



## DOVE AND DRAGON

A skit showing how to ignite an explosive church-planting movement,  
based on John Wesley's highly successful practices.

John Wesley, along with his friend George Whitfield, launched the Evangelical Movement, in spite of pains inflicted by the old dragon to thwart it. *Dove and Dragon* shows how Wesley's tiny gatherings practiced the same New Testament guidelines as today's church planting movements.



Use this skit to rally folk to multiply flocks by launching a "2<sup>nd</sup> Track" of highly-prolific house churches. Follow up the skit with discussions for those who are interested. (See suggested discussion questions listed at the end of the skit.)

Modify or shorten the skit to fit your circumstances. (It is not copyright). Actors may simply read the lines, without props or costumes, as the skit is not to show acting ability or to entertain.

Words in **bold** reflect actions that Jesus or His apostles required, and that are common to church planting movements. They have numbered endnotes to discuss later, to implement them. A topical index to the endnotes also follows the skit.

### PARTICIPANTS

**Ardent**

**Deeprut**

**Blacksmith** Use a Cockney accent if you can.

**Dove** Preferably a woman. Stand to one side of Ardent.

**Serpent** Hiss sibilants; stand to one side of Deeprut, at a distance from Dove.

**Prompter**

**Echoes** (*All who want to take part.*)

Echoes need no script. Simply repeat *Prompter's* brief words, shouting.

# DOVE AND DRAGON

## PRESENTATION

- Prompter My name is *Prompter*. I prompt.  
Join me in 18<sup>th</sup> century England, to see the old dragon pounce upon a budding movement  
in which thousands are coming to faith in Jesus in tiny home groups.
- We have no audience, as you are all the cast in this brief drama.  
If you did not receive a script, then you are an “Echo.”  
Simply repeat loudly the words I shout.
- Let’s rehearse. When I shout a line, you who are Echoes will repeat it, shouting loudly.  
Here we go. Ready?
- LOVE DIVINE!
- Echoes LOVE DIVINE!
- Prompter Again! Louder! LOVE DIVINE!
- Echoes LOVE DIVINE!
- Prompter & Echoes ALL LOVE’S EXCELLING!
- Prompter Jolly well done!  
As we relive this event, listen for guidelines to multiply churches.  
Are you ready?
- Deeprut The bell! I hear the bell, and we still have ten furlongs to travel!  
Cabby! Whip that lazy horse! Whip it, I say! Harder!
- Ardent No! No! Slow down! The road is rocky!  
Oh, no! The horse has thrown a shoe. Now we shall be late!
- Deeprut Maybe not. Here’s a blacksmith’s shop.
- Ardent Mind where you step, my good fellow; there’s horse plop everywhere.
- Deeprut What a sooty place! Well, I guess we must enter this filthy shop...  
I say! What’s that mob up to?
- Ardent I don’t believe it! Look!  
An Anglican clergyman is teaching that shabby little group, **sitting in a circle!**<sup>1</sup>
- Deeprut Oh, thank you chaps for offering us your seats on these kegs of nails.  
Much obliged.  
Oh, but you’re sitting on the dirt floor!
- Ardent Quiet, please. I want to hear.  
The teaching is quite lively. That little priest lets them interrupt with questions.
- Prompter & Echoes SUCH LIVELY TEACHING!
- Deeprut I wholly disapprove of such lack of control. I’m going to take a nap!
- Serpent Yes! Sweet dreams!
- Prompter & Echoes SWEET DREAMS!
- Dove No! This message is important!  
Hear and heed!
- Prompter & Echoes HEAR AND HEED!

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- Ardent Reverend, wake up!  
The chap has finished and is saddling up his horse.  
He has turned this meeting over to that burly blacksmith.
- Deeprut Ugh! His rustic Cockney brogue grates on my ears.  
I say! What disorder! That uncouth drudge has them all chatting!
- Prompter & Echoes SUCH LIVELY DISCUSSION!
- Deeprut They're quite uneducated, I dare say!  
Such atrocious grammar!
- Ardent Wait! They've all hushed. sooty  
Oh! Can it be?  
The blacksmith is holding up bread in his sooty, calloused hand.
- Deeprut Surely, he's not... Oh, no!
- Blacksmith (*Loudly, emphasizing each word*)  
Take... Eat... This is my Body...
- Deeprut (*Shout angrily*) One moment!  
Ahem! My good fellow, I cannot receive the Holy Sacrament from a layman's hands.
- Ardent Oh, oh!  
I say, Reverend, you and I are visitors here. We have no right to interfere.  
Let's step outside where we can talk about this....
- Deeprut Of course, sir! I cannot get out of this smelly place quickly enough.
- Ardent Right. There's a good fellow. Well, here we are, outside.  
Ah... I didn't learn your name on the way, sir.
- Deeprut I am the Rev. Deeprut, Vicar of First United Central Memorial Legacy Church,  
on First Avenue and Queen's Way. Ours is the highest steeple in Liverpool.
- Ardent I'm honored to know you, Reverend.  
I'm Pastor Ardent, shepherd and janitor of New Life Chapel down by the livery stables.  
It's the town's most squalid quarter.  
**We work with poor folk who find it easy to repent and trust Jesus.<sup>2</sup>**
- Deeprut Indeed. Well, I prefer quality to quantity.  
My church's motto is, "You cannot take it with you, so leave it with us!"  
I say! Who is that galloping off in such a rush?  
Dash it all! The rogue splashed muck on my cloak!
- Ardent It's that priest. Didn't you recognize him?
- Deeprut I slept during most of his rash teaching. I heard enough from that little Rev. *Wellesley*.
- Ardent Not *Wellesley*! Wesley – John Wesley.
- Deeprut Whatever.  
Well, I daresay we've heard the last from him!  
Such fuss over serving the poor! What blarney!

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- Ardent        His blarney challenges me. In fact, it's tearing me in two!  
                  You were asleep when Wesley eyed my clergy collar.  
                  He looked me in the eye and asked,  
                  *"Will you help at least some in your flock do as Jesus and His apostles required,  
                  to launch a "second track" that can multiply simple flocks that bring many to Jesus?"*
- Deeprut        A second track? Rot!  
                  I have heard enough of his ridiculous babbling about *tiny gatherings* and *field preaching*.
- Prompter & Echoes        TINY GATHERINGS AND FIELD PREACHING!
- Ardent        Oh! *Two voices* are pulling me in opposite ways.  
                  One is soft like a dove; the other hisses like a serpent.
- Dove            (*Slowly, with feeling*)  
                  When people don't attend your church,  
                  Lost lambs for whom wise shepherds search,  
                  Just take your church to them, to all!  
                  That's the way of Christ and Paul.  
  
                  Don't let men's rules hold reapers back!  
                  Just let them **launch a second track.**<sup>3</sup>  
                  God's flocks in Acts, in homes were born  
                  Among the poor, the lost and scorned.
- Serpent        Ssss! Don't be suckered by this! It's too radical! Seditious!  
                  This rabble has nothing to teach you.
- Deeprut        Well, one thing that Wesley said is true...  
                  Most of the poor and illiterate folk avoid our beautiful sanctuaries.  
                  Hmm. I wonder why, Pastor Ardent.
- Ardent        They have a skewed view of us; they think we're stodgy, snobbish, money grabbers.  
                  Sadly, a few of us are. The old dragon keeps up his attack, doesn't he?
- Deeprut        Aye, lad! That he does.  
                  But to multiply flocks as that bloke said, would invite even more error and conflict.
- Ardent        He said their groups have less serious errors than do older churches, and we have seen why.  
                  My flock's so passive and my teaching so abstract! Such a contrast!  
                  And those folk were generous, today!  
                  Even the poorest gave their pennies to **help anyone in dire need**<sup>4</sup>
- Deeprut        Wesley said that serving the poor is a normal part of their church life and evangelism.
- Ardent        And they all shared their love for Jesus! All of them!  
                  **They let everyone speak freely!**<sup>5</sup>  
                  I've never seen such lively openness.
- Deeprut        And I've never heard such lively noise!  
                  All those ruffians sang, they did! Such caterwauling!  
                  That lass in a ragged dress with a brat in her arms warbled way off key!
- Ardent        But when she sang "Joy of heaven, to earth come down", her eyes filled with tears.
- Prompter & Echoes        JOY OF HEAVEN, TO EARTH COME DOWN!

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- Deeprut     That maiden’s unbridled emotion during sacred worship was scandalous!  
              And others, too. Such confusion is the devil’s doing!
- Ardent       Whoa! Careful! That’s close to what Jesus called blaspheming the Holy Spirit!  
              That lass was not confused; she was enthralled with Jesus.  
              She was captivated by His presence!  
              It may have been the first time that she ever escaped from spiritual confusion.
- Deeprut     That terrible song! I fear I shall hear it 24 run through my mind all week.
- Ardent       I hope it runs through my mind and in my heart all week,  
              as the apostle Paul said it should.  
              Oh! Do you suppose that we need a second track?
- Deeprut     My parish would never accept such a change.  
              Folk there are content, and I dare not desert them.
- Ardent       Wait! You surely *were* asleep!  
              You missed the meaning of Wesley’s *second track*.  
  
              Neither God nor Wesley asks us to abandon the flock God that has given us to tend.  
              We are to **urge and enable our churches to release those eager activists,**<sup>6</sup>  
              those apostolic types with itchy feet, to go do new work.
- Deeprut     I don’t trust those types, lad. Nor does my flock.
- Ardent       Our flocks may accept it when they see that a second track is not costly nor requires everyone  
              to change.  
              A second track is thoroughly based on the New Testament.
- Deeprut     No one will leave my flock to go onto a second track, if I can prevent it, Pastor Ardent.  
              Such rashness would bring disapproval and would jeopardize our careers.
- Serpent      Yes! Such severe deviations would endanger your standing amongst pastors.  
              A pastor’s social life is of vital concern.  
              You’ve earned your *position*. (*Shout, ‘position.’*)
- Ardent       I admit it; I am concerned about my social position as a minister.
- Prompter & Echoes     MY POSITION!
- Dove                 Let social life embrace our Lord  
                              With Jesus we must have accord.  
                              You want so much to be “accepted”!  
                              But **think of those who are neglected!**<sup>7</sup>
- Ardent       Wesley warned not to fear man;  
              he also said that the movement is of no threat to *mother* churches.  
              New flocks are formed by winning the lost to Jesus, not by draining older churches.
- Serpent      Sssss! Pay no attention!
- Ardent       He said churches thrive by extending Christ’s Kingdom through birthing *daughter* churches.  
              Many who come to Jesus in a second track will later attend the larger mother church.
- Deeprut     But they might introduce all sorts of novel ideas! Frightening!

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- Ardent        Come now, Rev. Deeprut.  
                  A second track would not replace what we're doing. It supplements it.  
                  A second track retains the theology and identity of its mother churches.
- Deeprut        Wesley said the new movement rejuvenates older churches as well.  
                  Well, I doubt it!  
                  You've heard what they say about such movements...  
                  *"A mile wide and an inch deep."*
- Ardent        Not so in those tiny gatherings! I've never seen such depth and passion for holiness!
- Deeprut        But such wretched order!  
                  Did Wesley know that lay leaders would dare to serve Communion?
- Ardent        I doubt it, but he surely set the stage for them.  
                  He said they could obey Jesus' commands above all human rules.  
                  He also said a blacksmith could meet all the biblical requirements to shepherd, if not man's rules.
- Deeprut        I say! Here comes that blacksmith now.  
                  Let's go! I don't want to chat with the likes of that ruffian.
- Ardent        I do. Wait!
- Blacksmith    Welcome, sirs. Such gentlemen as ye so rarely grace our tiny gatherings.  
                  It's well you came today; for we allow visitors only every other week.  
                  That's because folk of our wicked background must deal with many shameful sins.
- Deeprut        Surely, no worse than what I heard today!  
                  I admit I did not feel drawn to such corrupt folk.
- Blacksmith    Jesus was. An' 'e's our only hope.  
                  Sure and we don't find no hope in the established churches.
- Deeprut        I don't see why not.
- Blacksmith    Me group were miners who drank and caroused of Saturday nights, wastin' their week's pay.  
                  So we do as Jesus did; we 'old parties for 'em on Saturday nights;  
                  now they stay sober, keep their money, have far more fun and meet Jesus.
- Ardent        All this poses a painful question for us, Rev. Deeprut.  
                  Should we tell such groups to disobey Christ's command to celebrate the Lord's Supper?
- Blacksmith    How can you even question such a thing, sir?  
                  Is Jesus not the head of our church?  
                  **The only way to crown Christ as King of Kings is to obey Him!**<sup>8</sup>  
                  We obey the commands of the One what 'as all authority on heaven and earth,  
                  He said, "If you love me, obey me commandments".
- Deeprut        It's the *spirit* of the Great Commission that counts, my good lad.  
                  You take it quite too literally.  
                  You must maintain proper order.
- Blacksmith    But whose order, sir?  
                  You heard Wesley' say how unsaved folk knelt at his altar to receive Communion,  
                  and he were unhappy with that.

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So he said he has them kneel at the altar to *pray first* to receive Jesus in their hearts, before he gives them blokes the sacramental body of Jesus.

Deeprut Well, that novelty will soon blow over!  
Now, Pastor Ardent, listen to reason. There's no need of a second track.  
If sinners actually cared to know Christ, they would come to our churches.

Ardent But, sir, you know they would not. Take that peasant seated next to you.  
His britches were so worn; they'd sewn patches on top of patches!  
And his wife wearin' faded rags!  
If they dared sit in your pews, they'd get the cold shoulder!

Blacksmith 'Tis true, lads. I were out of place in the big church in town;  
I never owned no church-goin' garments.  
Last time I went, the parson was abashed at my presence.  
My wife wept all the way home.

You chaps would be embarrassed, too, if we came to your worship as we are.

Ardent Oh, my heart is aching!  
How far have we strayed from the simple ways of Jesus?  
Your tiny gatherings intrigue me, sir. I want to know more.

Blacksmith Very well. We allow you to visit twice, Wesley's rules.  
Then you decide if you'll join.  
Wesley tries to keep groups small, from six to eight,  
and our group done reached its **limit of twelve**<sup>9</sup>,

Ardent So what would you do if we came?

Blacksmith We'd put you in a more educated meeting.  
You're of that class in English society, a bit more privileged than my kind.  
The tiny gatherings are for peers, so as nobody looks down on his brothers.  
We **avoids conflicts that come from mixin' folk of unlike background.**<sup>10</sup>

Deeprut Commendable, old chap, but uneducated leaders can hardly maintain due discipline.

Ardent Aye, 'tis true, mate.  
We couldn't have no discipline if we done it alone, but we don't.  
Our **groups stay closely knit**<sup>11</sup>.

Mature leaders coach new leaders and we help each other.  
We submit to accountability as strong as on shipboard, to the sternest captain.

Deeprut But such leaders would not be accountable to *us*.  
They would be as termites undermining our authority!  
To let new leaders control, would rob you of your influence.

Serpent Out on a second track, you could not control; you'd lose your power.  
Your influence would grow weaker.  
You would lose position and power. POWER!

Ardent (*Groan.*) Those voices keep tearing me in two!  
I don't want to lose control or my power.  
I admit it. I want my power!

Prompter & Echoes MY POWER!

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- Dove                      Your selfish fear of losing power  
                                    That's what tears and makes life sour.  
Slay that wicked urge you bear!  
                                    The power I'll give you won't compare.
- Blacksmith    Gentlemen, sure and you'll do far more for Jesus, if you do as Wesley says.  
                                    We send out circuit riders to coach leaders of new flocks.  
                                    We can do it as weak as we are, so surely you can, too.  
                                    I would bet my horse on it, lads.
- Ardent            Wesley said that all it takes is a few visionaries who step out into a new movement.
- Deeprut        Rot! Those visionary activists are all a bunch of troublemakers!
- Ardent            Yes, like the apostle Paul.  
                                    Wesley said the dual tracks bless each other,  
                                    provided **both tracks respect the other in love.**<sup>12</sup>
- Dove                      To keep both tracks from constant fight  
                                    You must resist the serpent's bite.  
                                    That dragon hopes you'll bare your claws  
                                    And gripe about each other's flaws.
- Blacksmith    We resist the temptation to complain about the failings of our parent track.  
                                    Feeling superior to others hurts us all.  
                                    God does not bless such judging.
- Serpent        Be practical. What would people think?  
                                    "Field preaching" to poor, uneducated folk would smear your prestige.  
                                    Folk admire you now. So don't share your glory with new leaders.  
                                    They'd deflect attention from you and tarnish your image.  
                                    Hold to your position, power and prestige! PRESTIGE!
- Ardent            (*Groan*) I cannot stand the tension!  
                                    I cannot surrender the little prestige that I do have!
- Prompter & Echoes    MY PRESTIGE!
- Dove                      So, slay your lust for praise from men!  
                                    Let childlike trust replace that yen.  
                                    Just **die to self, die every day.**<sup>13</sup>  
                                    To bear the *cross* is Jesus' way
- Deeprut        A second track would lure folk away from our churches and decrease our living.  
                                    It's like dividing a pie, Elder Ardent. The more the slices, the smaller the pieces.  
                                    Fewer shillings in your purse! Think of your financial security, your pension!
- Serpent        Yes! Yes! Your pay will be less! Less Position, Power, Prestige and Pay! PAY!
- Ardent            I hate to admit it, but financial risk haunts me, deep in my soul. I worry about my pay.
- Prompter & Echoes    MY PAY!
- Blacksmith    Gentlemen! Gentlemen!  
                                    That carnal fear is one of the things Jesus told us to crucify!  
                                    We don't ask for no outside funds.  
                                    **The many converts support the movement.**<sup>14</sup>



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- Ardent      Rev. Deeprut, have we the courage to do as our heart tells us?  
I just don't know.  
What about Wesley's second track bothers you most?
- Deeprut     All of it. Take *"Field Preaching."*  
The Word of God is too sacred to be preached outside of a consecrated edifice.
- Blacksmith   Jesus said to look upon ripe fields. Have we done that?  
We're to send reapers to the poor and scorned;  
whom we don't find in church buildings.  
They're the ones God has prepared to receive Jesus.
- Deeprut     I dare say!  
Well, I preach the gospel, and very do so well, if I do say so myself.
- Blacksmith   But, sir, we don't mean preaching monologues!  
Amongst us, that's as rare as hog's wings.  
The New Testament demands scores of times to practice "one another" interaction.  
Christ's apostles urged serving one another more than any other church activity, they did, so  
we obeys 'em.
- Serpent      Fanaticism! Don't listen to it!
- Blacksmith   **Only in tiny gatherings can all take part, children too.<sup>15</sup>**  
We limits tiny gatherings to 12 grown-ups.
- Serpent      Foolish! Don't pay attention to such nonsense!
- Blacksmith   Sure and in our tiny gatherings folk **sense Jesus' presence<sup>16</sup>**  
just as One Corinthians 14 says we would;  
we don't just repeat truths about Him.
- Deeprut     Such mysticism!  
I'm sure we all worship as the apostles instructed the churches.
- Blacksmith   Do we now?  
You appears, sir, to be a scholar. You surely know that for three centuries after Christ,  
churches worshipped in homes, with hearty interaction.
- Deeprut     My good man, my sermons take my parishioners deeply into the mysteries of God's Word.
- Blacksmith   Keep doing it, mate. It fits your type of folk.  
But let others teach in a way that fits their type of folk.
- Ardent      I see now!  
Teaching only by monologue fails to meet needs on the cutting edge of a movement.  
You helped visitors to sense the presence of Jesus, and put new believers to work.  
You helped them plan to **tell pals and kin what Jesus has done for them.<sup>17</sup>**
- Blacksmith   That keeps God's grace flowing amongst folks.  
We all edifys one another, using our different gifts in harmony as Christ's body.
- Prompter & Echoes      LOVING HARMONY!

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- Ardent      You had much prayer for folks' salvation, restoration and physical healing.  
And you helped Wesley engage a circuit rider to start and lead more tiny gatherings.  
Blacksmith    Aye, lad. He also arranged for me to coach two newer leaders,  
to provide ongoing leader training with strong accountability.  
*Circuit Riders* also train apprentice leaders on the job, by modeling pastoral skills.
- Deeprut      I say, you overlook our grand old colleges!  
They hold to the highest standards of academic excellence.
- Blacksmith    Sure and some do, but we must not limit pastoral training to a single system.  
We must **train in a way that fits the cutting edge of a movement.**<sup>18</sup>  
Our leaders train new shepherds by coachin' 'em as Paul told Timothy to do.  
Coaches coaches others who coaches others, as flocks multiply, as Two Timothy 2 says.
- Deeprut      You take such pains with your strict methods! How rash! Such *Methodists*!
- Ardent      It is surely more efficient to let larger groups hear expert teachers, is it not?
- Blacksmith    Rev. Wesley tried that; he said it bore less fruit,  
so we stick with the old method what Jesus' apostles done.
- Deeprut      I say, your transparency shook me.  
One chap even confessed that he' had swiped a mule!
- Ardent      And the others restored and reassured him.  
You, Mr. Blacksmith, set the tone.  
You admitted that you once were a brawler and confessed your current shortcomings.
- Blacksmith    Aye. We leaders sets an example.  
We's no better than the rest; that's for sure, lads.  
Most of us leaders are just as poor and unschooled as our flocks.  
Some clergymen sneers down on the likes of us what lacks schooling.  
Some are legalistic and impose rules that keep chaps like us from leading.
- Ardent      I've see legalism. Oh, it hurts.  
Legalists poke a chap's conscience,  
goading him to feel guilty and to doubt his salvation.  
Then they blame his despair on the Holy Spirit.
- Blacksmith    Our tiny gatherings remit sins; we restore those what confess and repent,  
and expels them that don't.  
This discipline brings straying sheep to their senses, as the Corinthians discovered.  
Paul told the Romans hows it's God's transformin' grace what leads folk to repent,  
not our scoldin' 'em.  
**It's God's Spirit what does the convictin';  
we only be correctin' 'em humbly and firmly**<sup>19</sup>
- Ardent      I saw that. Each one spoke of his present experience, how he was getting on spiritually.  
The others built him up, strengthened and consoled him, as One Corinthians 14:3 requires.

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- Blacksmith I was a brawler, but in a tiny gathering God filled me with His Spirit, He did,  
and purified me heart.  
I still has to rule me temper,  
but the Holy Spirit empowers me not to do what the flesh wants.  
I've put men on the floor of the pub, I have.  
I've been floored, too, and deserved it, lads.
- Deeprut Shocking! Such violence is simply evil!
- Blacksmith Not always, mate. At times getting angry is holy.  
Jesus got angry and flogged them moneychangers in God's temple, He did.
- Deeprut I've heard enough.
- Blacksmith Very well, gentlemen, the cabby's horse is shod and ready to trot.  
I have another to do.  
Cheerio, and watch your step!
- Deeprut Good day!  
Well, Pastor Ardent, you saw what occurs when commoners handle the holy Word!
- Ardent But I liked it!  
Oh, I don't know what to do! What shall I do?
- Prompter & Echoes WHAT WILL I DO?
- Ardent Oh, those voices!  
*(Look back and forth, alarmed, at the two speakers in the following clash.)*
- Serpent To spurn the norm is neither sane nor safe!  
So haughty, to pose as a grand reformer!
- Dove Many Englishmen have had convictions so deep, they died before compromising truth.  
Do you have such convictions, pastor Ardent?
- Serpent *(Iratly, and louder)*  
Be normal! Be safe! Protect your career! Rustle no feathers!  
Lie in green pastures beside still waters, alongside all the other contented sheep?!
- Dove Whom do you want to please? God or man?
- Serpent Only an idiot would step out of his zone of comfort and put his social acceptance at risk!
- Dove *(With intensity)*  
Do you give greater preference to commandments of man or of God?
- Serpent Don't cause division.  
Don't bring needless opposition and suffering upon yourself! Pain! Pain!
- Dove *(Sternly)*  
Did Jesus tell you to bear the cross?
- Ardent I can't take the pain! Wesley's way cannot be true! I won't let it be! I won't!  
The old way is the better way!
- Deeprut *(Clap)*  
Ah! You're coming to your senses, my son.  
One must not be a fanatic, you know.

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Dove Now is countdown time to agree to sustain a movement.

Prompter & Echoes FIVE... FOUR... THREE... TWO...

Ardent I give up! I surrender!  
Oh, dear Lord, kill my fears! Slay my ego!  
Forgive my lack of trust!

Deeprut Careful, mate! Let us not fall into fanaticism.

Ardent Oh! What relief! Joyful surrender!

Prompter & Echoes SWEET SURRENDER!

Deeprut Are you ill, Elder Ardent? You rave feverishly.  
Has excitement heated your blood?  
My barber's shop isn't far; he's an excellent blood-letter.  
Our cab's ready; I shall carry you there.

Ardent Not now, sir, thank you. I know now what I shall do.  
My congregation will send a few as Jesus did, to meet with the needy and neglected.  
That's how movements have started throughout history.

Dove Yes. Let folk see Jesus in your loving care and simple words.  
Some of your flock will love it.

Ardent We will do it, Lord!  
With your power, precious Spirit of God, we send workers out onto a second track!  
Now I know why that girl beamed so when she sang "Set our hearts at liberty!"  
Oh! Blissful Freedom in Christ!

Prompter & Echoes FREEDOM!

Blacksmith Rev. Ardent, are you ready to **bind an agreement<sup>20</sup>** in the way Jesus said,  
where two or three gather in His name, so the Father will bind it in heaven?  
An agreement to launch a second track?

Ardent Absolutely, sir! Let's join our hearts to pray in Jesus' name.  
Oh! Rev. Deeprut is over there cleaning off his shoe.  
It's just us two.

Blacksmith It's we *three*, sir. Jesus said he'd be here, too.  
Sure and He's here now.

Serpent Ugh! The air around here reeks of holiness!  
I must flee! Away! Away! (*Run*)

Dove (*Step forward, extend arms toward the people.*)  
And you? Will you heed the gentle voice?

Prompter & Echoes AMEN! AMEN!

## DOVE AND DRAGON

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## ENDNOTES

These endnotes explain guidelines that are common to rapidly-spreading movements.

- The endnotes are an aid to discussion, understanding and planning of specific actions.
- Skip items that do not concern you.
- Fill in blanks after questions that apply to your coworkers.

### **<sup>1</sup> Sit in a circle.**

- Jesus and His apostles commanded face-to-face interaction in believers' meetings. Dozens of "one another" commands in the New Testament demand reciprocal organic body life. Seeing only the backs of others' heads, except of a speaker, stifles. Conscientious shepherds will not let monologue sermons eclipse God's preferred means of dealing with His truths.
- Merely explaining the Word or passing on information falls short God's purpose of teaching; it is to *equip workers for different gift-based ministries* (Eph. 4:11-16).
- Teaching *per se* is not leading. Many highly gifted teachers need to work closely with action-oriented leaders, in order to hold believers accountable to carry out weekly, practical tasks.

What might you do, to advise teachers in a 2<sup>nd</sup> track, to make sure workers do their weekly tasks?

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### **<sup>2</sup> Send workers to the poor folk who find it easier to repent and trust Jesus.**

- When despised Samaritans came flocking to Jesus, He told His disciples to look on the fields that were ripe for harvest. Many workers must step out of their familiar social venue to work among the poor and neglected, harvesting where God has prepared the soil.
- Jesus said it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than for a camel to pass through a needle's eye. He added, however, that with God, all things are possible (*Matt. 19:24-26*). Some "camels" lead movements made up of poor folk.
- Church planting movements start among the poor and oppressed, but their children become the next generation's middle class. Educated church planters often bond with the middle class and fail to "shake the dust from their feet" to leave as Jesus said, when the harvest is meager (Mark 6:11). Shaking the dust seldom requires change of residence; simply go to poorer folk.
- You will find willing workers among those eager, rambunctious types who strain at restrictions, and sometimes make leaders nervous. Don't mistrust them; mobilize and coach them. Who in your church, school or agency would be eager to step out and launch a new movement among the poor, neglected and rejected, with your encouragement?

Specify potential workers whom you will challenge:

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What long-term effects of a 2<sup>nd</sup> track movement do you expect?

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## DOVE AND DRAGON

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**3 Launch a 2<sup>nd</sup> track.** Take your church to those who don't come to an institutional church building.

- A 2<sup>nd</sup> track retains a mother church's organizational identity and beliefs, but requires *only what Jesus and His apostles required*. This frees workers of huge expenses and time-consuming, human rules that accumulate over time.
- Evangelize and worship in homes. History mentions no church building until nearly 300 years after Christ. The New Testament word *church* was either a home gathering, a *cluster* of very small groups in a city or region, or the entire Body of Christ of all ages.
- Assure doubters that a 2<sup>nd</sup> track is totally New Testament and Wesleyan.

How will you urge workers to find many *persons of peace* among neglected but receptive people, who will welcome the workers into their homes and open the door into their social network?

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**4 Help people in dire need, as part of evangelism and regular church life.**

- Jesus and His apostle did not have a separate program to deal with the poor and suffering. Mercy work and healing was part of their evangelism and church planting. Nobody did isolated ministries, separated from the church body with its diverse gifts and gift-based ministries.

How might you go about advising workers to combine mercy work with the other vital ministries?

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**5 Let everyone speak freely.**

- Scripture repeatedly requires believers to use their spiritual gifts as one body to serve one another, Rom. 12; Eph. 4; 1 Cor. 12; 14:3, 24-25. "All" are to "prophesy" (*strengthen, edify and console* each other, 1 Cor. 14:3).
- This interaction is to include confessing faults to one another. Alcoholics Anonymous and similar programs for recovering addicts revived features of Wesley's tiny gatherings: confession starting with the leader, firm accountability, and avoiding curious observers.
- Meetings on the cutting edge of a movement must give ample time for members to...
  - 1) Report spiritual progress or problems,
  - 2) Serve one another, each using their spiritual gifts.
  - 3) Report practical work done the last week,
  - 4) Agree on next week's work, normally done by two or three together, witnessing, healing, exhorting, consoling, prophesying, helping folk in need, etc.
- This interaction and planning during small group worship replaces the exclusive use of monologues that can eclipse vital gift-based ministries.

What will you advise leaders to do, to develop interactive meetings?

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What will you advise, to keep attention-seekers from talking too much, stifling interaction?

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- The word "personal" is not in Scripture but can denote a felt relationship with Christ. However, Satan has put a popular spin on it to mean *private*, which stifles spontaneous witnessing.



## DOVE AND DRAGON

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How will you help workers avoid a destructively private view of faith?

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### **6 Urge and enable your church to release eager activists.**

- The command to “go” does not require an entire congregation to migrate, but to send its “apostles” (*sent ones*).
- Help your congregation recognize its duty to send workers to neglected folk (Acts 1:8).
- Keep the project before your people, and urge those who are eager to serve to speak with you.

How will you encourage and arrange for your congregation, school or agency to send out workers as the Antioch church did (Acts 13)? State specific plans for the immediate future:

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### **7 Focus on the neglected.**

- Church planters are to give preference to folk where Christ has not been named (Rom. 15:20). Missionaries that cluster in fields already reached get in each other’s way and often quarrel.

How will you steer workers toward peoples that know nothing of the gospel?

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### **8 To crown Jesus as King of Kings and head of a flock, obey Him.**

- To praise Christ without heeding His commands is phony. He is the actual head of a church only when it obeys Him out of love (John 14:15). Jesus commissioned believers with “all authority in heaven and earth” to make disciples by teaching them to obey His commands. To teach sound doctrine and character is worthy, but by itself falls short of true discipling and leads to a passive congregation.
- One can summarize all that Jesus commanded in seven basic commands (you may prefer to break some commands down into two or more commands). The 3,000 who repented at Pentecost began doing these general commands at once, Acts 2: 37-47:

**Repent, believe in Jesus, and receive the Holy Spirit** (be born again)

**Be baptized** and live the new, holy life that it initiates in Christ

**Break bread** in remembrance of Jesus’ death

**Love** God, neighbor, fellow believers, enemy (forgive) and the needy in a practical way

**Pray**, heal in Jesus’ name, and wage spiritual warfare

**Give** of time, talent and treasure

**Make disciples**, evangelize, apply God’s Word, train leaders, send workers to all nations.

- Church planting manuals abound that list dozens of things to do, without discriminating what Jesus and His apostles actually required. This complicates and slows the work.

What will you do, that you are not doing yet, to help workers make disciples precisely as Jesus said?

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### **9 Limit the size of a group.** Wesley limited his tiny “class meeting” gatherings to 12.

- Only small groups can allow every person to talk freely as Scripture requires. Let believers report how they are doing spiritually, and plan the next week’s practical work. Staying small requires multiplying new groups, but not by splitting a group down the middle. Rather...

## DOVE AND DRAGON

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- 1) Let newly converted families catalyze groups, instead of taking them into existing groups.
- 2) Keep sending apprentices and their willing companions to start new flocks.
- 3) Soften the pain of separating beloved group members by having occasional united meetings with mother and daughter groups together.
- 4) To sustain relationships between groups, folk in parent groups coach folk in new groups.

In what specific ways will help workers heed these guidelines to keep flocks multiplying?

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### **10 Avoid conflicts that come from mixing folk of different cultures or backgrounds.**

- A clash arose when Jewish believers forced their culture on gentile Galatians. This error is common when dealing with another culture, and very often stifles a movement.
- Legalists often confuse spiritual unity in Christ with external conformity to rules, practices or a dominant culture.
- Churches multiply normally within a particular social network. New believers find it hard to worship with folk of different backgrounds, and seldom continue going where they have no relatives or fail to form close friends soon.

What will you do to help workers *be all things to all men* ? (1 Cor. 9:22)

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### **11 House churches stay closely knit to each other.**

- The *body life* required by 1 Corinthians 12 did not apply to just one congregation, but to the cluster of home churches in Corinth that formed a *regional* church body. House churches are too small to have all the spiritual gifts needed to do every activity required by the New Testament; thus, *one another* interaction *between* flocks is often as vital as *within* them.

How will you see that house churches continually serve each other?

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### **12 Both tracks respect each other in love.**

- Peter started a second track for Gentiles in the city of Cesarea, with Cornelius and his friends, Acts 10. This drew criticism from the “1<sup>st</sup> track” in Jerusalem, until Peter served as a cushion between the dual tracks, explaining how God brought about the gentiles’ repentance.
- Paul protected 2<sup>nd</sup> track believers by harshly rebuking 1<sup>st</sup> track legalists in Galatia.

In what way can you avoid friction and cultivate love and respect between dual tracks?

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### **13 Die to self and follow Jesus every day.** Die to sin and bear the cross that Jesus gives you

- Opponents of a 2<sup>nd</sup> track are often leaders who fear that a movement they cannot control will weaken their influence. They, like all believers, must let the Holy Spirit replace selfish fear and lust for power with love.

How will help leaders and believers on both tracks bear the cross as Jesus said?

## DOVE AND DRAGON

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### **14 Converts support and sustain the movement.**

- A frequent killer of church multiplication has been paying pastors with outside funds, which creates dependency and greed, and stifles obedient stewardship among converts.

How will you help poor believers embrace the truth it is more blessed to give than receive?

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### **15 Include children in interactive worship.**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> track churches have no nurseries or Sunday Schools; worship has a strong family atmosphere and engages children in ways that fit their age.
- Older children help younger ones prepare brief participations, such as...
  - 1) Repeat Bible verses,
  - 2) Sing,
  - 3) Draw pictures and explain their spiritual meaning to the adults,
  - 4) Briefly act out Bible stories or portions of them. Often it is better that children do not memorize lines but do what an adult narrator suggests.
  - 5) Participate together with adults, including men.

How will you help leaders engage children actively, together with adults, in worship?

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### **16 Sense Jesus' presence.**

- Jesus listed three specific things to proclaim when witnessing: His death, resurrection and promise to forgive the repentant (Luke 24:46-48). This requires narrative, not abstraction.
- The apostles never used an abstract, doctrinal approach to witnessing such as the *Roman Road* (Paul wrote Romans to believers already baptized and under pastoral care).
- In church planting movements, new believers convey to others the powerful presence of Jesus, by healing, enjoying happy fellowship and giving loving care.

How will you help workers witness the way the apostles did?

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### **17 Help converts tell friends and kinfolk what Jesus has done for them.**

- The tiny gatherings were for peers and kept friends and relatives together. Similarly, the apostles did not extract converts from their circle of family and friends. They dealt with families as a unit, and worked within existing social networks.
- The only thing they did with a repentant believer before baptism was go to the family.
- The Western emphasis on individual, private faith leads to extracting persons from their social circle, and stifles a movement. Church multiplication movements flow along kinship lines.

## DOVE AND DRAGON

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How will you help workers see people as God sees them, not as isolated individuals, but as part of a circle of family and friends?

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**18 Use a method of training that fits the cutting edge of a movement.**

- As in 2 Timothy 2:2, leaders coached newer leaders of new churches, so that leader training flowed right along with church planting. These coaching “chains” resulted in thousands of new churches in apostolic times, as they also do now in church planting movements.
- A wise trainer does four things, besides pray, when meeting with apprentices:
  - 1) Listen as each worker reports practical work they have done since the last meeting, and compare it with the plans that the worker agreed upon in the last meeting.
  - 2) Plan work to do with people before the next session, and record it.
  - 3) Listen as apprentices briefly recap reading that they you assigned previously.
  - 4) Assign reading that fits plans, plus any studies simply for edification.

How will you help new leaders provide training that models pastoral skills on the job, as Christ and Paul did?

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**19 Let the Holy Spirit do the convicting that leads to repentance.** Avoid needless scolding.

- On the cutting edge of a movement, new converts’ sins can shock a mature believer who has little recent experience in the devil’s world. This can lead him hastily to judge the spiritually newborn in a way that discourages rather than encourages to trust God’s grace to overcome.
- Like Paul, in his letters to new believers, workers should rejoice at the baby steps that converts take in Christ, before scolding them for their errors.
- Workers are to deal with trespasses firmly but humbly, “in a spirit of gentleness” (Gal. 6:1), as Wesley’s tiny gatherings did weekly.

How will you see that believers in new churches confess sins to each other as James 5:16 says, and receive correction by humble leaders?

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**20 Bind the agreement to start and sustain a movement within a specific people group.**

What “two or three” among your colleagues will gather in Jesus’ name as He said, to have the Father bind an agreement to see a specific 2<sup>nd</sup> track movement take root and grow?

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