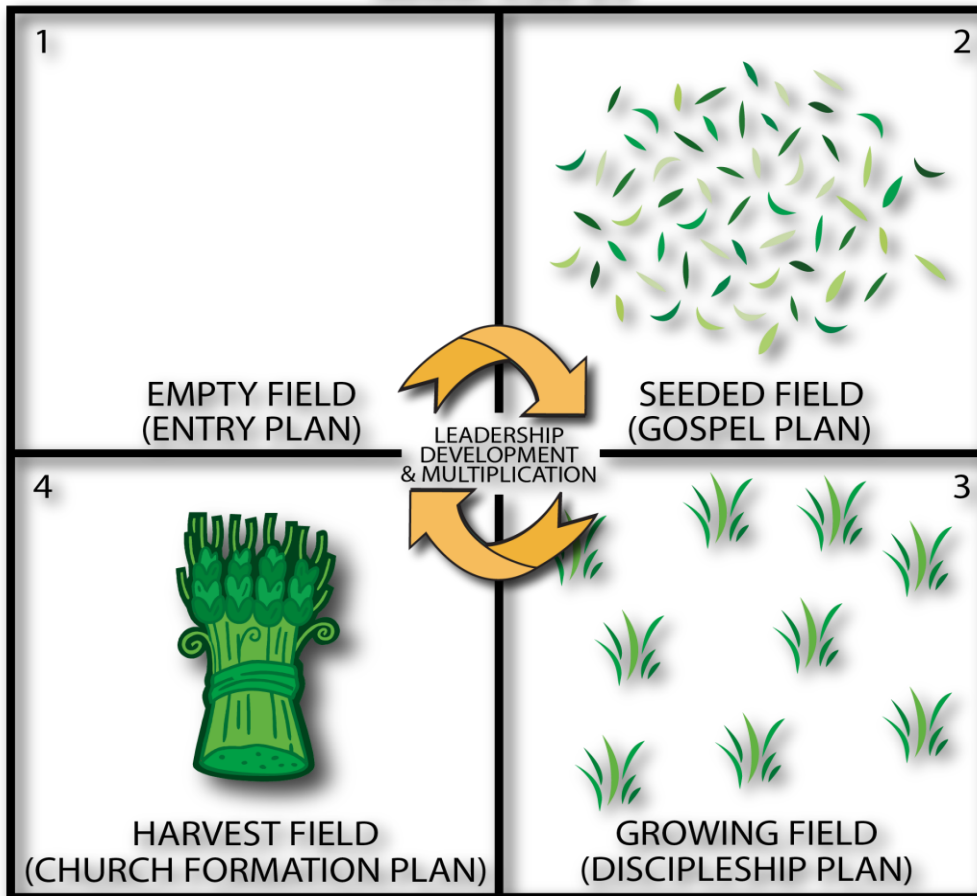




Four Fields of Kingdom Growth

THE FOUR FIELDS OF KINGDOM GROWTH
MARK 4:26-29



By Nathan and Kari Shank – 2007
Revised - 2014,
Church Formation Update - 2015

Four Fields of Kingdom Growth

Starting and Releasing Healthy Churches

Materials within this manual are drawn from the church planting experience of several South Asia practitioners. We have sought to give credit to several of these colleagues but regretfully acknowledge the likely omission of some who have contributed aspects of this training.

Specific acknowledgments go to Jeff S. Angie S. John C. Kumar P. Neil M. Jesse S. Shanee S. Jared H. David G. Lipok L. Kunsang C. Wilson G.

Compiled and Written by: Nathan and Kari Shank, 2007.
Revised and updated- 2014

Preface

We believe the church is the vehicle of God's glory. Everywhere Christ has been made known the church has served as the kingdom outpost. The church is the ordained model for social ministry, community transformation and individual sanctification. For these reasons we have committed our lives to this purpose: the planting of His church in areas and among peoples where He has not been known (Rom. 15:20-21).

Church planting is a Holy Spirit driven process. Our use of Mark 4:26-29, from the outset is designed to demand dependence on the Holy Spirit. No man-made model or wisdom will ever replace the Lord's activity or timing in the expansion of His kingdom. While this manual offers suggestions for advance, its primary purpose is the introduction of Jesus' kingdom agenda. By evaluating Jesus' kingdom agenda we intend to organize and evaluate our models of ministry in hopes of introducing reproducible tools. We have sought to capture the process of kingdom growth through church planting detailed within scripture as it has been lived out among the peoples of South Asia. We confess at the beginning many flaws and make no claim to comprehensive strategy.

A second goal of this manual is an understanding of "big picture" issues both helpful, and harmful to the church planting process. With this in mind we ask the reader to consider this work as an object of prayer. May it be a tool in the fulfillment of Paul's pursuit to take every thought captive under the lordship of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). May God be glorified through the fruit of this effort.

Nathan and Kari Shank

Northeast India – 2007, Revised 2014

Table of Contents

Using the Manual	Page # 5
Introduction to Kingdom Growth	Page # 9
Evaluation of the Four Fields	Page # 27
Field #1 – Reproducible Entry Strategy	Page # 35
Field #2 – Reproducible Gospel Presentation	Page # 46
Field #3 – Reproducible Discipleship	Page # 59
Field #4 – Church Formation UPDATED**	Page # 72
Leadership Multiplication – Leaders Planting Leaders	Page # 100
The Holy Spirit in Church Planting	Page # 121
Barriers to Overcome	Page # 128
Church Planting Motives	Page # 139
Case Study – The “G” People	Page # 142
“No Place Left” – Acts Study	Page # 145
Bibliography	Page # 154
Trainers Guides	Page # 157

Using the Manual

This manual will:

- 1) Introduce kingdom expansion and church planting as a work unique to the Holy Spirit of God. The corresponding role of a “kingdom agent” under the leadership of the Holy Spirit will also be examined after the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
- 2) Present a kingdom framework for organizing and balancing church planting ministry.
- 3) Present tools, within the kingdom process, useful for introduction and evaluation of the principles of reproduction.
- 4) Introduce and invite readers into lifetime study of the Word as the playbook for kingdom investment through church planting.
- 5) Uncover potential barriers often overlooked by practitioners in their pursuit of multiplication.
- 6) Encourage readers toward faith by suggesting evidences of Holy Spirit investment ensuring kingdom advance.

The readers of this manual should:

- 1) Consider studying this manual in small groups with church planting partners.
- 2) Take time to work through the suggested Bible studies, pursue consensus among partners on terms, definitions and vision for principles and reproducible tools introduced within the manual.
- 3) Carefully consider their tools for balance and reproducibility within the suggested kingdom process.
- 4) Develop action plans related to each of the “four fields” for the purpose of moving toward reproduction and multiplication of their efforts.

Within this manual, we will present and then build upon the kingdom instruction of Jesus. We believe, Jesus preached the kingdom (Mk. 1:15), chose kingdom agents (Mark 3:13-19), and then instructed them in the kingdom agenda and principles. The principles Jesus presented (often in parable form), he then modeled throughout his earthly ministry. If this thesis is correct, the principles and models Jesus left as an example constitute the basic job description for multiplying disciples and kingdom communities (churches) in fulfillment of his Great Commission. We intend to present this instruction and pursue alignment with these kingdom principles. Pursuing kingdom alignment will require serious evaluation of models and tools employed for harvest.

We wish to state from the beginning, the tools we have implemented and wish to share through this manual were created in the field. They are born of experience, yet they are by no means perfect. Every tool or idea introduced in this manual can be improved. By improvement we mean tools can be simplified and or explained and applied more effectively. It is worth noting, each tool has been refined over and over to maximize potential for multiplication.

At times tools may seem over-simplified or lacking in depth. Simple tools have always been our goal. We have learned, information does not create movement; thus, our goal is not effective content. Rather it is application of biblical truth that characterizes a movement of the Spirit of God. Our goal has always been a 1:1 ratio among what is understood and what is applied. This 1:1 ratio leads churches toward reproduction. We believe churches are designed to reproduce through “sent ones” who are equipped, empowered, held accountable and released into the harvest field.

Kingdom growth and its vehicle, church planting, are rightly understood as process. We therefore encourage multiple readings of this manual as layers of application may be grasped as reproduction takes place. Toward this end you will encounter several recurring tools designed for evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of church planting efforts. We have found these tools helpful in evaluating vision, diagnosing problem areas and determining next steps as generations of churches roll out.

You will find the following headings in each chapter.

- 1) End-Visioning – At the conclusion of each chapter you will be encouraged to deal with “brutal-facts” related to the chapter’s content. Evaluation of your ministry fields will lead to the ‘WIGTake’ question.

WIGTake – *What is it going to take?*

You will be asked to calculate goals based on God’s desire “*that none should perish*” (2 Pet.3:9) as it relates to each field.

- 2) Tools for Evaluation – At the conclusion of each chapter you will be asked to evaluate a tool based on several scripted questions. These questions are intended to create critical evaluation not only of the tools presented, but also of the tools you are currently employing. Using this tool throughout a reading of the manual, or in discussion of reproducibility within a network, has often proved valuable in identifying barriers to reproduction. It is our hope that such evaluation becomes a discipline in the lives of practitioners. See the section entitled “Evaluation of the Four Fields” for an introduction to this tool.

- 3) Self- discovery Studies – The Bible is the final rule and authority for faith and practice for both the disciple and the Church. Scripture is to be held above tradition and opinion. It is relevant in every situation and cannot be improved upon in regard to wisdom or methodology. For this reason, at several points throughout the manual the call is made to pause and consider the biblical content on a variety of topics. We suggest these issues be studied in group settings, as these self-discovery studies are designed to deal with potential barriers.
- 4) Working the Plan – At the conclusion of each chapter, this section suggests immediate goals for application. The goals are designed to mobilize believers toward 100% participation. Such goals may, of course, be tailored toward the realities of different networks but they are intended to prescribe nothing less than the potential of a fully mobilized workforce.

The Engine of Movement: Multiplying a Mentorship Process¹

God has ordained patterns of discipleship and mentoring applied through the faithfulness of his children (2 Tim. 1:13/2:2). This pattern repeats itself within His sovereign pursuit of the nations. Applying these patterns to the content contained within the manual is essential. Without intentional engagement of “Timothys” capable of reproduction at every level of responsibility, the church planter is bound to his own giftings and calendar. That is, his work and efforts will go no further than his own skills and presence will allow.

In our years of service, we have seen many from the West enter fields in Asia, and we have observed a common barrier. Most come with a vision limited to their own abilities and efforts, and they fail to realize their efforts alone will not complete the Great Commission. We have come to realize much of our role is to help them grasp this truth, to “hit the wall,” at the end of themselves. For some this is a painful process as years are spent pursuing personal fruit and gain, only to become disillusioned when a life’s work is swallowed up in the birth rate of a single day in massive nations like India.

We must not see our gifting or calendars as the strategy. Rather we must take up the vision of our Lord, who told his disciples they would do greater things after his departure (Jn.

¹ Steve Smith and Ying Kai have coined the phrase ‘T4T’. Their description of a three-thirds process provides a great summary of what is suggested as mentorship in this manual. Though our applications may at some points vary, for the sake of clarity we will use the same title, ‘T4T’ within this work to describe the mentorship process. Used with permission.

14:12). By the power of the Spirit, they would extend Jesus' ministry far beyond his work centered in Israel.

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." John 14:12

To reach the nations we must have a vision for our own disciples' fruit surpassing that of our ministries. As the Spirit leads, this vision for propelling others beyond us is the only means of changing a nation or completing the Great Commission. We must multiply ourselves, and those we train must do the same.

T4T – Those who have multiplied themselves share a common process. This process goes by many names as practitioners seek to describe their mentorship. For clarity, within this manual, we will draw on the descriptions offered by Steve Smith and Ying Kai in their book T4T.² The T4T process is the engine for movement. Application of the pattern of discipleship modeled by our Lord in the creation and investment of his apostolic band is essential in the understanding of Kingdom growth. The reader will be served to consistently re-read our description of T4T in the chapter entitled, "Leadership Multiplication." You will also see references to T4T throughout the manual, as it is the desired means of application for content and tools presented. Finally, at the conclusion of each chapter goals and end-visioning tools are intended to aid in the application of lessons within each of the Four Fields of Kingdom Growth. Each of these lessons and goals should be introduced within the T4T process.

² Within the 2014 revised edition of this manual we wish to cite: Steve Smith and Ying Kai. *T4T: A Discipleship Revolution*. (WigTake Resources, 2011).

An Introduction to Kingdom Expansion:

Grasping our dependence on Him and our role in the harvest.

If you could ask God for any one thing to help you start a new church, what would you ask for? Many times our answers to this question reflect our own preconceived definitions of what is truly church. Among those we train, responses often include things like, "I would ask God for a building." Others have responded, "We would need a good location." In the Asian context where budgets may be limited, things like guitars, drums or song books (in the most traditional settings) often make the list.

While all of these items fill a perceived need in the mind of those asked, we must question their necessity to the progress of the kingdom of God. Does God need these things to carry out His will for a church and its people? Is this truly the best we could ask of a Lord who has promised us all things needed in doing his will? Perhaps the reason for such answers is a simple failure to truly evaluate what is essential in the formation of new churches as the kingdom expands.

In this area we need not speculate what is best. Jesus has already given clear teaching concerning what is needed. For the church planter, discovering kingdom essentials is a must. Take time to read the parable below of the growing seed as an example of kingdom instruction given to kingdom agents Jesus was about to deploy.

"This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk then the head then the full grain in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe he puts the sickle to it for the harvest has come." – Mark 4:26-29

Self-Discovery Assignment – In groups of 6-10 read Mark 4:26-29 and discuss the following questions.

What is the main point of the parable for Jesus' disciples?

What is needed to expand the kingdom?

Record your thoughts here:

What do you consider to be the main point of the parable?

Answer – The work of the unknown doer -- The Spirit of God gives the increase.

For the farmer, the mystery of growth cannot be explained. Though he can fertilize and attempt proper exposure to water and sunlight, the actual process of growing is out of his control. At the end of the day he will eat and sleep comfortably, knowing it is the nature of the seed in the soil to produce a crop. He can rest in this knowledge because God has ordered this process since the beginning. It is a process so common its mystery is often overlooked. At the right time, in the right place, dependent on a multitude of right conditions beyond human control, the seed sprouts and grows. In this process, many times, we take for granted God's incredible orchestration. The Lord provides optimal conditions and all the essential elements for growth.

The natural ordering of creation reflects truth in the kingdom of God.

A note on context - After first preaching the kingdom personally (Mk. 1:15), Jesus calls and then chooses kingdom agents from the crowd (Mk. 3:13-19). The 12 chosen were to reproduce what had been modeled. They were designated "sent ones" or apostles for the purpose of going and preaching (presumably the kingdom message). Almost immediately, Jesus introduces kingdom instruction that seemingly confounds both the crowds and his opposition and at the same time reveals spiritual truth for those with ears to hear (Mk.4:9-11). Because chapter 4 presents several parables, some have suggested this chapter is a collection of parables from across his ministry. Mk 4:33-35, however, suggests multiple parables within a single setting (see v. 35). Three of these parables draw on the growing process as an illustration. While the parables have applications for end times, a present ministry context should be the primary filter for their interpretation. We are suggesting, by describing kingdom principles, Jesus was clarifying the Spirit's role and the corresponding job description he both modeled and would later entrust to these same disciples. The parables of Mark 4 were instruction for those with "ears to hear". These hearers, were to go about the business of the kingdom modeled by the Lord himself.

As Jesus was speaking these parables, the Holy Spirit had yet to be given to the church. Following the events of Pentecost we hear from Paul the explanation of this great mystery in regards to the work of God in the establishment of the kingdom and His church.

*"I Paul, sowed the seed, Apollos watered it,
but God made it grow" (1 Cor. 3:6).*

Paul and Apollos fulfilled their roles, but it was God who gave the increase. This is the lesson Jesus intended for the twelve in the parable of the growing seed (Mk 4:26-29). After the disciples were selected by the Lord Himself from the crowd (Mk. 3:13-14), enlightened with kingdom secrets by the Spirit of God (Mk 4:11), and perhaps, having self identified as the 'good soil' (Mk. 4:20), the parable clarifies the limits of the disciples' abilities. These followers were not the key to the kingdom. Their effort, skill and even their faithfulness to sow and reap meant nothing apart from an unknown doer on whom they were totally dependent.

We often say, "Attempting to start a new church without the Holy Spirit's investment is like planning a trip to the moon without a rocket." In a discussion of the means of kingdom ministry, the conversation

must begin and end with the Lord's hand. While we can be sure God's desire is the spread of the kingdom through the establishment of the church (Mt. 16:18), often the most difficult aspect of discerning his will is timing. When is the optimal season for planting? Why has seed taken root in this soil and not the neighboring soil? All these things are mysteries addressed within the kingdom instructions of Mark 4 and best left in the hand of the Holy Spirit. The great comfort for the kingdom agent or church planter rests in the sovereignty of God who never rests in his tending and nurturing the coming harvest.

Consider these questions concerning the Spirit's involvement in your ministry. We will examine our answers together throughout the Bible studies in this manual.

Questions concerning the Spirit of God:

- 1) How many hours do I spend listening to God through his Word?
- 2) When was the last time God revealed His plan or timing in my life?
How did he do so?
- 3) How would I describe my calling and commission from God?
How did I learn God's calling?
- 4) How do I test my decisions to ensure God's will and timing?
What role does the Spirit play?
- 5) Have there been times I mistook God's will or timing in my ministry?
How did that happen?

Later, we will have much to say concerning abiding in Christ. Abiding is key for discerning God's direction (Jn. 15:4-8). Great leaders in scripture have been abiders. Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Nehemiah and Daniel were all dependent on hearing the Lord's voice and obeying within His timing. Many disasters were avoided, and victories gained because those God had chosen discerned His hand and timing. It is also true, many tragedies occurred when these leaders made decisions of direction or timing in their own strength rather than submitting to the Lord. How have you prioritized listening to the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:12)?

For those who rightly grasped the main point of the parable, right response would include further enquiry of the Lord, "what then would you have us to do?" If the increase was fully dependent on the Lord's power and timing, what then was the role and stewardship of Jesus followers? It is important to remember Jesus both instructed and modeled kingdom truth for his followers throughout his ministry. The answers to our questions would be lived out during the earthly ministry of Christ as a model for the twelve. The Mark 4 parables, gave the twelve and others a window into the role Jesus would model and to which they would be commissioned as agents of the kingdom.

Let's take some time to consider essentials utilized by the Spirit in the kingdom farming process.

*“This is what the kingdom of God is like.
A man scatters seed on the ground.”*

In the first sentence we see three essentials, utilized by the Spirit of God, for kingdom growth.

- 1) *Sowers* – men and women willing to cast the seed.

In this parable kingdom activity begins with a *sower* (Luke 10:2). God has chosen to use his people as catalysts in his kingdom. The scripture speaks repeatedly of our duty as well as the awesome privilege of representing the Creator and proclaiming His redemptive plan (Mt. 28:18-20, 1 Pet. 2:9-10, 2 Cor. 5:17-18). As we consider the need for sowers, the church planter is well served to consider the following questions concerning his own expectations of sowers. The answers to these simple questions have a huge impact on the potential of our ministry. We will search for answers together throughout the studies in this manual.

Important questions concerning sowers:

- 1) What does a sower do?
- 2) Who is qualified to be a sower?
- 3) How do I equip sowers for the kingdom work?
- 4) How many sowers are presently working in fields where I have committed?
- 5) How does a sower measure success?

Answers to these kinds of questions will reveal the true potential of our ministry to multiply. 2 Corinthians 9:6 has always been true.

*“He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly;
he who sows generously will reap generously.”*

It is simple logic. How many people will hear the gospel today within our kingdom ministry? The answer to this question depends on the sowers we are equipping and sending into the field. The clear gospel as well as a definition of successful evangelism must be evaluated in order to maximize work force within the potential harvest. Each one of us has biases and unspoken opinions concerning who is qualified to sow the gospel. We will revisit the topic of qualification and mobilization of sowers in the following sections.

- 2) *Seed* – the word of God cast from the hand of the sower.

Another essential for kingdom growth is the gospel seed. God has ordered creation in such a way that *seed* is the essential starting place of all life. No life begins without a preordained origin or primary element through which growth is possible. For the spiritual life, God has ordained his Word as the point of origin (Rom.10:13-17). Without it we are left in a Romans 1:18-32 condition, recognizing the Creator visible in creation, yet universally condemned because we reject Him. This is why God has gone to such

lengths to provide us with the complete record of His nature and His redemptive plan (Rom. 10:17). He wants us to follow Him. This is not possible apart from his Word (Rom.10:9-15).

Consider these questions concerning your use of God's seed. We will search for answers together throughout the studies in this manual.

Questions concerning Seed:

- 1) If the seed is the gospel message, what are the essential elements?
- 2) How do I measure right response to the gospel seed?
- 3) What barriers keep my target field from understanding the gospel?
- 4) What medium is most likely to produce fruit within my field?
- 5) Does mass seed sowing accomplish the task? What types of follow up are in place?

Faith comes by hearing (Rom 10:17), but not all hearing results in faith (Matt. 13:14). There are those whose hearts are not ready to receive the gospel message. Yet distinguishing between the two has never been a job assigned to man. The sower is wise to remove as many obstacles to the reception of the seed as possible, yet the gospel seed must remain un-compromised. Sowing the gospel seed with integrity introduces a natural (although sometimes painful) filter among its hearers (Mark 4:1-20). Those who stumble should do so over Christ, not our inept presentation. A proper understanding of the audience can help the sower to avoid possible stumbling blocks or even emphasize needed elements that may be lacking within the worldview of the listener. This brings us to our next essential.

3) *Soil* – the hearts of the lost in which seed is cast.

Knowing and engaging the audience are essential parts of kingdom growth. Those disconnected from the lost will never see abundant harvest. Jesus will always be the standard for the use of our time. When we consider His priority, seeking and saving that which was lost (Luke 19:10), we are also called into account for our pursuit of those who have not heard. As Jesus instructed his disciples concerning His second coming He made note of the gospel target, specifically, *“the good news of the kingdom will be preaching in the whole world, as a testimony to all nations”* (Matt. 24:14). Peter further informed the church of the Lord's great patience in this matter: the Lord desires that *“none should perish, but all come to repentance”* (2 Pet. 3:9). God's end vision includes a kingdom of priests from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne in worship (Rev. 5:9-10). The hope of the Lord's coming must always be coupled with a desire to carry on His work among the peoples of the world.

The soil is all around us. Everywhere we look we can see the lost. Consider these questions concerning the soil. We will search out answers throughout the studies presented in this manual.

Questions concerning the Soil:

- 1) Who is my audience?
- 2) How does my target people process information? Make decisions?
- 3) What percentage is literate? How will I present the gospel to illiterates?
- 4) How many homes am I targeting? How many villages or towns?
- 5) How many lost people do I know personally?
- 6) What barriers exist within their worldview preventing understanding of the gospel message?

We are told today the planet holds over 7 billion people. We can estimate from this number a death rate of nearly 300,000 per day. With only 86,000 seconds daily, this means more than three deaths every second. Including Catholics, the number of people who claim to be Christian stands around 2 billion, just under one-third of the earth's population. If these estimates are accurate, this means two people enter eternity in hell every second of the day. What percentage of your town, target people or population segment knows Christ? How many of them will enter eternity today without a saving knowledge of Christ?

Jesus went on to say in the Mark 4 passage:

"Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk then the head then the full grain in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe he puts the sickle to it for the harvest has come."

Again, we can see essentials of the kingdom in these lines.

- 4) *Season* – commitment to the harvest.

No seed grows over-night. No farmer sows one day and expects to reap the next. Only those committed to the harvest will see the fruit. Like a farmer, the kingdom agent must grasp a clear vision for the coming harvest. Without it, distraction, hunger and even despair may sidetrack the effort. Consider the farmer in Jesus' parable. How many visits did he likely make to the field? Once to sow, once to see the stalk, once to see the head, once to see the full grain in the head, once to determine the time of harvest, and once to swing the sickle. We can observe at least six trips to the field and more likely he visited daily. Why would the farmer sow where he does not intend to reap? Consider these other questions concerning the season. We will search for answers throughout the studies presented in this manual.

Questions concerning the Season:

- 1) Am I committed to the harvest?
- 2) How much time do I designate to checking growth of the seed?
- 3) What priorities do I have that compete with tracking the harvest?
- 4) What harvests am I currently tracking?
- 5) Is the end vision or goal of my ministry a gathering of the harvest?

When faced with these questions many have realized their goals were not new church starts. If you are satisfied with anything less than gathering the harvest, your ministry is not focused on church planting. When speaking of the kingdom in Matthew, Jesus said, “... *he who does not gather with me scatters*” (Matt. 12:30). Opportunity in the form of time, effort, fertile soil and many other resources are squandered when we fail to commit to the harvest.

Within modern discussion on church planting, growth and mission a great deal of energy is used in discussions of pace. Terms like “rapid” are sure to create conversation among church planting practitioners. Throughout the kingdom parables, pace is a topic reserved for the sovereignty of God. Man is not in control. This should frame our discussion, including our criticism of paradigms that describe pace. To be sure, the Lord marches forward. Are we in step with and committed to *His* pace and timing?

5) *Sickle* – mobilized labor in the harvest force.

It takes only one person to sow. The harvest, however, brings the whole community together. While one can scatter seed effectively, the nature of the harvest demands a quick response beyond the abilities of any one harvester. For this reason family, friends and neighbors are mobilized into the harvest to reap together. The reason is obvious. Timing is everything. If the harvest is too early, the grain will not be ripe, lacking essential nutrients. If the harvest is too late it may spoil in the field. An entire season of resources and labor would be lost. Consider Jesus’ instruction as he sent sowers into the fields of Galilee.

“The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few, ask the Lord of the harvest therefore to send laborers into the fields” (Luke 10:1-2)

Sowers alone were not enough. Those Jesus sent were given instruction concerning the sowing the seed within the ongoing task. They were compelled to immediately pray for the laborers needed to reap where they were sowing. They prayed for laborers to ensure the harvest was brought together in a timely and orderly way. Likewise, we must be ready to cut and gather when the harvest comes. Consider these questions related to the sickle or harvest. We will search out answers throughout the Bible study presented within this manual.

Questions concerning the Sickle/Harvest

- 1) What resources exist to help me bring in the harvest?
- 2) How many are ready to swing the sickle within my network/ministry?
- 3) Who within my ministry can help me mobilize harvesters?
- 4) How does the work of a harvester differ from that of a sower?
- 5) Is my sickle sharp? Am I ready for harvest?

The imagery of sowing and reaping is repeated often in scripture. The sickle in Mark 4:29, is often linked by commentators with the coming of the Lord and the harvest of the whole earth (Joel 3:13, Rev.14: 14-20). While the harvest mentioned in these passages carries a negative implication for those under judgment, we are reminded the Lord is sovereign over the kingdom process. The harvest awaits his sickle. Meanwhile, Jesus followers are instructed to be about the work. As God has chosen, there are many in whom the light of the gospel has dawned. They are ready for community. Let us be about the work of cutting and bundling that which the Lord has brought to life.

John 4:35-36 say,

“Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest?’ I tell you to open your eyes, and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests to crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.”

It is important to remember, sowing is motivated by vision for harvest. Jesus implies in John 4, the two works are dependent upon, and in fact, complete each other. We must pursue both and celebrate one finished work.

A terrific truth of these essentials from Mark 4:26-29 is that all have been provided to us in advance. The kingdom ministry inaugurated by Jesus is carried on by those who respond to his Great Commission. Just as Jesus mobilized and deployed kingdom resources, we have a stewardship for resources around us. As we continue our study of Mark 4 we will consider Jesus’ example in kingdom ministry. Take time now to pray through these elements to ensure all the resources available are being utilized for the harvest.³

Further Questions for Consideration

Which if any of these elements of kingdom expansion are you considering for the first time?

In what areas of the kingdom stewardship are you gifted to lead?

What areas must you emphasize to ensure the proper focus within your ministry?

³ For further insight into these essential elements see: Charles Brock, *Indigenous Church Planting*, (Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1981).

Kingdom Growth and the Four Fields Process

As we move beyond the parable we remember, Bible study begets Bible study. Having suggested Jesus' use of the kingdom parables as descriptions of his "present ministry context" useful for orientating his disciples in the kingdom agenda it is time to test our interpretation. If we are correct, we should see clear examples of Jesus pursuing an agenda of kingdom expansion across the Gospel accounts.

Jesus began his ministry by preaching the kingdom message, "*The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!*" (Mk. 1:15). He called followers in Mark 1-2 as witnesses to his kingdom agenda. He chose and appointed some of these to be with him, and that He might send them out to preach (Mk. 3:13-19). N.T. Wright believes Jesus introduced these followers to a new kingdom "praxis" (process by which a theory, skill or lesson is enacted).⁴

We suggest, Jesus' audience for the kingdom parables (Mark 4) were to be kingdom agents given to him by the Father, and gifted with the secrets of the kingdom of God (Jn. 17: 6-8, Mk. 4:11). Jesus used the kingdom parables to give them living pictures of the kingdom growth process. The illustrations borrowed from farming ensure meanings can be easily translated and understood across cultural differences. In this way Jesus locked the truths of the kingdom into a form that all peoples in all times can grasp.

Jesus' kingdom agenda can be summarized within a few broad categories. Jesus entered and engaged new fields. He sowed the seed of the kingdom, depended on the Spirit to give the increase, nurtured the new growth and cut and bundled the harvest into communities. Finally, Jesus reproduced his agenda through faithful leaders entrusted to follow his example.

The following "self-discovery assignment" can be accomplished with a cursory glance but at the same time constitutes a life time study for those pursuing a kingdom focused ministry. You are encouraged to revisit this study often. It is suggested here, the kingdom parables serve as a framework for understanding Jesus' kingdom agenda across the Gospel accounts. Jesus' kingdom agenda serves as a working job description for both his disciples and our lives and ministries.

⁴ N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* vol 2; (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1996). 277. P. 244 - Wright states, "Jesus' kingdom-announcement functioned like a narrative in search of fresh characters, a plot in search of actors... if Jesus is the "agent" in the drama, the action is in need of some "recipients", and apparently some "helpers".

Self-Discovery Assignment – In groups of 6-10 search the following passages for examples of Jesus’ “kingdom agenda”. Assign 1 passage per group.

Time allotted – initially, 1 day – preferably, life time study!

Specifically, where do you see examples of Jesus stewarding the essentials of the kingdom:

- 1) Entering and engaging new fields? - Soil
- 2) Sowing the gospel seed? - Seed
- 3) Depending of the Spirit to give the increase? - Spirit
- 4) Nurturing the new growth in the form of new believers? - Season
- 5) Cutting and bundling the harvest in the form of kingdom community? - Sickle
- 6) Multiplying his efforts through committed, faithful followers? – Multiplying laborers

Dependent on time and the size of your training audience assign the following passages for study.

- Matt. 4-13
- Mark 1-8
- Luke 4-15
- John 2-10

As groups complete this study, take time for presentation of findings. We suggest each group create charts they can use to track and present their findings to the larger group. As groups present, look for common themes, take note of aspects specific findings unique to specific Gospel accounts. Contrast Jesus’ activities with those entrusted to His followers. - What assignments had He previously modeled? What differed?

Over our years of training concerning the kingdom of God, many have rightly asked us to clarify the relation between the Kingdom and the Church. A thorough defense of the nature of the Kingdom and its relation to churches will not be possible here. We do however, at the outset, wish to warn our readers against a separation of Jesus’ description of the kingdom and the unanimous outworking of kingdom expansion: clearly defined churches throughout the New Testament writings.⁵

We realize across scripture that the kingdom of God and the church are inseparable. Church history also testifies, wherever the kingdom of God has spread the church has served as its outpost providing follow-

⁵ For an adequate description of the relation between Kingdom and Church see: Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986); also Andreas Kostenberger, and Peter T. O’Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission*. NBTS 11 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2001).

up and body life to the newly assembled resources of the harvest. Rightly identifying essential elements of the kingdom is a starting point for church planting as well. Though church is not mentioned in the kingdom parables, it is clearly introduced within Jesus' kingdom agenda as the organizational unit of the kingdom (Matt 16:18).

We believe, right stewardship of the kingdom essentials will lead Jesus' followers into intentional church planting. We must, in the process, recall the main point of the parable. It is the Lord who gives the increase. As sowers and reapers of the kingdom harvest, we have roles God intends us to play. We must remember, however, the parable presents both controllable and un-controllable elements. For example, the sower lacks the power to give life. The sower cannot cause growth, nor can he marshal resources (rain, sunlight) necessary for health and the maturity of the grain on his own. These are un-controllable elements for which the farmer is totally dependent on the parable's unknown doer, the Spirit of God.

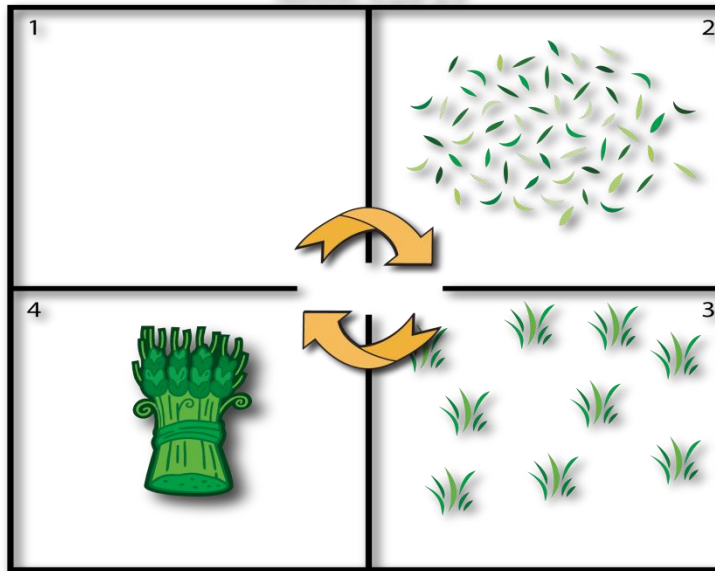
This reality does not, however, release the laborers (including present readers) from responsibility. Just as the sower is diligent to sow, oversee and eventually harvest, the disciples of Jesus are offered a commission within His harvest field. The roles of the sower and reaper fall in the controllable realm. It is our disciplined choice of obedience to sow, oversee and at the right time harvest the grain. Not only are we invited and in places commanded to take up these tasks, but we are also told repeatedly across the gospel accounts that Jesus expects us to, "*pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers*" (Luke 10:2, Matt. 9:37, Jn.4:35).

As we are commissioned by our Lord to labor, we celebrate His wisdom for us in the parables. Just as certain elements are essential, the proper ordering of each element is also essential. Harvest never comes before sowing. Sowing never precedes entering the field. The timing and order for the implementation of such essentials must be understood and employed if harvest is to be obtained. Once again the process of sowing and reaping offers us our starting point in our pursuit of the kingdom agenda. Never forget, the Spirit gives the increase. It is our privilege to join him in the kingdom work!

As kingdom agents, we (after the example of our Lord's earthly ministry) must:

- 1) Enter and engage empty fields.
- 2) Sow the seed of the gospel message.
- 3) Nurture the new growth born of the Spirit of God
- 4) Cut and bundle the harvest into kingdom community
- 5) Seek to multiply through equipped, empowered disciple leaders

THE FOUR FIELDS OF KINGDOM GROWTH



The Four Fields of Kingdom Growth⁶



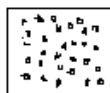
Field #1 – The Empty Field



Like the farmer we must consider our method of entry.

Key Question – *How do I enter a new field?*

Where do we start? How do we know when and where to plant? As outsiders attempting to enter a new field or cross long-standing barriers with the gospel, we must consider these questions lest the church planter spoil the potential harvest through hasty or ill-advised action. Understanding the biblical answers to such questions provides the church planter with a simple, clear strategy for transitioning from an outsider driven method to a locally led movement. We will refer to the plans we receive from scripture as **“Entry Strategy.”**



Field #2 – The Seeded Field



Within the second field the church planter is faced with a simple question.

⁶ The Four Fields diagram organizes the teaching of Neil Mims, Jeff Sundell and David Garrison who employed the ‘Five Parts of a Church Planting Plan’ to describe both Jesus’ and Paul’s activities in scripture.

Key Question - *What do I say?*

Answering this question seems simple, but the need to present the gospel across ethnic and social barriers is anything but simple. Understanding worldview, apologetics, and the essential elements of the gospel are all part of answering this key question. A proper understanding of field #2 will provide the church planter with tailored, reproducible and effective tools for sharing the gospel. We will refer to the plans we receive from scripture as **“Gospel Presentation.”**



Field #3 – The Field of New Life



Here the church planter begins to see the fruit of his labors. As the crop begins to emerge from the seeded soil, the farmer is faced with this question.

Key Question – *How do I make disciples?*

Said another way, the question is, “What role do I play in facilitating growth?” The beginning stages of growth are critical as set a pattern for the future success of the crop. The crop is at no point more vulnerable than in the early stages. For this reason care must be given to present a purely biblical foundation on which future growth can be built. We will refer to the plans we receive from scripture as **“Short-term and Long-term Discipleship”** plans.



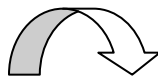
Field #4 – The Harvest Field



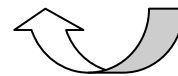
This field represents the time of celebration. As the harvest is cut and bundled the church planter faces the following question.

Key Question – *How do I form a new church?*

Answering this question properly will help to ensure the long-term growth and health of new churches. The Bible has a large amount of material devoted to answering this question through both example and direct command. We will refer to the plans we receive from scripture as our plans for **“Church Formation.”**



Leadership Multiplication



Finally, the Four Fields process repeats itself in the form of generational multiplication. As the harvest is gathered the farmer stewards both food for the year and seed for the next. The ability to multiply sowers and mobilize into new or expanded fields determines the potential to multiply harvest in coming seasons. The resources available lead us to ask the following question.

Key Question – *How do I develop and multiply leaders?*

Answering this question properly ensures a sustainable and multiplied harvest. When leaders are multiplied, movements begin resulting in generations of new church starts. We will refer to the biblical patterns we receive from scripture as **“Leadership Multiplication”**.

Each field presents the farmer or church planter with a specific question.

Field #1 – Empty Field - How do we enter a new field?

Field #2 – Seeded Field - What do we say? To whom do we say it?

Field #3 – New Growth - How do we make disciples?

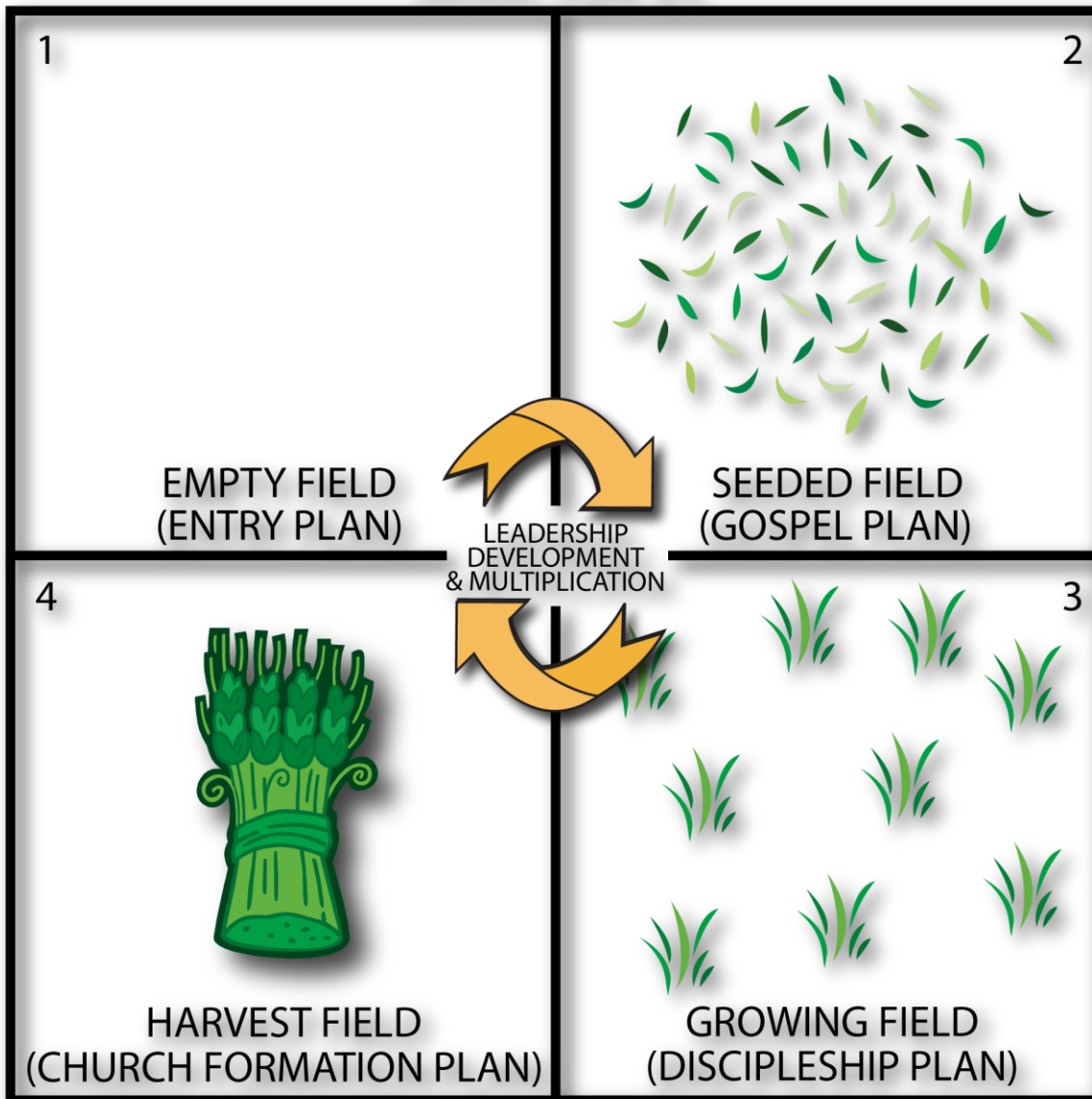
Field #4 – Harvest Field - How do we form the church?

It should be understood, these are not sequential steps to church planting. In fact as the process moves forward the previous elements continue. Discipleship does not cease when church is formed. Instead, it is strengthened by community. Likewise, gospel presentation does not cease when discipleship begins. They obviously interlock within the greater understanding of kingdom expansion.

Consider again a diagram of the farming process.⁷

⁷ It is beyond the scope of this manual to summarize the variety of interpretation on Jesus’ parables as kingdom instruction. Interested researchers will find a significant debate available with little consensus for application. After a broad reading on the subject, we wish to suggest the following works for those interested in further study. George E. Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*. (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1974). Ladd has written broadly on the subject of God’s kingdom. Among his works, this book details what has been called “inaugurated eschatology”, as a framework for understanding Jesus’ kingdom agenda. Ladd believes Jesus’ kingdom is already at work moving toward and awaiting its final consummation at the second coming. A second foundational work we recommend on the kingdom agenda comes from N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, vol. 2. (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1996). Wright believes Jesus earthly ministry introduced a “kingdom praxis”. Wright suggests Jesus used parables to introduce his kingdom agenda and a basic paradigm he then lived out in the presence of a hand selected audience of empowered kingdom agents. We conclude, Jesus’ ministry began and demonstrated a kingdom paradigm he expected his disciples to also adopt. We have detailed the “inaugurated kingdom praxis” (paradigm Jesus began) elsewhere.

THE FOUR FIELDS OF KINGDOM GROWTH



The Kingdom Process modeled by Jesus and Paul

As time allows, consider these additional studies focused on the summary statements of Jesus and Paul. In his prayer, Jesus summarized the effects of his earthly ministry. Do we see the kingdom process within this summary? Secondly, consider Paul. Do we see Jesus' ministry reflected in the life and kingdom efforts of the Apostle Paul as he suggested (1 Cor. 11:1).

Self- Discovery Study – Christ's "completed work" – Jn. 17

In groups of 6-10, read John 17:1-25. Examine Jesus' description of a "completed work" (Jn. 17:4) that preceded the cross. Search for answers to the following questions:

- 1) Did Jesus connect to those the Father had prepared?
- 2) Did Jesus do evangelism – seed sowing that resulted in harvest?
- 3) Did Jesus' disciples obey the instruction and example Jesus gave?
- 4) Did Jesus nurture the new growth by investing Himself?
- 5) Did Jesus multiply leaders who could go and reproduce the kingdom agenda?
- 6) How was Jesus dependent on the Father (Lord of the Harvest) to give the increase?

John 17:6 shows us Jesus' dependence on the Father (the Lord of the Harvest) who entrusted chosen men to Jesus' care. Jesus rightly discerned the Father's leading (17:9), introduced the Father (17:3, 8), and instructed these few in obedience to the Word (17:6-7). Jesus fulfilled a protective role (17:12), yet He entrusted their ultimate protection, endurance, sanctification and unity to the Father (17:11-17). Finally, Jesus prayed for and committed the multiplied fruit of His followers to the Father (Jn. 17:18, 20:20-23).

Jesus perfectly demonstrated the kingdom agenda. His investment in a three-year, earthly ministry carries the weight of an inspired example for His disciples throughout church history. Like a man with vision for the harvest, Jesus entered the field, scattered the gospel message, committed Himself to nurturing new growth among those who had been given life, and He cut and bundled the harvest. Along the way, Jesus mentored the few the Father had given (Jn. 17:18) who would soon be entrusted with reproducing the same kingdom agenda (Jn. 20:21). Jesus modeled these things within perfect submission to the Lord of the Harvest, who gives the increase. Jesus perfectly demonstrated the process of kingdom advance.

The example of Jesus has, to this point, been our primary focus. It is appropriate to also consider the church's reproduction of all that Jesus inaugurated in his kingdom ministry. For that purpose we should pause here to ask, "Did the early church carry out the same kingdom agenda modeled by our Lord?"

Consider this self-discovery study of the example of Paul who sought to follow the kingdom example and commission of Christ within specific fields (Acts 20:24-25).

Self- Discovery Study – Paul's Farewell to Ephesus – Acts 20

In groups of 6-10, read Acts 20:17-38. Examine Paul's' description of his three year ministry in Ephesus. Search for answers to the following questions:

- 1) How did Paul connect to those the Lord had prepared?
- 2) Did Paul do evangelism – seed sowing that resulted in harvest?
- 3) Did Paul's disciples obey the instruction and example Jesus gave?
- 4) Did Paul nurture the new growth by investing himself?
- 5) How did Paul organize the harvest?
- 6) Did Paul empower leaders capable of sustaining the kingdom agenda?
- 7) Was Paul dependent on the Lord of the Harvest to give the increase?

The Holy Spirit set and controlled Paul's timeline throughout the Acts account (Rom. 15:17-19). Coming and going, sowing and reaping, organizing and empowering were stewardships Paul exercised with urgency as the Lord allowed. As an example for the believers (1 Cor. 11:1-2) Paul demonstrated a life committed to the kingdom agenda. His priorities reflect the Lord's instruction. As the Lord led, Paul entered new fields, sowed the gospel seed, nurtured new growth both with a short-term pattern and long-term investment (1 Tim. 1:13-14, 1 Cor. 4:17, 2 Cor. 13:1). Paul organized churches in each field and ensured leaders were identified and entrusted to the leadership of the Holy Spirit and his Word (Acts 20:32, Titus 1:5,9).

Consider this self-discovery study for a summary of the broader scope of Paul's church planting ministry.⁸

⁸ For further study on Paul's kingdom focus consider the section "No Place Left" within this manual. Readers will be encouraged to consider similar study across the "missionary journeys" of Paul (Acts 13-20).

Self- Discovery Study – From Jerusalem to Illyricum – Rom. 15:14-23; Acts 20:1-5

In groups of 6-10, read Romans 15:18-23 and Acts 20:1-5. Examine Paul's' description of his missionary journeys. Search for answers to the following questions:

- 1) What fields had been entered?
- 2) Did Paul give evidence of evangelism – seed sowing that resulted in harvest?
- 3) Did Paul's disciples obey the instruction and example Jesus gave?
- 4) Did Paul nurture the new growth by investing himself?
- 5) How did Paul organize the harvest? What churches had been formed by Acts 20?
- 6) Is there evidence of multiple leaders capable of sustaining the kingdom agenda?

Summary

Paul did in fact imitate Christ. We, the readers of the New Testament, can be confident in our discernment of what is best (Phil. 1:9-10) by pursuing the same agenda. A life spent engaging the lost by entering new fields, sowing the gospel message, nurturing new growth through a commitment to discipleship and church formation also carries the potential of multiply when scriptural tools are employed.

As Jesus said,

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father... And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth."

Jesus inaugurated the kingdom while on earth. By remaining in Him (Jn. 15:5) Jesus' disciples also pursue the kingdom agenda (Matt. 6:10, Jn. 20:21-22). The Spirit of God is at work governing and overseeing the kingdom agenda and its agents (John 14:9-16:16).

Is your ministry committed to multiplication within His agenda?

Evaluating the “Four Fields”

Before we begin our examination of each of the “Four Fields,” it is appropriate to pause. There are no perfect plans, nor are there perfect church planters. Each of us can be sharper. Evaluation of the focus of our ministry and tools can help to move us toward reproducible models and prioritize high value activities. Willingness to assess the strengths and weaknesses of our networks will enable this training manual to provide appropriate material for encouraging movement.

Evaluation of potential networks for training can also be driven by the Four Fields process. To recognize strengths and weaknesses in each of the fields consider the following questions. The questions are designed to evaluate issues of authority, reproducibility and mobilization of existing human resources.



Taking serious time at the outset of this study to examine these questions and to lay our plans before the Lord is foundational for processing tools and plans presented in this manual. Take time now to address each question with those you intend to lead or study with. Use the following questions to guide your discussion.

Evaluating the Four Fields

Take time to evaluate each area of either your network or existing networks you are training.

What are the areas of strength?

What areas need improvement?

Make plans to address any areas of weakness.

Are weaknesses due to barriers or simple lack of focus?

What barriers? -

What resources exist that may help strengthen these areas?

Are there people in your network who can model strength in these areas?

Does your calendar prioritize addressing these weaknesses?

What lessons have you learned from Jesus' example to deal with these weaknesses?

Evaluating Tools and Methodologies

The vision of the church planter plays a significant role in the type of tools and strategies he will use. For those intending to start only one church, the issue of reproducibility is of little consequence. For those with the vision for multiple churches leading to generations of church starts, the big picture demands tools and strategies driven by local believers. No church planter can produce multiplying churches. This means new generations of local believers must take the lead. While this presents a challenge for the typical church planting programs of today that do not emphasize multiplication, it is possible. Consider the following questions concerning reproducibility as you evaluate church planting plans and materials.

1st - Are the tools and plans obedience/accountability based?

Matthew 28:18-20

Expectation for every believer to obey Christ must be the center of our church planting plan. In Matthew 28, you find the Great Commission. Jesus commands you to make disciples. He also gives you the focus of such discipleship.

Read Matthew 28:19-20 and answer this question.

What are you to teach your disciples?

Matthew 28:19-20

“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.”

Many times as we ask this question, the answer quickly comes, “We must teach the commands of Christ.” This is *not*, however, the correct answer. When we look closely, we see Jesus gave a more specific commission. The task of making disciples is teaching *obedience* to the commands of Christ. Teaching commands does in itself make healthy disciples. It is obedience that sets a man in the right path. Obedience is the center of the Great Commission. Without the foundational habit of obedience, the infant will never see maturity, nor be capable of reproducing the tools and strategy we invest. Grasping the teachings of Christ is a life long task. The habit of obedience to these ongoing lessons, however, can be taught within our short-term discipleship.

The habit of obedience will serve the disciple throughout life as new challenges and applications for Christ’s commands are revealed within scripture. Simple actions taken to implement Christ’s commands to give, love and share the good news are the starting point for healthy church starts.

Measuring obedience demands accountability. Obedience based tasks assigned within our church planting efforts should include regular feed back loops capable to encourage mutual submission to the Lordship of Christ. Take time to incorporate such accountability sessions as a staple of your church planting activities.

2nd - Are the tools and plans granting responsibilities that challenge new believers?

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 1 Pet. 4:10-11

As James reminds us, “Faith without deeds is dead” (James 2:26). With this in mind, we must expect and commission our disciples to apply the Word. One key element in promoting such action is the giving of responsibility.

Imagine a farmer who plants a crop and goes away for four months. At the end of this time he returns but is surprised to see the seed he has sown has not produced a harvest. Such a farmer would be considered foolish. He has received what his efforts deserved. Consider on the other hand the successful farmer. He cares for the crop. Sufficient water is provided, and in places where the soil is thin, fertilizer is added. This fertilizer ensures the necessary nutrients are present and promotes rapid growth. The church planter should consider responsibility similar to fertilizer. Responsibility promotes rapid growth. Without the need to fulfill responsibility, what motive for growth remains?

In church planting, responsibility is fertilizer!

I have visited and attempted discipleship in many churches that lacked the vision of multiplying believers through responsibility and accountability. Rather than active involvement, the laity had been convinced their roles were to be merely spectators. In other cases, those who desired such responsibilities within body life were lost in a congregation too large for efficient delegation. In either case, the value of contribution to body life was underestimated, leading to a breakdown in reproducibility.

For the church planter, mentoring others into leadership depends upon the believers’ discovery and practice of their spiritual gifts. Challenging even new believers with manageable tasks geared toward such gifts will accelerate their maturity. Grasping their own identity in Christ (1 Pet. 2:9) and their role in the body (1 Cor. 12: 7) are keys to reaching their potential. Granting responsibility opens this door.

3rd - Do the tools and plans expect, anticipate and commission multiplication?

2 Timothy 2:2

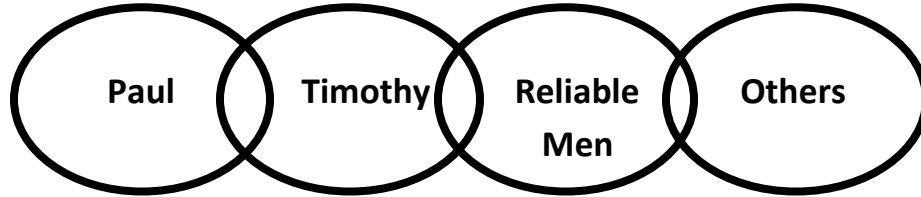
The greatest joy in ministry is not making disciples. Rather, it is seeing your disciples make their own disciples! Paul’s discipleship was driven by a focus on reproduction (2 Tim. 2:2). Those with the willingness to reproduce what was learned were his priority. We can assume the opposite is also true. Those who did not reproduce did not fill positions of leadership.

In 2 Timothy, Paul passes this charge to his disciples. Consider this principle of reproduction.

2 Timothy 2:2

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

Within this verse four generations of believers can be observed.



This is a discipleship chain. Paul invested in Timothy. Timothy was faithful to invest in reliable men. The In this case, reliable meant they would invest in others ensuring the chain would not be broken. The church planter who implements this verse in his ministry will see similar chains emerge. We will refer to these chains as the “222” principle named after 2 Timothy 2:2.

The ‘222’ principle – church planting movements are catalyzed by discipleship chains in pursuit of fourth generation reproduction.

Consider these strengths of church planting chains;

- 1) Teaching others is a great tool for learning even for the teacher. Reproducing materials and lessons for disciples demands command of the lesson and solidifies its importance.
- 2) Discipleship is best in a small group or one on one. Delegating discipleship expands potential for such relationships.
- 3) Ministries with multiple locations can be maintained through a chain. See Paul’s example in Acts detailed later in this manual.
- 4) As authority and responsibility are passed, the chain can survive the eventual and potentially healthy loss of its “Paul.”

“222” is a key in the kingdom!

4th - Do the tools and plans utilize local believers from the harvest for facilitation?

Titus 1:5

Within your church planting vision, who leads? Tools and plans dependent upon outsiders to teach or facilitate movement will not multiply. The church planter must remember everything needed for the harvest is in the harvest! This includes teachers promised to the church in Ephesians 4:11-12.

Many times pioneer church plants are derailed by the perceived need for exposure to outside education. We have seen hundreds of examples of emerging leaders sent outside their context to attend intense discipleship training. Many times, this disconnects the leader from his or her disciples and creates an unseen barrier. Consider these difficulties:

- 1) The leader who has been trained outside now has a special status unavailable to the average believer. Such status is not the pattern seen within scripture.
- 2) Dependence is established within the minds of believers when a prerequisite for church leadership is the ability to leave job and family to attend a residential discipleship program.

Any church planting effort that is not mobilizing teachers from within the harvest must be evaluated to ensure the tools fit the context. Materials that assume prior biblical knowledge will not be appropriate for pioneer areas. The church planter must believe first generation believers, being mentored themselves, are capable of mentoring others as well. When believers are provided appropriate tools, the gifts of even the newest believers can flourish.⁹

5th - Do the plans and tools push believers toward self-discovery?

2 Timothy 3:16-17

John 14:26 still applies today. The Holy Spirit is still the counselor. He is responsible for teaching the disciple of Christ all things and reminding him or her of the words of Christ. These lessons are not bound to a classroom. The Holy Spirit is on the job 24/7. The Scripture is provided to the church as a tool of the Holy Spirit. Learning to walk in relationship under the instruction of the Word is top priority for the new disciple.

The church planter must learn confidence in the sufficiency of the Word in the Holy Spirit's hands. Encouraging the disciplines of Scripture reading and meditation on its application to church planting creates an atmosphere for life long learning. This enables self-feeding, and provides the only source of fuel for sustained church planting effort. Without an ability to self-feed on the Word, the infant never reaches maturity. The healthy disciple is one who knows where to find the food.

The church planter should push for participative Bible study, and accountability in the form of pastoral care from the beginning. A lecture format of mentorship risks passivity among the priesthood. Encouraging a disciple's interpretation and application of the scripture enables the Holy Spirit's guidance and the disciple's willingness to listen for His voice (Jer. 31:33-34). The conversation between God and the believer is the foundation of true discipleship and a strong church planting team (Jn. 3:29-30, 4:42).

6th - Do the tools and plans naturally lead toward church formation?

The end goal is always autonomous churches. With this goal in mind, the tools and plans we make should be evaluated to ensure an environment that flows freely into church function. Our transitions within the four fields should be evaluated so that "seams" that cause believers to trip or get stuck rather

⁹ See "Bible Study Methods" within Field #3 for tools new believers can use to disciple others with solid biblical teaching.

than advance in confidence are consistently eliminated.¹⁰ Beginning discipleship for example, should incorporate aspects of body life, collective identity and mutual responsibility to the commands of Christ necessary for healthy church. In this way the foundation of church commitment and functions are being introduced from the first lesson of following Christ.

Summary of Tool Evaluation

If our goal is multiplication, all of these elements are worth consideration as we answer the question, “Is this tool reproducible?”

For the church planter, careful consideration of outside materials introduced to the field is a must. With each new tool, instrument, book, tradition the church planter sets the expectation for the church and the leaders who are emerging from the harvest. To understand reproducibility, the church planter is served by making a list of all tools, materials, traditions and expectations introduced into the harvest field.

The planter should keep in mind such truths as: choice of instruments is a matter of opinion, holiday traditions are not outlined in scripture, and infrastructure is a luxury not a necessity. Things like hymnbooks, guitars, baptisteries and even chairs should be evaluated. Any of the items listed not native to the context should be carefully scrutinized. If not demanded in scripture they should be discarded. Doing so will promote and protect indigenous ownership of obedience and body life. This process further prevents frivolous financial burdens which often cripple the potential for multiplication.

Materials should utilize the heart language of the people. Among peoples with no written language, or with more traditional oral learning styles oral materials can be easily developed.

¹⁰ It should be noted we make no claim to have eliminated sticking points within our own efforts. Barriers will always exist and should be expected. Rather, we wish to point out a commitment to identify and eliminate sticking points for mobilizing local believers emerging from the harvest.

Tool for the Trainer

As you work through the materials offered in this manual, you will find these questions repeated at the end of every section. Take time in groups of 6-10 to evaluate the tools presented as well as your team employs. Consider the following questions for discussion. Seek to build upon strengths, and take steps to correct any perceived weaknesses within your system. Take time to discuss and explain each “yes” answer. Why are these important?

Questions to consider for every tool introduced in church planting fields:

Is the tool obedience based? How will you internationalize accountability?

Does the tool grant responsibilities?

Does the tool plan for multiplication?

Is the tool facilitated by locals who emerge from the harvest?

Does the tool depend on self-discovery leading to local ownership?

Does the tool demand and catalyze community leading toward church formation?

The answers you find to each question ultimately frame our answer to the question:

Is it reproducible?

Field #1 – Reproducible Entry Strategy

Objectives - The church planter will:

- Evaluate common entry strategies in pursuit of a biblical “best practice.”
- Understand the “outsider to local” transition and its importance.
- Demonstrate faith through childlike obedience to the example and methods of Jesus.

Field #1 is the empty field. All of the potential of the harvest is wrapped up in the soil. The church planter must work under the assumption that each new field, whether urban or rural, has segments that have been prepared for the seed. This is a matter of faith for the church planter. The Holy Spirit prepares the way for the gospel ahead of the church planter’s efforts (Acts 17:26-27). Any failure in this area reflects self-reliance that can potentially halt any church planting effort. As the workers approach such a field, the question they must ask is:

Key Question #1 - *“How do I enter a new field?”*

As we will see in scripture, answering this question properly begins and ends with recognizing where the Holy Spirit is at work and joining Him in His tasks. God’s desire is that “none should perish...” (2 Pet. 3:9). While we hold this to be true, many times our strategies fail to grasp its implications. God is far more passionate about the lost than we are. Even among the least reached peoples of the world a healthy view of calling and timing must reflect a view of God’s involvement and the urgency of the harvest. Those who truly believe God has placed them in His will must also grasp His investment long before their arrival.¹¹ God is in the business of preparing soil.¹² The soil otherwise rocky and shallow has been plowed and fertilized. The church planter is therefore driven as much by discerning where God is at work as by invoking God’s involvement.

Assurance of God’s involvement in our target fields does not insure our discernment of His activities. Joining God within His agenda and timing is no easy task. For this reason, Jesus gave his disciples explicit instructions that were intentionally preserved by the Holy Spirit in the Word. Consider this Bible study within Jesus’ training context. As He mobilized two by two “entry teams” his instructions offer us valuable training material.

¹¹ See Acts 17:26-27 – Paul says, *“From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.”*

¹² An empty field does not indicate an easy task as any field must be prepared to receive the seed. Rocks and stumps must be cleared, soil plowed and prepared as well as removal of any threatening thorns or shrubs that may choke the new growth before it takes root. It is true many times church planting may require decades of prayer. It is also true that many have in the midst of such prayer failed to see the answers as God has opened doors they may simply never have recognized.

Entry Tool: Jesus trains His followers to enter new fields.

Luke chapter 10 reveals Jesus' entry strategy. Consider this passage.

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or a 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. "When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this the kingdom of God is near.'" (Luke 10:1-11)

Luke is careful to give us the specific context of this sending. As Jesus continued to fulfill the Father's purposes, more and more of the Judean and Galilean areas were exposed to the gospel. For Jesus, this mission required entry into new fields, towns and homes. Luke 10:1 details the purpose for and use of the disciples within Jesus strategy. The sending of the disciples is by no means random. Rather Jesus gives each pair a specifically assigned town in which to sow. These towns were selected due to Jesus' imminent plans to enter them. In verse 1 Jesus,

"...sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go."

Jesus did not rush in. Rather detailed instructions were handed to His disciples that were to be completed in preparation for His arrival.

Several reasons for this approach are possible. The disciples who were sent in this manner received on the job training in discerning the Spirit's working. The Spirit had preceded the disciples' arrival preparing the hearts of some to receive the message of peace. Discerning His presence can best be done on site. We can further state that Jesus planned and perhaps prioritized His travel based on the disciples' reports. Jesus' follow-up would certainly encompass areas the disciples had found the Spirit at work.

This sending also created a multiplying effect, reaching out to several villages before filtering the results to prioritize his travels. . Matthew tells us in his gospel, "Jesus visited all the towns and villages of Galilee" (Matt. 9:35). Eckerd Schnabel has suggested no less than 170 villages existed within Galilee in

Jesus day.¹³ This means, not only was Jesus constantly on the move, He likely would not have accomplished the task without the mobilization of disciples authorized to reproduce His efforts.

Finally, although Jesus was sending His Jewish disciples among Jewish towns and homes, the idea of searching for homes and people of peace suggests they were strangers in these fields. Jesus faced the same issues we face today. What is the best way to present a radically different message to a people with an established worldview, methods of decision-making and social structures? Answering this question means transitioning from the efforts of an outsider to mobilization of local believers as the laborers in harvest .

One of the greatest barriers in seeking to present gospel truth is the host culture's perception that ideas shared are foreign. A common solution for this barrier within missiology is an adoption of the host culture in hope of entering the social circle of a particular population. These efforts culminate in the establishment of trust and allow the outsider to earn a voice within the community. While this method is respected, difficulty comes from its foundational assumption. This method assumes the cross-cultural missionary must become an insider. This requires months if not years in most settings.

The urgency of Jesus' task (visiting "all the towns and villages of Galilee" within a three year period, Matt. 9:35), demanded a different approach. The disciple's joyous report within hours or days of His sending them reveals the potential fruit of a drastically different method. (T4T)

Jesus did not send His outsiders to become insiders; rather he sent them to seek out those locals whom the Spirit had prepared to receive the message. In this way after its initial acceptance, within the house of peace, the spread of the gospel carried potential to become movement driven by local believers. The door the Spirit had opened became a gateway through which others could respond within their own social structure.

Self- Discovery Study – Entry Strategy

In groups or in pairs, have your students read about Jesus' entry strategy and record answers to the following questions.

Self-Discovery Study - Luke 10:1-11

Take time now to read Luke 10 and answer the following questions from the passage.

- 1) What did Jesus tell the disciples to do?
- 2) What did Jesus tell the disciples not to do?
- 3) What was the goal of their efforts?

¹³ Eckhard Schnabel, *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies and Methods*. (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity, 2008).

We can be sure Jesus was not wasting His breath. Every instruction given the disciples had a specific purpose in Jesus' mind. Careful consideration of these, "do's and don'ts" reveals great wisdom for approaching the work as outsiders.

The means of entry is given to us in verse 2.

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Jesus instruction is simple. Go and ask! Most versions read, "Go and pray..." Simple, concentrated, on-site prayer was commanded. Jesus begins the disciples' lesson with a tool that helps the church planter to see the doors already open to the gospel. Nothing is more important. Jesus demands his disciples to intercede on behalf of the neglected harvest field. While the grain is ready to be cut, no one is swinging the sickle. Unless the harvest is perceived, it will never be gathered. Part of God's answer to this petition is the opening of our own eyes to see the harvest.

Going and praying is the first "do" on Jesus list. On site prayer was intended as the window for entry.

Jesus then begins an extensive list of do's and don't's.

Do's

Say 'Peace to the house'
Stay in that house
Eat/Drink what is given
Heal the Sick
Say, 'The Kingdom is near'
Not welcomed? Shake off
the dust.

Don'ts

Don't take a purse
Don't take a bag
Don't take sandals
Don't greet on the road
Do not move house to house

Every time this passage is applied, new insights and possible explanation will be revealed to the church planter. Jesus' wisdom in giving these instructions enabled the disciples to evaluate the Lord's working and correctly identify those serious about the gospel.

Because the disciples traveled without rations or the means to support themselves, they were dependent from the beginning on the Lord to open doors for them. It was all or nothing. Either they found things the way Jesus had instructed, or they would go hungry. Several possible reasons exist for this instruction:

- 1) The disciples were dependent and therefore were to recognize God's provision.
- 2) Jesus used experience to teach His disciples the wages of the gospel.

- 3) Jesus intended the vulnerability of the disciples to be a filter to identify those in whom grace was being revealed.
- 4) Could Jesus have intended to bless the merciful for their welcome of his sent ones? “Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy” (Matt. 5:7)?
- 5) Allowing someone to serve you builds trust and value in the relationship.
- 6) Others?

Why did Jesus tell them not to greet anyone on the road? Possible answers include:

- 1) They would face less distraction, and would exhibit single-mindedness.
- 2) They were to go straight to heads of household rather than fringe peoples.
- 3) They were learning that life-changing decisions are most often made in the home.

This also reveals the goal of the journey and prayer. Jesus intended his disciples to locate “homes and men of peace.” These were simply homes and men in which the peace of God would be welcomed and accepted.¹⁴ For this reason the disciples were not to be distracted, even by those on the road, and were not to move around from house to house.

Disciples whose greetings of peace were received had finished their search for a house of peace. At this point they were to move into the instruction on the kingdom of God and its imminence.

Goal of Luke 10 – Houses and men of peace.

Jesus’ focus was a home open to the gospel. We will see later how this venue sets the stage for the birth of new churches. Let us realize first, however, the family has always been the target of God.

Within the record of God’s judgments in the Old Testament we see again and again the deliverance of families. As the flood approached, it was Noah and his family who were spared (Gen. 6-9). When God passed judgment on Sodom, His intention was the deliverance of Lot and his family (Gen. 19). As Joshua led the Israelites across the Jordan River to destroy Jericho, it was only Rahab and her family who were spared (Joshua 2, 6:17).

In the same way within the New Testament, we see the Holy Spirit’s leadership engaging whole families consistent with the Luke 10 model. Consider the following passages. Who was saved?

Acts 10: 9-48 / Acts 16:13-15 / Acts 16: 25-34 / Acts 18:5-11

¹⁴ The importance of “house of peace” can be fully appreciated when the entire church planting process is in view. The fulfilled goal of entry strategy, the house of peace, provides an efficient venue for evangelism, discipleship and church formation. An entry that opens homes provides a *seamless* transition to house church starts.

In each case in the midst of prayer, the Holy Spirit opens a door to the homes of peace. In each case, the entire family is enabled to believe and all who believe are baptized immediately. Each of these cases, as with the Old Testament passages mentioned above, make use of the Greek word *oikos* to describe the family or household.¹⁵ While exact rendering of this word is difficult in English, the concept is clearly seen in the two-thirds of the world where extended family is the norm. In the case of Cornelius, *oikos* was used to refer to his family, friends and neighbors, all over whom he had influence over. Lydia, a God-fearing woman also proved to be the gatekeeper to her family (Acts 16:15). Through her the door opened to what would become the Philippian church highly praised by Paul in his letter to the Philippians.

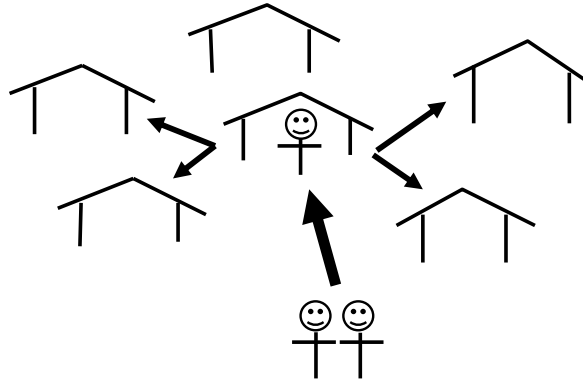
A study of the similarities between Luke 10 and the ongoing practices in the book of Acts shows several similarities. Jesus had warned His disciples in Luke 10:3 that persecution would come. This was the context in which Paul connected to the Philippian jailor (Acts 16) as well as the household of Crispus in Acts 18. Prayer seems to be the thread connecting all such examples. Peter was caught up in prayer as God revealed to him his plan for Cornelius and other Gentiles. Paul was in pursuit of a place of prayer when Lydia was introduced. Again within the Philippian jail, the earthquake that freed the prisoners was within the context of prayer and praise by Paul and Silas.

Another common occurrence within all these passages was the quick departure of the pioneer evangelist. As the Luke 10 petition for laborers in the harvest was cast in the book of Acts, those from the outside were never God's long-term answer to the request. After a few days Peter left Caesarea (Acts 10:48). Upon his release from jail, Paul left Philippi (Acts 16:40). Many times Paul was forced to move on as persecution grew (e.g., Acts 17:1-13). In a world where our God is sovereign, we must assume God allowed such pressure to keep Paul moving forward. The one exception was Corinth in which Paul is said to have spent 18 months in response to a vision from the Lord (Acts 18:11). The point here is that God did not use those pioneer church planters as the laborers in the harvest fields. Rather, their absence demanded new leaders emerge from within the harvest.

God's answer to the petition for laborers in Luke 10 seems to have been new believers revealed through the house of peace. Those who had accepted the message of peace were rooted in communities in which churches began. The churches of Caesarea, Philippi and Corinth are clear examples of this method. In this way the gospel began to spread among trusted locals capable of reaching the existing community structures.¹⁶

¹⁵ Acts 10:24/16:15/16:31,33/18:8 see also, Septuagint – Gen 7:1/19:12,15/ Joshua 6:17,22-23

¹⁶ Areas where locals have taken up gospel ministry have consistently proven the most fruitful in our ministry. For the importance of lay driven ministry and on the job training see: David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*. (Midlothian: WIGTake Resources, Bangalore, 2004).



In Acts the transition to local leadership seems to have been built upon local authority structures. As God prepared men and women of influence to receive the message of peace, the message peace was not hindered by a perceived foreign influence. It was unhindered as it flowed through the recognized, redeemed authority structures of local culture. Local responsibility and ownership resulted in multiplication of the message (1 Thess. 1:5-6).

Working the Plan

An entry strategy modeled after Jesus' example includes the sending of disciples into various fields with specific instructions and goals. These instructions should mirror Jesus' instructions as much as possible, thus ensuring accomplishment of His goals. The goal of our being sent is identification of houses and men of peace who welcome the message of the gospel. Said another way, the goal is open homes! These homes serve as gateways into these communities. When you discover the house of peace you have discovered the location of your next church plant. New believers within this setting maintain their familiar authority structure and pattern for decision-making. The new believers who are insiders in the community should immediately be mobilized to gather and expose their *oikos* to the message of Christ.

Further towns or communities can be accessed through the *oikos* of the man and house of peace. Family members who have scattered for work or marriage provide connection to further fields and should be followed-up by the new believers.

Tool for the Trainer

One of the most effective tools of entry strategy is a simple list of the men of peace's *Oikos*. Have each new believer make a list of at least 25 family members and friends who need Christ.

This list represents their circle of influence, and therefore their responsibility. Weekly accountability to sharing with those on the list can facilitate a locally driven movement in the pattern of Acts 10, 16 and 18.

Other Common Entry Strategies

When we consider the popular entry strategies employed today, how do they compare with Luke 10?

- 1) Door to door evangelism— blanket visitation of each home in a geographic area.
Strength – saturation.
Difficulty – discernment is replaced with a blanket approach that is as likely to stir up persecution and propaganda/false motives as it is a movement of God.¹⁷
- 2) Crusade – Gather a crowd or approach a crowd with the message.
Strengths - attractive events. Community oriented.
Difficulty – transition to the venue and agent of discipleship is unnatural, decisions are not made within existing authority structures. Follow-up is difficult logistically and relationally. Converting fringe peoples is more likely. While this is good, it typically grows existing churches rather than catalyzing new church starts. Targeting fringe peoples often carries the unintended result of pushing mainstream community farther away.
- 3) Mass Programming – Radio/ TV.
Strengths – mass exposure to the gospel.
Difficulty – maintaining feedback loops for those who respond can be troublesome. Confusion possible as the medium is open to mixed influences. Dependent on technologies. Radio depends on coverage area and reliable radio receivers. Expensive.
- 4) Social ministry – Meeting felt needs.
Strengths –fulfills the Lord’s command to give. Can clear the rocks and stumps of prejudice and the propaganda of false theologies from a new field.
Difficulties – potential exist within projects for false motives and loyalties that separate mercy ministry from the intended agent of transformation - the church. Grand scale of projects may not be reproducible on local levels.

A note on healing - We should also note here that healing the sick was only one of the instructions of those sent out (Luke 10:9). Healing is a tool within entry strategy, not the strategy itself. When rightly interpreted, healing provides a sharp demonstration of the Lord’s power and love. It provides confirmation of the Lord blessing the message (1 Cor. 2:1-5). The good news of the kingdom must remain the goal of entry. “Peace to this house” is the engine intended by Christ to drive entry strategy.

Each of these methods listed above is attractive due to the pace in which penetration is possible. Each rightly claims expedience as its major strength. At their most effective, however, each of these methods

¹⁷ It is important to understand, once entry has been made through the house of peace, *oikos* may indeed take a form similar to a door-to-door approach as the insider spreads the good news. This is however a 2nd phase activity facilitated by the man of peace.

is still dependent on a “mouth to ear” presentation of the gospel for follow-up.¹⁸ These conclusions are not meant to discourage such ministry attempts. Rather, it is to distinguish them as preparatory or even pre-evangelistic activities. They may, in fact, foster an environment for “men of peace” to emerge in later Luke 10 applications.

End-visioning-Entry Strategy

WIGTAKE, What is it Going to Take?

Developing a plan for entry into new fields is a must for the church planter. In doing so, it is best to begin with the end in mind. Knowing the fields God has assigned you will help determine many aspects of your ministry. Here we ask a simple question.

How many fields must we enter?

For this purpose, let us consider a hypothetical study of the “X” people group. The X people have a population of 1 million living in the state of Assam in India. As plans are made to engage the X people, it is appropriate to gauge the size of this task. Knowing the X live in scattered communities, we realize Entry Strategy must be prioritized.

“X” people, population – 1,000,000

Accessing census and available people group studies, we can safely estimate the average size of the “X” household at 5-7 people. By this we know as many as 200,000 households exist among the “X”.

**Pop. – 1,000,000 divided by
5 per household =
200,000 households**

We can also estimate the number of villages among the “X” people. Accessing data given by a local aid organization, it can be estimated the average “X” village hosts fifty homes. Having visited 20 such villages to confirm this data, we can therefore estimate the number of “X” villages.

**200,000 “X” households
divided by 50 households per village
= 4,000 villages**

¹⁸ “Mouth to Ear” (M2E) simply means one must explain while others listen. This form of one-on-one evangelism cannot be replaced by media, as questions and misunderstandings often must be addressed.

In this way, the necessity of Entry Strategy can be fairly assessed. The task of reaching the “X” people includes entering multiple fields or villages. Assessing such information gives the church planter a clear measuring rod for progress. An increase in the number of villages responding to the gospel from year to year is a clear indicator of advance.

For those with a geographical or megacity approach, care must be given to the perceived communities within the population. We must not assume the gospel will flow freely from one group to another without special attention. For this reason, the church planter is well served to approach a city in a similar fashion as one would multiple villages. Ethnic, linguistic and economic factors must all be considered in order to assure exposure across the area.

Consider your Target People
Name of People _____ Location _____
Population =’s _____
Population divided by 5 = _____ homes
Homes divided by 50 homes per village = _____ villages.
How many villages are currently being engaged?
What is your goal for the next calendar year?

Entry Strategy Goals - Men of Peace/Oikos

1) A team of prayer warriors trained in Luke 10 strategy targets new villages.

Remember as time passes and new villages are engaged, this team should multiply just as Jesus sent first 12 and then 70 others (Luke 9-10). For this reason one must consider the resources needed to mobilize such teams and plan from the beginning for exponential growth. This is an area in which bi-vocational/lay ministers can have great impact if committed to weekly activity.

2) Every believer, 100%, within your network has a list of his or her own *oikos* and is following up responses with new groups.

Every believer has a circle of influence including family, friends, co-workers and neighbors - a window through which family groups must be targeted with exposure to the gospel.

Specific Actions

Set specific goals for # of villages to be entered in the next three/six/twelve months.

Map out the existing *oikos* groups within your network to discover connections in neighboring villages.

Train an entry team and go try it! Send the members of your team two by two into neighboring villages. Practice Luke 10 and search for the homes of peace. Work the plan!!!

Evaluating the Tool – Luke 10 - House of Peace Strategy

Take time in groups of 6-10, to review Jesus' method in Luke chapter 10 for entering pioneer fields. Consider the following questions for discussion. Seek to build upon strengths and take steps to correct any perceived weaknesses within your efforts. Where might your methods need improvement?

Questions to consider:

Is it obedience based? Is there an accountability process?

Does the tool grant responsibilities?

Does the tool plan for multiplication?

Is the tool facilitated by locals?

Does the tool depend on self-discovery?

Does the tool lead to church formation?

Is the tool reproducible?

Explain each "yes" answer. Why are these important?

Field #2 – Reproducible Gospel Presentation

Seeding the Field

Objectives – The church planter will:

- Understand of “Mouth to Ear” tools for gospel presentation
- Examine biblical qualifications for evangelism
- Understand partnership with the Holy Spirit in evangelism
- Develop a vision for mobilization of believers through evangelism training

Here we put seed in the hands of the sowers. Presentation of the gospel to those living in darkness is the heart of the Great Commission and the gateway to discipleship. Mastering and utilizing simple tools is the goal of every church planter. As we will see, modeling and empowering others by training with these tools are also essential to maximize the harvest. As we consider field #2 let us again consider the sower’s task.

Every corner of the field should be saturated. The farmer is unaware of which soil is richest. There are no guarantees concerning which seed will grow and which will not. The sower simply sows with confidence. It is the nature of seed to sprout and grow. When the kingdom is in view, the seed in the parable is the Word of God, specifically the gospel (Mark 4:14).

Having examined Jesus’ example of entry (key question #1) we come to our second key question.

Key Question #2A – What do I say?

Answering this question in the minds of potential church planters empowers and directs them to action. Teaching others what to say means multiplying the witness. The logic is simple: the more sowers in the field, the more seed will be sown.

Recently I heard a man say that there are only two kinds of people in the world:

- 1) Those who need to hear my story of salvation.
- 2) Those who need to be trained to tell their story!

This truth creates another key question within our ministries:

Key Question #2B - Who is qualified to share?

All of us have answered this question (even without knowing we have done it) through our expectations of the disciples in our network. Those we take time to train and hold accountable to sharing are those we truly feel are qualified. This truth is perceived by our disciples as well. Those who stand aside or are not trained must assume they are not qualified to partake in such ministry. In this sense, our expectation becomes a qualification. The problem comes when our expectations conflict with Christ’s.

Mathew 28: 18-20 was given to all believers. It is a command! Any believer who is not spreading seed is in violation of this command. The only way to overcome sin is to repent and turn from sin toward God (Acts 3:19). We must expect obedience from all believers.

Let us see how Jesus answered this question.

Tool for the Trainer

Take the time to commit the following story from scripture to memory. Use your own words. Expressing the lessons of the passage is as important as the details. Use the story to teach the following lessons.

John 4: 4-42

Now he [Jesus] had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Joseph had given his son Jacob. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into town to buy food).

The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would've given you living water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

"I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim the place we must worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth."

The woman said, "I know the Messiah," (called Christ) "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 to a woman. But no-one asked, "What do you want?" or "why are you talking with her?"

v. 28-30 – 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 Christ?" 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 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. Even now the reaper draws his wages; even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper are glad together. Thus the saying 'one sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

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 because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

Answering the Key Question – *Who is qualified to share?*

If asked, "Who is the greatest evangelist of our time," who would your answer be? We have asked this question hundreds of evangelism trainings. We have heard the same response over 90% of the time, with exceptions coming only in remote fields among purely new believers. Billy Graham is known worldwide as *the* evangelist of the 20th century.

Let us consider Billy Graham's qualifications.

Billy Graham

- 1) Is Billy Graham a male or a female? Answer - Male
- 2) What is Billy Graham's education level? Answer – Multiple degrees
- 3) How long has Billy Graham been a believer? Answer – Since a young age
- 4) What is Billy Graham's reputation? Answer - Good, advisor to presidents
- 5) How would you describe Billy Graham's lifestyle? Answer - Righteous

Other evangelists that people might offer in response to this question will likely possess these same qualities. Collectively, this list could be used to describe competencies for any evangelist in our own minds. When applied to our key question however, these qualifications severely limit the potential candidates for sowing.

Who was the evangelist in the John 4 passage? Who partnered with God to share the good news of Jesus?

Answer – the Samaritan woman!

Jesus first won her and then sent her to call her *oikos* to faith. She was a tremendously effective evangelist! Within the story her whole village was pointed toward Jesus as the Christ, and many have believed in Jesus as the Savior of the world.

Consider now her qualifications:

Samaritan Woman

- 1) Male or Female? Answer - Female
- 2) What was her education? Answer – Little chance she was educated
- 3) How long had she been a believer? Answer - New believer, 1 day
- 4) What was her reputation likely to have been? Answer - Bad reputation
- 5) How would you describe her past lifestyle? Answer - Sinful past- 5 husbands

This is not the person we would have chosen to represent us. Yet given the choice of sending Peter, who led three thousand on the day of Pentecost, or John, who recorded the gospel, or even Thomas, who many believe traveled as far as India with the gospel, Jesus set all aside and invited her to partner with him for sowing the seed of the gospel in her village. She was chosen to represent God Most High! What does this teach us?

In John 4, Jesus teaches his disciples and all who hear the story that God's list of qualifications differs from ours. Anyone committed to obedience in the name of Jesus Christ is qualified for partnership in evangelism.

With this in mind, the church planter's goal should be obvious:

Equip and commission *every believer* to spread the gospel.
Hold the priesthood accountable to their natural duty!¹⁹

Effectiveness in evangelism cannot be profiled. Looking into a crowd and attempting to identify the potential evangelists is a mistake.

*The only way to discover effective evangelists is to train everyone
and allow faithfulness to reveal fruitfulness.*

We are often amazed when the last we expect become the most fruitful. Many of our greatest breakthroughs have come as a surprise to us. Training the laity and allowing God to use the faithful to employ simple tools will reveal the fruitful.

We can not emphasize enough: equipping lay people is where the fruit is! Expect all believers to sow the seed. Demand accountability from all believers to the Great Commission, and fruit will follow.

As disciples are trained, the church planter should expect similar results. Consider the following summary of our experience having trained thousands:

When training 20 believers to do evangelism, you should not be surprised by the following.

12-15 – Inactive 3-5 - Active but fruitless 1-2 – Super-producers

The Samaritan woman was a “super-producer.” Super-producers are the faithful, highly effective seed sowers. Examples include the demoniac who shared in the Decapolis (Mark 5:1-20), Peter, the fisherman whose preaching won three thousand at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41), or Epaphras who in Paul’s absence planted the Colossian church (Col. 1:7, 4:12). Discovering and empowering such individuals multiplies the potential of your ministry.

Why was the Samaritan woman so effective?

The Samaritan woman shows us “four essentials of evangelism” through her actions.

Consider again verse 28-30.

v. 28-30 – 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 Christ?” They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

¹⁹ This foundation of church planting should not be taken for granted. Scripture clearly calls the church of the New Testament a priesthood. This includes every believer (1 Peter 2:9-10). See 1 Peter 1:1 for confirmation of the scope of Peter’s audience.

The Samaritan Woman's Four Essentials

1) Immediate obedience to Christ

As soon as the Samaritan woman recognized Jesus as the Messiah, she left everything and obeyed his instruction. She went to the town and called the people. Verse 28 tells us she even left her water jar. Nothing was more important than obedience. Her routine, daily needs and questions were put on hold to obey.

A "DNA" of obedience in evangelism is essential. Every believer has at times been prompted by the Holy Spirit to share the good news. Our willingness to respond is a life or death decision. It is also a matter of Lordship as 1 Pet. 3:15 shows:

"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

In the matter of sharing, this text declares our preparedness to be a matter of Lordship. We must decide ahead to be faithful when opportunities arise.

Tool for the Trainer

The list created within entry strategy of non-Christian friends and family serves as a prompt for evangelistic efforts. Commission your disciples to take advantage of the next opportunity to share with those on their lists. Make it a matter of prayer and obedience to the Lordship of Christ.

2) The personal testimony of the believer

In verse 29, the woman said two things to the people. The first of these two was her personal testimony: *"Come see the man who told me everything I ever did."*

Verse 39 confirms this by stating, *"Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I ever did.'"*

There is no record of the woman preaching. John did not record her bringing out the people's shortcomings or pointing any fingers. Rather, she expressed the experience she had with the Messiah. It was her personal story, involving her very personal past. Again 1 Peter 3:15 is appropriate. *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."*

We have often found the testimony of new believers to be the sharpest tool for evangelism. Their life change is fresh, and almost everyone they know is a non-believer!

Tool for the Trainer

Take the time to train each believer in sharing his or her personal testimony. Paul's example for us in Acts 22:1-21, contains three parts, and if read, takes around three minutes.

- 1) Paul's life before Christ – v. 1-5
- 2) How Paul met Christ – v. 6-16
- 3) How Paul's life changed after Christ – v. 17-21

Train your disciples to share their story in these same three parts. Limiting practice to three minutes assures the essential elements are communicated every time we share. Emphasize the encounter that led to **faith**, the change that followed **repentance** and the new walk with Christ as **Lord** (Acts 20:21).

- 3) A gospel presentation.

Verse 29, "Could this be the Christ?"

Gospel presentation means: *presenting Jesus as the Savior and calling people to a decision.*

This is what the Samaritan woman did. She did not demand faith; rather she simply laid the matter before the people. This left the decision to them. Do you believe He is the Savior, or not? Can Jesus save you or not? The choice was theirs.

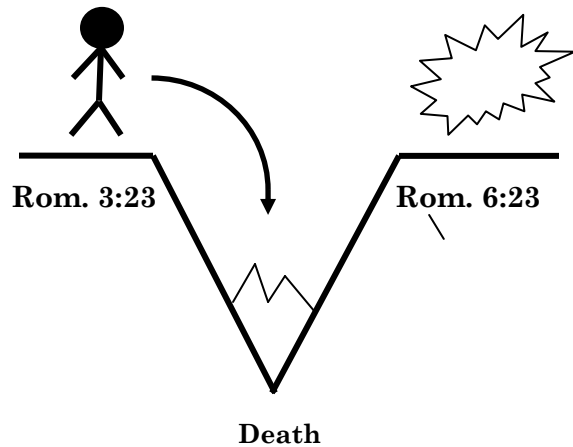
1 Peter 3:15 concludes by saying – *"Do this with gentleness and respect."* Presenting Christ as the savior and calling for decision is all we are asked to do. The rest belongs to the Holy Spirit.

Whatever form your gospel presentation takes, it should remain as simple as possible. Refine your gospel presentation using the language of the people. Avoid scholarly and religious vocabulary. In this way, it is not only understood by the lost, but can be reproduced by your disciples.

We have used the following tool for teaching new believers how to get started in sharing the gospel.

Tool for Evaluation: The Gospel Drawing

The book of Romans tells us about the problem of sin and the way to approach God. Here is a simple way to understand and explain the solution Jesus gives. Believing the message of Jesus and turning from our sins to follow Him brings salvation and relationship with God through Jesus.



Have disciples memorize these four verses with the following emphases.

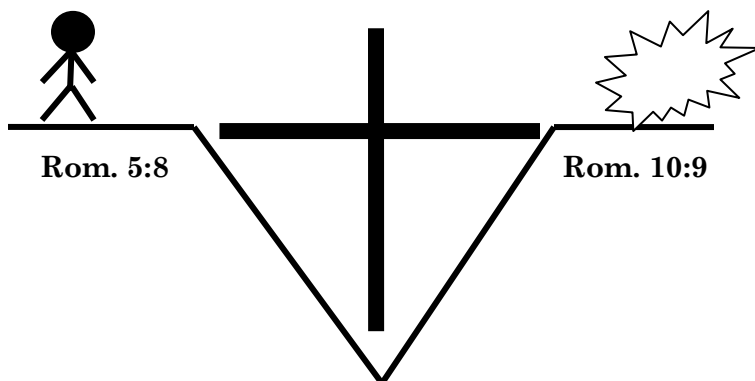
Romans 3:23 – All **sin**: our efforts are not enough because only God is **holy**.

Romans 6:23 – Sin brings **death**, but there is hope in the **gift of God**.

Romans 5:8 – God’s plan for us is this: **Jesus died** for us **while we were in sin**.

Romans 10:9 – To receive His salvation: we must **confess** Jesus as our **one Lord**, **believe** His **resurrection** in our heart as our hope of salvation.

Because of sin we could not reach God, but God had a plan to reach us!



You can use these two simple drawings and the four verses listed from Romans to share the good news of salvation with anyone. Start with your family. Share with all your friends and neighbors.

The simplicity of the gospel drawing is intended to encourage confidence leading to an initial attempt to share the good news. We have found the most difficult attempt to share the gospel is the first one.²⁰ Overcoming the fear of sharing demands a simple starting point. If a disciple does not believe he can share the good news, no attempt will be made. For this reason, keep it simple! As the disciple grows in confidence, the questions his hearers present will become the venue for further learning.

As a disciple grows in his ability to share, consider the following study for self discovery.

<u>Self Discover Assignment</u>	
Examples within the book of Acts provide us with key elements to include in our presentation. Here Paul's presentation in Acts 17 has been completed. Take time to examine Acts 2 to discover Peter's key elements.	
Acts 17: 22-31	Acts 2:14-39
God is described as:	
Creator and Lord of all (v.24-26)	
Alive and the giver of life (v.27-29)	
Judge of all through Christ (v.30-31)	
Savior by Christ's death and resurrection (v. 31). One who demands repentance (v. 30).	

4) Introduction to Christ

Finally, we see the woman lead the people to the feet of Jesus (v.30). We no longer need to take people to the well in Sychar, but we must still make the introduction.

If you were to introduce two strangers, you would bring them together and allow them to converse. If you spoke for both parties, the relationship would never begin. Relationship depends on communication. When we speak to God, we call it "prayer." Modeling simple prayer for the potential believer opens a pathway for communication. As the seeker encounters future problems he or she is capable of reproducing what has been modeled. Searching the scripture with the seeker provides opportunity to model listening for God's response. As difficulties arise, the seeker can then begin to hear from God on his or her own. The conversation has begun.

Verse 42 demonstrates this essential.

²⁰ See: Alvin Reid, *Introduction to Evangelism*, who states, "Fear is the greatest barrier to the advance of the gospel."

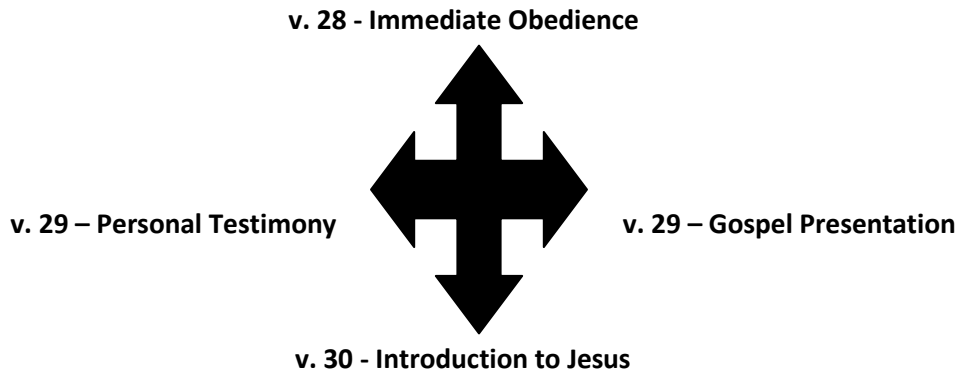
“The people said to the woman, ‘We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.’”



All believers are expected to take up the Great Commission. Implementing these four essentials in the expectations you have of every believer will reveal many faithful and fruitful evangelists within any network. Consider this simple diagram for organizing these essentials.

The Four Essentials of Evangelism

John 4:4-42



Tool for the Trainer

When training new believers in these four essentials, consider the following saying for memorization.

(With hands above the head)

“We give immediate obedience to the Lord.”

(With hands extended outward)

“We reach out with a Personal Testimony and a simple Gospel Presentation.”

(With hands extended downward)

“We lay a foundation by introducing them to Christ.”

Working the Plan

Now that we have established every believer as a potential and commissioned evangelist, the task before the church planter is mobilizing laborers for in the harvest. Training and sending the army into the fields is a top priority. Anything less than 100% of your network faithfully sowing falls short of the Great Commission's expectation.

For this reason, a system of accountability must be established. For pre-existing networks, this can be a painful process. As we said earlier, you can expect surprises as many unanticipated super-producers emerge from within the network. At the same time, you can expect some of the long-time evangelists to be unmasked by such accountability. Such "posers" will quickly be revealed and should be either corrected or released.

As much as possible, weekly support in the form of prayer and reporting should be established. Each member of the church should be expected to take advantage of daily and weekly opportunities to sow the seed of the gospel. In this way, the truly faithful and fruitful are recognized and are empowered toward new church starts.

Allow the fruit to demonstrate the health of the tree!

A personal testimony and a simple gospel presentation can be learned in one day. Combined with a list of non-believers to reach, the seed sower is ready to move. Send them out, and just as Jesus did, call them back to report the fruit of their labors (Luke 10:17-20).

Remember, mouth to ear is a necessity for effective evangelism. Even when mass evangelism tools are employed, the gospel still depends upon one-on-one follow-up. Multiplying sowers multiplies the seed sown!

End- Visioning – Gospel Presentation

"WIGTAKE" – What is It Going to Take?

Consider again the "X" people group with a population of 1 million souls. Keeping in mind God's stated will (2 Pet. 3:9), that none should perish, we must ask ourselves:

How many sowers are needed so that all might hear?

As we approach the "X" people, we trust God has heard and is responding to the Luke 10:2 prayer for laborers in the harvest. Determining the size of this task helps the church planter to set God-sized goals capable of fulfilling His desires.

Let us assume a faithful lay evangelist or seed sower of the gospel is able to sustain a consistent, thorough witness among 8-10 households. These households, at an average of five per home, create an umbrella of approximately 50 people.

One lay evangelist = saturation of 10 homes. At 5 people per home, this equals 50 people under the sower's umbrella.

With this in mind, how many lay evangelists would be needed to bring the gospel within reach of the "X" people?

"X" Population = 1,000,000
1 Lay Sower = 50 people.
1 Million Divided by 50 = 20,000
1 Million "X" People Reached by 20,000 Lay Sowers
*Reaching 10% of the "X" people requires
2,000 faithful sowers!*

Goals - Gospel Presentation - Mouth to Ear and Gospel Saturation

- 1) **100% of the existing network are trained and held accountable for sharing their story (Personal Testimony) and His story (Gospel Presentation) by this date _____.**

As new believers are added, consider incorporating testimony training into the celebration of baptism. This ensures each new believer has been trained as you move forward.

- 2) **Accountability groups are formed, encouraging and taking reports from each believer weekly. Every member is challenged to share with five people each week.**

Groups should meet weekly and will likely in time be led by the faithful sowers among your network. In the implementation of these goals, avoid competition, rather, mutual encouragement and prayer over the harvest should be the focus.

Specific Actions

Model the accountability groups and lay mobilization with either heads of household within your network or with the projected leaders of such groups. Consider several possible gospel presentations before deciding which one you will use. Base your decision on the most reproducible and understandable presentation within your context. If people can understand it, they can reproduce it!

If necessary, utilize different presentations under different circumstances. Give the faithful the freedom to adapt and experiment with a variety of presentations, but make small, incremental changes to avoid confusion and determine where change is really effective. Work a presentation 100 times as a sample size before suggesting or implementing change. Apply what is effective to the larger group.

Evaluation – John 4 and the Four Essentials

Take time in groups of 6-10, to evaluate Jesus method in John chapter 4 for mobilizing sowers. Consider the following questions for discussion. Seek to build upon strengths, and take steps to correct any perceived weaknesses within your efforts.

Questions to consider:

Is the tool obedience based? Is there an accountability process?

Does the tool grant responsibilities?

Does the tool plan for multiplication?

Is the tool facilitated by locals?

Does the tool depend on self-discovery?

Does the tool lead to church formation?

Is the tool reproducible?

Explain each “yes” answer. Why are these important?

Field #3 – Reproducible Discipleship



The Field of New Growth



Objectives – The church planter will:

- Evaluate existing and potential discipleship tools
- Understand the discipleship process and role of mentorship
- Develop discipleship tools and chains within each network

Discipleship is represented by the field of new growth. Once houses of peace have been identified and the gospel shared, it is natural to think of discipleship beginning in the home. This has many benefits. As mentioned earlier, family-based discipleship makes use of existing authority structures. In this way our entry, gospel and discipleship strategies flow seamlessly through the homes God has prepared.

The church planter's expectations of these new believers will determine the potential for multiplication. Every time new believers are added within a network of churches, a decision must be made. Two options exist:

- 1) Gather them into an existing church.
- 2) New believers begin new churches.

While the first of these choices is employed 90% of the time, the second option represents vastly greater potential. For those who have practiced a Luke 10 entry strategy, the houses of peace revealed by God should be perceived as potential church starts.

Transition to field #3 demands a close look at our methods and models of discipleship.

Key Question – How do I make disciples?

Understanding Short and Long-Term Discipleship

When considering discipleship, the church planter is wise to consider two categories: short-term and long-term discipleship. In order to understand these, consider these two questions.

- 1) What will get them started? – Short-term
- 2) What will keep them moving? -- Long-term

Short -Term Discipleship – Think in terms of 1 to 3 months.

Lessons taught within this period lay a foundation (either strong or weak), on which the disciple will build his or her new life in Christ.

Typically, short-term discipleship consists of 6-10 lessons shaped by the elements of reproducibility. If multiplication is the goal, responsibility, accountability and reproducibility are a must. This means measurable actions and goals must drive the material forward. Choose training over teaching, everything taught must be practiced!

Short-term discipleship sets the “DNA” of new churches. The church planter should accept this axiom:
What a disciple does in the first three months of faith he or she will reproduce throughout his walk.

If the disciple is asked to passively observe the work of the church, passivity will likely be the “DNA.” If the disciple is expected to aggressively pursue friends and loved ones, reproducing what has been trained, multiplication is set in motion.

Long -Term Discipleship – Think in terms of 1 to 3 years.

While milk must be provided by the mother, maturity is dependent upon the ability to feed oneself. In the same way, long-term discipleship must be driven by the disciple’s own pursuit of the Lord. The church planter must choose materials that promote a healthy walk with the Lord capable of transforming one’s family and community relationships as well.

The material chosen or developed must reflect a dependence upon the Word of God and the Spirit of God as the life-long counselor of the disciple. Exposing the new follower of Christ to His voice through the Word is a must. The Holy Spirit is the teacher, further molding the actions and attitudes of the disciple into the image of Christ (Rom.8:29).

For this reason, long-term discipleship should focus on the transmission of tools capable of guiding the disciple throughout life. A disciple capable of managing such tools is free to stand on the Word.²¹

<u>Short-Term Discipleship</u>	<u>Long-Term Discipleship</u>
1-3 Months	1-3 Years
Pattern of Obedience	Captivity of Every Thought
Spiritual Milk - DNA	Spiritual Meat - Self Feeding
Dependent upon a mentor	Accountable to mentor
Lays the Foundation	Erects the Structure

²¹ As churches begin to multiply, further long-term discipleship may include theological education. For such education, consider the strengths of “extension” or informal programs capable of a trickle down approach while not disconnecting leaders from their fields (TEE). Evaluate these potential systems for strengths and possible weaknesses, and do your best to incorporate “self-discovery” as the primary teaching method. For materials consistent with the vocabulary and vision of this manual contact us through: www.churchplantingmovements.com

Short-Term Discipleship Tools

Any experienced church planter will have discovered the value of a beginning discipleship package. Not only does such a package ensure right DNA among new believers, it also facilitates the habit of meeting together. This habit may not be natural among cultures in which worship is private. The Apostle Paul seems to have employed such a package of beginning discipleship. Many of his letters make reference to the “pattern of sound teaching” which he taught “everywhere in every church.”²² Unfortunately, as it was undoubtedly transmitted orally, we do not have a written outline of Paul’s pattern. We do however have all the tools necessary to recreate a package of sound DNA to get believers started in their walk with Christ.

Creating a Beginning Discipleship Package

Matthew 28:19-20 *“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.”*

Within the Great Commission we are instructed to make disciples of all nations. We do this by baptism and teaching. Within the Matthew passage written above, what is to be the subject and goal of our teaching?

Answer – Obedience to the Lord’s commands.

Many times as we read the Commission, we assume our role is to communicate all the commands of Christ. Each one of us continues to discover and apply Jesus’ commands in our daily lives. Attempting to teach all the commands would require lifetime commitment with a handful of disciples. The Commission charges us with teaching obedience! Contrary to teaching commands, teaching obedience can be accomplished in a relatively short time. The pattern or habit of obedience is to be the goal of the disciple maker. In this way, long after the teacher has departed, discipleship continues as the learner discovers and by force of habit obeys the commands of Christ. Teaching commands with no expectation for obedience strips the Commission of its reproduction. It also robs momentum from your ministry. Do not settle for do’s and don’ts. Instead, fulfill the Lord’s expectation, teach obedience.

It is worth our time to consider which commands we will use to establish a pattern of obedience.

²² Paul uses the term “*hupertypon*” and “*typon*” to describe his pattern in: 2 Timothy 1:13 and Romans 6:17. It has been suggested this term, translated “pattern” or “form” is most accurately translated “supertype.” Within these passages, Paul has multiplied this pattern through Timothy into the Ephesian fields as well as through Aquila and Priscilla into the Roman church he had not yet visited at the time of his writing. When 1 Corinthians 4:17 is considered it seems clear, Paul expected his disciples to teach and train others in a set pattern. Establishing expectation and discipline among every branch of his church planting ministry mattered to Paul.

Self- Discovery Assignment

In groups of 6-10, take a moment to consider the first church in Acts chapter 2:28-47. Make note of the church's activities. List activities you believe are fulfillment of the direct commands of Jesus?

List them here and cite the verse in which they are found.

Determining what the first church practiced from the beginning, and prioritizing these elements in our beginning discipleship help to motivate and ground new believers in clear biblical precedent. Teaching obedience to such commands of Jesus is not a one-time event; rather it requires ongoing practice motivated by their love relationship with God (John 14:15, 14:21, 15:10)²³

Consider our findings concerning the obedience of the first church.

We see the first church fulfilling at least seven of the clear commands of Christ in this passage.

They are:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1) Repentance and Faith – v. 38 | 5) Giving – v. 45 |
| 2) Baptism – v. 39 | 6) Prayer – v. 42 |
| 3) Love (fellowship, service and worship) – v. 42-47 | 7) Great Commission – v. 38, 47 |
| 4) Observance of the Lord's Supper – v. 42, 46 | |

While this list is by no means exhaustive of Christ's commands, it does give us a starting point from which to teach the habit of obedience. Take time to examine "The Seven Commands of Christ" attached to this manual for the connections between Acts 2 functions of the first church and the explicit commands within Jesus training ministry.²⁴

²³ It should be noted, 1st generation believers are especially prone to replace previous works based systems of religion with an improper understanding of salvation under Christ. It is the motive that separates our obedience and devotion to Christ from works based systems. We work from salvation, not toward salvation. Lordship is a response and product of salvation not penance or an attempt to grasp salvation. Consistently emphasize motive in your discipleship plan.

George Patterson has suggested, obedience to one of these seven commands is the answer to overcoming any problem a new church might face.²⁵ Giving these commands as “milk” discipleship ensures a *pattern of obedience* capable of maturing new believers rapidly.

Gleaning from Others

It is worth noting, the church planter is not being asked to create new tools. Many quality beginning discipleship materials exist. Exposure to such materials serves to sharpen and enhance our efforts. Based upon their strengths in the areas mentioned above consider these materials either for adoption or adaptation to your context.²⁶

- Universal Disciple, Thom Wolf -- copyright 2004, University Institute available for download at www.universal-disciple.com.
- Seven Commands of Christ, George Patterson. To order extensive materials visit www.trainandmultiply.info.
- New Life in Christ, Thomas Wade Akins available for download at: www.pioneerevangelism.org.
- Teach them to Obey, R. Bruce Carlton, Acts 29, to order materials visit: www.go2southasia.org/authors.html.
- Training for Trainers, “John Chin” – T4T lessons and process instruction available at: www.t4tonline.org
- Rapidly Advancing Disciples – “RAD” – Wilson Geisler. For free downloads visit: www.churchplantingmovements.com

²⁵ George Patterson and Richard Scoggins, *Church Multiplication Guide (Revised): The Miracle of Church Reproduction*, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2002).

²⁶ See bibliography for links to adapted trainers guides which include 6-10 beginning discipleship lessons meant to enhance accountability.

Practice for the Trainees

- Take time to examine the “Four Fields Trainers guides” at the end of this manual. Utilize the reproducibility questions to evaluate strengths and weaknesses (p.25).
- Assign your training groups to practice teaching different lessons from the booklet throughout the week. Practicing the model is as important as understanding the material. Give the following guidelines to your trainees to practice as they teach.

The Seven Commands Training Model guidelines for teaching these lessons:

Following these guidelines insures that every believer can reproduce what has been taught. This is our goal: reproduction of the lessons for multiplication of disciples.

- 1) Tell the story – One of every two people in the 10/40 window is functionally illiterate. For this reason, we must use a model everyone can follow. After you have told the story, repeat it with questions to check for understanding. Think of creative ways to encourage the trainees to repeat the story. They can tell it to a partner, act it out in drama, or even retell it to the whole group. In this way, the story is heard and told multiple times by each trainee.
- 2) Participative Study - Passages and teaching points should be discovered by the trainees – use the “Sword” Bible study questions (on the next page) to bring out the meaning of the story. Allow discussion to draw out the meaning intended.
- 3) Emphasize the Assignment and Accountability – Discipleship is not just what we know, it is what we do! Begin the following lesson with accountability to previous assignments.

Tools for the Trainer – Bible study method as Long-Term Discipleship

1) Bible Study Method

A simple reproducible Bible study method can drive long-term discipleship. Nothing in the discipleship process can replace consistent exposure to the Word of God. Before we look at possible Bible study methods, let us consider these strengths of home or family-oriented Bible study.

- 1) The home or family group creates mutual accountability and encouragement among new believers. This helps to solidify the collective identity as the body of Christ.
- 2) Family oriented Bible study provides for literate and oral learning styles. Collective study requires only one reader per household.
- 3) The committed family relationship provides for long-term plans. A family setting provides for systematic study over time. This ensures material is presented within context. In this setting the Bible is seen as the source of discipleship.
- 4) It enables multiple discipleship groups in varied locations without the immediate presence of the mentor. This is necessary for church planters with multiple fields.
- 5) Participative study/discussion allows for the expression of spiritual gifts emerging from within the group. This means God chooses the leaders!

Providing disciples with a “reading or listening schedule” creates a simple form of accountability. Incorporating a feedback loop for lessons learned, obstacles faced and questions raised makes reporting progress a natural part of the system. This can be done by keeping a participants journal of the guided study and questions answered or asked after each passage. For mentors who disciple several groups at once, feedback quickly enables the mentor to address areas of concern or misunderstanding.

Here are two examples of Bible study methods that incorporate feedback. Each utilizes a pattern of simple questions designed to reveal doctrine and application from the assigned passage. Take time to evaluate them using the “Evaluating Tools” questions at the end of this chapter.

The Sword

Description – Hebrews 4:12 in the Bible says:

*“The word of God is living and active, sharper than any **double-edged sword**. It penetrates even to dividing of soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

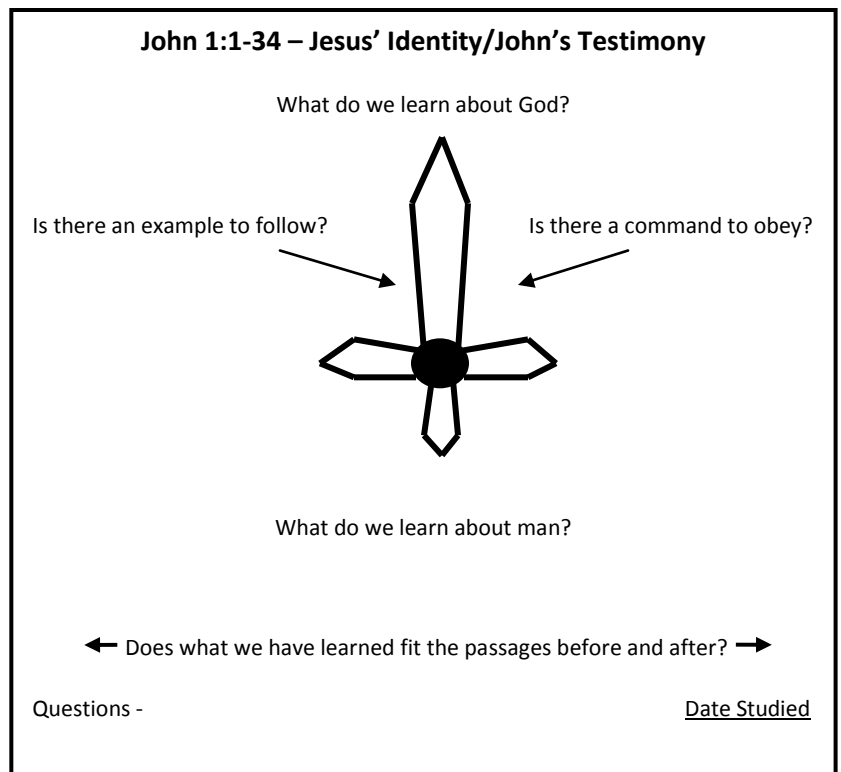
Everything we need to know about God and man is revealed in the Bible. The Bible also reveals God’s desire for us through examples and commands we should follow. Anyone who wants to know God and follow Jesus must hear the Bible and seek to follow its lessons. When the Bible is heard, we can learn its meaning by asking these questions in the diagram:

1) The up ↑ of the sword points us toward God. We ask the question:
What do we learn about God?

2) The down ↓ points us toward man.
We ask the question:
What do we learn about man?

3) The two edges of the sword penetrate our lives, thus creating change. They lead us to ask the questions:
Are there commands or examples to follow?

4) The side arrows ↔ point us to the passage before and after our assignment. They cause us to ask the question:
How does what we have learned fit the context?



When we hear from the Bible and ask these questions, God will reveal Himself and His will for us. The Bible will become like a sword cutting out any part of our lives God is not pleased with. We can replace these wrong thoughts with the truths we hear about God and obedience to the examples and commands we discover.

We should hear from the Bible every day. You should listen to God’s Word with your family and ask these four questions together. Discuss the answers God reveals in each story. Any answer you discover should be written on the page next to the question. Any thing you do not understand can be written at the bottom of the page so you can ask someone later.

Example – Using the sword to study books of Bible is as simple as assigning passages. Above, in the text box, is an example lesson from a series we created through the book of John. Feel free to assign books of the Bible for daily study based on the natural divisions within the narrative.

Four Uses of the Word

Description – 2 Timothy 3:16-17 in the Bible says:

*“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for **teaching, rebuking, correcting and training** in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

These verses in 2 Timothy reveal God’s use of His Word in our lives. There are four uses for God’s Word.²⁷ They are: teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training. Together they fulfill the purpose of equipping us for every good work. When we expose ourselves to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit uses the Word in these ways. When we consider these four uses of the Word, four questions come to our mind.

- 1) Teaching – What is right?
- 2) Rebuking – What is not right?
- 3) Correcting – How do we become right?
- 4) Training – How do we stay right?

As we read or hear from the Word of God, we should ask these four questions. Together they help us hear God’s voice. This changes our lives to fit His will. Not all passages answer all four questions, but most passages will answer at least one. As you read through books of the Bible, keep a journal of the answers you find to these questions. Also, record changes the Lord helps you make as a result.

Example – The 2 Timothy questions work remarkably well with the otherwise difficult materials presented in the Epistles, the Psalms and Proverbs. Processing non-narrative passages presents challenges for the new believer. Asking these simple questions can help to reveal the meaning.

Example - Colossians 1:1-29 – Paul’s Work/Christ’s Supremacy

Read the passage and answer the following questions.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) What is right? | 2) What is not right? |
| 3) How do we get right? | 4) How do we stay right? |

Questions -

Date Studied

²⁷ These four are based upon the NIV translation. Using different translations and teaching in different languages requires simple adjustment of the vocabulary used for this model.

Inductive Bible Study and the role of Overseer, Elder, Pastor

Inductive Bible study tools should be understood as a means to an end. Participative study tools, practiced in group settings, provide disciples with the necessary skills for conducting personal and family study. Perhaps the greatest benefit in utilizing such tools is that they provide a venue for recognizing the spiritual gifts within a community of new believers. As questions are asked and answers discussed, such gifts can be easily discerned through the responses of new believers.

From this point, the church planter is served to invest specifically in those demonstrating teaching gifts. In such cases, the participative tool can easily be adjusted to allow for more formal content development such as sermons. We utilize these same tools for modeling lesson and sermon production. We suggest modeling and group study as a necessary step within the “able to teach” expectation of overseers (1 Tim. 3:2). Gathering fruitful disciple makers from your network for one or two-day workshops over an extended period can serve in the development of ongoing teaching materials. Take the time needed to practice outlining passages with new leaders based on the Bible study methods. Do this together until each leader has caught the vision for independent lesson production and demonstrated sound principles of interpretation.²⁸

Monthly or quarterly gatherings can keep this process moving forward. Each time they gather they should produce develop these types of lessons. Likewise, retreats also provide the needed accountability for leaders who are asked to reproduce such material in the field.

Working the Plan

Ephesians 4:11-12 teaches us that God provides teachers for all His churches. Knowing this means the church planter can confidently release the task of teaching new believers to those whom God has chosen within each new church. Paul’s New Testament example of starting churches and releasing them quickly further confirms God’s role in providing such leaders from within the harvest. The church planter who identifies the faithful should encourage them to teach what they know.

*A disciple who has heard one command and obeys is ready to teach others
what he has learned and done!*

The greatest resource we have in developing such leaders is our time. We must manage our schedule and prioritize time with the faithful who will take what is modeled and be able to teach others. Take time now to pray and ask God who those potential disciple makers are in your network. List some of them below.

²⁸ As we have identified “emerging leaders” for new churches qualified by 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 to be overseers, a formal training focused on OT and NT survey with intense hermeneutics practicum has been developed, called “Foundations for Emerging Leaders”. It is available by contacting us at: www.churchplantingmovements.com or in PDF form through a simple web search.

Tool for the Trainer

List those God has given who are capable of training groups of new believers.

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1) | 6) |
| 2) | 7) |
| 3) | 8) |
| 4) | 9) |
| 5) | 10) |

Now that potential disciple makers have been identified, how will you mobilize them? Retreats or trainings that model simple beginning materials and the methods needed to coordinate group formation can be helpful. In areas where this is not possible because of finances or distance, one-on-one mentoring is essential. Remember, the faithful deserve our time. The list of capable disciple-makers created above may be worthy of a 60-90 day time investment over the next year. It is this private ministry of one-on-one investment that will change our world!

Reproducing disciples means reproducing simple beginning discipleship. As new believers are added through seed sowing, how will you gather them into groups?

Will you utilize the authority structure of the home or gather them into existing churches?

What will you teach them first?

How will you hold them accountable to obedience?

Each of these questions is a part of working the plan of discipleship. As a team of disciple makers is formed within your network, they must focus on transmission of simple tools for multiplication to take place.

Discipleship and disciple makers must always be pushed to the edge of your network!

Begin utilizing a Bible study method with existing believers. As they reach out among their *oikos*, encourage them to take an active role in modeling these methods for new believers. Families that study the Word together will impact their communities.

End- Visioning – Discipleship

“WIGTAKE” – What is It Going to Take?

Consider again the “X” people group with a population of 1 million souls. Keeping in mind God’s stated will (2 Pet. 3:9), that none should perish, we must ask ourselves:

How many disciple makers are needed to fulfill Matthew 28:18-20 among them?

As we gather the growing harvest among the “X,” we trust God has chosen men and women and assigned them the task of teaching (Eph. 4:12). Discovering disciple makers and equipping them with simple, reproducible tools is our main focus. Determining the size of this task helps the church planter to set God-sized goals.

We can assume that a faithful lay teacher is able to sustain discipleship and accountability among five households. These households, at an average of five disciples per home, create an umbrella of 25 disciples.

One Lay Teacher =’s discipleship in 5 homes. At
5 disciples per home, this equals 25 people
under the teacher’s umbrella.

With this in mind, how many disciple makers would be needed to disciple 10% of the “X” people?

“X” population =’s 1,000,000 x 10% =’s 100,000
1 lay disciple maker = 25 people under his umbrella.
25 into 100,000 = 4,000 disciple makers needed

Goals – Discipleship - Short and Long Term Facilitation

- 1) **We will identify (#)_____ potential disciple makers within three months.**

As new believers are added in each locality, this goal must be reassessed. Discipleship at the edge of the network constantly renews the need for more disciple-makers.

- 2) **We will facilitate discipleship workshops taught on site to model and mentor teachers in simple materials each month.**

Mentoring groups should meet regularly for modeling of beginning discipleship methods and materials, creation of long-term lessons, and accountability to previous assignments.

- 3) **We will enlist trainers capable of reproducing the mentoring process in expanding fields.**

These trainers can be identified from within your existing network by their faithfulness and fruitfulness. Concentration of time with these trainers will multiply discipleship groups.

Specific Actions

- 1) Begin modeling accountability from the top down. Every level of leadership within your network should have both a Paul (disciple-maker) and a Timothy (disciple) in their lives.
- 2) Evaluate your schedule to ensure a priority of time spent with your list of trainers.
- 3) Solidify a set of beginning discipleship lessons. This will lead to uniformity within your network and foster a healthy “DNA” of multiplication.
- 4) Cast vision for the “big picture” of reproducing disciples with your inner circle as often as possible. Your willingness to release authority will model the same for them.

Evaluation – The seven beginning discipleship lessons and the SWORD study method

Take time in groups of 6-10, to evaluate the tool, the seven beginning discipleship lessons for training new believers. Consider the following questions for discussion. Seek to build upon strengths and take steps to correct any perceived weaknesses within your efforts. See the booklet in the appendix for reference.

Questions to consider:

Is the tool obedience based? Is there an accountability process?

Does the tool grant responsibilities?

Does the tool plan for multiplication?

Is the tool facilitated by locals?

Does the tool depend on self-discovery?

Does the tool lead to church formation?

Is the tool reproducible?

Explain each “yes” answer. Why are these important?

Field #4 – Reproducible Church Formation

The Harvest Field

Objectives – The church planter will:

- Understand biblical church function and purpose
- Examine biblical guidelines for church health
- Do an honest evaluation of existing churches within their network
- Be introduced to tools for designing next steps in church formation

By church formation, we simply mean “bundling the harvest” and molding a collective identity as the body of Christ. This is not a task solely dependent on the church planter. It is God who establishes His church within His timing. For the church planter, joining God in this task means fulfilling certain tasks while delegating others. For the church planter the question is:

Key Question – *How do we form the church?*

Let us begin with the end in mind. For the church planter, it is necessary to think of church on these two levels.

- 1) **What is a church?**
- 2) **What does a church do?**

Taking time to pursue answers to these questions with the leaders of your network will solidify common vision and promote healthy evaluation of the steps needed to arrive at healthy church. Use the following studies to promote discussion. Take time to develop your own definition of healthy church based on the Word.¹

Self-Discovery Study – Healthy Church Identity

Read the following passages and discuss the descriptions of church identity.

- 1) 1 Peter 2:9-10 -
- 2) 1 Peter 2:5 –
- 3) 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 –
- 4) 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 –
- 5) 1 Timothy 3:15 -

¹ For further help with scriptural references concerning church identity and function see the compiled list within: “*The Baptist Faith and Message 2000*”, Article VI: The Church. Available for download at: www.sbc.org.

Understanding biblical church function is essential. Biblical accounts provide precedents for church activities. Examining church function at the source will help us later evaluate existing church tradition that may or may not promote healthy advance.

Self-Discovery Study – Healthy Church Function

Read Acts 2:41-47 and Acts 11:19-26, 13:1-3. What do healthy churches do? Record your answers below.

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1) | 5) |
| 2) | 6) |
| 3) | 7) |
| 4) | 8) |

Tools for Evaluation -- Facilitating Healthy Church

One of the challenges of teaching healthy church is organizing the vast amount of material available in the New Testament for quick dissemination in advancing fields. For this reason, consider these simple tools for organizing the biblical content as well as evaluating next steps in church formation designed to help oral learners.

Two “Handy Guides” will be introduced.

- 1) The Handy Guide for the Man of Peace²
- 2) The Handy Guide for the Maturing Church³

The first of these is intended as a starter. As the man of peace gathers his *oikos* around the gospel and begins discipleship, he is faced with a handful of simple questions that if not answered carry potential to stunt development of a new church. As a church begins, unexamined worldviews and previous religious practice, such as worship in temples, must be answered. In facing the issues of getting started, we have found the first of these two guides very helpful. It provides answers for the “Man of Peace.”

² This guide was created in the field as the need arose among new believers to answer several key questions in the initial formation of churches. Our partnership with Lipok Lemtur in pioneer fields showed us the need for this tool and served as the testing ground.

³ This guide was first introduced in the teaching of David Garrison. We have since made small adjustments to the format and content, but wish to credit Dr. Garrison in its creation.

The Second “Handy Guide” is valuable for those churches that are either maturing or perhaps returning to health. Organizing a church around simple reproducible vision is a key to multiplication. Of course, maturity is a process. It is not produced in a single training. Thus the church planter is served to consider again the T4T process or mentorship as these materials are introduced. Those churches that have arrived at “maturity” are sometimes served to go back to the beginning, as maturity is not a box to check off but a reality that must be maintained and revisited over time as traditions often cloud true biblical expectation. This second “handy guide” has proven very valuable among existing churches struggling with extra-biblical tradition which has limited their ability to reproduce.

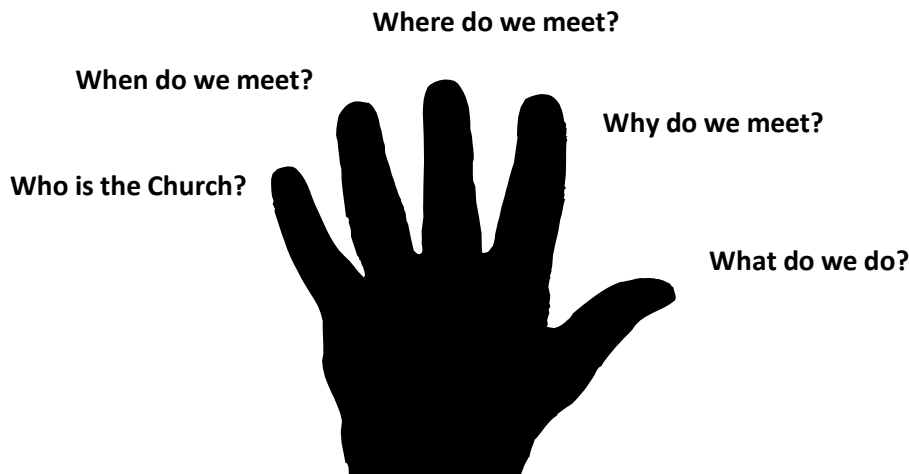
Tools for the trainer – The Handy Guides to Healthy Churches.

The Left Hand – “Handy Guide” - for the Man of Peace

There are five questions that must be answered in the mind of the Man of Peace as he begins hosting a new church.

Who? When? Where? Why? What?

These are the 5 key questions of new church starts.



Question #1 – Who is the church?

This is a question that can be revisited with each contact with the Man of Peace, as the answer encompasses the many word pictures given in scripture, (Body of Christ [1 Cor.12:12-31], Bride [Eph. 5:22-33], People of God, God’s household, Royal priesthood [1 Pet. 2:4-10], etc.) To answer this question for the first time, however, we have chosen one verse. Acts 2:41 shows us the entry point for the formation of the first New Testament churches.

*“Those who accepted his message were baptized,
and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”*

Three initial teaching points exist in this verse. First, when the message was presented, those the Lord called, *accepted his message*. By faith these were added to the family of God through the sacrifice of Christ. It did not stop there however. They also chose to identify themselves with Christ’s body in his death, burial and resurrection through baptism.

This truth creates a second teaching point for us in this verse. Those who accepted the message were baptized. Baptism *immediately* follows *acceptance*. Here the point of emphasis is on both *the immediate inclusion* of some who in Acts 2:36-37 are said to have murdered Jesus, and the clear precedent of *baptism after acceptance*. This would seem to strike down any argument concerning the need to live up to any standard as prerequisite to baptism, as no more gross sin can be imagined than literally killing the author of salvation. It also answers potential false teaching concerning baptism prior to a personal confession of Christ.

Finally those who were baptized were *“added to their number.”* This means they had a *recognizable membership*. They knew who was in and who was not. The church is open to minister to all but exclusively formed around those who have followed the Lord in obedience, the first steps of which are acceptance and baptism.

Do you have the expectation of large harvest? Having 3,000 baptisms on the first day of the church most certainly meant multiple baptizers. No one man could keep up with the needs of this multiplying community.

Question #2 – When do we meet?

Here the answer is not written in stone; in fact, the precedent of the first church will point to daily meetings (see Acts 2:46). What can be stated, however, is the need for a regular plan for meeting.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another -- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

Many cultures not known as “time oriented” have struggled with this question. The question for us as cross-cultural workers is: should such a schedule be imposed? The answer here should err on the side of freedom. Timing and length of service is not mandated in scripture. Consistency, however, is a must among new believers from belief systems that promote private worship. The goal is to establish the habit of meeting and seems to be the command of Hebrews 10.

Answer: Each new church start should set a time and day for regular meeting at least once per week. As a new family is created, our lives together should be set apart and considered as holy unto the Lord.

Key Question #3 – Where do churches meet?

The answer is the New Testament precedent. See the following study from the from Acts and Paul's letters.

Self-Discovery Bible Study

Read the following passages and answer the question.

Acts 2:46/5:42/16:40/17:5-7/18:7/19:9/20:20/Romans 16:1-5

1 Cor. 16:19/Col. 4:15/ Philemon 1:1-2

Question – Where did the churches meet?

Answer: In each case, the New Testament precedent is clear. In fact, no other venues exist in scripture.⁴ Following the example of scripture means churches meet in homes. Take time with your disciples or church planting team to discuss reasons for homes as the venue for church. This exercise can create valuable discussion, but may not be needed for the pioneer Man of Peace who is likely to simply follow scripture. Challenge the believers in your church. Would they be willing to offer their home for expanding the kingdom? Hosting a new Bible study, or the willingness to host a church fits the biblical precedent established in the study above.

Question #4 – Why do we gather as church?

The answer here is our primary motive.

1 Corinthians 10:31 says, *“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it for the glory of God.”*

This is a simple instruction for the church. Every activity the church participates in should pass the 1 Corinthians 10:31 test. Anything not committed to glorifying God is outside the realm of healthy church activity. This simple instruction is the charge of every believer. Mutual accountability to this command must be the “DNA” of our churches. This is the only pure motive. Anything less is an impure offering.

The scripture also offers mutual accountability and encouragement as a motive for the habit of meeting together.

⁴ Some may claim Acts 2 as an exception to meetings in homes. It can be defended, however, that the purpose of Temple meetings was ongoing evangelism as the believing community engaged their Jewish brothers. The second possible argument is the lecture Hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus where Paul is said to have continued in teaching for two years. It is of note, however, that Aquila and Priscilla who were in Ephesus and would have had access to the hall chose instead to use their home as the host of a church (see 1 Cor. 16:19, which is written from Ephesus).

Hebrews 10:24-25 say, *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

Vision, accountability and encouragement are resources that must be regularly renewed. Like food for the body, or fuel for a machine, these benefits of body life keep us moving in the right direction. Do not forsake the assembly! Among converts of eastern religions, which view worship as an individual right, corporate worship and accountability may be new concepts. While the Holy Spirit will generate an intrinsic motive for fellowship, the habit of meeting corporately must be modeled. Doing so will expose new believers to the intended benefits of body life detailed in Hebrews 10:24-25.

Question #5 – What does a church do?

Here we need to make a simple list of activities of the first church recorded for us in Acts 2:38-47.

Self – Discovery Study – Acts 2:38-47

What did the first church do?

Present the gospel – call for decision – v. 38

Baptize the believers – v 41

Commit to leader’s instruction – v 42

Fellowship – love each other - v 42

Break Bread – Lord’s supper/meal - v 42

Prayer – v 42

Give to the needy – v 44-45

Meet regularly – v 46

Praise God – v 47

Do you consider these the functions of a healthy church?

What, if anything is missing in the list of healthy function you created from Acts 2:38-47?

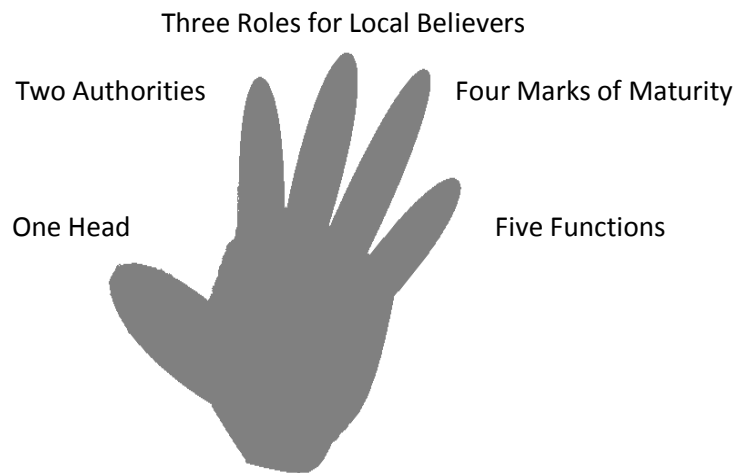
Remember, we are suggesting a starting point for the house or man of peace. New believers, or families of new believers expected to reproduce these functions are the starting point of a new church. Once this level of healthy church function exists, self-awareness, or a corporate commitment to identity as the body of Christ, remains as a necessary qualifier of church.

We have seen repeatedly in the field, church function proceeds maturity. This means, the activities of a church, in obedience to the Christ’s commands, are the starting point for church. This does not discount the need for formal church identity, leadership or church discipline as believers stray from healthy

function. Each of these elements of maturity will necessarily follow and help to bring order to a body's obedience to the Lord's commands.

For this reason, the church planter should evaluate the intended results of beginning discipleship. Introduction and expectation of obedience to the Lord's commands are a catalyst to healthy church function and can be expected from the beginning. Obedience corporately, adds the elements of body life demonstrated in the first church recorded in Acts 2:28-47.

The Right Hand -- The Handy Guide to a Mature Church



This guide presents the church planter with an easy way to organize elements of maturity and health vital to the longevity of a church.



The church has **One Head**.

Christ is the Head of the Church

Ephesians 1:22-23 says:

“And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything in the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”

Christ is the head of the church. There is no other. God has ordained only one “*chief shepherd*” (1 Peter 5:1-4). Within the body of Christ there is no hierarchy. “*The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you.’*” (1 Cor. 12:21). Rather, all parts work together for the good of the body. Each believer is a part of the body, and membership includes mutual accountability (1 Cor. 12:27). The church is the fullness of Christ displaying corporately the full extent of His ministry on earth. Ultimately each member is

responsible to Christ above all else in matters of function and polity. This means we each have access to the Head and carry responsibility among his body for promotion of right practice.



The church has **Two Authorities**.

The Word of God and the Spirit of God

The Word of God – To guide the church, God ensured the recording of His instruction and plan for mankind. It is without error and is the sufficient tool for discerning all matters of faith and practice. The scripture speaks to all matters concerning the church and must be central in the decision-making process of the body of Christ.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 tell us, *“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God will be fully equipped for every good work.”*

The Spirit of God – God has provided each believer His Spirit as a counselor. The Spirit indwells us at conversion and guides us toward right thought and action. When we sin, the Spirit brings conviction leading us toward repentance and confession before God. His voice must be discerned as it guides the believer into God’s will.

In John 14:26 Jesus promised His disciples, *“The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”*

Together the Spirit of God and the Word of God guide the church. God’s Spirit uses the Word as a tool to instruct and at times rebuke the believer. The Word is the Spirit’s tool for shaping and directing the church. Together these two provide all that is needed for the church to move forward in assurance of God’s will.

The Spirit and the Word will never contradict each other. They parallel each other similar to railway tracks. They will never cross nor part. Emphasis only on the Word will lead the church towards legalism. In the same way, emphasis only on the Spirit will likely result in emotionalism.

Any teaching or interpretation should be tested by these two authorities. When one claims to have a message from the Spirit, it must be tested with the Word. When an interpretation of the Word is shared, the Spirit confirms its truth in the heart of the believer. This process keeps the church from error.



The church has **Three roles for local believers** ⁵
Pastors, Deacons and Priesthood

Role #1 – Pastor⁶ – Three New Testament words are used to describe this leader in the church.

- 1) Shepherd – Ephesians 4:11 – “*poimenos*” – literally, “shepherd,” here translated as “pastor”
- 2) Elder – Titus 1:5 – “*presbuteros*”
- 3) Overseer – Titus 1:7 – “*episkopon*” - alternately translated as “bishop”

1 Peter 5:1-2 uses a form of all three of these terms to describe one office. The pastor is to be a shepherd, elder and overseer for the church.

“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...”

Here Peter establishes the role of leaders given the responsibility of oversight and at the same time helps the church avoid hierarchy by claiming equal status with others called to this office. There is but one Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 5:4).

As the name suggests, a *pastor* is simply one who leads his flock to *pasture*. Their charge over the sheep is that of protection and direction to nourishment. Every flock needs a shepherd. It is a worthy goal of the church planter to ensure their appointment. The church planter should note that no where in Scripture is Paul or any member of his church planting team referred to as a pastor. Church planters in the New Testament did not fill this role. Rather, as Paul instructs Titus, recognizing this role from within the church was a key for church formation (Titus 1:5).

Role – The job of the pastor is given to us in Ephesians 4:11-12.

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for the works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up”.

What is the pastor’s role?

⁵ Baptists have historically proposed two of these roles as offices in the church – pastor and deacon. This Baptist expression is motivated as a safeguard against the division of the pastor, elder or overseer role. Such a division introduces hierarchy among these offices. It is suggested such a distinction be carefully avoided as each were descriptive terms for the same office.

⁶ The term “pastor” is a matter of preference as any of the three NT terms could be used to describe this servant. The point being made here is the division of these three terms for the creation of hierarchy among the body is a precedent beyond the scope of scripture and should be avoided.

Many believe the pastor must do the works of service. A more careful reading of this passage reveals the works of service are the job of every believer. According to verse 12, the pastor is an equipper of God's people.

It is often said, 80% of the work is done by 20% of the people. If this is true of the church, the failure belongs to the pastor. As an equipper, it is their job to mobilize the church with simple tools and accountability to perform ministry.

Qualifications – The qualifications of pastors can be found in Titus 1:6-9 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7. Take time to go through these lists. Use the following chart to categorize each qualification.

Self-Discovery Bible Study		
Read the passage and assign each qualification to the appropriate category. List them below.		
<u>1 Timothy 3:1-7</u>		
Character	Gifts/Skills	Education
A similar study can be done for Titus 1:6-9. What differences exist between these passages? Why?		

A careful reading of these lists reveals Godly character as the essential qualifier for this role. Character cannot be replaced with any amount of biblical education or giftedness.

This means that the simplest of men in whom God is manifesting His character are qualified to serve!

Tool for the Trainer
Evaluating Emerging Leaders

Having examined the list of qualifications for Overseers provided in 1 Tim. 3:1-7, take time to consider the emerging leaders in your church plants.

Step one – list potential “emerging leaders” who you feel fulfill Paul’s expectations and demonstrate an aptitude for leadership.

Step two – evaluate their potential for leadership based on 1 Tim. 3:1-7. List any quality that may be lacking in the column on the right.

List of Emerging Leaders

Observations of Character

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

An application of church discipline

Read Matthew 18:15-20. If emerging leaders listed above lack expected elements of character required for leadership in the church, perhaps it is time to implement the Lord’s instruction for church discipline.

Based on your observations (above) how might you apply the instruction given in Matt. 18:15?

What Bible passages will you use to show him his fault? -- Make a list.

Take time with those you train to describe the step-by-step progression if a brother fails to repent as detailed in verse 16-20. Why does the church have the final say (v.17)?

Through prayer make specific plans to apply the Lord’s instruction. Remember, this may be the first time new believers have considered the Lord’s method for correction. This creates a sensitive, yet valuable teaching and training opportunity.

Role #2 - Deacons – Deacons are designated servants of the church. While not mandated in scripture, the role of Deacon was introduced to ensure equality among the Jerusalem congregation.

Role – Acts 6:3 gives us the role of the first deacons.

“It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the Word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them”.

As a servant, the deacon is an advocate of the poor. Fulfilling any need of the congregation falls within the realm of the deacon’s job description. This enables the church and its leaders to move forward in the ministry of the Word.

Qualifications – The qualifications of deacons can be found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The list is remarkably similar to that of the pastor. Again, it is primarily character that qualifies and disqualifies individuals for service.

Deacons as Treasurers – Nowhere in scripture is the treasurer described as an authoritative or mandated office. Utilizing a treasurer, however, follows the lead of our Lord as he traveled with His disciples. Jesus was accused of many things. He was accused of being a drunkard and associating with sinners (Luke 7:34), breaking the Sabbath (Mark 3:1-6), being demon possessed (Mark 3:22) and even blasphemy (Matt. 26:65). Jesus was not, however, accused in scripture of mishandling money. What was the reason for this? Perhaps it was because He had a treasurer!

Acts 6:1-5, previously mentioned to introduce the office of Deacon, includes an oversight function in the distribution of support for widows within the early church. The original deacons were entrusted with the task of a fair distribution of food among widows regardless of ethnic background or language.

Role – The treasurer protects church leadership from accusation. The treasurer must be transparent in all dealings. Accountability either through witnesses or bookkeeping is the clear precedent within scripture and is a must among churches.

Role #3 – Priesthood – Priesthood is the corporate identity of every regenerate believer. Here we have intentionally chosen ‘priesthood’ over ‘priest’ as the Bible teaches this role as a corporate function of the Church. Just as the nation of Israel was chosen as a ‘*kingdom of priests*’ (Ex. 19:5-6), so too Peter applies this corporate identity to the elect. 1 Peter 1-4 are addressed all those purchased and redeemed by Christ out of the world (1 Peter 1:1-2, 2:9-10). Where New Testament churches gather, members are to fulfill their role as a ‘*royal priesthood*’.

Role – 1 Peter 2:9-10 details the following purposes for the Priesthood.

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, now

you have received mercy that you may declare the praise of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

The New Testament priesthood is a corporate expression. Priesthood includes citizenship as *‘the people of God’*. As citizens of the light, the priesthood is to identify with the corporate Body of Christ (the Church) organized in various local churches (1 Pet. 2:4-5). This priesthood also has a specific purpose. Each member is to actively *‘declare the praises of him who called {them} out of darkness.’* Each believer is a representative of Christ’s Gospel (v. 9). Peter’s instruction is echoed by the Apostle Paul who expected every believer in local churches to follow his example. Paul’s expectation was that each believer in a local church would imitate his way of life, and his work in the Lord (1 Cor. 11:1, 15:58, 16:10, 15-16).⁷

Qualifications – The New Testament Priesthood is qualified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at salvation. The Holy Spirit has sealed each true believer by faith for the day of redemption (Eph. 1:11-14, 2 Cor. 1:21-22, 5:5). The Spirit’s indwelling is not a work of man. The Spirit cannot be manipulated or coerced by any effort of man. Rather the Spirit calls, seals and gives gifts among the corporate priesthood as He determines (1 Cor. 12:1-11). Where the Spirit has regenerated believers they are a part of the New Testament priesthood known corporately as the local church. This qualification serves as a denial of a formal ‘office’ of priest, and denies any form of hierarchy intended to set one ‘priest’ over another.



The church has **Four Marks of Maturity**

Self-Governing, Self-Supporting,
Self-Reproducing and Self-Correcting

For those who have studied missiology, these first three will be quickly recognized as a simple adaptation of the “Nevius Principle.”⁸ The fourth “self” later offered to the church speaks to churches’ need to address theological issues through their own cultural lens. Here we have replaced Self-Theologizing with Self-Correcting. The change in terminology reflects an emphasis on filtering or correcting one’s own culture with scripture. The community of faith is not asked to re-invent theology.

Rather, following Paul’s example they must seek to “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5). This is witnessed in the New Testament as Greek background believers dealt with

⁷ For a description of Paul’s every member expectation in Gospel sowing see Peter Orr’s article: *“Abounding in the Work of the Lord, (1 Cor. 15:58), Everything we Do as Christians or Specific Gospel Work?”*, *Themelios* 38.2 (2013):205-214.

⁸ Nevius, building on the work of Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson, formalized 3-self’s for indigenous mission in his classic book, *Planting and Development of Missionary Churches* (New Jersey: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1958).

the issues surrounding Jewish customs and tradition. The culmination of this issue in Acts 15 reveals an inherent faith in the Holy Spirit to guide each new people in the biblical filtering and redemption of their own culture.

Self-Governing

By self-governing, we simply mean a mature church has the capability to make decisions for itself. Doing so means proper exercise of the two authorities granted the church. They must be able to discern guidance from the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

Self-Discovery Study – Self-Governing

Read Acts 6:1-7 and answer the following question.

Who chose the first deacons?

Answer – The 12 gathered “all the disciples” and instructed them to choose the first deacons. When the decision was made, there was no debate. Rather, the 12 simply recognized the choice by the laying on of hands.

How did the 12 know the believers would choose the right men?

The 12 entrusted the task of guidance to the Holy Spirit! The church was about to be scattered by persecution. It is suggested, the selection of deacons in this manner, was on the job training for believers about to be scattered by persecution (Acts 8:1). Through this exercise the believers learned to discern God’s voice by exercising responsible selection of leaders under Holy Spirit guidance.⁹

Why is this important? – The understanding affirms the doctrine of “Priesthood of the Believer.” When churches’ decisions are made for them, they are robbed of their birthright. Access to God for all people through the washing by blood and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are key doctrines related to salvation. All believers have access to the throne (Heb. 4:16). All believers have access to the Lord’s guidance through his Word (Heb. 4:12). It is true that hearing and discerning God’s voice is a learned discipline, of

⁹ For description of four other New Testament accounts of this type of congregational rule see: John McRay, *Paul: His Teaching and Practice*. (Grand Rapids, Baker, 2003), p. 383-386. These accounts include: Acts 1:15-26 (the appointment of Mathias), and the use of the Greek term *cheirotoneo* and *kateseses* translated “appoint” in 2 Cor. 8:18-19, Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5. McRay demonstrates the original meaning of “stretching out one’s hand for the purpose of giving one’s vote in the assembly.”

course. Our point here is simply that the church planter must allow this learning to take place through corporate ownership of the decision-making process.¹⁰

Self-Supporting

The church must have ownership of its function. Self-supporting means the ministry and outreach it performs are fueled by stewardship of its own resources.

Self-Discovery Study – Self-Supporting

Read the following passages to discover New Testament examples of giving.

Acts 2:44-45/4:34-36/11:29/2 Cor. 9:10-15/Phil. 4:14-19/1 Thess. 2:8-9/others?

The book of Acts 11:27-30 and 2 Corinthians 9 record the giving of offerings between churches. Contrary to modern trends, it is the daughter churches that gave to the “mother church” in Jerusalem. Further, Paul’s example of self-support for the Thessalonian church and others was intended as a model for their own independence (1 Thess. 2:6-10, 5:12-14).

Why is this important? – Several reasons exist.

First, there is intrinsic motivation when one perceives his or her ownership of ministry. As the giving of members begins to fuel ministry, joy is the inevitable result. This creates an atmosphere of giving, thereby catalyzing healthy church function (2 Cor. 9:6-15).

This issue of local ownership of giving is also perceived by non-believers outside the church. As those transformed by the gospel begin to reach out in love, their neighbor’s jealousy and accusations are replaced with gratitude and openness to the source of transformation.

A third reason is simple mathematics. Outside funds will never replace a local, intrinsic motive for giving needed to change a nation. Dependence on outside funds will impose a ceiling limiting the spread of the gospel. Breaking through this ceiling requires local ownership of the task including finance.

Self-Reproducing

The healthy church will multiply. Maturity means a church will take ownership of the responsibility to evangelize its field. For the church planter, this means expecting every believer to accept the Great Commission. Paul demanded and praised such ownership among the churches to which he wrote.

¹⁰ Freedom, even to fail, in decision making is freedom to grow in the knowledge of God’s grace. See the writings of Charles Brock for strong argument concerning this freedom. Charles Brock, *Indigenous Church Planting*. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 2001).

1 Thessalonians 1:7-8, *“And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere.”*

It is important here to remember Paul spent as little as three weeks in the establishment of this church (Acts 17:2).

To the church in the home of Achippus he wrote, *“I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ”* (Philemon 1:6).

Here Paul asserted a Christian walk without the practice of sharing one’s faith lacks understanding of God’s provision.

Why is this important? – The farmer is made for farming. Mobilizing local new believers into the harvest is the only way to multiply. As new believers take ownership of the fields, generations of new believers will flood the church.

Self-Correcting

We have sought to simplify this “fourth self” by inserting the word correcting in place of “theologizing.” We are not asking new believers to start from scratch. There is much to gain by exposure to the theology of the universal Church. Rather, we expect new churches among previously unreached peoples to examine their own beliefs and practices for the purpose of taking every thought captive to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). Doing so means they have taken a firm grip on Scripture as their guide.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, *“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

The proper use of scripture is a mark of maturity. It must be the source of teaching and training and can be trusted for rebuking and correcting as well.

Why is this important? Host peoples must learn to filter their own culture. Consider this example.

Among the Hindus of India, idolatry is rampant. Church planters in this context are faced with the difficult task of guiding new believers through an examination of their worldview and redemption of certain aspects of their culture. To outsiders, certain surface level out-workings of the culture are obviously detrimental to the new believer’s relationship with Christ. Under the surface, however, there are countless other layers of culture the church planter does not perceive. This makes these few surface issues key for the church planter. They represent potential teaching points in the process of filtering culture through scripture.

When faced with the need for redemption of culture, the church planter has two options.

Option #1 - Forbid the practice of obvious sinful aspects of the host culture.

Giving quick instruction concerning the host culture may solve several immediate blatant trespasses. But it also has a more lasting unseen effect.

Firstly, Hinduism, like all other false religions is works based. The Hindu background believer has been programmed since birth with the thought he or she must *accomplish* salvation. Quickly adding a list of do's and don'ts perpetuates their dependence on self rather than God.

Secondly, solving these issues for the new believer quickly exhausts the surface level aspects of culture the church planter may perceive. This means the church planter has inadvertently lost the opportunity to walk along side new believers in the redemption of culture. No point remains for the church planter to offer guidance. This leaves the new believer alone in their effort to hear God's voice redeeming the more subtle, hidden points of their culture. Syncretism in the heart of the new believer is the likely result.¹¹

Option #2 - Model a careful searching of scripture with faith in the Holy Spirit to help the new believer or church body, discover and implement self-correction.¹²

Utilizing this option means from the beginning the Spirit and scripture are seen as the agents of change. Dependence is never formed on the church planter's instruction and lifetime filtering of the subtle, hidden points of culture is set in motion.

For example, suppose a host culture considers wife beating to be a socially acceptable practice. The church planter could produce a list of expected do's and don'ts for husbands. A second option available to the church planter would be to call the body of believers together for a participative and comparative study of Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18-19 and Titus 2:1-8. Choosing the latter option would lead to discussion on deeper issues such as motive for submission, the family's reflection of our relationship with Christ and the sanctifying value of responsibility within family. Dealing with scripture on this heart level is the path toward a self-correcting body.

The Four-Self's

Consider an infant. Each of us began life in this way. We were totally dependent upon our parents for food, direction, love and daily care. These things are natural. God has ordered life this way.

As the child grows, however, he or she must take ownership of each of these areas. It begins feeding itself, choosing and buying its own clothes, choosing its own friends, doing its own school work and so on. Eventually it even lives on its own caring for its own needs and beginning to reproduce.

¹¹ See Roland Allen, *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1949), chs 4-6 for a more thorough argument on this topic.

¹² Syncretism is not a danger, it is a reality. Every new believer who has understood and accepted Christ by grace perceives Christ in the midst of his or her un-examined world-view. It is the job of discipleship to create a venue for examining world-view issues. In this sense all disciples are being led away from syncretism. Rather than fear syncretism the church planter is served to expect it in order to deal with it directly.

Imagine an adult man who still depends on his mother to feed him. We would instruct the man to grow up. Maturity demands a certain level of autonomy. We suggest to you, however, the mother is as much to blame as the son. Unwillingness to release the responsibilities related to maturity have stunted the growth of the offspring.

The same is often true of the church. A church that depends upon outsiders to make decisions, support, and correct its mistakes is not mature. Learning to walk requires practice. Without it, dependence is a given.



The Church has **Five Functions**

Worship, Fellowship, Ministry,
Mission and Discipleship¹³

In Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus gave us the greatest commandment.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all of your mind... and the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Obedience to this command drives the first three church functions.

Worship – Expressing love toward God.

Anything the church does as an expression of love toward God is worship. That could include singing, giving, praying and acts of obedience to His Word.

Fellowship – Loving the Body of Christ

Every believer has two kinds of neighbors, lost neighbors and saved neighbors. Loving our brothers and sisters in Christ is fellowship. Any act of love toward our spiritual family constitutes fellowship. Praying for one another, giving and carrying each other’s burdens are all acts of fellowship.

Ministry – Loving the Lost

The second type of neighbor is the lost. Showing the love of Christ through our actions and attitudes is ministry. The church should consider such acts of love as a strategic aspect of its function. Any activity of the church that expresses such love is ministry.

The Great Commission gives us the remaining functions of the church. Jesus said, *“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”* (Matthew 28:19).

¹³ The five functions listed here are a loose adaptation of Rick Warren’s teaching on the Great Commandment and Great Commission within his book, *The Purpose Driven Church*. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1995. p. 103-109.

Mission – Going!

Mission means carrying the message of Christ’s salvation to peoples who have not heard. According to Acts 1:8, this can be fulfilled locally and at great distances. For the church, practicing mission should be a part of everyday life.

Discipleship – Teaching others to obey everything Christ has commanded.

Our discipleship must be focused on moving believers forward in their relationship with Christ. Plan to provide tools and accountability.

Why are these important? - The health of any church is defined by its function. Any church, regardless of size, age or venue with healthy function is successful.

Self-Discovery Study – Church Functions

Examine the 1st church in Acts 2:41-47. Which of the five functions do you see at work in this congregation?

- | | |
|----|-----------|
| 1) | 4) |
| 2) | 5) |
| 3) | others? - |

Tool for the Trainer

To ensure the implementation of these functions take time to practice them. In small groups of 6-10 assign the facilitation of each function to different members of the group. Assign someone to lead in:

Worship – Loving God

Fellowship – Loving other believers

Ministry – Loving the Lost

Mission – Going!

Discipleship – Training others to obey

Allow multiple one-hour practice sessions with feedback opportunities to sharpen understanding of these functions. Brainstorm together different ways to fulfill each function in the small group setting.

The Goal - Multiplying healthy churches – and the mess we create.

The Apostle Paul wrote many letters to churches he had been a part of starting. It is of interest that Paul never wrote a single word to a fellowship, preaching point or even a cell group. Paul's open letters were addressed to churches.

Self-Discovery Study

How healthy must a church be to be a church?

Take a few minutes to look over the letter, 1 Corinthians. What challenges was the church facing? Make a list.

- 1) example – factions among followers/leaders – chapter 3:1-5
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)

As we examine Paul's church plants, we are many times surprised by the lack of maturity or Christ like morality they exhibit. Instructions concerning struggles with sin, order, false teaching, the errors of leadership and misuse of ordinances or gifting are common within Paul's letters. According to Paul, however, these struggles did not prevent him from respecting them as autonomous churches. Consider Paul's opening statement in 1 Corinthians 1:4-9:

I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge – because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

Considering the condition of the Corinthian church, which we just examined, these verses are remarkable. Paul was confident because he knew the faithfulness of God (v.9). Paul was confident, even where maturity was lacking, that God was committed and faithful to the Corinthian church. Though they were struggling to emerge from the baggage of their pre-Christian culture and worldview, they were church. Calling them church (1 Cor. 1:2), claimed Christ's promise in Matthew 16:18. Because Jesus was invested in them, the gates of hell would not stand in the way of fulfilling their purpose.

For church planting teams, it is valuable to discuss and come to consensus on vocabulary used in the church planting process. Even when the congregations were unhealthy, *Paul commissioned churches to all that Christ expected them to be*. Doing so raised the expectation for each body to the full measure of identity, responsibility and authority.

Introduction and acceptance of terms such as; fellowships, preaching points, "house" churches, cell groups, cottage meetings for new groups carry the potential to undermine the goal of new churches. If our goal is multiplication, these terms should be examined to determine motive as they often reflect an alternate definition of success with limited potential.

For this reason we have chosen to limit our terminology to the following.

- 1) A new "church start" – A "church start" is a new gathering we (the church planters) intend to become a church but that may be lacking some element of function or identity. These are new groups, often formed in or around houses or men of peace. Calling a new group a "church start" does not mean that everything we start *is* church. Rather, this choice of vocabulary reflects our intention. We have committed, we *intend* everything we start to become church. Often, even as church function is underway the necessary identity may be lacking and is often the last element in place for a group to become "church".
- 2) A "church" – A "church" is a body of baptized believers committed to a collective identity under the Lordship of Christ, for the purpose of fulfilling all of Christ's expectations for his body. That said, there has never been a church that fulfilled Christ's expectations throughout its lifecycle (for examples of churches lacking elements of health see the 1 Corinthians example listed above, or Galatians 1:2, 1:6-7 or Rev. chapters 2-3, 2:4-5, 2:14-16, 2:20, 3:2-3, 3:15-16). The biblical precedent for churches in such condition is rebuke and reproof after the example of Paul (1 Cor. 5:1-5, Gal. 1:6-9, Titus 1:5).
- 3) A "healthy church" - A "healthy church" is a church (see above), fulfilling the expectations of Christ as outlined within scripture. Remember, this is the goal; it is not a box that can be checked or forever completed. Churches will inevitably fall in and out of compliance with the fullness of Christ's expectation. Regular examination, evaluation and discipline will be needed.

Healthy churches are the plan. Anything less fails to fulfill Christ's eternal purposes (Matt. 16:18, Eph. 3:10). As witnesses to movements of multiplying churches over the years, we have grown in our understanding of Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 11:28,

Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.”

After a long list of persecutions and sufferings (2 Cor. 11:23-27), Paul confesses his ongoing burden of concern for churches he and his disciples had planted. The nature of his calling (Rom. 15:18-23), and the violent responses of those who have opposed him demanded an itinerant ministry and the inevitable longing to be among those whom he could minister to only from a distance (Acts 14:5-6, 19-20, 17:10-15). As we pursue similar goals (the multiplication of healthy churches), how will we monitor and faithfully serve churches we are not able to shepherd in person?

In presenting church formation up to this point, we have suggested the ideal. We believe the “handy guide” introduces the elements necessary for promoting and maintaining the health of churches. Church health, however, is a dynamic goal that must be pursued as well as maintained. Often such evaluation of church health reveals elements of false teaching or sin. It also reveals elements of dependence or control preventing the release of autonomous church starts.

Below is a tool for evaluating and internationalizing elements of church health within body life. This tool is based on the activities and priorities of the first church in Acts chapter 2:38-47 as well as elements of maturity recorded in the Acts 13:1-5, Antioch church.

As you work through the Generational Mapping tool, consider the following questions for evaluation of your church plants and church planting disciples. Remember, for multiplication to occur, releasing healthy churches is as important as starting them!

An introduction to Generational Mapping

As churches begin to multiply in new generations, the church planter will quickly discover his or her own calendar does not multiply at the same rate. Success in generational growth quickly outstrips the pioneer church planters firsthand knowledge of the congregations and new fields that are bearing fruit. This is cause for celebration as each new point of light takes the Enemy's ground. At the same time the church planter's responsibility for healthy DNA across these generations becomes increasingly difficult to track.

One of the most effective tools in tracking health across a network is a simple generational chart. By tracking the common elements mentioned earlier as markers for movement toward health, the generational chart quickly takes on a diagnostic function that helps the church planter recognize areas of weakness or concern across entire streams of church planting.

Let us first suggest a few definitions.

First Generation Church – these are churches started by the original church planter or pre-existing churches approached by a church planting trainer for training in reproduction. Mapping these churches is the first step in the creation of a generational map. Begin by asking the trainee for locations, dates and the names of local leaders in churches they have begun. List them across the top of the page.

Second Generation Churches – these are churches that have been started by members of first generation churches independent of the original church planter. The individuals responsible for these church starts are typically the “Timothys” of the original church planter, thus providing spiritual “grandchildren” as the network begins to multiply for the first time. These may be easily discovered by asking if and when first generation churches have started their own works. Typically, these begin in connection to a specific disciple who can also be listed on the chart.

Third Generation and beyond – these generations follow the same pattern as each generation is encouraged to take up responsibility for targeting its own empty fields. Typically fourth generation (G4 movement) is a measure of church planting movements. By the time these generations emerge the need for such mapping becomes obvious.

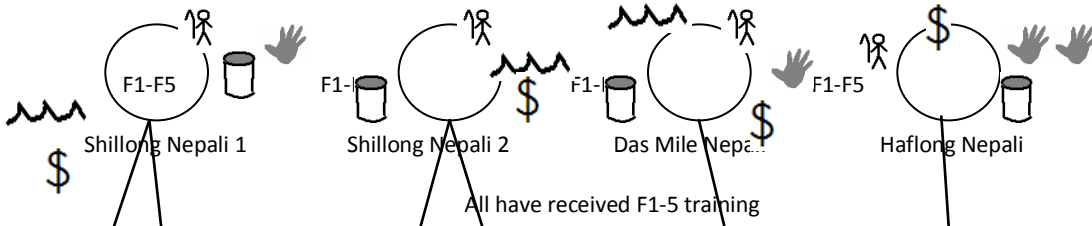
It will be appropriate for each network to define the minimum requirement for a group to be included on the chart. This can be facilitated through discussion of the definitions of church identity and function listed above.

Once all existing churches are mapped on the chart, the elements of church health discovered in Acts chapter 2 and 13 can be tracked across the generations on the chart. Take time to examine each element church by church on the chart. Looking for an “edge” of obedience for each element within the generations of church planting will help to determine next steps in the development of health across the generations.

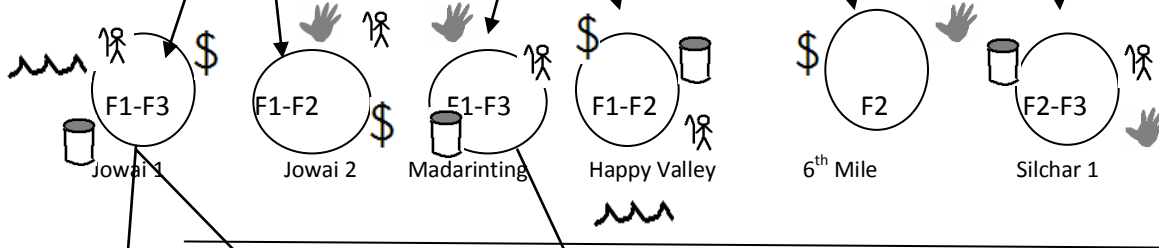
Consider the chart below as an example.

Generational Mapping - Intentional Church Formation

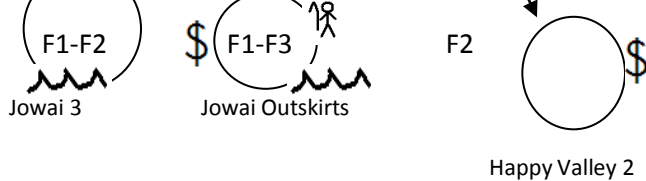
Generation 1 – Churches that were engaged for training or planted by the original church planter.



Generation 2 – Churches that have been started by the Generation 1 churches. Only list churches in the habit of meeting regularly.








Generation 3 – These are churches started by Generation 2 churches. Only list churches in the habit of meeting regularly.



Include names of all identified leaders, locations of the meetings and the date established.
When needed, transfer growing streams onto their own map.

Mapping Legend

-  Shepherd/Elder/Pastor - 1 Tim. 3:1-7/1 Pet. 5:1-2
-  Five Functions - Acts 2:38-47/Matt. 22:36-40
-  Lord's Supper Authority within the church - 1 Cor. 11
-  Baptism Authority within the Church - Mt. 28
-  Regular Collection of Offering /Appointed Treasurer - 1 Cor. 9

Tracking Training

- F1 – Field 1 - 2x2 Teams – Luke 10/oikos
- F2 – Field 2 – Personal Testimony and Gospel Pres. - List of Non-Believers
- F3 – Field 3 - Seven Commands/SWORD
- F4 – Five Functions Present –Biblical Leaders
- F5 – List of next generation “Timothys”

Uses of the Generational Map

We have found three major uses of this tool as churches multiply.

1) A vision for multiplication

By mapping generations, a paradigm capable of reaching an entire population comes into view. There are many effective church planters in the kingdom. Their efforts and abilities serve as models, but will not finish the task. First generation church starts (across the top of the page) represent addition, not multiplication. No matter the gifting or ability of the first generation church planter, his efforts add new believers and church starts. While this is commendable, we have never seen an example of this saturation approach keep up with population growth.

*Growth across the generational map is addition.
Growth in generations down the map represents multiplication.*

Spiritual grandchildren and great grandchildren within 3rd and 4th generation church starts represent multiplication. Capturing vision for such multiplication is an effective application of the generational chart.

2) Tracking elements of church health

As stated above, effective follow-up across multiplying generations cannot be maintained through the efforts of only 1st generation church planters. The nature of multiplication makes this impossible. Tracking elements of health across generations will always reveal “edges” or points where obedience and training break down. Finding these “edges” reveals the need for further training and encouragement among churches not yet implementing the element of church function. Remember, the elements themselves do not create health. Rather the disciplined practice of obedience creates the venue for renewal and obedience leading toward health.

3) The map provides a script for **T4T** discipleship chains

Where the map is used, next steps are not guesswork. By using the generational chart, first generation church planters, who are unable to visit 3rd and 4th generation churches do not have to guess next steps. By examining church function across the chart next steps are revealed by showing what is missing. In this way the chart is a tool for diagnostics as often entire streams can be seen lacking certain elements. To be sure, elements of health do not just appear in succeeding generations. What is lacking in the parent will not spontaneously occur in the offspring.

Content for practice, application and accountability can be scripted in this manner. In this way our **T4T** becomes more efficient.

Tool for the Trainer

Take time to consider the churches you are involved with using the Generational Mapping tool. Ask the following questions.

- 1) Are there areas in which your church starts are getting stuck?
- 2) What barriers exist in local tradition keeping them from moving forward?
- 3) What would it take to break out of these ruts?
- 4) How can you move existing networks past troublesome traditions?
- 5) Are there key leaders with the perceived authority to move these churches forward?
- 6) Are authorities recognized within the church making healthy function possible?

End- Visioning – Church Formation

“WIGTAKE” – What is It Going to Take?

Consider again the “X” people group with a population of 1 million souls. Keeping in mind God’s stated will (2 Pet. 3:9) that none should perish we must ask ourselves;

How many churches are needed?

As we gather the harvest among the “X”, we are faced with the challenges of multiple church starts. Determining the size of this task helps the church planter to set God-sized goals toward fulfilling God’s desires.

Worldwide, the average church size is about 50 people. Within our context we can use this average to estimate the number of churches necessary.

If one church = 50 people,
how many churches are needed to reach 100%
of the “X”?

With this in mind, we divide the “X” population by fifty to determine the number of churches needed.

“X” Population = 1,000,000
1 Church = 50 people.
1 Million Divided by 50 = 20,000
Reaching 1 Million “X” people would require the start of
20,000 churches.
*Reaching 10% of the “X” people would require
2,000 church starts!*

Forming and Releasing New Churches

Creation and adoption of goals for church formation should be tailored to each specific setting. For some, a goal of beginning 50 new churches in the next year is an appropriate goal. For others, moving existing churches towards healthy function may be a prerequisite.

Together with the leaders of your network, consider appropriate goals and anticipate a movement of God’s over the next year. What would you need to spend your time doing to respond to a movement? We suggest you record these activities in the form of goals below.

- 1)
- 2)

Specific Actions

Modeling healthy church function for your network and the projected leaders of new church starts is a must. One to three day trainings in which the “Handy Guide” is used to practice these functions, and the introduction of generational charts to track these functions can get you started.

Evaluate each church within your network to determine the next steps in their formation. Use the Generational Tracking tool to design specific actions intended to move past areas where churches may be stuck. Ensure there is a shepherd for every flock! Ensure there is authority for obedience vested in every church!

Evaluation – The Handy Guide to Church Formation

Take time in groups of 6-10, to evaluate the training tool, “The Handy Guide” for training new believers. Consider the following questions for discussion. Take steps to correct any perceived weaknesses within your efforts.

Questions to consider:

Is the tool obedience based? Is there an accountability process?

Does the tool grant responsibilities?

Does the tool plan for multiplication?

Is the tool facilitated by locals?

Does the tool depend on self-discovery?

Does the tool lead to healthy church formation?

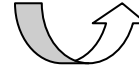
Is the tool reproducible?

Explain each “yes” answer. Why are these important?

Leadership Multiplication



Leaders Planting Leaders



Objectives - The church planter will:

- Examine Jesus and Paul as examples of mentors who multiplied
- Develop a vision for multiplication through the leaders they produce
- Be leaders who plant leaders
- Commit to a specific set of “Timothys” within their ministry

Reproducing the Four Fields Kingdom Process

Key Question: Where do you see multiplication in the parable of the sower (Mark 4:26-29)?

“This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk then the head then the full grain in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe he puts the sickle to it for the harvest has come.” – Mark 4:26-29

Answer: Jesus did not mention multiplication in the parable. Examination of the context, however, includes Jesus investment in the 12, and others (the good soil, Mk. 4:20) who had been enlightened by “the secrets of the kingdom” (Mk. 4:10-11). As audience for the parables, these disciples were those who saw and perceived, heard and understood (Mk. 4:12). To them, the task of reproducing the kingdom message would soon be entrusted (Mark 3:13-19, 6:7-13, 16:15-20). Through them, and their reproduction, the ends of the earth would be engaged, evangelized and disciplined in community (Mk. 16:15-20, Matt. 28:18-20, Jn. 17:20-23, 20:21, Acts 1:8).

A note on Context: Jesus preached the good news of the kingdom (Mk. 1:15). Jesus also called kingdom agents from the crowds of followers, committing himself to a few (Mk.3:13-14). Those he called he also appointed, “designating them apostles – that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach...” (Mk. 3:14). These twelve (and others – Mk. 4:10), became the audience for “the secrets of the kingdom of God”. Throughout the rest of His earthly ministry, Jesus fulfilled his commitment to these twelve. They were both, with Him, and they were sent out to preach the kingdom message (Matt. 9:35-10:4, Mk. 3:14, 6:7-13, Luke 9:1-6, 10:1-11, Acts 1:8, 4:13).

As Jesus’ words of instruction regarding the kingdom are preserved for us to hear and understand, his example among the kingdom agents is also preserved for us to see and perceive. The kingdom instructions of Mark 4 were inaugurated (begun) within Jesus earthly ministry and invested in those He

called and taught by his example. Jesus intended to multiply through those who applied these lessons (Jn. 15:5-6). He also prayed for generations of believers not yet brought into the kingdom as fruit of His followers obedience (Jn. 17: 20). By following Jesus' example, It was the few, faithful to the call to be with Him who obeyed the kingdom agenda (Jn. 17:4-10) Jesus' kingdom agenda, introduced in the kingdom parables resulted in kingdom advance through kingdom agents equipped and sent into the field (Matt. 11:12). Jesus multiplied through the disciples he mentored.

Introduction to Mentorship - Timothy Groups

As mentioned within Field #3 titled "Discipleship", "222" is key to the kingdom agenda (2 Timothy 2:2). The root of all leadership multiplication is mentoring. What a disciple sees in the life of his or her mentor will likely be replicated. Mentorship of new believers is not something we begin or end. It is an ongoing process. This section will help organize our efforts.

Understanding Mentorship

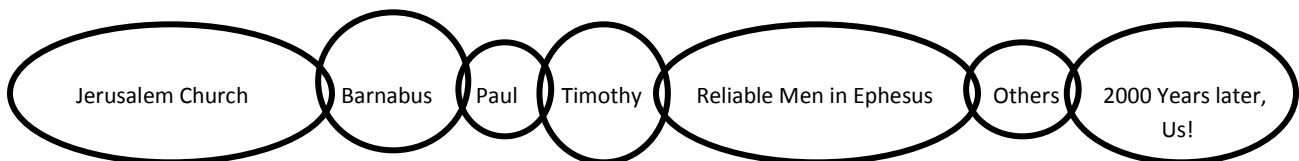
Every individual on the planet is under the influence of a mentor. These mentors model actions and attitudes that lead to reproduction of social norms. We are mentored by parents as we learn and understand roles and rules of social interaction. We are mentored by teachers in our understanding of authority and submission. We are mentored by friends as we consider our life direction and the use of our time. Even our worldview is determined by a collective mentorship at the hands of our culture or social community. Though often overlooked, mentorship, either positive or negative, is ever present.

This truth applies to the believing community as well. Each new believer is being mentored – perhaps unknowingly - in the tasks of following Christ. That which is observed as typical Christian behavior constitutes the social norms of this community. Over time these "norms" create equilibrium or balance as believers tend to take on prescribed roles and/or attitudes within body life. Sadly for many, this process constitutes a "cooling off" of initial excitement and zeal for the Lord's work.

It is possible to manage the mentorship within a community of believers with intentionality and defined goals.

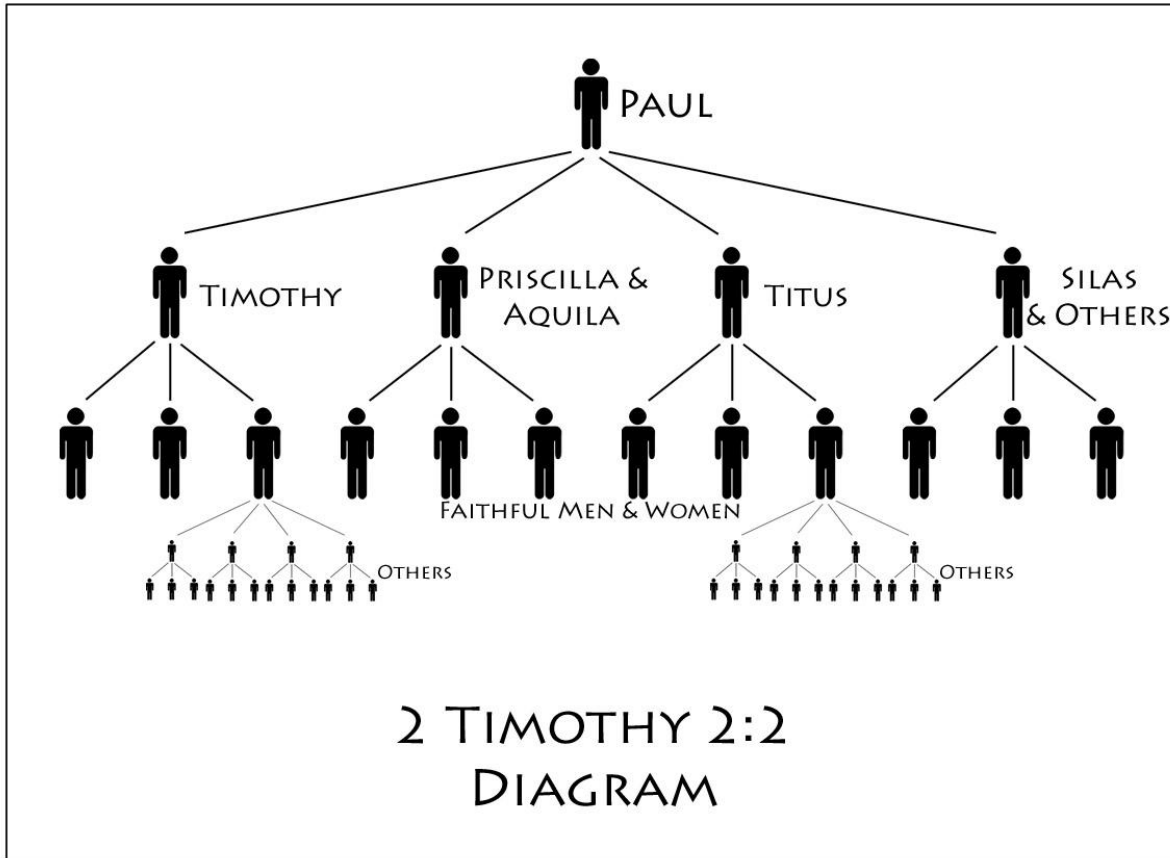
2 Timothy 2:2 says: *"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."*

As we said earlier, this verse represents a chain of discipleship or mentorship. If we expand our view beyond this verse to the greater New Testament context we see this chain extends in both directions.



Not all the links look the same. Some seem smaller than others. Yet without each link, the chain is broken. Whether we perceive it or not, chains of discipleship exist in every church. Where healthy reproduction is the goal, investing healthy discipleship into these chains is a must.

Consider the chart below.



Paul’s ministry existed in chains. In this way, even in his absence, Paul had an ongoing discipleship relationship with thousands.

This diagram demonstrates for us the vertical dimension of discipleship chains. The “vertical dimension” is a picture of a multiplied harvest capable of discipling an entire nation.⁴²

Note these observations from the diagram:

- 1) Multiple chains can be started by the same leader

⁴² This diagram demonstrates the flow of authority and responsibility to the edge of a discipleship chain. It was adopted from the writing of Wilson Geisler, RAD – Rapidly Advancing Disciples. Web publication – available for free download at: www.churchplantingmovements.com

- 2) Each generation or “link” in the chain carries a level of multiplication. This is the truth of Church Planting Movements. Generational links multiply; just adding your own Timothys is merely addition.
- 3) Faithful men and women are needed to continue the chain.
- 4) Others?

Similar to leaders, families are organized in this fashion. Parents become grandparents when the third generation is born. Each generation carries a new potential for multiplication.

Generation growth is the key to multiplication!

God has ordered the kingdom in a similar way. As Paul commissioned Timothy to the task of reproduction he had in mind *spiritual grandchildren* also capable of reproduction. This vision must drive our plans for leadership multiplication.

Organizing a Mentorship Ministry

The nature of a mentor’s assignment demands reproduction of leaders at each point of the kingdom process.

Expanding the ministry to new and otherwise unreached areas demands the development of new entry teams capable of penetrating darkness, as well as faithful sowers capable of saturating the field with the seed (Field 1-2).

Anchoring the ministry demands multiplication of disciple makers and church planters who encourage roots for the newly established churches (Field 3-4).⁴³

Mentorship of such leaders is a time intensive process requiring multiple contacts and by its nature must continue for months or years. Within a multiplying ministry, these tasks quickly outgrow the abilities or availability of the mentor. How will the “Paul” mentor facilitate the needed small group mentorship capable of keeping up with multiplication?

A Timothy Group is the answer.

Definition – “Timothy” – A leader who is willing and capable of receiving the core elements of kingdom growth from a Paul mentor and investing these elements in others in a leadership chain.

Definition – “Timothy Group” – A group of disciple makers committed to a “Paul and Timothy” relationship in which responsibilities are passed through a discipleship chain to the edge of the network.

⁴³ In 1 Cor. 3:5-15, Paul shifts metaphors from planting and watering to “laying a foundation” and “building upon it”. The lesson however is the same as both sowing and nurturing are essential. Here we have substituted, expanding and anchoring.

Facilitating Timothy Groups

Paul instructed Timothy to search out those capable of mentoring others within his pattern, but doing so raises several important areas of consideration (2 Timothy 1:13/2:2). Managing Timothy groups demands answers to three key questions:

- 1) **How do we mentor our Timothys?**
- 2) **How do we identify potential Timothys?**
- 3) **What do we mentor our Timothys to do?**

Key Question #1 – How do we mentor Timothys?

Answer – A process we call “T4T”.

Understanding this question and its answer from scripture will create a venue for effective application of the content in this manual and provide a mechanism for introduction of any biblical content as discipleship continues. Everything that has been introduced within this writing depends on a process we call “T4T”.⁴⁴

Defining “T4T”

‘T4T’ is not a curriculum or content. It is bound up in the necessities of process and relationship. Learning may take place in a classroom, mentoring, however, requires field exposure. Just as Jesus did, we must be willing to walk with our “Timothy’s”. It is field exposure that creates the venue for mentorship. Application of principles taught, setting goals, and facing real life problems are all best taught on site. This high value use of time is non-negotiable in effective mentorship.

Consider Jesus’ example in Mark 3.

Versus 13-15 say;

*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 our demons.*

The two most important words in leadership multiplication are: *come and go!*

⁴⁴ At the time of our writing our understanding of T4T was derived from the teachings of ‘John Chin’. Since that time Steve Smith and Ying Kai (John Chin) have published the work: *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* (Monument, CO: Wigtake Resources, 2011). – We highly recommend this resource and consider the four fields to be a script for T4T. Notice the chapter headings within the T4T book as they follow the four fields kingdom process.

This passage shows Jesus committing to twelve disciples given to him by the Father. He immediately begins a process of coming and going formed around teaching, modeling and application. This process develops across all four gospels and includes elements of pastoral care, accountability, teaching, practice, planning and finally commissioning. We will not do better than the Lord's method for multiplying through mentorship.

Time spent mentoring new leaders should focus on three key areas. They are pastoral care/accountability, new lessons/practice and planning/commissioning.

Pastoral Care/Accountability –Each Pastoral Care/Accountability session checks the momentum and progress of previous sessions. This simply means a cycle of assignment and action is expected as disciplines are introduced. Those the mentor invests in must be willing to move forward in obedience. An atmosphere of such expectation is essential within the Paul – Timothy relationship. This can also be seen throughout Paul's letters as he gives specific instructions to leaders. He sends leaders out, calls them to come, gives them specific charges (1 Cor. 4:17, 1 Thess. 3:2, 2 Tim. 4:9-13) and at times rebukes them for failure to complete assignments (see Titus 1:5).

Beginning Timothy sessions with a time of shared experience, encouragement and pursuit of answers to common church planting barriers also creates a pastoral atmosphere. Such activities are essential in the Paul - Timothy relationship as the mentor remains in touch with field realities and obstacles (see Luke 10:16-24 for an example).

New Lessons and Practice – Each meeting should include a new responsibility and or assignment designed to grow your disciples and leaders. These lessons should include dimensions of biblical instruction, relationship with others, experience in the field and spiritual commitment and growth.⁴⁵ Remember, self-discovery as the Word speaks to our Timothy is the best case scenario. Participative group settings encourage responsibility for each member to pursue biblical solutions. Much of Jesus' teaching can be seen in bite-sized pieces. For example, see His instruction on prayer in Luke 11 or His many parables. Each was designed and recorded under the direction of the Holy Spirit to ensure oral reproduction and discovery of truth and the value of application.

Competence has no value where confidence is lacking. Everything taught should be practiced to ensure reproducibility in the field setting. Christ was an expert mentor. Those things He expected of His disciples He first modeled for them. Key elements the Lord intended His disciples to carry on after His ascension were often practiced in His presence.⁴⁶ At times, Jesus would watch from a distance as His disciples were sent out to apply specific lessons (Mark 6:47-48).

⁴⁵ Malcolm Webber has suggested these four dimensions as a framework of adult learning. They are: Instructional, Relational, Experiential and Spiritual. See Malcolm Webber. *Building Leaders: The Spirit Built Leadership Series*, #4 (Elkhart IN. Strategic Press, 2007).

⁴⁶ Examples include: baptism (John 4:1-2), prayer (Matt. 6:9-15), preaching repentance (Mark 1:15, 6:12), casting out demons (Mark 5:8, 6:13, Luke 9:40-43, 10:17), Lord's Supper (Luke. 22:17-20).

Planning and Commissioning -- Finally the Lord left the task to His disciples in full confidence they would take up the leadership roles He had commissioned.⁴⁷ After sending the 12 and the 70 into the fields of Galilee (Luke 9:2, 10:2), the Lord also detailed a final plan that encompassed the entire world (Acts 1:8). Each of the four gospels record a commissioning based on the disciplines already invested in his disciples (Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:45-47, John 20:21). Every meeting with our Timothys should conclude with the planning of next steps and action plans for immediate obedience in the application of content practiced. Once plans are in place, send your Timothys out with the full authority granted by our Lord (Matt. 28:18, 20).

Key Question #2 - How do we identify potential Timothys?

Answer – Train every believer and filter to find the few.

Crowds followed Jesus. The crowds heard the good news of the kingdom, benefited from the Lord's power, and were urged to repent from sin (Matt. 9:35-36, 11:20). Man naturally believes, bigger is better. Whether Christian, Muslim, Hindu or Sikh, the natural man pursues size as a primary measure of success. Where this is true, crowds are naturally desirable. The same is natural in our view of ministry. The reality however, is not everything is my nature is healthy. Much of what is natural in my thinking must be taken captive in pursuit of the Lord's will (2 Cor. 10:5).

When it comes to mentorship we are at a disadvantage. Jesus had a perfect discernment of the Father's will. Those the Father had chosen were perfectly discerned (John 17:6).

Self- Discovery Study - Jesus Commitment to the Few: Macro/Micro investment in Mark 1-11

In groups of 6-10, review or scan Mark 1-11. Record references to Jesus' investment in crowds of seekers or followers (example - Mark 1: 33). Secondly, record examples of Jesus moving away from the crowds for investment in the few (ex. 1:37-38). Consider the following questions as references are gathered.

- 1) How would you describe Jesus' investment in the crowds that pursued Him?
- 2) By what criteria did Jesus identify the few for deeper investment?
- 3) What implications exist within this pattern for Jesus' kingdom agenda?

Finally, deal specifically with these two passages: concerning the crowds, Mark 4:11-12, concerning the few: Mark 9:30-32). Why did Jesus leave the crowds behind?

⁴⁷ Many have sought to capture the Lord's mentorship within a variety of acronyms. Some examples include, MAWL (Jesus Modeled, Assisted, Watched and Left) or TEAM (Jesus Taught, Expected, Assigned, Mentored). The church planter is free to adopt or develop such tools for direction of "Timothy Groups".

From Multitudes to Followers to Few

Jesus did not build His kingdom on crowds.⁴⁸ Instead, motivated by compassion (Matt. 9:36), He engaged the crowds at a macro level with the message of the kingdom. In many cases, the crowds were not prepared to receive the implications of what was being sown (Mark 4:11-12). In the words of John, *“many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man’s testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man”* (John 2:23-25).

From the crowds, Jesus consistently called for followers (Matt. 4:19, 8:22, 16:24, Luke 9:23, John 9:23, 12:26, 21:19). Through the message of the kingdom, Jesus granted eternal life. In John 10:27 and 28 Jesus said, *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”*

Jesus’ followers were expected to count the cost (Matt. 8:18-22, Matt. 10:37-39, Mk. 8:34-36). From among those willing to carry their cross, Jesus chose a few who would be with Him, and be sent out to reproduce the kingdom message and agenda (Mark 3:13-19).

For those intending to multiply, Jesus’ example demonstrates an essential stewardship for investment of time. Moving from addition to multiplication requires discernment of the few God has provided through whom the kingdom agenda may be reproduced. Obedience to the Lord’s expectations will reveal the faithful. This leads us to one of the most under-utilized tools for effective discipleship.

Today many churches are filled with stagnant disciples. Stagnant disciples lead to stagnant ministries. Many who have envisioned multiplying churches have seen their plans and goals frustrated and even derailed by this stagnation. One reason for this is a failure to employ biblical filtering techniques within our leadership methods.

Filtering does not imply driving away the unfaithful or unfruitful. Rather, it shakes many otherwise stagnant believers into action by employing the expectations and responsibilities demanded of every follower of Christ. As responsibilities are given and fulfilled, the faithful and fruitful become obvious. Accountability within the T4T process reveals those to whom we should commit long term.

Our model for such filtering is Christ. Within three short years, Jesus was able to begin a movement that would break out worldwide and continue through the faithful to the ends of the earth. Setting this in motion demanded an efficient use of His most precious resource, His time. Consider Jesus’ approach to identifying and empowering the faithful among the crowds.

⁴⁸ As part of the “self-discovery study” above, consider the following passages as reference to crowds who followed Jesus – Mark 1:33, 2:2, 13, 3:7, 20, 32, 4:1, 36, 5:21, 24, 6:31, 44, 7:14, 8:1, 9, 34, 9:14, 25, 10:1, 13, 11:8, 18.

Self-Discovery Study – Filters for Faithfulness

Read the following passages to discover filters Jesus employed for identifying the faithful among the crowds who followed him. Record your findings.

- 1) Mark 10:17-23 – The Demands of Lordship
- 2) Matthew 10:32-38/ John 6:52- 67 – Hard Sayings
- 3) Matthew 13:9-17/ Mark 4:1-12, 33-34 – Parables – discerning the Spirit’s involvement.
- 4) Others? -

Identifying and molding the faithful few demanded Jesus’ time and devotion. Throughout the gospels, Jesus can be seen pursuing specific relationships with those whom the Father had given Him. In the midst of a very public preaching ministry, Jesus’ deep investment came in the private times with the few.

While it is assumed success in ministry is defined by broad influence, true influence may be more accurately measured by a depth of investment which multiplies through our disciples. It was not Jesus’ public ministry that changed the world. In fact, many who followed Him mistook Him for an earthly ruler (John. 6:15). Rather, it was the private ministry of Jesus that turned the world upside down!⁴⁹

The end result of Jesus’ filtering the multitudes was a core of disciples in whom He had deeply invested. From the multitudes, Jesus called for followers. From the followers, Jesus made disciples. From the disciples, He designated Apostles to lead the army forward to the nations.⁵⁰

In Mark 3:17 and 3:13-14, this designation is clearly seen. Jesus disciples included those who were following Him and learning from Him. The twelve were designated “Apostles” so that He could send them out to preach. Following Jesus’ example, the purpose of mentoring is to identify and send out faithful disciples.

Why is filtering important?

The greatest resource of the church planter is his time.

Throughout His ministry, everyone Jesus encountered desired His time. Again and again He was summoned to the homes of officials, invited to dinners and feasts as an honored guest and expected to stay where His ministry was producing fruit. The crowds of people who followed Him brought a variety of illnesses and needs. Many possessed their own agendas for the “Messiah.” The majority could not

⁴⁹ For descriptions and tools for facilitating public and private ministry in the pattern of Jesus see: Thomas Wade Akins, *Pioneer Evangelism*. (Brazil, Junta de Missoes Nacionais, Convencao Batista Brasileira, 1991).

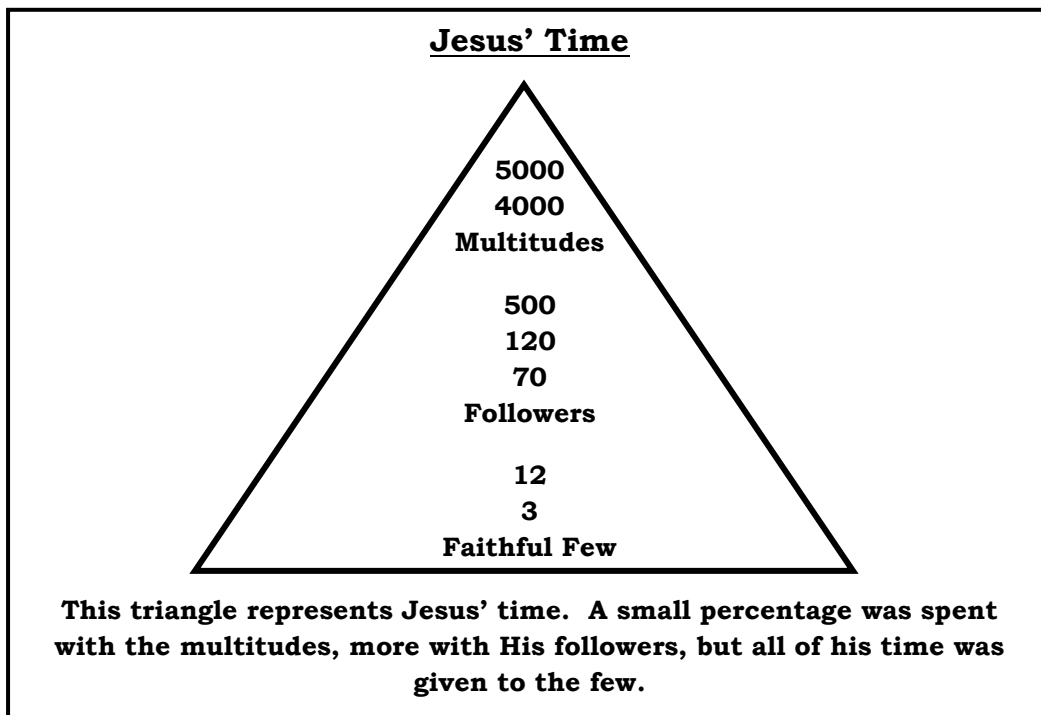
⁵⁰ These materials taken from: R. B. Carlton, *Acts 29: Practical Training in Facilitating Church-Planting Movements* (Radical Obedience Publishing, 2003).

see past the temporal, physical needs of their daily lives. Yet Jesus was driven by the Father's agenda. Spending excessive time with the marginal or unfaithful was not an option (Mark 1:29-39, *37-38, Matt. 11:23).

Filtering ensures time is given to those disciples who are moving forward. This was a key to Jesus' ministry. Everywhere Jesus went beyond the reach of the crowds, the faithful few were called to join Him. Whether on a mountainside, across the lake, or in the garden, Jesus' time was devoted to core disciples who would carry on His mission (Mk. 3: 13-19, 4:35-41, 14:32-38).

In the same way, a Paul type mentor will be faced with many of the distractions and duties of ministry. Rather than obstacles, these present opportunities to the mentor for the delegation of responsibility to other emerging leaders. Without such delegation, the mentor's schedule is further divided as congregations multiply. The mentor's calling and direction must be revisited often to ensure it remains the top priority. Doing so ensures our time is spent with those God has given us to advance His kingdom.

Consider this diagram of the use of Jesus' time.⁵¹



⁵¹ Robert Coleman suggests, "the more concentrated the size of the group being taught, the greater the opportunity for effective instruction." See Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1972) p.25.

Assignment for Application

Applying these truths from Jesus’ ministry means discovering some things we should start doing and others we must stop doing in order to do the best. We must be willing to evaluate and sharpen our own leadership effectiveness. Take time to consider and answer these questions within your ministry.

- What filters do you utilize to find the faithful?
- How much time are you spending with those who are not producing fruit?
- Who are the few God has given you that deserve more of your time?
- Do you define faithfulness by fruitfulness?

Prayerfully list the names of 5-10 leaders God has given you who are worthy of more time. Commit before God to ensure time in your schedule for deep investment in these few.

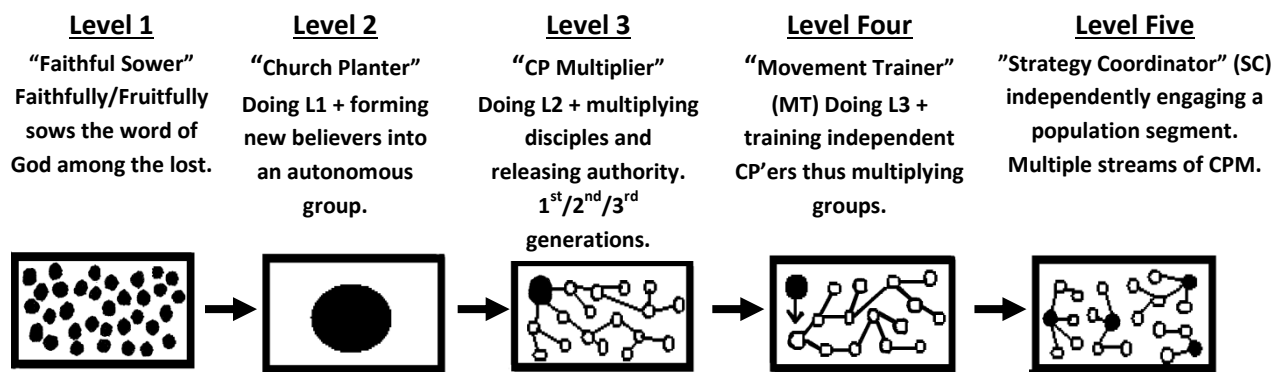
You have just identified your first “Timothy Group”

Key Question #3 – What do we mentor our “Timothy’s” to do?

Answer – The Four Fields Kingdom Process

The answer to this question is the Mark 4, Four Fields plan. Our goal is faithful and fruitful reproductions of ourselves! Our Timothy’s are next generation church planters. This means we must mentor “Timothy’s” on all levels of our leadership plan.

Measuring the growth of leaders in our networks has led us to adopt five levels of leadership.⁵² Consider this diagram.



⁵² These leadership levels are meant to be a “measuring stick” for tracking growth in vision and responsibility. It is a tool to help us determine key competencies and identification of barriers that if not addressed lead to stagnation.

Utilizing levels of leadership tool demands two key questions.

- 1) *Where are my leaders on the L 1-5 scale?*
- 2) *How do I move them forward to the next level?*

Answering these questions will provide focus and intentionality to your mentorship of new leaders. Identifying their current position (level) is only the beginning. Much more important are the plans for moving them forward.



Seed Sower
Level One Leader

Description – *Field 1-2 Facilitators* - These leaders are simply **obedient** to the Lord’s command to spread the gospel. They have overcome fear and prejudice with a **love for the lost** that compels them to sow. Most commonly these sowers **use simple tools**. They have been trained to use the tools available to every believer; their **own testimony** and a **simple gospel presentation**. Most likely they have begun with their own “**Oikos**” and have won some to faith. Their use of such simple tools enables them to **model for others** in a reproducible way.

How do we move them?

Level 1 leaders should be challenged with the vision of gathering believers into **discipleship groups**. Many times these leaders lack the qualifications of a pastor, but can still be mobilized to start new churches.⁵³ **Equipping L1’s with simple discipleship material** is a must. Their **confidence in presenting** the material will determine their willingness to take the next step. Consider materials that offer **participative Bible study** to relieve the perceived need for sermon preparation.

An important Bible study for these leaders would include Acts 2 and 13 with an emphasis on obedience and the **functions of the church**. Working with these leaders provides a chance to set the “DNA” of an emerging church along lines that are reproducible and indigenous.

⁵³ While women do not meet the qualification of pastor as outlined within the New Testament, they can be seen as the catalyst for new church starts throughout Acts and the letters of Paul. (see the examples of Lydia, Pricilla, etc.) With this in mind, all levels of leadership, outside the pastor are open to women.

Level 1 Skills – able to...

- 1) sow obediently
- 2) love the lost
- 3) use simple tools
- 4) reach their own “Oikos”
- 5) model sowing for others

Next Steps...

- 1) Form discipleship groups
- 2) Reproduce simple discipleship material
- 3) Gain a confidence in presenting
- 4) Use a participative Bible study method
- 5) Understand church function

Common Barrier – lack of expectation. The major barrier here is a lack of expectation among church leaders for the role and value of every believer in the Great Commission. Where expectations lack, powerful evangelists such as the Samaritan woman, demoniac, or reformed tax collectors like Zacchaeus often miss the radar. A lack of expectation for every believer responsibility often leads to a grossly under mobilized priesthood (2 Pet. 2:9-10). What is the result? Squandered opportunities as avenues into ‘oikos’ lines available through every new believer are neglected.



Church Planter
Level Two Leader

Description - *Field 3-4 Facilitators* - Level 2 leaders have taken a step forward by solidifying their new believers into new church starts. They have grasped the need for body life and the indispensable functioning of the local church. Within their skill set is the ability to **recognize key spiritual gifts** necessary for proper church function. They are able to **model effective seed sowing** as well as **facilitating beginning discipleship** for added believers. They have a clear vision for healthy church, they steward **authority for the ordinances** and facilitate them regularly within body life.⁵⁴ It is not assumed that the church planter will become the pastor; rather, an awareness of Ephesians 4:11-12 pushes the church planter to **recognize emerging leaders** from among the faithful who might be entrusted the task of leadership. In this sense, church planters ought to be quick to **release authority** concerning church function and the continued ordinances.

How do we move them?

Many challenges exist for church planters. Defining and maintaining their role is a never-ending task. Traditional models imply an ownership of the new congregation, pushing the church planter toward pastoral leadership. Multiplying churches is not possible within this model. The church planter must **release the fruit**. A season of prayer will perhaps clarify the planter’s role and assist in the **delegation of**

⁵⁴ It is clear that church planting and church growth are stunted where authority for practicing the ordinances is withheld. A difficulty arises within church plants facilitated by women. In such cases, the emerging male leadership and this authority should be quickly recognized to fill such a gap.

leadership within the new body. Paul completed this process rapidly, enabling him to engage new fields.⁵⁵

For this reason the church planter is well served to consider a study on the spiritual gifts. A **healthy knowledge of body life** will promote respect for the priesthood of new believers.⁵⁶ The church planter must also begin to critically manage his own schedule. The **ability to filter** through disciples toward effectiveness will sharpen and focus his efforts toward efficiency. This understanding leads directly toward the **“222” principle of multiplication**,⁵⁷ releasing the church planter to engage other fields.

The church planter must also grasp the progress of the new gathering toward biblical church. An understanding of milestones toward **healthy church** will help the planter to measure progress and determine next steps.

Level 2 Skills - able to...

- 1) recognize spiritual gifts
- 2) model seed sowing
- 3) facilitate beginning discipleship
- 4) facilitate the ordinances
- 5) recognize emerging leaders
- 6) release authority

Next Steps...

- 1) Release the fruit
- 2) Delegate leadership
- 3) Know healthy body life
- 4) Grow in the ability to filter
- 5) Empower “222” multiplication
- 6) Release healthy churches

Common Barrier - extra biblical qualifications. The biblical qualifications for the overseer, elder, pastor role are in a battle with our preferences. We would like to have an educated, polished, experienced front man for our weekly service. He should be a charismatic eloquent speaker, dynamic visionary, a Bible scholar, excel in his gift of communication, etc. The reality however, is none of these things makes the list or priorities in scripture. 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 read as lists of character traits essential to lead a flock. Yes, they should be “able to teach,” but let us not confuse the solid use of God’s word with our contemporary preference for polished public speaking.



Church Planting Multiplier

Level Three Leader

Description - A Church Planting Multiplier (CPM'er) is a church planter who has successfully multiplied through the birth of new generations of churches (2nd, 3rd, 4th generations). This has likely happened in

⁵⁵ Consider his stay in Thessalonica – possibly as little as three weeks (Acts 17:2). This is also the issue that caused his rebuke of Titus in Crete. (see Titus 1:5)

⁵⁶ See the studies on priesthood within the section “Motives for Church Planting” within this manual.

⁵⁷ “222” refers to 2 Timothy 2:2.

connection with his own willingness to **recognize and release authority** within the local church, **mobilize the laity** to effective sowing and reaping, and **foster a “DNA” of multiplication**. While churches continue to grow, they also continue to reproduce. **Second, third and fourth generation** churches are the vision of this leader. This Church Multiplier is a **strong delegator of responsibility**, often including **multiple layers of leadership** within a network. They **model entry to church formation**, otherwise known as the Four Fields, and have taken up a **training type role** within their own network. In large part these efforts are summarized within an understanding of **ministry beyond their own abilities**.

How do we move them?

The question that may be asked here is, “*Should we move them?*” The Church Planting Multiplier is a highly effective leader within a movement of God. Great care must be given not to distract this individual from the harvest. When the time is right, however, the potential such a leader has for impacting other networks is great.

The CPM'er vision can be greatly helped through **exposure to other fruitful fields**. Many times leaders can see barriers in the work of others they are blind to in our own efforts. In this way exposure to other fields has often led to recognition of personal barriers. Such exposure also offers a chance for the **evaluation of tools utilized** in his and other fields.⁵⁸ Such exposure may also **open his eyes to a role within the global church** and kingdom expansion. It offers fresh opportunity to experience the Great Commission and **re-evaluate “What is It Going to Take” (WIGTAKE)** within a larger context.

The goal of this exposure is the mobilization of such individuals to **empower other networks** toward effectiveness. These facilitators should be challenged to recognize their expertise and potential **role as catalysts** for independent movements. When the time is right, training others outside their network will multiply their effectiveness.

Level 3 Skills – Able to...

- 1) recognize, release authority
- 2) mobilize the laity
- 3) foster multiplication
- 4) cast a 2nd, 3rd, 4th generation vision
- 5) be a strong delegator
- 6) model entry to church
- 7) provide a training role
- 8) carry a vision beyond own abilities

Next Steps...

- 1) Exposure to other fruitful fields
- 2) Evaluation of tools
- 3) Perceive role in global church
- 4) Re-evaluate “WIGTAKE”
- 5) Empower other networks
- 6) Perceive role as catalysts

⁵⁸ This “cross-pollination” must be balanced with a warning so as not to confuse and derail an existing movement through the introduction of extra-biblical tradition.

Common Barrier - unwillingness to release authority. Releasing responsibility and authority is leadership building 101. Yet, within ministry our natural bent toward order has led to systems of church government and ordination designed (or perhaps manipulated) to retain control over would be kingdom advances. Church Planting Movements do not coexist with an unwillingness to release control. Where an unwillingness to release exists, potential for multiplication is devastated.



Movement Trainer

Level Four Leader

Description - A movement trainer (MT) is one who introduces methods for multiplying churches within **autonomous existing networks**. The movement trainer does not own the fruit of his labor; rather he **empowers networks** independent of his own to effectiveness. The movement trainer is capable of **training leaders in levels 1-4** and the Five Parts of the Church Planting Plan. The movement trainer also possesses **strong networking skills** along with the **ability to mobilize resources** needed to facilitate such trainings. He has an emerging **Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 vision and burden** for all nations.

How do we move them?

While the movement trainer is a proven effective leader, his or her ministry may lack a **people group focus**. In this way, the strategic nature of the Great Commission is at times lacking. People group focused missiology can be clearly seen through **study of “panta ta ethne”** within scripture. God’s pursuit of all peoples clearly ties the Great Commission and the Lord’s return to the exposure of ethnic groups to the gospel message.⁵⁹ While we do not affect the Lord’s timing, **concentrated prayer** in this area has revealed in the hearts of many a **clear burden for specific population segments**. Challenging the movement trainer with such biblical material may result in the **engagement of a previously unreached people**.

Level 4 Skills – Able to...

- 1) train/empower existing networks
- 2) train levels 1-4 and the Five parts of the CP plan
- 3) efficiently network with others
- 4) mobilize resources
- 5) see Rev. 5 and 7 vision and burden

Next Steps...

- 1) Develop a people group focus
- 2) Study of “*pantha ta ethne*”
- 3) Commit to concentrated prayer
- 4) Develop a clear burden for specific population
- 5) Engage the previously unreached

Common Barrier - false visions of success. We must answer the question, “Our kingdom or his?” Our answer will motivate and maintain the L4 role or make it impossible. It is not natural for men (with a

⁵⁹ See “Motives for Church Planting” study within this manual.

sinful nature like mine) to give away the kingdom to others. We typically invest time and resources in growing our ministry. Man naturally paints the paradigm around themselves, meaning much of our effort is designed to keep ourselves in the middle, as the hub, around which everything revolves. Failure to stay in the middle derails the vision for success, namely a big, robust, influential ministry. The L4 leader gives away the kingdom by training outside his direct influence. He will not own the fruit of his efforts. The network he is working to grow or multiply will not owe him allegiance. His investment will not make him famous. In some cases the network he trains may not know he exists! If we want or need to be “in the show” our influence is likely tied to our own network.



Strategy Coordinator

Level Five Leader

Description – A Strategy Coordinator (SC) is one who has accepted the task of **training level 1-4 leaders** as well as the **mobilization of existing networks and resources** into the engagement of a specific population segment. This population segment has become the focus of an SC’s ministry for the purpose of **implementing reproducible church planting strategy**. The SC is an **advocate of an otherwise unengaged, unreached people**. The goal of the SC is the **facilitation of multiple streams of church planting** within the designated population segment capable of exposing all to the gospel. The SC’s team will likely include sowers, church planters, CPM facilitators and master trainers.

How do we move them?

The “SC” is in the unique position of recognizing the goal of the Great Commission. The “SC” must be challenged to see the existing task beyond their assignment for the filling of gaps beyond their reach. Who is the next SC? What groups exist that must be engaged?

Level 5 Skills – Able to ...

- 1) train L 1-L4 leaders
- 2) mobilize networks/resources
- 3) implement reproducible CP strategy
- 4) advocate for an unreached people group
- 5) facilitate multiple streams of church planting

Next steps... We consider level 5 leaders the goal of our leadership reproduction. Similar to the Apostle Paul, who had multiple streams of reproducing churches (Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, Asia), these leaders are competent to work the plan under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Help these leaders by platforming their voice for the benefit of the Great Commission community.

Common Barrier – priority. Staying on task among so many voices and needs is essential. L5 leaders are world class, Apostle Paul type leaders. Multiple streams with multiple generations (CPM) come with multiple potential distractions! The ability to stay focused, prevent distraction and at times filter voices and opportunities that come once a CPM gets noticed is essential. We have seen several CPM’s fragment once the Great Commission Community took notice. The progression often looks like this; someone with good intentions shines a spotlight on what God is doing, the CPM takes on a “laboratory” type function for the interested learner or well wisher. Each new “observer” searches for ways their

ministry experience of gifting may benefit the work. Sometimes, with the best intentions, the observer inserts a secondary agenda for example, human needs projects, educational institutions, knowledge based discipleship packages, all with foreign funding paradigms. These are usually legitimized in the name of ‘sustainability.’ The L5 leader must learn to navigate these potential distractions and keep the network on task.

Consider the subtle differences in these roles.

L3 - CP Multiplier – Mobilizes and trains within own network

L4 - Movement Trainer – Mobilizes autonomous existing networks to multiplication

L5 - Strategy Coordinator – Mobilizes existing networks to target specific unengaged population segments

Assignment for Application

Re-consider the leaders in your first potential “Timothy Group”.⁶⁰ Think and pray over each leader on your list and answer the questions that follow.

Take time to consider their current roles in ministry. What responsibilities are they fulfilling now?

Which of the “four fields” are they facilitating?

Taking into account their entire ministry, where would you place them on the leadership chart today?

Most importantly, wherever they may currently be, how will you move them forward?

Take time to record specific actions for each leader you have designed to move him or her toward greater responsibility. This type of intentionality will help you take full advantage of every contact with these leaders.

⁶⁰ This list was made within this section at the completion of Key Question #2.

Timothy Group Action Plans

Timothys	Current Level (L1-L5)	Specific actions for moving them forward this month
Bikash	L2–Church Planter	-this month he will release authority to two men to baptize

As Strategy Coordinators approach an existing network the question often arises:

Do we build leaders or discover them?

The answer to this question will greatly impact the rate at which leaders can be engaged and or trained to effective ministry. Is it possible to engage leaders who may already be practicing level two or three leadership? What about those who take their credentials from an academic setting rather than field experience? Must they begin at level one in order to advance in leadership? How do we balance and value “hands on obedience” with the ability to manage “big picture” issues that demand a broader view of the global church?

In seeking to answer the question, “Are leaders built or discovered?” no comprehensive answer can be offered. Each setting carries with it specific circumstances as every leader brings different gifting into the discussion.

Potential advantages of building leaders:

- 1) The “DNA” issues of obedience and authority are addressed from the beginning. This protects a movement from outside tradition that may hinder multiplication.
- 2) Groups of leaders tend to grow together. “Crops” of leaders who have advanced through leadership levels tend to have a close relationship of trust built over time.
- 3) Spiritual gifts and talents are well known and likely fully utilized. Discovery and practice of these gifts takes time and should not be fabricated or assumed.
- 4) Others?

Potential disadvantages of discovering leaders:

- 1) New leaders entering the network carry many assumptions concerning ministry that may not fit “DNA” issues.
- 2) Issues of competition and trust should be expected if grass roots leaders perceive a short-cut to leadership.

- 3) Character and issues of integrity that have been closely examined while building leaders may be wrongly assumed as new leaders enter from outside the network.
- 4) Others?

While outside leaders offer a tremendous resource and should be utilized for kingdom work, care must be given to protect the “ethos” of multiplying church starts. Outside influence or introduction of new leadership carries potential both for sharpening an existing movement or derailing it.

What to Study – Paul’s Leadership Production

Consider Paul’s Example. When we consider a list of the leaders within his network, which ones did he win to faith?

Which ones did he discover and mobilize toward effectiveness?

The answer here seems to be, “Paul both built and discovered new leaders”. It could be concluded, leaders like Timothy, Luke, and others were won to faith through Paul’s evangelistic efforts. Others, Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos or John Mark may have been believers before meeting Paul. This reality leads the fruitful mentor to always be on the lookout for potential Timothy’s.

End- Visioning – Leadership Multiplication

“WIGTAKE” – What is It Going to Take?

Consider again the “X” people group with a population of 1 million souls. Keeping in mind God’s stated will (2 Pet. 3:9), that none should perish, we must ask ourselves:

How many leaders are needed?

As churches are formed among the “X,” we are faced with a consistent need for more leaders. Determining the size of this task helps the church planter to set God sized goals as he is used in the pursuit of God’s kingdom.

Ephesians 4:11-12 tells us God supplies leaders for every church. Five types of leaders (though pastor-teacher may actually be one role) are mentioned; apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Recognizing and equipping these leaders is our task. To determine the number of leaders necessary, let us take God at His Word. We will plan for five leaders per church.

If one church =’s 5 leaders,
and 20,000 church plants are needed
to reach 100% of the “X.”
how many leaders are needed?

20,000 churches X’s 5 leaders per church
=’s 100,000 leaders need to be mentored
*Reaching 10% of the “X” people would require
10,000 leaders!*

Goals – Leadership Multiplication

Multiplying Leaders on Five Levels

Mentoring leaders can begin today. Start with those God has placed within your network, be it a single church or association of churches. Challenge them all to move forward guided by goals similar to these below.

- 1) Assess each of the existing leaders in the network to determine next steps for their development in the next three months.
- 2) Bring (#)_____ new potential leaders into the network by training them on the four fields and assigning the task of sowing.
- 3) Personally invest time and resources in (#)_____ potential leaders as a model for other mentors in my network.

Specific Actions

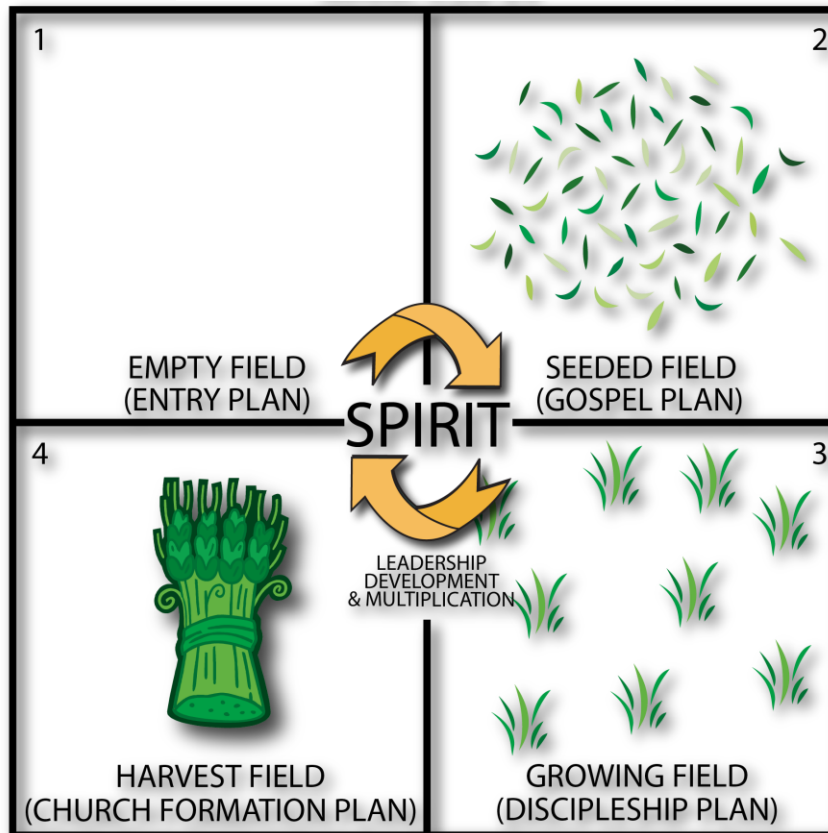
Make a list of all the potential leaders in your network. Use the “Five Levels” to assess their current leadership level, and make specific plans to move them forward. Consider grouping leaders from the same level for mutual accountability to progress.

Approach the heads of other networks to share vision for leadership multiplication. If God opens the door, provide a simple sowing training and cast vision for investment in the faithful.

Now that we have covered “The Four Fields,” and key questions for multiplying leaders, consider a more in-depth evaluation of your ministry. Progress requires evaluation. Using the following questions, take time to pray through each field to ensure efficient use of the human resources God has placed within your ministry. What are the things you need to *start* doing?

A second question that may be more relevant is, “Are there things you need to *stop* doing in order to do the best?”

The Spirit of God in Kingdom Growth



Having examined the role of the kingdom agent or church planter across each of the four fields it is time to return to the beginning. At the beginning of this manual it was stated, “Attempting to start a new church without the Holy Spirit’s investment and guidance is like planning a trip to the moon without a rocket.” Of course, not all that calls itself church is a work of the Spirit of God. Much can be fabricated and dressed up to look like a work of the kingdom. Inside, however, the shell is hollow. This leads us to a key question in our ministries:

How do we know what we see is in fact a genuine work of the Spirit of God?

This short section will by no means cover the scope of the Spirit’s involvement; it is an attempt, however, to demonstrate the futility of such effort outside the leading of the Spirit.

Have you noticed how few books on church planting give priority to the role of the Spirit of God? Motives for this exclusion are not necessarily wrong. When asked, a colleague recently remarked,

“Many do not write on the topic because they do not control the Spirit.” His point is well taken. We must focus on the role the Spirit expects of us. This is faith in action as we move in assurance of the Spirit’s involvement. At the same time, however, there is work for the church planter in the area of discernment. Would not the teachings on abiding and prayer (John 15:1-8, Matt. 6:5-15) seem hollow if there were no implications for discernment within our efforts?

The Spirit of God is the central figure in New Testament church planting. The Spirit’s activity is essential in the growth process of the Mark 4 parables. Mark 4:27 says,

*“Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up,
the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.”*

Clearly there is an unknown doer as the seed is transformed into harvest. This has been ordered by the Lord as Jesus goes on to say, *“all by itself the soil produces grain –”*. When understood in the light of 1 Corinthians 3:6 we are reminded it is God who makes the seed grow.

“I (Paul) planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.”

The ever-present doer is the Spirit. Understanding this truth hurls our church planting efforts into the realm of partnership within God’s design for the kingdom. It has been ordered this way. Man is fully dependent on God to create life, to provide for growth and eventual resources for reproduction.

We would be remiss if we did not also pause to consider the vast teaching on the Holy Spirit in Scripture.⁶¹ There is no part of the church planting process that does not demand dependence on the Holy Spirit. Everything we do begins with the humble admission we are not capable on our own. Likewise, multiplication is dependent on His indwelling of every believer.

⁶¹ Two of the best available works on the Holy Spirit that balance our role with faith are: Roland Allen, *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962). Allen covers the topic throughout as the Spirit’s activity is the center of his thought and argument in the entire work. Second, see J.D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting* (UK: Paternoster, 2009), 59-72. Payne commits one full chapter to the Spirit’s role. Much of this chapter follows his lead as we focus on the Spirit’s involvement in relation to the five parts of kingdom growth.

Examining the Holy Spirit's Activity and Investment

Field #1 – The Spirit's Role in Entry Strategy

Self-Discovery Study – The Spirit in Entry

Read the following passages to discover ways the Spirit guides us in entering new fields. List them next to each verse.

- Acts 8:26, 29, 39 –
- Acts 16:6-7 (also "Spirit of Jesus") –
- 1 Cor. 2:1-5 –
- Rom. 15:19-23 –
- Acts 17:26-27 ("God who made the world") -

With your team, discuss these activities as they relate to your current context:

- Does the Spirit still lead us the way He did Phillip or Paul?
- Does He show willingness to confirm the truth of the gospel through miraculous power?
- Does the Lord still control timing and direction in your movements and plans for advance the way he did with Paul in the Asian field?
- Can you give testimony of the Lord's leading to a man/house of peace that became a church?

Field #2 – The Spirit's Role in Gospel Presentation

Self-Discovery Study – The Spirit in Gospel Presentation

Read the following passages to discover the Spirit's role in presentation of the gospel. List your discoveries next to each verse below.

- Acts 1:8 –
- Acts 4:12-13,31 –
- John 16:13-15, Acts 6:10 –
- John 16:8-10 –
- John 3:5-8, 1 Cor. 12:3 -

Acts 1:8 is unique among the Great Commission passages. It is not a command; rather, it is a promise. Jesus promised, you *will* receive power, and you *will* be witnesses! We must ask ourselves:

Do we function today within the promises of Acts 1:8?

We organize ministries, churches and outreach efforts based on the concentric circles the text provides. Yet most believers live as if Acts 1:8 were never written. Ephesians 1:13-14 tells us all who have believed are marked in Him [Christ] with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit. Was not Paul referring to the promises of Jesus in John and Acts? If so, the book of Acts is not a just a record of what the Spirit did 2000 years ago. Rather, it is an example of what we can expect the Spirit to do today.

Take time to discuss these questions with your team.

- Has the Spirit changed? Is He still willing to act as He did in the book of Acts?
- How have you seen the Spirit empower your witness recently?
- Do you face the temptation to attempt things only the Spirit can accomplish rather than trust His timing?

Field #3 – The Spirit’s Role in Discipleship

Self-Discovery Study – Spirit in Discipleship

Read the following passages to discover activities of the Spirit related to discipleship.

- Rom. 5:1-5 –
- John 14:25-26 –
- 1 Cor. 2:9-13 -
- 1 Cor. 12:1-31 –
- Phil. 1:5-6, 1 Cor. 1:4-9 (of God) -
- Acts 20:32 (of God) -

What the Lord begins He finishes. Calling, justification and glorification can all be referenced in scripture as on-going activity and completed action (Rom. 8:29-30). This does not excuse, however, the church planter or disciple maker from responsibility. A healthy tension exists between our dependence on God to grow disciples and our responsibility to take an active role in that process. A church planter seeing multiplication will inevitably wrestle with the balance of time invested in discipleship and the urgency and calling for evangelism in new fields.

As multiplication occurs expect questions of conscience such as, “How fast is too fast?” “What must be introduced and modeled to ensure lasting fruit?” Ultimately, the question is, “are my disciples ready to stand without me?” Paul faced this same tension (1 Thess. 2:17-3:5), and we suggest the tension is healthy. A balance must be maintained in the pursuit of depth and width in our efforts.

In maintaining balance, much depends on the church planter’s answer to a key question:

Can the Spirit be trusted to finish what He has begun?

The obvious answer is “yes”. We must be willing to trust the Spirit to carry on what we are unable to accomplish. This is not a call to lazy discipleship. The Great Commission demands disciple making. Beware, however, of the church planter or church leader who assumes his or her agenda for discipleship is the key to the Commission.

While these concerns cause much insomnia for church planters, we must be willing to commit disciples to the Holy Spirit’s care. As the Lord sets direction and timing for the harvest, the church planter is served to make use of every moment provided by the Lord and when departure is demanded to remember the Lord of that harvest is on scene (Phil. 1:4-6, 1 Cor. 1:4-8, Acts 20:25-32).⁶²

Our ability to trust and release fields into the watchcare of the Spirit is a key to multiplication. The perception that believers need us or our knowledge to become mature is not of God. We must expect spiritual gifts among new believers capable of supplying all that is needed in church planting, health and maturity. This expectation brings us into fellowship with Paul who released new churches and wrestled in prayer for their survival.⁶³

Field #4 – The Spirit’s Role in Church Formation

Self-Discovery Study – The Spirit in Church Formation

Read the following passages to discover the Spirit’s role in forming churches.

- 1 Cor. 12:12-13 –
- Rom. 16:25 –
- 1 Thess. 1:5-7 –
- 1 Pet. 5:1-5, Col. 1:18, (of Christ) -
- Matt. 16:18, Rev. 2-3 (of Christ) –

Based on these verses, the Lord gives leaders to the church, instructs and rebukes when the church wanders and gives birth to each church as the Kingdom advances. Let us remember the words of Christ, “... I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matt. 16:18).

Consider these questions for discussion with your team.

⁶² Similarly, Jonathan Edwards faced criticism throughout the Great Awakening. His writing reflects an apologetic tone concerning his faith in the investment of the Spirit of God to complete what he (Jonathan) could not. See, Edwards, *On Revival: The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust reprint, 1984).

⁶³ See the balance demonstrated in Paul’s journeys and letters – Acts 17:2 balanced with 1 Thess. 1:4-10, and 3:1-10, or 1 Cor. 1:4-9 balanced with problems throughout the letter, or Philippians 1:6-11, and 2:28 balanced with 4:6 – see ‘anxiety’.

- Do you have room in your ministry for Ephesians 4 Leaders to emerge?
- Is there a minimum requirement for a church to be released? Should there be a maximum?
- Are there needs of the church that come from outside the harvest?
- What do these verses say about the pure nature of church?
- Is your ministry on track?

The Spirit's Role in Leadership Multiplication

Self-Discovery Study – The Spirit in Leadership Multiplication

Read the following passages to discover the Spirit's role in multiplying leaders. List your findings in the space below.

- Luke 24:47-49 -
- Acts 13:1-4 –
- Acts 20:28-29 –
- Eph. 4:11-12 (of Christ) -
- 1 Pet. 5:1-5 –

In John 4:31-37 we see the Lord coordinates everything between sowing and reaping! This includes the reproduction of leaders capable of working the fields in future generations of the kingdom. Many times our own abilities or giftings cloud our vision for the work of the Spirit through others. You are not the key to the Lord's strategy. Your efforts alone will never be enough. Your calendar will not change the world. Allowing our minds and plans to drift into a self reliant pattern of thinking sets us up to compete with the Spirit as the agent of transformation. Beware of such idolatry.

Question to discuss with your team:

- Are you your own plan?
- What leaders are you currently depending on the Spirit to provide?
- Can you list new leaders emerging provided by the Spirit?

Seeing Healthy Reproduction

There are many forms of growth yet, only the plans and people fully surrendered to the Lord and His glory will ***see healthy reproduction*** (Jn. 15:4). It is possible to grow without reproducing. We must not be satisfied with fat or bloated congregations of believers unwilling to surrender the kingdom to others. Similarly, not all reproduction is healthy. As churches reproduce the temptations of thinking we have arrived and made our mark in the kingdom must also be avoided.

There is one thing the Lord will not share with us. God provides infinite grace to those who accept Him. God provides a world full of resources that reflect His hospitality. His glory, however, is off limits to us. Ask the couple in the garden who wanted to be like God (Gen. 3:5). Ask those who built the tower what

profit came from wanting to ascend into the heavens (Gen. 11:4). Just as they did in the garden, we have a choice. We can have a name for ourselves or make his name known. The two ambitions do not mix.

Perhaps this is why God has chosen the simple things of this world to confound the wise (Matt. 11:25)

Do you want to see healthy reproduction?

There is a spiritual discipline not often mentioned in today's popular writings. We have seen it lived out in the lives of some of the most fruitful men on the planet. The fact you have never heard their names is evidence of the grip this discipline has on their lives.

John 12:24 says, *"I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."*

Make it your discipline to die so the Lord of the Harvest can move forward through you.

Barriers to Overcome

As stated earlier, reaching our potential in church planting at times means taking up new activities we should be doing. At other times it means letting go of things that hinder the church planting process. Paul rightly prayed day and night for the church planters at Philippi that "...they might discern what was best" (Phil. 1:10). An attempt at putting the "best" into practice many times reveals some hidden obstacles within our host culture and more often within our own church traditions.

The effective and efficient church planter will always use evaluation to sharpen and focus his efforts. Paul's prayer in Philippians 1:9-10 lead to two questions in discerning the God's will.

- 1) What is the best I need to *start* doing?
- 2) What do I need to *stop* doing in order to do the best?

Barrier #1 – Restricting the Practice of Baptism

The first of these suggested barriers deals with the matter of baptism. For the New Testament followers of Jesus, baptism was the first step in a life-long process of obedience. Romans 6:1-11 equates baptism to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. In this sense, baptism is an initiation for those who stand together in testimony to the victorious, resurrected Savior.

Along with the symbolism of baptism, the right practice of baptism solidifies a "DNA" of unquestioned obedience. Jesus commanded we receive and perform baptism. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus demands that His followers make disciples. The method of discipleship is then laid out: baptize them and teach them to obey. Today, in many fields where traditional church exists, the practice of baptism has become a point of contention.

Two potential barriers to scriptural baptism are common.

- 1) Churches delay baptism to gauge levels of commitment.

When we assume the motives for such delay are pure, we can in some ways sympathize. Many times, candidates for baptism have approached the church with wrong or false motives. Perhaps the "convert" seeks relief from a social pressure or economic hardship. Many times in these cases the baptized disciple, disillusioned by unimproved circumstances, reverts back to native religious practice. Perhaps a convert from a polytheistic background has not understood the sole Lordship of Christ. In other settings where persecution plays a role, caution is taken to ensure the baptism of a new believer is not

entrapment, the breaking of a local or national law prohibiting baptism. While these situations are understandable and require grace, they must be answered with the example of scripture.

It is certain the first generation disciples of Christ scattered across the Roman Empire had come from an idolatrous context. Many if not all of those baptized in Philippi, Athens, Corinth and Ephesus had been gross idolaters before recognizing Christ. Scripture further records the fear of Ananias when faced with the baptism of Saul. This fear was natural, as Ananias was potentially facing a trap. He was asked to baptize the persecutor (Acts 9:13-14). Yet this fear was overcome by the clear instruction of Jesus to move forward (Acts 9:15-16).

Whatever the motive, the most common reason for delaying baptism is the perceived need for understanding before baptism is performed. Once this suggestion is accepted, the question that must be asked becomes, "What must be understood?" As we will see, the New Testament lessons on baptism must have been quite simple. It seems the understanding needed could be covered between the point of salvation and the walk to the river as baptism was unanimously immediate. The church planter must ensure nothing is added to the grace of Jesus as a condition for acceptance into the church family. In this way baptism actually promotes true repentance as the candidate counts the cost of identifying his or her life solely with Christ.

Why does this matter?

Consider the following study.

Self- Discovery Bible Study

Read the following passages and answer these questions from Acts.

Acts 2:38, 41/8:36-38/9:17-18/10:44-48/11:17-18/16:31-33/19:5

Questions:

- 1) Who was baptized?
- 2) When were they baptized?
- 3) Who baptized them?

Within the book of Acts, we see murders and idolaters among those who were baptized. All who accepted Christ were immoral one day and baptized the next. There was no period of reform; rather, baptism celebrated the beginning of new life. While immediate baptism is never demanded within scripture, no other example exists! At the first possible opportunity, baptism was performed. While scripture does not give us the rationale for this unanimous precedent, the church planter must assume such an example has specific reasons.

For those not convinced by the precedent of scripture, another danger in the restriction of baptism is undermining the urgency of obedience to the Lord's command. Sadly, in many cases, the decision to delay believer's baptism is related to the baptizer's desire for control. Above and beyond the grace of Jesus, imposed requirements for baptism often include elements of Bible learning and understanding which replace simple child like faith and obedience. Where this occurs, withholding or delaying baptism implies an uncertainty concerning salvation.⁶⁴ In this way the testimony of the new believer is replaced with the church's testimony about the believer. This trend robs the joyous testimony of an infant and more importantly disrupts the foundation of obedience. If baptism is subject to delay, why follow the command to love or give? Why pray, repent or even make disciples? This is a dangerous trend that must be avoided as churches administer baptism.

Consider a second potential barrier:

- 2) No one in the locality has authority to perform baptism.

In this case, a queue begins. Those accepting the message of Christ and desiring biblical baptism have found that no such opportunity exists due to the lack of recognized authority. For the church planter, this issue demands the question, "Where does such authority originate?" Baptism was certainly given to the church; it is an ordinance to be practiced within the body of Christ. At the same time, Jesus gave baptism as a significant part of the Great Commission, thus applying to all believers.

Whatever your interpretation of the authority given in the New Testament, the source of this barrier is the local church. Either the existing church has failed to accept the authority given by Christ, or a pre-existing church holds such authority over the head of the church plant in an attempt to exert control. At times this withholding of authority has a pure motive, but pure motive does not imply right practice. Many perceive a threat to doctrine they believe must be maintained. Loosing church plants to baptize at will is feared as it may grow increasingly out of control. In this case, a fear for Jesus' reputation may constitute a pure motive, but not necessarily a healthy one. God gave us His Word as a protection of doctrine. His reputation is safe within the solidified record of Scripture. Protecting the message from the world has never been the commission; rather, unleashing its transforming power of the gospel message through proclamation in obedience to the Lordship of Christ is our task.

Whatever the motive for withholding or restricting the performance of baptism to a select few, we must again weigh our opinions against the examples of scripture. Consider the following passages.

⁶⁴ The opposite is also implied. Permitting baptism suggests the church is convinced the salvation is genuine.

Self- Discovery Bible Study

Read the following passages and answer the question provided.

John 4:1-2/Acts 10:48/1 Cor. 1:14-17

Question: Who performed the baptisms?

Jesus watched, Peter demanded others baptize, and Paul can't even remember the issue! Jesus released authority! Peter released authority! Paul released authority! What should you do?

Why does it matter?

Baptism is the first act of obedience in the life of the new believer. It sets a precedent. It begins a habit of obedience that should rule the believer's life. When we send laborers into the field to sow the seed, yet restrict the authority to baptize, the habit of obedience is starved among the harvest. The first sign of growth is choked in the life of the new believer.

The opposite is also true. Releasing authority and multiplying baptizers is essential to multiply the baptized. Disciples entrusted with the task of administering baptism recognize a new identity. Cutting disciples loose from any restriction unleashes disciples to pursue the Great Commission. Releasing authority in this way releases a network of harvesters to own the fruit of their labors. Give the laborers the Lord's instructions and the authority to carry them out!

Barrier #2 – Professional workers dominate ministry

The difficulty here is the engine that often drives "professionalism" in pioneer fields. When outside subsidy establishes an extra-biblical priesthood, a barrier is inevitable. You will not multiply churches with pastors paid from outside.⁶⁵ At least two reasons for this exist.

- 1) As the work grows, the pastor sees his income solidified. Releasing the fruit of new works to begin new churches creates a danger to his livelihood and thereby his family's well being. He will always be motivated to gather new sheep into his existing barn.
- 2) The growth of the movement or reproduction of churches will always be bound to the money coming in. While we can claim the promise, "God will provide," we would be well served applying it from the beginning. The likes of India, Bangladesh and other populous nations will never have enough paid pastors to reach them. Exponential growth is hindered when dependence on outsiders is accepted.

⁶⁵ See Rad Zdero, *The Global House Church Movement* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2004), p. 42-44, for study of New Testament financial support systems.

This same rationale also makes the quota system within church planting efforts a dangerous practice. After receiving training in church planting and related pastoral ministry, trainees are released to begin a new work. Within a predetermined time frame, the church planter is expected to produce a prescribed amount of fruit. This is the quota system. As the date approaches by which the goal must be reached, the church planter is placed in a difficult situation. Knowing his livelihood for the next year depends upon his production, desperation often confuses sound ministry. The quota system also devastates the potential for reproduction as the church planter who releases new generations of churches risks losing support, or at best creating competition for support.

The potential for unhindered, reproducible church planting is best served within an indigenous self-supported movement. This truth is supported biblically (1 Tess. 2:6-9, 4:11-12). Paul did not pay church leaders in pioneer areas. Rather they were compelled by the Holy Spirit to focus on and commit to the harvest (1 Thess. 1:4-8).

Barrier #3 – Financial commitments to infrastructure

What you may have guessed is these commitments are often created by our own traditions. God has provided all that the church needs according to His promises. The difficulty arises as the Church has refused satisfaction with God's provision. This difficulty did not show itself in the biblical account. Instead, those experiencing extreme poverty were praised as some of the most generous in their giving (2 Cor. 8:2).

What causes such hardship in the modern era?

Consider this study.

Self-Discovery Bible Study

Read the following passages and answer the question.

Acts 2:46/5:42/16:40/17:5-7/18:7/19:9/20:20 Philemon 1:1-2/Romans 16:1-5/1 Cor. 16:19/Col. 4:15

Question – Where did the churches meet?

While the Bible does not demand churches to meet in homes, the biblical precedent is clear. The New Testament church made use of the homes provided by God for the gathering of the

church.⁶⁶ The house church phenomenon is not a phenomenon at all. Rather it is a return to the biblical model.

Churches choosing to make use of the homes God has provided are free to designate the tithes and offerings of the church to ministry. These offerings will impact local communities and enable the proper functioning of the church. Giving supplies the felt needs of members and will promote continued faithfulness.

The home also provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Seekers coming from other world religions unwilling to enter a “Christian temple” may indeed feel comfortable in the homes of believers.

Barrier #4 – Extra-biblical Qualifications for Pastors

Throughout the Bible God has chosen simple men for the fulfillment of his will. Moses was perhaps the greatest leader of Israel. He spent time face to face with the Almighty, and was used to deliver them from bondage (Ex. 3:14-17). David, like Moses, was used by God to deliver and lead the people God had chosen. He was Israel’s greatest King, a man after God’s own heart (1 Sam. 13:14). The amazing link between the two, besides their accomplishments, was their origin.

Where were these men when God called them?

Both Moses and David were prepared by God for their roles by tending sheep! Though Moses had a regal upbringing, he was not ready for leadership until spending forty years on the backside of nowhere. In the same way David, the least of his brothers, was the unappreciated shepherd boy. Yet this boy from nowhere claimed the power of God in the overthrow of the giant Goliath who had mocked both God and His army (1 Sam. 17). God used obscurity and a simple lifestyle to prepare these men for greatness.

The New Testament bears witness to the same trend. Jesus had access to the synagogue and could have certainly picked the most learned as His disciples. Yet it was the simple that He invested in. Jesus’ disciples were fishermen, considered unclean and likely cast off by the religious elite (Mark 1:16-18). Others were tax collectors, hated by the people, yet when transformed by God’s grace, they were able to turn the world upside down!

Acts 4 gives one of the greatest descriptions of those Jesus chose.

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and took note that these men had been with Jesus” (v.13).

⁶⁶ The one exception to this rule is Acts 19:9. Here the church may have gathered in a school, the Lecture Hall of Tyrannus.

It was not their background that qualified them for ministry. Rather, it was their devotion and obedience in following the Lord.

Today many existing churches have accepted an unspoken rule: pastors should be educated men. While education is by no means to be discouraged, one must ask the following:

How much education is necessary?

While some discuss degrees, others question the necessity of literacy. This may seem absurd as access to the Bible is most certainly a qualification for church leaders. Yet few of the first-century pastors had consistent access. Some would also question Peter’s literacy. His second letter, which unlike the first is not ascribed to the pen of Silas, displays a rudimentary ability in Greek. This raises the question, “Can a man who is unable to read discern and interpret the Scripture?” The very discussion challenges the current consensus. It is suggested, a limited education is not a disqualifier for pastoral service.

Can a pastor be trained on the job?

The answer to this question will most certainly determine the rate at which pastors can be prepared and released in new church starts. A look into the teaching of Paul is appropriate at this point.

Self-Discovery Bible Study		
Read the passage and assign each qualification to the appropriate category.		
<u>1 Timothy 3:1-7</u>		
Character	Gifts/Skills	Education

One or possibly two of the qualifications listed by Paul could be argued within education or skills; the vast majority of qualifications are character traits. Character is the primary qualification of leadership in the church. Nothing can replace it. God has made it available to both the learned and the simple through His indwelling presence. Imposing extra-biblical requirements for the office of pastor *will*

hinder church multiplication!⁶⁷ We cannot improve on scripture and should not allow our traditions to try.⁶⁸

Barrier #5 – False Definitions of Success

A church planter who does not consider a church a success until it has reached 100 members or more will likely not plant many churches in his career. This is not to say a career spent planting one church is not successful; it is simply that goals we set are sometimes predetermined by a definition we may never have evaluated.⁶⁹

For many, today's definition of success calls for large numbers.⁷⁰ The unspoken definition of a successful ministry is determined more by the size of the church than any other factor. While this is not true in every case, it sub-consciously weighs on every church planter's hopes and goals. Without achieving the proposed model of successful size and scope, the church planter is left no alternative but to be considered a failure. In some sense it is a vicious cycle. Only those fulfilling the definition are allowed a voice to question or refine our understanding of success. This constitutes a great danger. My point may be expressed in the following example.

Consider a young church planter who, desiring the best God has for his ministry, purchases one of the hundreds of church planting books offered the global Christian community by the Western church. As do many, this book assumes bigger is better.⁷¹ Without this goal ever having been stated, a mental picture is established in the young church planter's mind of the eventual goal of his efforts. This sub-

⁶⁷ Consider the tools presented in this manual designed for on the job training. Additional materials for training in hermeneutics and doctrine refined for reproducibility can be obtained by contacting us at: www.churchplantingmovements.com

⁶⁸ The church planter will find great help in avoiding such barriers by reading: David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*. (Midlothian: WIGTake Resources, 2004); also Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*. (London: World Dominion Press, 1946).

⁶⁹ It is worth noting here the largest Protestant denomination in the world, the Southern Baptist Convention, USA with more than 43,000 churches still carries an average church size less than seventy. If size is a primary indicator of success either the SBC average is failure or our definition has been unconsciously skewed.

⁷⁰ See Ebbie Smith, *Growing Healthy Churches*. (Augusta, SC: Intercultural Institute for Contextual Ministry, 2003), 23-26. Dr. Smith is suggesting the need for healthy churches has become clouded in a pursuit of size as the primary definition of success.

⁷¹ Consider the warnings of Rick Ferguson who echoed our concerns in a painfully honest testimony of his own slip into the trap of pride and the thought of building his own kingdom over God's. Richard Harris, *Reaching a Nation through Church Planting*. (Alpharetta, GA: NAMB, 2003), 78-79.

consciously determines every step from the first believer unto his exit strategy before he ever puts his hand to the plow.

The problems in this scenario are numerous. For example, imagine our hypothetical church planter hails from China. The model which he has been unknowingly fed leads him down a sure road to persecution due to its public and corporate nature.

Or consider the church planter who hails from India. The problem in this setting is the extreme poverty of the new believers. Due in part, if not completely, to the accepted definition of success, the church planter is destined either to failure when sufficient money cannot be raised or to dependence as he must look outside for the funds needed to accomplish the assumed definition of success.

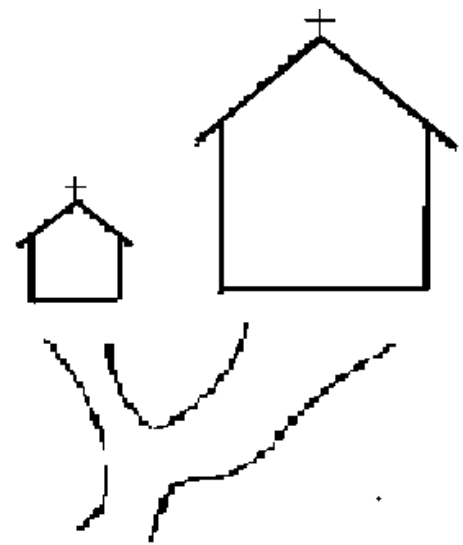
Further, those who achieve the goals of this model often find themselves rejected by their own who perceive the church building and other infrastructure of their ministry to be foreign. These are only a few of many examples that could be offered to demonstrate the danger of our assumed definitions and goals.

While each person's definition of church must be evaluated, let us first consider the assumption at the root of our definition. Suppose I could take you to a town where two churches had been started. Simply by driving past the two churches, seeing the property owned by each, it is natural for anyone to judge between the two. Within our minds we would define one as the more successful church.

Let us then consider the criteria of our judgment. It is natural for man to consider the larger, more extravagant building to be the success. This is the nature of man. Bigger is better. How can the thousands who attend such institutions be wrong?

In many cases we also value stability, in which case older is better. The reason for such assumption is obvious. A proven track record that has been established over many years promotes trust that what has been established will continue. This applies to more than just churches. Imagine choosing a bank for your investment. Where would you feel safe putting your money? A predisposition toward stability is a natural human tendency.

Consider the problem. If I were to ask a Hindu, "Where is the greatest Hindu temple in the world?" the Indian Hindu would point me to Rishikesh or Varanasi. Where ever I was sent, the sub-conscious reason for the referral would almost certainly be the size and age of the temple. Bigger and older are better in the mind of the Hindu. If I were to ask the Muslim to direct me to the greatest mosque, Mecca would be suggested for the same reason. The Catholic who is asked will undoubtedly answer "the Vatican." The Buddhist would likely point to Lhasa due to its ancient monastery which for generations housed the Dalai Lama. It happens to be one of the largest in the world. This is the nature of man.



Which road would you choose?

We do, however, need to remember our nature is flawed by the effects of sin.

To mindlessly swallow our natural assumption without thorough evaluation is careless. Scripture urges us toward such introspection (Rom. 12:2). With this in mind, why are we so willing to accept a prescribed definition of success in ministry without critical evaluation?

The Example of Jesus – Mark 1

Consider the example of Jesus. In Mark 1, Jesus entered the home of His disciple Peter for the first time. After Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, the Bible says all the sick and demon possessed from the town, Capernaum, were brought to the door where Jesus healed them. Early the next morning, while it was still dark, Jesus left the house and spent time alone with the Father.

After some time, the disciples sought Jesus to inform Him a crowd had gathered at the door. Everyone was looking for Jesus, who overnight had become the most popular man around. Everyone wanted His time. Everyone wanted to see and touch Him. By most definitions He was a huge success! This made Jesus' next statement to the disciples unexpected:

The disciples urge Him to return to the house by saying, *"everyone is looking for you."* Jesus replied, *"Let us go somewhere else, to the nearby villages, so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come"* (v.38).

Jesus was not bound to our definition of success. Had He remained, the crowd would surely have grown as more people heard of the miracles He performed. Yet His unquenchable desire was for the Father's will. He would not be distracted by any crowd or fame.⁷²

⁷² For further writing available on this potential barrier, contact the author through the Website: www.churchplantingmovements.com

Advice for Trainers

Training differs from teaching. Teaching is for the mind, but training implies practice. Anyone training others for church planting would be well served to consider several aspects of his or her schedule.

- 1) *In what order will you present the material?* Answers to this question may depend upon the complexity of the materials being taught. Often when presenting all five parts of the CP plan we begin with church formation. This enables us to practice healthy body life as well as to model the simplicity of New Testament church.
- 2) *What barriers will you face?* Anticipating potential barriers in the theology or ecclesiology of your trainees may help you to order the presentation of material. Many times our trainings have two central functions. The tearing down of barriers stemming from tradition, opinion or false theology followed by a building up of the scriptural patterns.
- 3) *What are the realistic goals?* The five parts of CP plan present a process of church planting. Together they are a large bite of information for the beginning church planter. Dividing the material into smaller bites may at times be a relevant exercise. We have also found the repetition of complex materials has led to application and acceptance by trainees. In this way, though not fully grasped in the first training, subsequent reviews of the same materials led to “ahha” moments when the church planter discovered the big picture.
- 4) *Who are you training?* The training of lay people has continuously proven the most fruitful. Yet access to the laity within existing networks is not always a given. At times more formal “gatekeeper” trainings are a necessity. Convincing the head of a network may require a different approach. Gatekeeper trainings tend to deal with the “why” questions behind certain materials whereas a lay training is driven by “what.” (*Why* should we do it? - vs. - *What* should we do?)
- 5) *Practice everything!* Confidence is the key with lay people. What they practice they will do. Assumption is the trainer’s downfall. Assuming understanding or competence will lead to disappointment. Don’t teach-train! Put the material into action.
- 6) *Avoid the danger of sequentialism.* The five parts of the church planting plan are not five steps to church planting. Rather, they should be understood as ongoing areas of emphasis in the church planter’s role. We have seen many trainees mistakenly assume church planting is a matter of objectives to check off a list. This is not the case. We are suggesting kingdom process. Its’ parts often overlap (for example, the lines between discipleship and church formation should remain intentionally blurry).
- 7) *Tools are interchangeable.* Though this manual is highly directive, be willing to adapt tools to the specific settings within each new field. See the bibliography for examples of practitioners who have utilized different tools effectively. Allowing some adaptation among confident practitioners also allows for a level of ownership which maximizes use the use of tools.

Church Planting Motives

Key Question - *Why church planting?*

In a setting of relative peace throughout the world, Christian ministry has taken on a variety of forms. Careers in media production, relief work, social ministry and services have grown alongside the expanding roles for professional ministry in the traditional church setting.

Amidst the vast opportunities available to the men and women of God, why should church planting be considered? Little external motivation is apparent. Church planting offers little visible security. The salary of a church planter is likely never guaranteed, and years of obscurity within the profession are a distinct possibility.

To uncover motivation for a focus on new church starts one must dig into scripture. Understanding motives for church planting is on par with understanding God's plans for all people. Since the day of Pentecost the spread of the gospel has resulted in the planting of churches. Everywhere the kingdom has spread, the church has been established as an outpost. The church is the vehicle of God's kingdom.

Understanding motives for church planting demands an understanding of God's motivations for the expansion of His kingdom. Consider the following studies for insight into God's motives:

Self-Discovery Study – God's Primary Motive

Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow.

- 1) Isaiah 43:6-7 – Why did God create man?
- 2) Isaiah 49:3/Jeremiah 13:11 – Why did God choose Israel?
- 3) Psalms 106:7-8 – Why did God rescue Israel from Egypt?
- 4) Romans 9:17 – Why did God raise up Pharaoh?
- 5) Exodus 14:4 – Why did God part the Red Sea?
- 6) 2 Samuel 7:23 – Why did God give the Promised Land?
- 7) 2 Kings 19:34 – Why did God rescue Jerusalem?
- 8) Ezekiel 36:22-23 – Why did God restore Israel after the exile?
- 9) John 14:13 – Why does Jesus answer prayers?
- 10) John 12:27-28 – Why did Jesus suffer?
- 11) Isaiah 43:25/Psalms 25:11 – Why does God forgive sin?
- 12) John 16:14 – Why was the Holy Spirit sent?
- 13) Romans 1:22-23 – Why are we judged?
- 14) 2 Thessalonians 1:9-10 – Why will Jesus return?
- 15) Romans 9:22-23 – Why does God pursue His wrath?

God's glory is the greatest of motivations. From the beginning, the revelation of that glory has been His greatest gift to mankind. The separation caused by sin has distorted and subjected creation to confusion. Setting the relationship right was the work of Christ and is carried on today through the Church.⁷³

Consider God's glory among the church.

Self- Discovery Study – God's Glory - the Church

Read the following passages concerning the church as the vehicle of God's glory.

- 1) Romans 11:36 – What is the church's prayer?
- 2) 1 Corinthians 10:31 – How does a church live?
- 3) 1 Peter 4:11 – Why does the church serve?
- 4) Philippians 1:9-11 – Why has Christ made us righteous?
- 5) Matthew 5:16 – Why does our light shine before men?
- 6) Ephesians 1:4-6 – Why did God choose us as a people?

Revealing His glory is the primary motive behind God's establishing the Church. As stated earlier, we are the vehicle of His glory. Some would ask how this motivates the planting of new churches. Consider the following passages for understanding God's will for kingdom expansion:

⁷³ For more thorough presentation of God's glory as a motive for His redemptive work see – John Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 22-27.

Self-Discovery Study – God’s Plan for Advance

Read the following passages and search for a common theme within God’s plan.

Old Testament

Genesis 12:3/18:18

Psalms 2:8/22:25-31/46:10/57:7-11/67:2-4/72:17-19/96:3

Isaiah 2:2/11:10/12:4/42:1/42:10-12/51:4/52:15/56:7/60:3/66:18

Ezekiel 36:23/39:21/Jeremiah 1:5/16:19-21 Haggai 2:7/Zechariah 9:10/Micah 4:1-3/

Malachi 1:11/1:14

New Testament

Matthew 4:12-16/15:21-25/24:14/Mark 11:15-19/Luke 2:25-32/13:29

Revelation 5:9-10/7:9

Conclusion – Isaiah 49:6

When understood together, God’s glory and His heart for the nations of the world clearly define the remaining task. The return of Jesus Christ awaits the fulfillment of Revelation 5:9-10, the calling of the purchased from every tribe, language, people and nation to form the kingdom of priests in service to God.

Why church planting?

Church planting carries the gospel message to nations who have not yet heard. The church is the vehicle; planting it among the remaining lost is God’s plan.

Case Study - “G” People - Church Planting Team

Duration – 12 years

Strategy Coordinator’s Profile

The “SC” for the “G” people is a well-educated first generation believer now working primarily cross-culturally. He is fluent in several relevant languages of his target peoples and has spent time researching local cultures and religious traditions as his strategy has progressed. He has been a leader in contextualization throughout the region and has often faced criticism for these efforts. The “SC” is strong in delegation with vision for the Lord’s return driving him forward. He expects all believers to do the ministry of reconciliation, calling the lost to saving faith.

The Field – In “SC’s” words...

I and our team are working cross culturally in pioneer areas with a geographical focus among multiple PG’s who have never heard the name of Jesus. The primary people we seek to engage is spread across around 2000+ kilometers east to west. The population we are currently engaging is estimated at between 25 and 30 million. The religion of our area is a mix of polytheistic deity worship as well as ancestor worship. There were no existing church planting tools when we began as we seem to be the first to engage these groups. Urban areas within our field are densely populated as more and more are drawn to the economic and social growth. The nation we work within is a player on the developing world markets and dominates trade throughout the region. This has meant a secularization of the society as even pagan religious traditions are motivated by finance whose income is fiercely guarded.

Persecution has followed each of our breakthroughs over the past decade with a variety of motivations. As stated before the financial crisis caused by idolaters abandoning temples and their priests is one, rejection of the gospel is another, but mostly I and my team have been persecuted for breaking from traditions of our own culture we examined and determined were not biblical.

Partners

We have both discovered outsiders and built up new local believers to become fruitful laborers for the harvest. (Those coming from outside were engaged after field arrival... we have not sought to mobilize outside senders other than our own churches.) Most of our leadership are first generation believers. This has meant on the job training for all of us as we move forward. The places we have seen explosive growth have unanimously been led by local leaders.

The Strategy

We are working around clear priorities:

- 1) Seek and win the lost through Holy Spirit direction,

- 2) Immediately disciple the converts to reach out to family,
- 3) Baptism is immediate as a foundation of obedience,
- 4) Gather the church in the homes of those committed to Christ and each other in the face of persecution,
- 5) Instruct and hold leaders accountable as quickly as possible before persecution forces us to move on,
- 6) Trust the believers to the Holy Spirit and return when possible to measure continued obedience.

This strategy has led us to multiple power encounters. False deities have been confronted directly and led to breakthroughs in several instances. (This is a likely reason for much of the persecution we have faced.) Such power-encounters have on the other hand opened doors for many religious and political leaders to accept Christ.

We are also helped in our entry and gospel presentation by frequent miracles and healings. Those who witness such events often surrender themselves to Christ.

Heads of household are typically our target. This has meant that whole families have often believed and been baptized together. This has helped our church formation as leadership seems to emerge naturally from within new groups.

Because persecution limits initial time with converts, we have been forced to develop a pattern of discipleship we seek to implement in each new field. This has helped to streamline our beginning discipleship as well as its reproduction with new believers after our departure.

The Results

By focusing on a district approach, we have been able to launch six distinct streams of reproducing churches. This has led to gospel saturation across the region. By granting responsibilities among new believers and our refusal to hold authority over these churches, maturity has come quickly in each field. Such responsibility has led to a strong leadership base with trainers and delegators in each region. We consider these 30 million reached.

Difficulties

1) **Traditions in other networks** have often hindered and introduced false teaching capable of derailing our efforts if not checked. We chose to confront these traditions directly by appealing to the source of such teaching and ultimately demonstrating from scripture their falsehood.

2) Some of our **churches are a real mess.**

False teachers are introducing false gospels, wrong understandings of the second coming, and excess in use of spiritual gifts. We also see works based backgrounds have often led to legalism, heresy

concerning abuse of the Lord's Supper, immorality, factions among churches and leadership and issues concerning refusal of leaders to earn their living.

3) **The New Testament is not yet available** for the peoples we are engaging. This has meant dependence on oral methods for teaching on the life of Christ. Even if the NT were available, the literacy rate is estimated to be below 10% across our field.

4) **Long-term discipleship difficult** due to distances. This is done mostly by correspondence. Though we have made it a point to revisit every church we have started at least once, many of the 2nd and 3rd generation churches have never fit into our calendar. Our materials include a review of our beginning discipleship package, emphasis on God's power, right theology and living and love for the mysteries of God's word. We have also sought to instruct believers concerning several "non-negotiables" we have discovered in scripture (salvation by faith, deity of Jesus etc).

Conclusion

Despite these and other shortcomings, I the "SC" am convinced everything needed for sustained growth and health is present in these six streams. I am also convinced after 12 years of service in these fields, my role is complete. Under the direction of the Lordship of Christ and guided by His Spirit, there is no room left for me to work. Our next term of service will likely seek to stretch out to the west to engage a new set of PG's.

Questions for Discussion and Evaluation⁷⁴

- 1) What strengths do you see in this church planting effort?
- 2) What weaknesses exist in this church planting effort?
- 3) What concerns do you have for the future of this work?
- 4) What advice would you give this church planting team?

⁷⁴ This case study is not unlike the ministry of Paul across his three journeys. Take time to re-read the study, and discuss any change in attitudes you may have toward Paul's success.

“No Place Left”

Allowing Scripture to Define Our Vision



Consider Paul’s mission field. God did not send Paul to some remote corner of the world. Rather Paul was assigned the task of evangelizing the epicenter of idolatry and hedonistic philosophy. When we consider what God used Paul to accomplish, our eyes are opened to the potential working of the Holy Spirit within an area most would consider hard. As with any polytheistic setting, the potential for syncretism was obvious. Persecution was widespread not only by the Roman merchants making money off the rampant idolatry and black magic, but also at the hands of jealous Judaizers. The Jews perceived the loss of control over their Jewish synagogues as a serious threat.

Some have suggested the Roman population at the time of Christ included 65 million souls by A.D. 100.⁷⁵ The most densely populated area of the empire was the coast between Rome and Jerusalem. From these truths, it can be estimated 25-30 million inhabited this coast.⁷⁶

Collectively, these factors make the years between A.D. 45 and 60 an incredible model for church planting potential. Consider the following studies for ongoing training with your church planting team. Make them your life long study.

⁷⁵ See -- www.unrv.com/empire/roman-population.php

⁷⁶ John McRay, *Paul: His Teaching and Practice*. (Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2003), 394. O’Brien gives the probable population density of major Roman seaports at two and a half times that of 20th century Calcutta, and three times that of Manhattan Island, thanks in part to an extensive network of “apartment houses.”

Paul's Journeys – Self Discovery Assignment

Objectives: The church planters will:

- 1) Examine the pace of church planting in the New Testament.
- 2) Discover Paul's strategy and the leading of the Holy Spirit within the timing and geography of his movements.

Assignment #1

Gather your trainees into three groups. Assign each group one of the three missionary journeys of Paul. Ask the trainees to record findings in response to the following questions. The blank map provided should be used as the students' copy on which they may record their findings.

Ask the following questions:

Where did Paul go? What were the results? How long did he stay? Why did he leave?

Answers to these questions should be recorded with specific references. Locations and travel routes can be drawn directly onto the map.

Group #1 – Journey # 1 – Acts 13 - 14

Group #2 – Journey #2 – Acts 15:39 - 18:22

Group #3 – Journey #3 – Acts 18:23 - 20:38

Assignment #2

In the same groups, read through the journeys again. This time as they map out Paul's travel expect them to track and evaluate Paul's strategies.

Journey #1 – Acts 13-14 - Paul and Barnabas

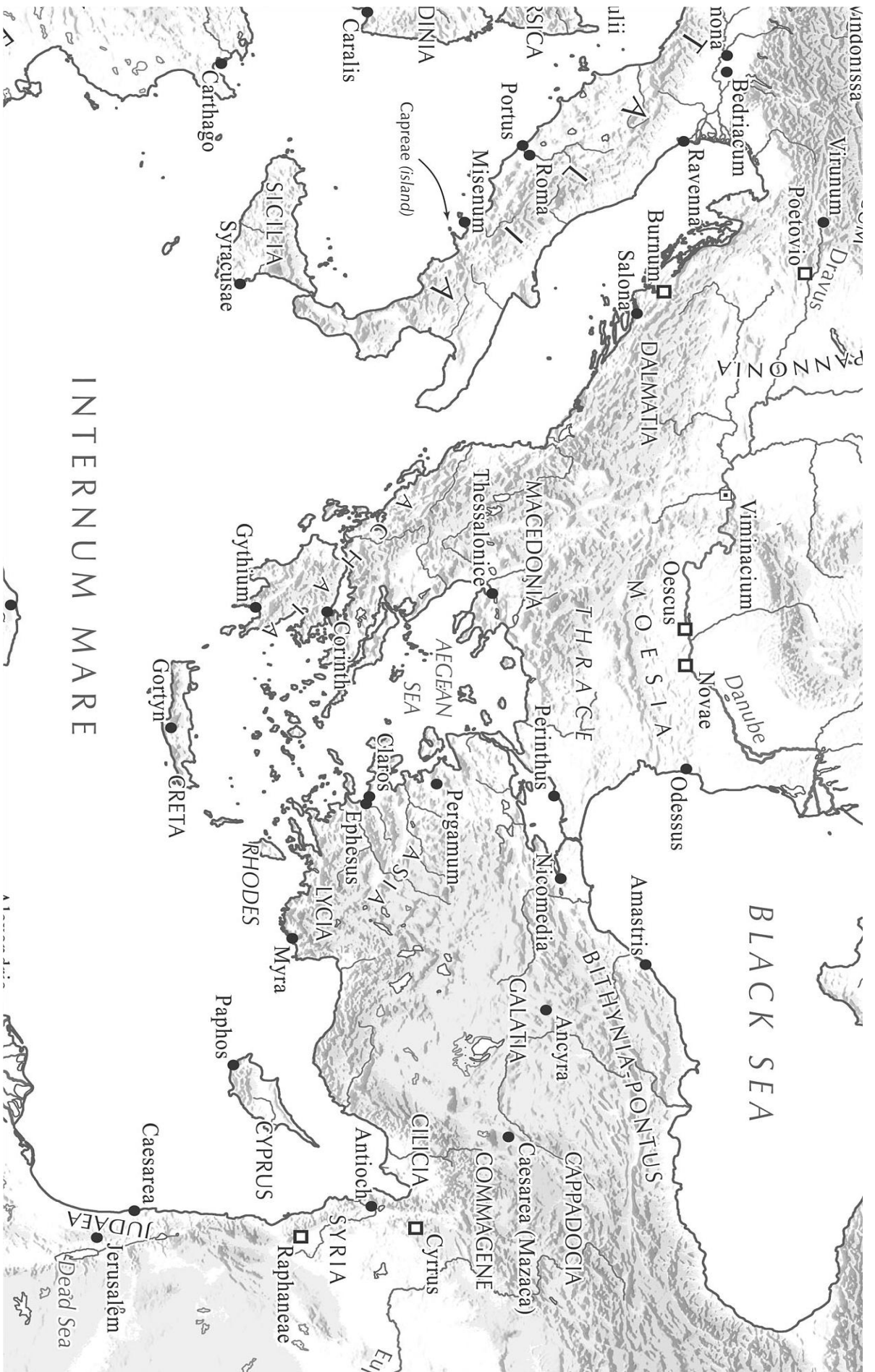
What was Paul's entry strategy?

How did he share the gospel?

How much time was spent in beginning discipleship?

Did he form churches?

Were leaders reproduced?



Twelve Lessons from Paul's Journeys

The "DNA" of Multiplying Churches

- 1) Rapid – Paul covers an area with a population of over 25 million within a 15-year window. Romans 15:19,23 - "no place left"
- 2) Six Streams of Church Planting - multiple streams developing simultaneously. Cyprus/Phrygia/Galatia/Macedonia/Achaia/Asia
- 3) Clear Priorities – Find, Win Man of Peace/Baptize/Disciple new believers in home setting/Release Authority/Revisit- evaluate, appoint elders⁷⁷
- 4) Authority Passed Quickly – ex. One of longest stays, Corinth – (Acts 18:11/18 months) –1 Cor. 1:10-14– Paul says he did not baptize! Who did?
- 5) New works were treated as churches from the beginning. Paul's letters are never addressed to cell groups or fellowships. Respect is given as "co-laborers," "brothers chosen by God," equals!
- 6) Ownership of Great Commission among new believers. Example, the Thessalonian Church (Acts 17:1-9- three week stay), 1 Thess. 1:7-8 – "rang out," "known everywhere".
- 7) Persecution – the cost of following ensured true believers willing to count the cost of following Jesus
- 8) Immediate Baptism – no example of delay in Paul's writings!
- 9) Began in Regional Centers Paphos/Pisidian Antioch/Iconium/Lystra/Derbe/Philippi/Thessalonica/Berea/Athens/Corinth/Ephesus – helped local believers reach out from there.
- 10) Key Trainers/Helpers in each region –see the Leadership development chart within this section.
- 11) Returned when Possible – Every field visited was revisited at least once before Paul's imprisonment. Letters also.

Paul's ministry was Holy Spirit driven. Paul was never in charge of direction. Rather, God determined the doors and timing of his entry and departure. Many times persecution allowed by God moved Paul to new fields. It was God who said leave the new believers to stand!

Teachers Documents – Use the following maps to assign and review the missionary journeys of Paul.⁷⁸ Dates are approximate as per the time line on the following page.

⁷⁷ See – P.T. O'Brien, *Gospel and Mission in the Writings of Paul*. (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1995), 43. O'Brien builds on the point of W.P. Bowers, stating, "his claim to have fulfilled the gospel... signified that he had established strong churches in strategic centers of this area...further evangelistic outreach and the up-building of congregations lay in the hands of others." See also, W.P. Bowers, "Fulfilling the Gospel: The Scope of Pauline Mission," *JETS* 30 (1997), 185-198.

Journey #1



Journey 1 – Acts 13-14

Teaching Points

- Characteristics of a Sending church at Antioch
- Three fields begin, Cyprus, Phrygia (Pisidian Antioch) and Galatia (Iconium, Lystra, Derby)
- Total duration is thought to be less than 18 months. Means little time spent any one place, elders appointed rapidly (Acts 14:23).
- Persecution followed everywhere
- Gospel presentation – 13:16-41
- Refusal of Paul/Barnabus to allow syncretism – 14:8-20

Journey #2



Journey 2 – Acts 15:39-18:22

Teaching Points

- First discipleship journey – Galatia and Phrygia – 15:41-16:6.
- List new leaders – Silas, Timothy, Luke, Lydia, Priscilla/Aquila, etc.
- Macedonian call leads to Philippi – no synagogue... only women and jailers! (Yet called his joy and crown in Phil. 4:1).
- Short stay in Thess.? – 17:2, Yet glowing report in 1 Thess. 1.

Journey #3



Journey 3 - Acts 18:23-20:38

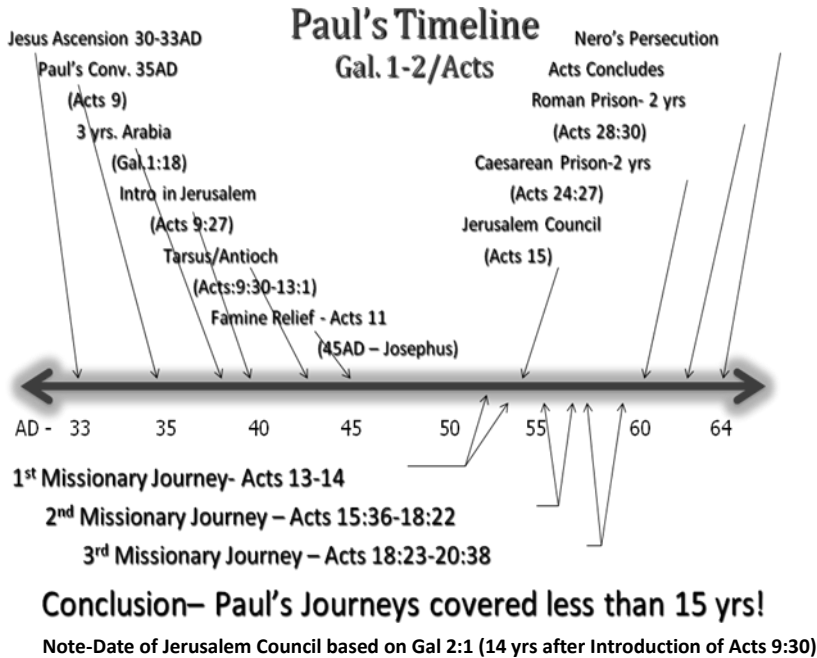
Teaching Points

- Asia previously closed now open for Ephesus. Timing is everything!
- Summary of his message - 20:20-21
- Commissioning of leaders – ch. 20, records such events in Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia (Ephesus).
- 20:4 – list of upcoming leaders

⁷⁸ For two thorough examinations of Paul's journeys including chronology see John McRay, *Paul: His Teaching and Practice*, FF. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1977).

Paul's Timeline

Assignment: Have trainees either in groups or as homework in pairs use Galatians 1-2 and the book of Acts to produce a rough timeline of New Testament events. The outcome should look similar to the one below.⁷⁹



Paul's Leadership Multiplication

All names listed below come from either Acts or the letters of Paul listing leaders in various locations.

This list includes church planters, church hosts, trainers of disciples, Jews/Greeks, pastors, highly respected teachers and runaway slaves.

Leadership Core

Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Priscilla/Aquila, Titus, Luke

Emerging Leaders

Jason, Dionysius, Justus, Lydia, Erasmus, Stephanus, Gaius, Phoebe, Crispus, Sosthenes, Apollos, Epaphrus, Aristarcus, Fortunitus, Archaicus, Andronicus, Julius, Erastus, Tertius, Trophimus, Linus,

⁷⁹ It should be noted a 15 year estimate does not account for certain gaps in the narrative of Acts. (Paul's lengthy stay in Antioch for example- Acts 14:28). John Stott calculates a 10-year window for Paul's journeys between 47-57 A.D. see John Stott, *The Message of Acts*, (Leicester: Inter Varsity.1990).19-20.

Eubulus, Claudia, Mark, Artemas, Tychichus, Clement, Onesimus, Demus, Epaphroditus, Zenus, Cresens, Carpus, Onesiphorus, Claudia, Prudens, Epaphras, others...

Sources of Leadership - It is worth noting, these leaders came from different sources.

Some were **won to Christ** by Paul – Jason, Crispus, Lydia

Some were **disciples of disciples** - Epaphras (Timothy’s disciple?) Apollos – (Priscilla/ Aquila’s disciple).

Still others were **discovered while ministering** and shaped over time by the God sized vision of Paul. – Priscilla and Aquila, Silas, Mark.

Conclusion – Romans 15:19, 23 – No Place Left! – Map below shows a mission field with six distinct church planting streams. Six CPM’s in the book of Acts – 25 million engaged in less than 15 years).

Paul's Six Streams of CP

The map illustrates six distinct church planting streams (CPM's) originating from Jerusalem and spreading across the Eastern Mediterranean and Asia Minor. The streams are numbered 1 through 6, corresponding to the text boxes provided. The map includes geographical labels such as the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and various provinces like Macedonia, Phrygia, Galatia, and Asia. Key cities like Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth are also marked.

#1 – Cyprus – Salamis/Paphos – Acts 13:6 – “they traveled through the whole island.”

#2 – Phrygia – Pisidian Antioch – Acts 13:49 – “The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.”

#3 – Galatia – Iconium/Lystra/Derbe – Acts 18:23 - “Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.”

#4 – Macedonia – Philippi/Thess./Berea/Illyricum – Rom. 15:19 – Illyricum also reached by the gospel.

#5 – Achaia – Corinth/Athens/Crete – Acts 18:9-11 Titus 1:5 – Gospel had spread to the island of Crete.

#6 – Asia – Ephesus - Acts 19:8-10 – “...all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.”

Romans 15: 19,23 – “by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way round to Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the gospel...there is no more place for me to work in these regions.”

Conclusions

In Romans 15:18-23, Paul summarizes his release from the geography of his previous three journeys and a desire to go to Spain. He concludes in verse 23, *“now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing to for many years to see you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain.”*

Surely there were individuals yet to hear the gospel message. Surely there were disciples, and churches not yet mature. How then, could Paul declare (under the influence of the Holy Spirit) that his role had been accomplished? Consider a final self-discovery assignment. What evidence did Paul use to suggest the fulfillment of his task? Could those key result areas inform our efforts and ministry goals?

Self- Discovery Study – From Jerusalem to Illyricum – Rom. 15:14-23; Acts 20:1-5

(Romans was written from Corinth within the third missionary journey – see Acts 20:3, Rom. 15:25-26)

In groups of 6-10, read Romans 15:18-23 and Acts 20:1-5. Examine Paul’s’ description of his missionary journeys. Search for answers to the following questions:

- 1) What fields had been entered?
- 2) Did Paul give evidence of evangelism – seed sowing that resulted in harvest?
- 3) Did Paul’s disciples obey the instruction and example Jesus gave?
- 4) Did Paul nurture the new growth by investing himself?
- 5) How did Paul organize the harvest? What churches had been formed by Acts 20?
- 6) Is there evidence of multiple leaders capable of sustaining the kingdom agenda?
- 7) Was Paul dependent on the Lord of the Harvest to give the increase?

Within his summary of an accomplished role it is clear, Paul did in fact imitate Christ. We, the readers of the New Testament, can be confident in our discernment of what is best (Phil. 1:9-10) by pursuing the same agenda. A life spent engaging the lost by entering new fields, sowing the gospel message, nurturing new growth through a commitment to discipleship and church formation also carries the potential of multiplying when scriptural tools are employed.

Summary questions for your team:

- 1) How do Paul’s priorities compare with the vision and focus of your team?
- 2) What priorities of Paul are you considering for the first time?

- 3) How does Paul's claim, "now there is no place left," fit with the key results you are pursuing?
- 4) Can the Spirit of God be trusted for similar results today?

How will your ministry focus, vision or key results need to be adjusted based on Paul's reality?

May there be "no place left!"

Bibliography

- Akins, T. 1991. *Pioneer Evangelism*. Junta de Missoes nacionais, Convencao Batista Brasileira, Brazil.
- Allen, Roland. 1946. *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*. World Dominion Press. Also published by Eerdmans, 1983.
- Allen, Roland. 1949. *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Beasley-Murray, George. 1986. *Jesus and the Kingdom of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986
- Birkley, Del, 1995. *The House Church*, Scottsdale: Herald Press.
- Bowers, W.P. 1997. *Fulfilling the Gospel: The Scope of Pauline Mission*, JETS 30.
- Brock, Charles. 1981. *Indigenous Church Planting*, Nashville: Broadman Press. Also published by Church Growth International, Neosho, 1994.
- Bruce, F.F. 1977. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Carlton, R. B. 2003. *Acts 29: Practical Training in Facilitating Church-Planting Movements*. Radical Obedience Publishing.
- Edwards, Jonathon. 1984. *On Revival: The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust. reprint.
- Garrison, David. 2004. *Church Planting Movements*. Midlothian: WIGTake Resources, Bangalore.
- Harris, Richard H. 2003. *Reaching a Nation Through Church Planting*. Alpharetta GA: NAMB Press of the SBC..
- Kostenberger, Andreas J., and Peter T. O'Brien. 2001. *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission*. NBTS 11 Downers Grove, IL.: Intervarsity Press.
- Ladd, George Eldon. 1974. *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism*, Rev. Ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- McRay, John. 2003. *Paul: His Teaching and Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Nevius, John. 1958. *Planting and Development of Missionary Churches*. New Jersey: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company.
- O'Brien, P.T. 1995. *Gospel and Mission in the Writings of Paul*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.
- O'Conner, Patrick. 2006. *Reproducible Pastoral Training*, Pasadena: William Carey Library.
- Patterson, George and Richard Scoggins. 2002. *Church Multiplication Guide: The Miracle of Church Reproduction*. Pasadena: William Carey Library.
- Piper, John. 2003. *Let the Nations be Glad*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2nd Ed.
- Payne, J.D. 2009. *Discovering Church Planting*. Colorado Springs: Paternoster.

Reid, Alvin. 2008. *Introduction to Evangelism*. Nashville: B&H Academic.

Schnabel, Eckhard J. 2008. *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies and Methods*. Downers Grove: Inter Varsity.

Stott, John. 1990. *The Message of Acts*. Leicester: Inter Varsity.

Smith, Ebbie C. 2003. *Growing Healthy Churches*. Augusta, SC: Intercultural Institute for Contextual Ministry,.

Viola, Frank. 2003. *Pagan Christianity*, Present Testimony Ministries.

Warren, Rick. 1995. *The Purpose Driven Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Wright, N.T. 1996. *Jesus and the Victory of God*, vol. 2. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Zdero, Rad. 2004. *The Global House Church Movement*. Pasadena: William Carey Library.

Additions within the 2014 revision

Smith, Steve and Ying Kai. 2010. *T4T, Training for Trainers: A Discipleship Re-revolution*. Midlothian: WIGTake Resources.

Scoggins, Richard and George Patterson. 1994 (revised, 2002). *Church Multiplication Guide: Helping Churches to Reproduce Locally and Abroad*. Pasadena: William Carey.

From other Practitioners

It is our assertion that these five parts of the Church Planting Plan are nothing new to missiology. We have sought to demonstrate their origin within scripture. For further study, consider the following examples of practitioners who have discovered these same five parts. Though not specifically listed, see the Five Parts within these books. Each selection comes from a proven church planter who has borne the cross in fields around the world.

Acts 29 – R. Bruce Carlton – see bibliography

The teaching of Carlton and his disciples gave rise to the recognition of these five parts.

- 1) Entry Strategy – Sessions 7,10,11.
- 2) Gospel Presentation – Sessions 6,29.
- 3) Discipleship – sessions 13,18,26,27.
- 4) Church Formation – 17,31,34.
- 5) Leadership Multiplication – sessions 4,8,16,26,30.

Reproducible Pastoral Training – Patrick O’Conner – see bibliography. Chapter one contains all five parts.

- 1) Entry Strategy –p. 29-36 -- “Guidelines” 7 and 8
- 2) Gospel Presentation p. 36-44 – “Guidelines” 9-11
- 3) Discipleship – p. 44-58 – “Guidelines” 12-16
- 4) Church Formation – p. 45-82 – “Guidelines” 16b - 21
- 5) Leadership Multiplication – p. 83-94 -- “Guidelines” 22-23

Indigenous Church Planting – Charles Brock – see bibliography. The five parts are woven throughout the book. See especially Appendix one “Church Planting Process” p. 262 within the 1994 edition.

Church Multiplication Guide – George Patterson and Richard Scroggins – William Carey Library, Pasadena, 2002.

Again the five parts are woven throughout. See especially chapter 10 within Part II.

- 1) Entry Strategy - Section 10-E,F.
- 2) Gospel Presentation – Section 10-B,C,D.
- 3) Discipleship – section 10-I,L,M
- 4) Church Formation – Section 10-F,G,H
- 5) Leadership Multiplication – Section 10-A,D.

Church Planting Movements – David Garrison – see bibliography. Garrison’s “10 Universal Characteristics” of a CPM contain all five parts. Part III - Chapter 11 – p. 172.

- 1) Entry Strategy – “Extraordinary Prayer” – Garrison description promotes prayer within a Luke 10 strategy.
- 2) Gospel Presentation – Every Church Planting Movement has “Abundant Evangelism” – Quantity and Quality.
- 3) Discipleship – Garrison emphasizes the “Authority of God’s Word” and suggests several alternative discipleship methods for non-literates.
- 4) Church Formation – Each of the sections on “Intentional Planting of Reproducing Churches”, “House Churches”, and “Healthy Churches” deal with formation.
- 5) Leadership Multiplication – One of Garrison’s strongest contributions are the sections on “Local/Lay Leadership” as a reproducible model.

Pioneer Evangelism – Thomas W. Akins – see bibliography. Here specific tools have been used in each of the five areas to start thousands of churches.

- 1) Entry Strategy – See studies on “Following the Oikos” and “Men of Peace”
- 2) Gospel Presentation – see the “Good News” Bible study as a tool for evangelism.
- 3) Discipleship – see the “New Life in Christ” Bible study for beginning discipleship.
- 4) Church Formation – The habit of meeting together is formed through these same participative Bible studies.
- 5) Leadership Multiplication – see the section concerning ongoing discipleship for leaders.

Trainers Guides

For those seeking tools for training others, we suggest reviewing the following “trainers guides” produced by practitioners with permission. Within each example adaptations to specific fields have led to breakthrough and valuable insight in the application of kingdom process and the reproduction of tools. Consider several examples for strengths and weaknesses as you develop and commit to specific tools within your network.

Where possible we request a copy of adapted tools in PDF format to share with others pursuing kingdom growth.

For the adaptations of Steve Smith see: “The Basic CPM Plan and T4T”

Available at: www.T4Tonline.org

For the adaptations of Steve Addison see: “Following and Fishing”

Available at: www.movenetwork.org

For the adaptations of Jeff Sundell see: “Disciples Cycle”

Available at: www.t4tUSA.org

For the adaptations of Wilson Geisler see: “Rapidly Advancing Disciples”

Available at: www.churchplantingmovements.com

For the adaptations of Justin Seale email Justin at: 4fieldstraining@gmail.com