:18-20).

- **New believers** do all that our Lord Jesus Christ commands, like the first church in Jerusalem did in Acts 2. The first 3,000 converts right away repented, were baptized, prayed, broke bread (Communion), learned and applied the Word, witnessed, gave generously, served the needy and fellowshiped with fervent love.
- **Church planters** make disciples the way Jesus said, and normally churches will multiply.

⁷ **“Doing the ministries that are required by the New Testament”** = naming and equipping elders to tend to what is still lacking in the new churches, as Paul told Titus to do.

- **Sending churches** let **missionary trainees** practice all ministries that the New Testament requires of a church. On the field these workers pass the skills on to **national pastors**.
- **These essential ministries include:** *Evangelism — Prayer, healing, family devotions and spiritual warfare — Stewardship — Counseling people with personal or family problems — Strengthening marriage and family life — Correcting and restoring offenders — Caring for the needy — Teaching, applying the Word, training shepherds, mentoring — Organizing so that all members participate in gift-based ministries — Fellowship within and between church bodies — Watching over the spiritual life of the flock, warding off wolves — Group worship — Reproducing daughter churches — Training and sending workers to neglected regions.*
- **For help:** Download *Developing Christian Community* free from...
< <http://www.MentorAndMultiply.com> > item # 22, or
< <http://mentorandmultiply.homestead.com/SmallGroups.html> >.