

Omega Course:

Practical Church Planter Training

Manual Four

By

The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting

In cooperation with

Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries

**Omega Course:
Practical Church Planter Training
Manual Four**

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MANUAL FOUR

Table of Contents

PREFACE.....IX
ABOUT THE ALLIANCE.....XI
THE CHURCH PLANTING CYCLE.....XII
THRESHOLDS.....XIII
CURRICULUM OVERVIEW..... XV

SCP VISION

LESSON 10: Strategy Components for a Church Planting Movement 3
Build Faith In The Vision..... 3
Set Goals Based On Faith..... 4
Practice Multiplication Instead Of Addition 5
Work From A Strategic Center Rather Than A Remote Location 5
Develop Mobile Facilitative Teams 6
Empower People 6
Develop Networks..... 7
Seek God's Guidance And Timing 8
Appendix: Faith and Obedience vs. Unbelief and Fear..... 10
Appendix: Things that Promote Natural Growth 11

LESSON 11: Signs of a Movement..... 13
Sign 1: A Special Time 14
Sign 2: Emerging Leadership 14
Sign 3: People Get Involved 16
Sign 4: New Forms 17
Sign 5: A Movement Is Spontaneous 17
Sign 6: A Movement Mobilizes People And Structures 18

LESSON 12: Shepherding Within a Movement..... 21
Leadership In Newly Planted Churches..... 21
Corresponding With New Churches 22
Guarding Against Heresy..... 24
Resourcing..... 25
Evangelistic And Church Planting Strategies 25

THE CHURCH

LESSON 12: Dynamics of the Emerging Church.....	31
When Is A Church A Church?	31
Organizing As A Church	34
LESSON 13: Characteristics of Growing Churches.....	37
What Is A Growing Church?	37
How Church Growth Happens.....	38
Twelve Characteristics Of Growing Churches.....	39
Evaluating And Monitoring Church Growth.....	44
LESSON 14: Church Government and Church Offices.....	45
What Is A Church?	45
Types Of Church Government.....	45
Offices In The Church.....	47
Responsibilities And PrIvileges Of Church Leaders	48

SPIRITUAL CHARACTER

LESSON 11: Love as the Foundation for Ministry.....	53
The Gospel As A Model For Relationships.....	53
God's Unconditional, Sacrificial Love	54
God's Love Applied To Relationships.....	55
Love As A Basis For Ministry.....	56
LESSON 12: Understanding The Father's Heart.....	59
Three Parables About Lost Things -Luke 15.....	59
The Parable Of The Prodigal Son	60
Application—Do We Love As The Father Loves?	61
LESSON 13: Grace Is For The Humble.....	63
Humility—What Is It?	63
Examples Of Humility	64
Prayer Expresses Humility Towards God.....	65
Christian Life Characterized By Humility.....	65

PRAYER

LESSON 8,9: Concert of Prayer	69
The Gospel For All People.....	69
Praying For The World	70
Concert Of Prayer – Praying For The Whole World.....	71

LEADERSHIP

LESSON 6: Servant Leadership	75
Worldly Leadership	75
Servant Leadership.....	76
New Testament Teaching On Servant Leadership.....	77
Application	78
Appendix: The Leader's Checklist.....	80
LESSON 7: Leadership Dynamics	81
Characteristics Of The Leader.....	81
Characteristics Of Group.....	84
The Nature Of The Task.....	86
LESSON 8: Styles of Interaction	89
Discover Your Style Of Interaction.....	89
The Four Interaction Styles.....	91
LESSON 9: Leadership Needs	95
What Kind Of Leaders Does The Church Need?	95
How Many Leaders Does The Church Need?	97
Where Do We Find These Leaders?.....	99
LESSON 10: Training New Leaders	101
Biblical Examples Of Leadership Multiplication	101
Training Objectives	103
Five-Step Process For Training New Leaders.....	105
Appendix: Qualities to Encourage in a New Leader.....	108

CELL GROUPS

LESSON 10: Discussion of Cell Group Questions and Problems	113
The Realities Of Cell Group Ministry	113
Questions And Problems.....	114
Solutions	114
LESSON 11: Cell Group Multiplication.....	115
The Goal Of Multiplication	115
The Process Of "Natural" Multiplication.....	116
Barriers To Multiplication	119

DISCIPLE MAKING

LESSON 6: Disciple Making Workshop.....	125
Small Group Discussions (1/2 Hour)	125
Disciple Making Workshop (20 Minutes)	126
Conclusion (3 Minutes).....	126

STEWARDSHIP

LESSON 1: Introduction to Stewardship.....	129
What Is Stewardship?.....	129
Why Talk About Stewardship? Two Issues	129
Stewardship Principles In The Bible	130
Our Stewardship	133
Stewardship And The Church Planter	134
LESSON 2: Financial Stewardship	137
Exploring The Bible.....	137
Personal Giving	139
Local Church Finances.....	140
Financing And Church Planting Movements	142
LESSON 3: Time Management	145
Establishing Priorities—Learning How To Manage Time	146
Practical Implementation	146
LESSON 4: Strategic Planning Process	153
What Is Strategic Planning?	153
The Strategic Planning Process	154
LESSON 5: Strategic Planning Process Workshop	159

THE FAMILY

LESSON 1: Biblical Roles in the Family.....	163
The Married Couple	163
The Role Of The Husband.....	164
The Role Of The Wife.....	166
The Role Of Children	167
LESSON 2: Parenting.....	169
Some Initial Observations.....	169
Some Biblical Principles	170

PREFACE

THE PURPOSE OF THIS MATERIAL

Church planters are often recruited and sent out with little or no training for the task that is before them. Church leaders who are overwhelmed with ministry difficulties often lack a clear vision of what God desires to accomplish through them. Both church planters and church leaders need training and vision, but Bible schools and seminaries are not realistic options for many.

This material is designed to provide not only vision for the church planter and church leader, but also the biblical foundation and practical ministry skills in order to see that vision become reality. It is not an educational "program." Rather, it provides necessary biblical and educational foundations, as well as practical ministry skills, which are required for church planting. Although the *Omega Course* was designed for Central/Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, we've been encouraged by reports that it is already being found useful when adapted for use in other contexts.

This curriculum has been designed to accomplish two goals:

1. To provide the necessary training for churches to be planted.
2. To encourage mobilization in the whole Body of Christ toward a church planting movement.

Today we see church planting movements taking place in many countries throughout the world, including Brazil, Romania, the Philippines, Nigeria, and others. We believe that the local church is God's primary instrument for world evangelization, and that church planting based upon multiplication principles is the most effective means of working towards the completion of the Great Commission. New churches must be planted with a vision for multiplication and the ability to plant other new churches. When this happens, there is potential for a movement of churches which is able to sweep across a nation and transform the lives of people throughout the land.

A church planting movement needs people involved in all levels of the church planting task, from young believers who are excited about their new faith, to leaders of denominations. Church planters by themselves can never be the catalysts for a church planting movement. This material is applicable and has much benefit for all levels of church workers and church leaders who can directly and indirectly support the efforts of church planters as they strive to fulfill the ministry to which God has called them.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This manual is one of five manuals, each of which contains approximately 26 one-hour lessons. In order to accomplish the goals stated above, the curriculum covers a wide range of subjects that are necessary for the church planting task. These include SCP vision, cell group ministry, discipleship, Church, evangelism, inductive Bible study, leadership, prayer, spiritual character and more.

The curriculum was divided into five manuals in order to provide an ever-expanding approach to the learning process. As each participant completes a manual, he or she spends time before the next manual putting into practice the principles that have been learned. Therefore many of the later sessions build upon principles and skills which have been learned and practiced in earlier lessons.

In other words, the curriculum has been designed to be learned and used in parallel with the actual planting of churches. As the participant actively works towards starting a new church, he or she will need certain skills and knowledge, and will encounter various problems along the way. The skills and knowledge needed at the beginning of the church plant are provided in the first manuals, while the activities and principles needed at a later stage in a church plant are presented in the later manuals. Each manual has been designed to provide skills, answer questions, and discuss potential problems that relate to the corresponding phase of church planting in which the participant is actively working. After this Preface you will find a list of key development activities or "thresholds" that trainees are prepared for and expected to apply between training seminars.

The lessons are grouped by subject, and each of the five manuals includes lessons from some subjects. Some of the themes, such as "vision" and "church" are included in all five of the manuals. Others, such as "discipleship" occur later in the curriculum, when the participant is at the point in his or her ministry when these themes are necessary. A curriculum overview containing a list of the lesson titles for each of the five manuals is included later in this section.

USING THE MATERIAL

Advice for the Participant

Much time, prayer and effort has been put into the preparation of all five of the manuals in this curriculum. Each manual is designed to address specific ministry skills and knowledge that are required during the process of starting a new church. Therefore it is highly recommended that you begin with the first manual, and not with one of the later manuals. In the same respect, each lesson has been carefully chosen and crafted to be useful, applicable and indispensable for the church planting task. It is to your benefit not to skip lessons.

Be aware that real learning takes place when you apply the concepts presented in these lessons to your personal life and ministry. Most lessons include an action plan at the end. These action plans are designed to help you apply the ideas in the lesson and should be completed before you begin working with the next manual. It can be extremely helpful to have a mentor to encourage and advise you as you apply yourself to church planting. A mentor can also serve your need for accountability as you apply the concepts being learned to your life and ministry. Having someone to come alongside you is not only effective pedagogy, but many church planters testify to the help this provides in their life and ministry. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to prayerfully seek some form of mentoring to enhance and strengthen your church planting ministry.

Advice for the Trainer

This material can be used in a variety of settings such as a Bible school, seminary or a church-based seminar. However this is not primarily educational material. It is training material. Education focuses on knowledge and information. The intent of the material is not merely to impart knowledge, but to motivate toward action employing biblically sound ministry skills. This manual is for 'doers.'

Although the method you choose to teach the lessons for each manual will depend on your particular context, each manual can be taught in a weeklong seminar. From this ideal, many training locations have successfully used other arrangements that fit better with the flow of life and existing ministries. They have sometimes opted for two intensive weekends or regular weekly sessions. It is recommended that the action plans at the end of each lesson be emphasized so that they are completed before the next seminar. Four to six months is a reasonable time to expect between seminars. The advantage of this type of training method is that it combines principles learned in the seminar with hands-on practice between seminars.

During seminars it is not necessary to teach every point of every lesson since participants can read the material on their own. Sometimes having trainees read the lesson and interact on how it relates to their own experience is a good method. At other times, a lecture from someone who is an expert in the subject being covered may be the best way to impart the concepts. But **DO NOT DWELL ON THE LECTURE APPROACH**. Be creative as you try various methods to convey the principles and skills contained in the lessons. Other trainers have found variations such as discussion groups, workshops and role playing to be helpful and interesting.

You have a sacred trust. The Lord of the Church wishes to disciple the nations, and leaders are needed. You have the awesome potential of helping to equip many who could foster church planting movements and to facilitate others in ministries of church multiplication.

Further help

Do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance to you in spreading the vision of saturation church planting or practically equipping church planters.

Jay Weaver, General Editor
Budapest, Hungary, January 2000
JayWeaver@compuserve.com

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

This curriculum has been prepared by *The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting* in cooperation with Project 250 of Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries. *The Alliance* is a partnership of churches and mission agencies committed to mobilizing believers to saturate each country in Central/Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union with evangelical churches. Saturation Church Planting is a strategy that seeks to establish local churches in every town, village and neighborhood so that those who accept Christ will have a local fellowship in which to grow in Christ and be equipped for ministry. *The Alliance* is built on the premise that joining forces will increase effectiveness, reduce duplication, and demonstrate unity within the body of Christ.

WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- The local church is God's primary tool for evangelism and discipleship.
- Partnership with churches and mission organizations is crucial for the multiplication of local churches and the development of saturation church planting movements.
- Training leaders is essential to church planting and church growth.
- The Lausanne Covenant is the statement of faith for *The Alliance*.

WHAT WE DO:

Church Planter Training and Mentoring

The Alliance provides skill-based training in seminar fashion with practical ministry assignments geared towards starting reproducing churches.

Information Gathering

Accurate information leads to good decisions in the church planting task. *The Alliance* can help with training and consultation for your information gathering needs in the areas of church planting and church growth.

Prayer Movement Consulting

A church planting movement starts with vision, which is discovered and refined through seeking God's heart in prayer. *The Alliance* can help you better understand the role of prayer movements in the church planting task, and how you can facilitate a prayer movement in your region.

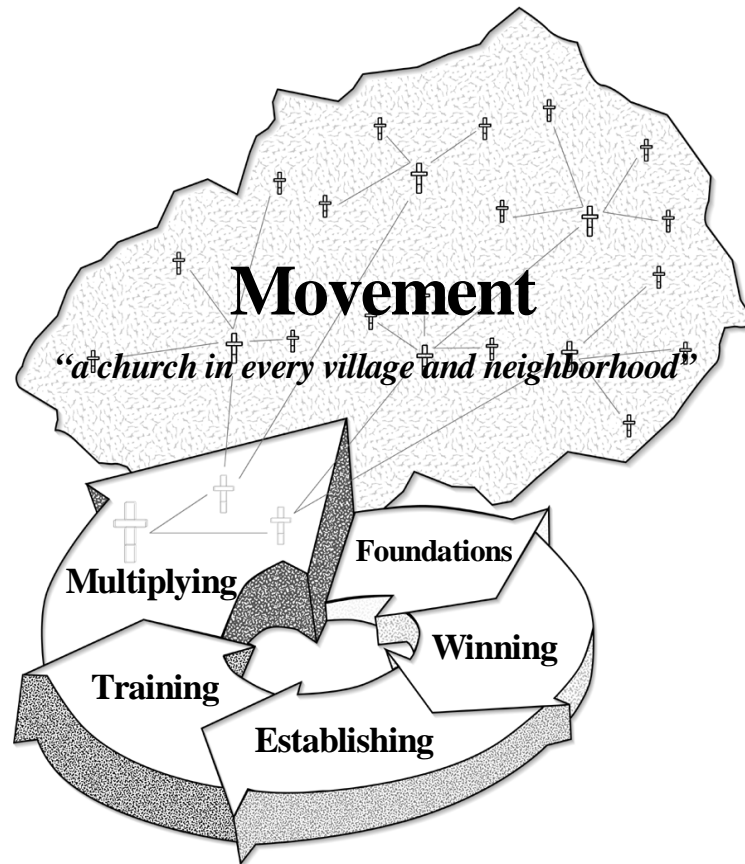
Vision Casting

What does God want for your country? He wants churches everywhere! *The Alliance* can help foster a vision for new churches with conceptual seminars on the principles of saturation church planting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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THE CHURCH PLANTING CYCLE



Church planting is not a randomly connected series of events and activities; it is a goal-driven process. This process requires the coordination of activity, the combination of skills, a commonality of philosophy, and competence in leadership. Development in these critical areas is the goal of church planter training. The "Church Planting Cycle" is a diagram of the church planting process that visualizes, from a particular point of view, the interrelationship of the key principles and practices at work within that process. This represents a kind of 'roadmap' for the church planter, allowing one to always determine from where they've come and where they are headed.

THRESHOLDS

For the *Omega Course* Church Planting Curriculum

Thresholds are concrete ministry activities which have been incorporated into this curriculum. Each threshold can be thought of as an individual stepping stone within the larger process of starting new congregations. The thresholds provide concrete action points which help the trainee to practically apply the concepts contained in the *Omega Course*. They are both milestones that indicate progress, as well as signposts which help give further direction. Following is a list of thresholds and emphases in the *Omega Course*.

MANUAL ONE: Emphasis On SCP Vision, Purpose Of The Church, Inductive Bible Study, and Research

Specific action items:

- Examining the purpose of the Church in light of the Great Commission
- Developing an overall ministry strategy based on "Z-thinking" vision
- Investigating "form and function" in the early Church and in today's Church
- Learning and practicing inductive Bible study
- Writing and sharing a personal testimony
- Initiating prayer support groups for evangelism and church planting
- Completing a comprehensive research project for the target area

MANUAL TWO: Emphasis On Evangelism and Cell Groups

Specific action items:

- Sharing of findings from the research project with others in the target area
- Writing a church purpose statement
- Developing a philosophy of church planting ministry
- Developing a personal evangelism strategy, including one-on-one evangelism
- Beginning cell groups with an emphasis on evangelism
- Using inductive Bible study personally and in the cell groups

MANUAL THREE: Emphasis On Discipleship, Spiritual Warfare, Teams and Teamwork

Specific action items:

- Identifying and training potential leaders for cell groups
- Spending time in prayer and fasting
- Evaluating the worldview of the church planter as compared to the biblical worldview
- Using scriptural truths to withstand spiritual attack in the life and ministry of the church planter
- Creating individual disciple making plans for the people involved in the church planting ministry
- Performing team development and evaluation activities
- Analyzing the spiritual gifts of the church planter and the church planting team

MANUAL FOUR: Emphasis On Leadership and Stewardship

Specific action items:

- Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the church planter's leadership style, with an emphasis on methods of personal interaction with others
- Incorporating principles of servant leadership into the life and ministry of the church planter
- Tracking the use of time in the life and ministry of the church planter, setting priorities, making schedules
- Evaluating the financial giving of the church planter, as well as that of the church plant itself
- Reviewing the biblical roles of a husband and wife and the responsibilities that church planters have to their families
- Leading existing cell groups through the process of multiplication
- Preparing a strategic plan for working towards saturation in the church planting ministry

MANUAL FIVE: Emphasis On Multiplication, Mobilizing Others, and Promoting SCP Movements

Specific action items:

- Initiating ministry cooperation with other evangelical groups in the target area
- Planning and implementing a supervisory structure for cell groups that will promote ongoing growth and multiplication
- Teaching people to pray for saturation church planting; mobilizing prayer at a city, regional, and national levels
- Developing and implementing a plan for the church planter to train and mentor new church planters
- Empowering and releasing new leaders for church planting ministry
- Promoting a vision in new churches for missionary involvement not only in their target area, but also to "the ends of the earth"

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MANUAL ONE OVERVIEW

Addresses primarily the FOUNDATIONS phase of the Church Planting Cycle

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Bible Study Methods (BS)	Evangelism (EV)
<p>Lesson 1: "Z" Thinking</p> <p>Lesson 2: The Great Commission and Church Planting</p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): Church Planting Cycle 3A: Church Planting Models</p> <p>Lesson 4 (4A,4B): Principles of Research 4A: Understanding Your Target Area 4B: Sample Questionnaires</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Biblical Foundations for the Church</p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): The Purpose Of The Church 2A: Great Commission Worksheet</p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): Form And Function 3A: Form & Function Applied</p> <p>Lesson 4: Defining The Local Church</p>	<p>Lesson 1 (1A): Justification by Faith</p> <p>Lesson 2: Living by the Gospel</p> <p>Lesson 3: Christian Growth</p> <p>Lesson 4: The Transforming Power of the Gospel</p> <p>Lesson 5: Keeping a Spiritual Journal</p>	<p>Lesson 1, 2: Concert of Prayer: Praying for Revival</p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): How To Facilitate Prayer 3A: Prayer Triplets</p>	<p>Lesson 1 (1A): Intro to the Inductive Bible Study Method 1A: How We Got The Bible</p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): Observing God's Word 2A: The Language of the Bible</p> <p>Lesson 3: Observation Workshop</p> <p>Lesson 4 (4A): Interpreting God's Word 4A: Bible Charts</p> <p>Lesson 5: Interpretation Workshop</p> <p>Lesson 6: Applying God's Word</p> <p>Lesson 7 (7A): Application Workshop 7A: Ephesus - an I.B.S.</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Introduction to Evangelism</p> <p>Lesson 2, 3: Developing Your Personal Testimony</p>
4	4	5	3	7	3

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

Addresses primarily the **WINNING** phase of the Church Planting Cycle

MANUAL TWO OVERVIEW

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Bible Study Methods (BS)	Evangelism (EV)
<p>Lesson 5: Biblical Foundations of Saturation Church Planting</p> <p>Lesson 6: Research Workshop</p> <p>Lesson 7: Mobilizing Resources through Research</p>	<p>Lesson 5: The Nature of the Church</p> <p>Lesson 6 (6A): Corporate Functions of the Church</p> <p>6A: <i>Baptism in the New Testament</i></p> <p>Lesson 7: Developing A Church Purpose Statement</p> <p>Lesson 8 (8A): Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry</p> <p>8A: <i>Developing a Philosophy of Church Planting Ministry</i></p>	<p>Lesson 6: Living Like Sons Instead of Orphans</p> <p>Lesson 7 (7A): Learning to be Sons</p> <p>7A: <i>Orphans vs. Sons</i></p>	<p>Lesson 4: Concert of Prayer: Worship and Meditation</p>	<p>Lesson 1 (1A): Biblical Principles of Leadership</p> <p>1A: <i>Leadership Case Studies</i></p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): Profile of a Leader</p> <p>2A: <i>The Leader</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Functions and Benefits of Cell Groups</p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A, 2B): Principles of Cell Group Leadership</p> <p>2A: <i>Cell Grp Ice Breakers</i></p> <p>2B: <i>Sample Activities</i></p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A): Starting a Cell Group</p> <p>3A: <i>Planning Worksheet</i></p> <p>Lesson 4 (4A): Cell Group Evangelism</p> <p>4A: <i>About "Oikos"</i></p> <p>Lesson 5: Cell Group Demonstration</p> <p>Lesson 6: Philosophy of Cell Group Ministry</p>	<p>Lesson 8 (8A): Various Ways to Use Inductive Bible Studies</p> <p>8A: <i>Biographical Study - Barnabas</i></p> <p>Lesson 9 (9A, 9B): Leading Inductive Bible Studies</p> <p>9A: <i>Study of Mt 20:17-28</i></p> <p>9B: <i>Study of Lk 15: 1-7</i></p> <p>Lesson 10,11 (10A): Workshop Leading Inductive Bible Studies</p> <p>10A: <i>Passages for IBS</i></p>	<p>Lesson 4 (4A): Evangelism and Church Planting</p> <p>4A: <i>Evaluating Evang Strategies</i></p> <p>Lesson 5 (5A, 5B): Barriers to effective Evangelism</p> <p>5A: <i>"A Church in Every People"</i></p> <p>5B: <i>Answering Common Objections</i></p> <p>Lesson 6, 7 (6A, 6B, 6C): The Process of Conversion</p> <p>6A: <i>Profile of persons to Evang</i></p> <p>6B: <i>Three Principles</i></p> <p>6C: <i>Examining Jesus' Approach</i></p>
3	4	2	1	2	6	4	4

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

Addresses primarily the **ESTABLISHING** phase of the Church Planting Cycle

MANUAL THREE OVERVIEW

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Evangelism (EV)	Disciple Making (DI)	Spiritual Warfare(SW)
<p>Lesson 8: The First Advance</p> <p>Lesson 9: Elements of Church Planting Movements</p>	<p>Lesson 9, 10: The Church and Spiritual Gifts</p> <p>Lesson 11: Social Dynamics of the Church</p>	<p>Lesson 8,9: The Law and The Gospel</p> <p>Lesson 10 (10A): Repentance as a Way of Life</p> <p>10A: <i>The Sinner's Place</i></p>	<p>Lesson 5: Prayer and Fasting</p> <p>Lesson 6, 7: Concert of Prayer: Praying to Spread the Gospel</p>	<p>Lesson 3: Spheres of Leadership</p> <p>Lesson 4: Introduction to Team Work</p> <p>Lesson 5: Team Development</p>	<p>Lesson 7 (7A): Cell Group Discussion Dynamics</p> <p>7A: <i>Discussion Questions</i></p> <p>Lesson 8: Caring for People in a Cell Group</p> <p>Lesson 9: Training New Cell Group Leaders</p>	<p>Lesson 8: Relational Evangelism</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Introduction to Disciple Making</p> <p>Lesson 2(2A): Your Role in Making Disciples</p> <p>2A: <i>Characteristics of Christian Love</i></p> <p>Lesson 3(3A): Know Your Goal, Know Your People</p> <p>3A: <i>Faith, Hope & Love</i></p> <p>Lesson 4(4A): Helping Disciples Grow Spiritually</p> <p>4A: <i>Spir Grth Need Evaltn</i></p> <p>Lesson 5(5A): Forms for Disciple Making</p> <p>5A: <i>Disciple Making Plan</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Understanding Worldview</p> <p>Lesson 2 (2A): Dynamics of Spiritual Warfare</p> <p>2A: <i>Study of Eph. 4:17-5:21</i></p> <p>Lesson 3 (3A, 3B): Spiritual Battles</p> <p>3A: <i>Bible Study</i></p> <p>3B: <i>Case Studies from Around the World</i></p>
2	3	3	3	3	3	1	5	3

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

Addresses primarily the **TRAINING** phase of the Church Planting Cycle

MANUAL FOUR OVERVIEW

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Disciple Making (DI)	Stewardship (ST)	The Family (FA)
<p>Lesson 10 (10A,10B): Strategy Components for a Church Planting Movement <i>10A: Faith and Obedience Vs Fear and Unbelief</i> <i>10B: Things that Promote Natural Growth</i></p> <p>Lesson 11: Signs of a Movement</p> <p>Lesson 12: Shepherding within a Movement</p>	<p>Lesson 12: Dynamics of the Emerging Church</p> <p>Lesson 13: Characteristics of Growing Churches</p> <p>Lesson 14: Church Government And Church Offices</p>	<p>Lesson 11: Love as the Foundation for Ministry</p> <p>Lesson 12: Understanding the Father's Heart</p> <p>Lesson 13: Grace is for the Humble</p>	<p>Lesson 8,9: Concert of Prayer: Praying Biblically</p>	<p>Lesson 6 (6A): Servant Leadership <i>6A: The Leaders Checklist</i></p> <p>Lesson 7: Leadership Dynamics</p> <p>Lesson 8: Styles of Interaction</p> <p>Lesson 9: Leadership Needs</p> <p>Lesson 10 (10A): Training New Leaders <i>10A: Qualities to Encourage in a New Leader</i></p>	<p>Lesson 10: Discussion of Cell Group Questions and Problems</p> <p>Lesson 11: Cell Group Multiplication</p>	<p>Lesson 6: Disciple-making Workshop</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Introduction to Stewardship</p> <p>Lesson 2: Financial Stewardship</p> <p>Lesson 3: Time Management</p> <p>Lesson 4: Strategic Planning Process</p> <p>Lesson 5: Strategic Planning Process Workshop</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Biblical Roles in the Family</p> <p>Lesson 2: Parenting</p>
3	3	3	2	5	2	1	5	2

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

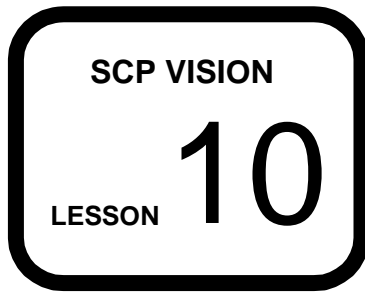
Addresses primarily the **MULTIPLICATION & MOVEMENT** phases of the Church Planting Cycle
MANUAL FIVE OVERVIEW

SCP Vision (VI)	The Church (CH)	Spiritual Character (SC)	Prayer (PY)	Leadership (LD)	Cell Groups (CG)	Preaching (PR)	The Family (FA)
<p>Lesson 13: Vision and Telescoping</p> <p>Lesson 14: Mobilization</p> <p>Lesson 15: Next Steps</p> <p>Lesson 16: Training As Part Of A Church Planting Movement</p> <p>Lesson 17: Mobilizing Leaders Through National Initiatives</p>	<p>Lesson 15: Church Discipline</p> <p>Lesson 16: Corporate Worship In The Local Church</p> <p>Lesson 17: How To Lead Corporate Worship</p> <p>Lesson 18: The Local Church and the Bigger Body of Christ</p> <p>Lesson 19: The Historical Impact of the Church in _____ (History of the Church in country context)</p>	<p>Lesson 14: Reconciliation Ministry</p> <p>Lesson 15: Moral Integrity of Church Planters</p>	<p>Lesson 10: Facilitating Prayer for a Church Planting Movement</p> <p>Lesson 11, 12: Concert of Prayer: Thanking God for His Faithfulness</p>	<p>Lesson 11: Releasing Leaders</p> <p>Lesson 12: Movement Leadership 12A: <i>Movement Leaders</i></p>	<p>Lesson 12: Cells That Saturate Through Local Churches</p> <p>Lesson 13 (13A): Supervising Cells 13A: <i>Final Step</i></p>	<p>Lesson 1: Biblical Preaching I: Understanding the Message</p> <p>Lesson 2: Biblical Preaching II: Understanding the Audience</p> <p>Lesson 3: Biblical Preaching III: Understanding Yourself</p>	<p>Lesson 3: Ministry to the Family</p>
5	5	2	3	2	2	3	1

Numbers in brackets () refer to appendices

TOTAL CURRICULUM HOURS: 127

SCP VISION



Strategy Components for a Church Planting Movement

☞ Lesson Purpose

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

☞ Main Points

- Strategy is simply the effective method for accomplishing a task.
- Certain ministry strategies promote church planting movements.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand how to work strategically toward church planting.
- Know what changes need to be made in his region in order to see a movement.

☞ Appendices

- 10A Faith & Obedience vs. Fear & Unbelief
- 10B Things that Promote Growth

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

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

INTRODUCTION

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

I. BUILD FAITH IN THE VISION

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

A. Mobilize for Prayer

If you want to overcome resistance and see a saturation church planting movement in your region, you must seek God's desire for the region. This is best done through prayer. Aggressive prayer in search of wisdom concerning what God wants for the region is an effective way to unite people and

instill vision concerning the fulfillment of the Great Commission. People who pray rarely have a problem accepting God's vision for saturation church planting. Prayer brings together those who have been longing for a great movement of God to impact their nation, people, and region.

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

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

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

B. Ask "What Does God Want?"

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

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

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

1. *The Response of Doubt and Disobedience*

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

2. *The Response of Faith and Obedience*

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

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

II. SET GOALS BASED ON FAITH

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

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

EXAMPLE

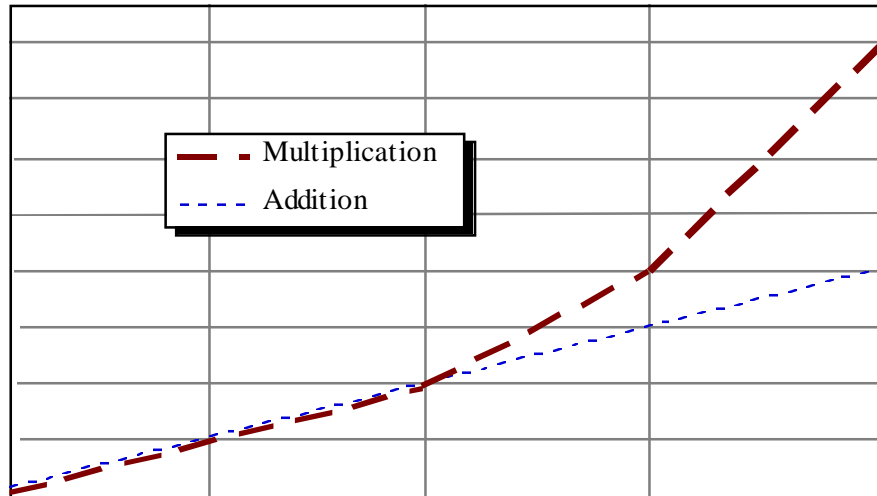
The Muria Church in Indonesia has grand growth plans. In the mid-1980's they had about six congregations with a combined membership of just over 500. The leaders set a goal to have 10,000 members by the year 2,000. This goal may have seemed completely unrealistic, yet today they are ahead of schedule.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

III. PRACTICE MULTIPLICATION INSTEAD OF ADDITION

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

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

Figure 10.1. Multiplication vs. Addition



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

Every church planter has a starting point. We have already seen how Paul selected strategic starting points in which to plant churches so that they multiplied to saturate the surrounding region (Manual Three SCP Vision lesson 8). Cities of commerce and transportation centers can be used to promote the Gospel.

Selecting strategic centers is an ongoing process. In the beginning of the New Testament Church, Jerusalem was the strategic base from which the church went out. The next strategic center was the church in Antioch. From there, as the Antioch church leaders worshipped and sought God, the Holy

Spirit sent out Barnabas and Saul to take the Gospel to the Gentiles (Ac 13:1-3). The next strategic center was Ephesus, the gateway to Asia and central to the four provinces (Galatia, Asia, Macedonia and Achaia) in which Paul invested most of his church planting ministry. Eventually Rome, the capital of the empire became the strategic center for the advance of the Gospel.

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

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

EXAMPLE

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

V. DEVELOP MOBILE FACILITATIVE TEAMS

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

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

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

VI. EMPOWER PEOPLE

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

EXAMPLE

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

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

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

VII. DEVELOP NETWORKS

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

EXAMPLE

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

A. Build Communication

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

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

B. Sponsor Conferences

In a movement, leaders have to see each other face to face. Getting people together through conferences, congresses and consultations is also necessary for a movement to keep its momentum. Nothing can stir up potential like a room filled with like-minded leaders. Large

gatherings like congresses inspire and motivate people. Smaller events like consultations allow leaders to work through difficult issues and clarify directions that they should pursue within a movement.

EXAMPLE

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

VII. SEEK GOD'S GUIDANCE AND TIMING

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

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

CONCLUSION

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

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

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

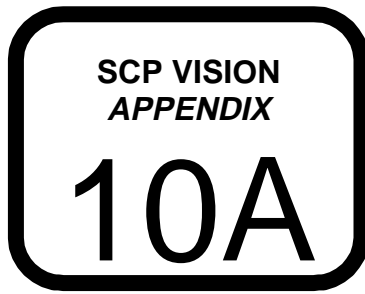
ACTION PLAN

- Choose and apply at least one of the church planting strategies discussed in this lesson and share the results with your trainer or mentor.
- See Appendix 10A. Compare the list to your ministry situation.

SOURCES

- Comiskey, Joel. *Home Cell Group Explosion*. Houston, TX: Touch Ministries, 1998.
- Correll, Richard C, *The Glory of God Among the Nations*. Grand Rapids: Church Planter Training International, 1998.

- Miller, Basil, *John Wesley*. Minneapolis: Dimension Books, 1943.
- Shenk, David W., and Ervin R. Stutzman, *Creating Communities of the Kingdom, New Testament Models of Church Planting*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988.



Faith and Obedience vs. Unbelief and Fear

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

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

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

SCP VISION
APPENDIX
10B

Things that Promote Natural Growth

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

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



Signs of a Movement

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to show that church planting can turn into a movement.

☛ Main Points

- A movement is a social phenomenon in which what was once rare is becoming more common.
- There are certain signs of a movement that can help the church planter discern what God is doing in the region.

☛ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand how to recognize the signs of a movement.
- Know the principles of ministry that lead toward a movement.
- Participate not only in planting churches, but work toward a church planting movement.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

To introduce this lesson, have the trainees discuss movements from their history, both secular and spiritual. Talk about movement principles from these examples.

This lesson discusses six "signs" for discerning a movement. Choose at least one example from each of the six areas and discuss it with the trainees in class. If you have extra time, you can choose several others to work through with trainees. When selecting examples, keep in mind the specific cultures and contexts of the trainees. Stress the principles used in each example which contributed toward facilitating biblical and healthy church planting movements with sound doctrine and practice.

INTRODUCTION

A movement is a social phenomenon. One way to describe a social movement is to say that, "What was once rare is becoming more common." It involves a growing number of people who are convinced about a common cause, an opportune time, and leaders who desire to make radical changes to the *status quo*. Special leaders emerge to inspire, motivate and lead their respective groups toward that cause. Movements motivate new events and activities. Simply put, it means that something that only a few people did is now being done by more people. It means that something that people did rarely, they now do commonly. It has enough of an impact on a group of people that it even changes their thinking, but not without conflict in the process.

The democratic movement in Eastern Europe that began in 1989 is an example of a secular movement. As a vision for political change swelled in the hearts of common people, revolutions came in a swift, spontaneous, and dramatic way that few could have predicted. The spread of the Gospel in the New Testament, the Protestant Reformation, the Wesleyan revival and the contemporary church planting movements are all examples of spiritual movements.

The clear goal of this church planter training is to help a church planting movement get underway in your region. When there is a movement of God in a nation, believers will have a renewed passion for the Gospel that should lead them to the spread the Gospel through spontaneous planting of churches and cell groups.

I. SIGN 1: A SPECIAL TIME

When the time is right, God moves and accelerates what He's doing in a nation! God is never early and He is never late—He always does what must be done at exactly the right time.

For a movement to happen, there is a delicate sense of timing. Within a nation or ethnic group, events, conditions, and expectations come together in a certain moment of history to form raw ingredients of a massive movement. In the Bible, timing is so important that God Himself ordained the time for movements. In the book of Exodus, it took four hundred years for the people of Israel to be ready to move out of Egypt, but what a movement it was! Two million people walked out of a devastated Egypt as the cloud led them by day and the fire by night. Daniel noted that God's time of seventy years had come as he prayed for Israel to move back to the promised land from captivity under the Persian Empire (Da 9:2). As God heard Daniel, waves of Jews returned to Jerusalem. They rebuilt the temple and the city walls and the desolate city came to life once again.

Galatians 4:4 says that, "At the right time God sent His Son..."

In the New Testament, timing is also a factor in starting and mobilizing the church. The disciples of Jesus were told to wait till they received the Holy Spirit. They waited until Pentecost (Ac 1:4; 2:1). The church was begun on that day, and a great movement in Jerusalem followed. Home meetings spread across the city, teaching God's Word. Believers also met publicly. In addition to teaching, there was fellowship, eating together, and people praying with one another (Ac 2:42-47).

Another great movement of the Church recorded in the New Testament is the great advance of the Gospel in Asia Minor. Acts 19:10 states that, "everyone in Asia Minor heard the word of the Lord, both Jew and Greek." God's timing was so critical in that movement that God would not even let Paul enter the region a few years before! Acts 16:6 describes Paul and his companions as "having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia."

It appears that timing is extremely important. God brings people to a point of receptivity to the Gospel, the message of a church planting movement, and mobilizes the Church to preach that same Gospel and plant more churches. A receptive population and a mobilized Church combine to form great advances of the Gospel. These movements will also leave their mark on history. If it is not God's time for a *massive* movement, do not be discouraged—You can still join in where God is moving even in a small way. Like the parable of the mustard seed demonstrates, God starts great things from a very small beginning. What evidences do you see in your target area that God is working? How can you join in there with a vision for a church planting movement—even if it is a tiny, seemingly microscopic mustard seed beginning? *Look at what God is doing and where He is working in your region and join in working there toward a church planting movement.*

EXAMPLE:

Argentina had always been known for the pride of its people. After losing at war to the British in 1882, the nation was humbled. This brought on a special timing for the advance of the Gospel because more people recognized their need for God when they experienced such a national tragedy. Within five years, the *Vision of the Future* cell group church planting movement swelled to 100,000 people.

II. SIGN 2: EMERGING LEADERSHIP

Many times in history when it seems that the kingdom of darkness is certain to overcome the forces of righteousness, God calls leaders who "understand the times" and know what God's people "should do." At just the right time, not too late and not too soon, God releases a blow through these leaders which brings the kingdom of darkness to its knees. So it was with Moses, David, Nehemiah, John the Baptist, the Apostle Paul, Martin Luther, John Wesley and others.

EXAMPLE:

The 18th century preacher, John Wesley, was such a leader. They called him “the most useful Saint in the British Empire” (Miller p. 63). The revival led by him and George Whitefield in England began at a spiritual low point when churches seemed powerless to impact society for Christ. Wesley’s ministry resulted in the conversion of hundreds of thousands and had a social impact that helped avert a revolution like the one in France. The Wesleyan revival spilled over into America, and led by Jonathan Edwards and Francis Asbury, resulted in saturation church planting of Congregational and Methodist churches.

Movements are all about leadership. For a saturation church planting movement to happen, leaders must emerge. They must promote the vision, develop new leaders, and convince existing leaders to support and join the movement. As the movement takes momentum, new leaders start emerging to carry it forward.

Like a rowboat heading upstream in strong current, these leaders will usually face some opposition. Usually, when directing a change in the *status quo*, those who lead a movement at its very beginning are more radical. This radical element can be like a new stallion in a herd of horses, challenging all of those who have been in the herd a while—they cause friction. Hooves may fly as leaders rear up and react! People will react to what leaders in a movement stand for—some positively, some negatively.

Movements can actually gain momentum from opposition as the resistance forces leaders to modify, solidify, and develop their sense of direction and convictions. Hopefully, if leaders of Christian movements hold radical opinions that are not biblical, they will modify their directions and convictions toward a biblical position.

Some leaders cast vision and ideas (such as the prophets, from Isaiah to John the Baptist). They demand change, but motivate it by reaching deep into the longing of people’s hearts for God to work among them. As they proclaim God’s intentions for His people, they work to convince them to depart from the *status quo* and follow God’s plan. *A church planting movement needs leaders who will plead the cause of saturation church planting to other leaders who may be reluctant to accept this vision.*

The Apostle Peter did this excellently in a public sermon as he focused on the hopes and dreams of the Jewish heart. He quoted his and their Scriptures from the prophet Joel. His message provoked their longing for God to send His Spirit to once again bring a prophetic word. But instead of speaking about the Spirit coming upon some distant, exalted prophet, he overwhelmed their expectations by quoting Joel and saying that their own sons and daughters would prophesy! What could be described as a spiritual movement followed (Ac 2). But opposition also followed his message. *A church planting movement needs leaders who draw out the longing in peoples’ hearts for God to work through them, advancing His Gospel by multiplying churches in the land.*

Paul was a leader who took action. If Christ was not preached somewhere, he would go there to do it (Ro 15:20-21). He set an example for others in ministry. In spite of hardships, persecution, and even destitution, (2Co 11:23-27) he planted churches! Others followed him in this example (2Ti 2:3). This is obvious, but must be said: *A church planting movement needs leaders who will lead teams to plant churches!*

Barnabas was a leader who developed other leaders even when they were considered a risk to the cause of the Gospel. He stood beside Paul when there was great doubt over whether his conversion was sincere and genuine (Ac 9:26-27). While Paul was alone in Tarsus, Barnabas called him over to Antioch and released him into his teaching ministry (Ac 11:25-26). It was from his ministry at Antioch that Paul went on to become a recognized apostle and church planter.

Barnabas also faced opposition when Paul refused to take young Mark with them again after he had failed on his first trip. Barnabas split from Paul to restore Mark to useful service (Ac 15:36-39). After time, not only did Paul himself say that Mark had become useful, but he became as a son to Peter and even wrote a Gospel! See for yourselves in 2 Timothy 4:11, Colossians 4:10, and 1 Peter 5:13 and read them aloud.

EXAMPLE:

The greatest ministry of J. Christy Wilson may not be that he was the first person in 1500 years to plant an Evangelical church in Afghanistan, but that he has inspired many other Christian leaders for missions, both on the foreign mission field and in pastoral ministry. He himself does not lead any organization. Bill Bright, leader of one of the largest missions and evangelism organizations in the world says that Dr. Wilson has deeply influenced him as the most spiritual man he has ever met. Dr. Wilson prays for hundreds of people every week—that God would use them. He encourages people, he believes in their spiritual gifts and he uses his own heavy influence and powerful connections to give them every opportunity to use them. As a pastor, professor, missionary, friend and counselor, he helps others see how God will use them and encourages them to work for the Lord before others notice them. Often, he will stand by and publicly speak well of someone, who although controversial, is serving the Lord and being used by Him.

One can pass the fire of a torch to another unlit torch without dimming one's own light. Lighting the torches of new leaders so they may also lead helps a small flicker in the night turn to a great blaze which can be seen a long way off. In the same way, equipping, or 'facilitating' others into leadership makes a movement grow. Acts 19:1-10 describes how in Paul's last ministry before he was imprisoned, he developed other leaders by beginning with twelve men in Ephesus. Paul himself stayed in the city, but those he trained reached all of Asia Minor with the word of the Lord! He describes how he worked with them during that time in Acts 20:17-38. Paul lit their torches! *A church planting movement needs leaders who will influence and develop other leaders who will keep the movement expanding.*

Leaders in a movement hold people accountable to the truth when it is overshadowed by traditions. Peter, Barnabas and Paul appealed to the ethics and conscience of other leaders to convince them regarding Gentiles and the Jewish law. They told the apostles and elders how God had used them to bring uncircumcised Gentiles to Christ. From this argument, they convinced the apostles and elders to write a letter freeing Gentile believers from obligations to Old Testament ceremonial law (Ac 15:6-7,23-29).

III. SIGN 3: PEOPLE GET INVOLVED

When a movement is underway, people continue to get involved in aspects of the movement in growing numbers and growing levels of commitment to the common cause. For a church planting movement, *the common cause is to fill the land with churches that preach the Gospel!* This means that more people will need to be involved in all the aspects of starting new churches. More people will become fully committed church planters. More people will help with special skills like music, evangelism, research, and in any other way that will be a help to plant churches. More people will be part of the sending team by regularly praying for church planters and their ministry.

EXAMPLE:

In Romania, the beginning signs of a **prayer movement** are evident. From Alba Iulia, Romania, a group of three women began praying for each other and their husbands. They progressed to pray for their churches, their region, for the nation and for new churches to be planted. This fellowship grew to over 30 groups with approximately 150 women involved in prayer. It spread to Bucharest where a prayer brochure for Romania was produced and used all over the nation and outside of the country. In Sibiu, two churches which are not of the same denomination pray together. In Cluj, there is a monthly women's prayer gathering open to all churches. Often, unconverted women attend, and some even become believers through this fellowship.

The invisible, empowering relationship that we have with God through prayer is the intimate link with Him who gives birth to and drives on a movement. That expression of a movement of His Spirit is signaled as multiplying groups of believers come together to meet with Him in prayer. First a few, then more and more gather for prayer, until the movement of His Spirit sweeps across a nation.

What signifies a movement is the reason *why* it attracts more people. People are convinced and committed to the common cause, and pass on their conviction and commitment to others. People are committed to a church planting movement because they are convinced this is God at work.

EXAMPLE:

The Deeper Life movement in Nigeria grew out of a Bible study in the home of William Kmuye, then a university professor. It has grown to more than three thousand congregations from that one Bible study. People sensed that God's presence was among them through the serious study of His word. Although growing rapidly, the Deeper Life Movement is committed to biblical practices, sound doctrine and quality leadership training through cell group ministry.

What kind of ministry are people flocking to get involved with in your region?

IV. SIGN 4: NEW FORMS

When a movement is underway, not only professionals and ordained leaders serve in ministry, but ordinary believers discover that God wants to use them too. A movement gets people involved at every level. Leaders emerge with a passion for ministry. People become active in serving God in all sorts of ways that they may have formerly thought only professional or well-established Christians could do. For example, not only seminary-trained leaders may preach and teach, but also believers in the church whom God has gifted for this ministry.

EXAMPLE:

Someone asked a church planting pastor of the Assembly of God in Brazil where he attended seminary. Since very few of the Assembly of God leaders have ever attended any formal theological education he looked at the person who asked him with surprise that he would even ask. His answer was, "Why, the seminary of the street!" Such a great church planting movement needs leaders and their leaders are trained through practical ministry experience.

What happens next? As more people start working in the ministry of the Gospel they will discover more successful, interesting, or unique styles of ministry that help others get involved also. For example, in a church planting movement a certain song may become popular because of how it touches the hearts of those who hear and sing it, or because of how it turns people to the Lord. Other trends that may appear in a church planting movement include evangelism methods that are successful, cell group meetings, and even preaching styles.

EXAMPLES:

The Lord's Army, a cell group movement which preached the Gospel from the Romanian Orthodox church, experienced great growth from the 1930's to the 1950's. While most music in the evangelical churches was imported and translated (often badly), the Lord's Army movement produced praises to God in music born on Romanian soil coming from the Romanian soul. Evangelical believers in Romania from other churches use this music to praise the Lord today.

The "hippies" from Calvary Chapel started making music, founding Maranatha Music and producing songs that have been translated all over the world. Two of those songs are *Seek Ye First* and *As the Deer*.

The Ichthus cell group church planting movement out of England has made the *March for Jesus* a world event. The song *Shine Jesus Shine* also comes from this movement.

V. SIGN 5: A MOVEMENT IS SPONTANEOUS

When a massive movement is underway, no one person or organization can control it. It simply gets too big for any one person to organize it. However, leaders in a movement can get together and influence the direction of a movement. It is completely unrealistic to think that separate denominational and independent churches will join together to become one denomination for the sake of a church planting movement. The differences are too real for them to be the same entity. But they can unite together as separate organizations toward the common cause of advancing the Gospel through church planting! That happens in a saturation church planting movement.

It is very possible for leaders from different denominations to get together and plan to fill their nation with Bible preaching churches, whether Pentecostal or Baptist (and others too)! Therefore, a movement cannot by nature be organized, but people and structures in a movement can be directed toward the cause of church planting.

EXAMPLE:

In a meeting that brought major denominational leaders together to discuss advancing the Gospel in Brazil, the president of the Assemblies of God, Jose Wellington read Psalm 133, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to live together in unity!" This meeting started the process which led to the Brazilian AD 2000 delegation and interdenominational good will.

A spiritual movement is always unpredictable. It is the very nature of the dynamism that is inherent in a movement. Yet such participation in the movements of God is oft times uncertain. We so often are operating and advancing within chaos, simply trying to manage that which we can and leaving the rest to God's sovereign care. Never knowing if there will be enough money, never certain that God will open the doors we envision or expect Him to open, never certain if there will be other people to join us, never certain if our strategies are 100 percent implicated in His movement, we advance in faith and confidence in His loving kindness.

A good test to see if what is happening is a movement of God or a human program is to ask, "Can a person control this?" Humans have great limitations. A movement of God must exceed and surpass human abilities and expectations. Can a person make another's heart receptive? Can a person convict another of sin? These are things the Spirit of God does. It is highly unlikely that what the human mind programs and controls is a movement of God. Get involved in ministry that will only succeed if God is in it. Avoid what will succeed if you just do the right things.

VI. SIGN 6: A MOVEMENT MOBILIZES PEOPLE AND STRUCTURES

Rapid growth requires new structures, more leaders and new ways of communicating. As a church planting movement gains momentum and new forms for ministry emerge, Christians will also begin to be mobilized at all levels to be involved in planting churches. Existing structures like local churches, denominational leadership, Christian organizations, and even schools will begin to find ways to participate in and help the church planting task. Sometimes new structures are formed for helping existing ones cooperate toward a church planting movement. Literature and communication media need to emerge to take the movement farther. The following things may happen when people and structures mobilize:

When existing leaders such as pastors, denominational officials and other key Christians see that the church planting movement is clearly the will of God, they will encourage the structures they lead to help.

EXAMPLE:

The Discipling a Whole Nation (DAWN) ministry brought together church leaders in the Philippines in 1973 for prayer and planning. The denominations each set their own church planting goals and set a target of planting 50,000 new churches by the year 2003. They are on target today as God has honored both their faith and unity!

When previously inactive Christians see that the church planting movement is of God, they will often begin to join in by prayer, financial giving, and even going and working! Training will take place to help people participate in a concrete manner, and some of that training may find its way into Bible schools and seminaries as well.

EXAMPLE:

The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting joins local churches with mission agencies to serve as a united unit in the former communist countries. *The Alliance* has helped with training church planters. By developing facilitation teams in the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe, they have reached out to national churches and helped them to train their own church planters. *The Alliance* has also produced training materials including this manual.

Literature and other communication media will inform, instruct, and inspire people *en masse* concerning the main ideas and themes of the movement. This is an essential element to help different groups in a movement grow together in the same direction. Media, especially literature, also legitimizes. Literature and media can help people to take the movement that produces them seriously. They also help a movement to spread beyond our imagination. Literature and media also reach geographically where the leaders and participants in a movement never could. The New Testament epistles are an excellent example of literature that grew out of a church planting movement. They are still informing, instructing and inspiring church planting movements today! Do you think first century Christians imagined Paul's letters instructing and inspiring believers in South America almost two thousand years later?

CONCLUSION

How do you find out where Jesus is actively working? He will always be found dwelling in His people. The first place to look to determine how God is at work is to check where He lives! How is God working in your region? Some of the signs of a movement may be evident in your region.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What can you do now to help lay the groundwork for a church planting movement in your region?
- How is God working at this time in the place you will serve Him for church planting? How can you stir the longing in people's hearts for God to work?
- Of the kinds of leaders in a movement, what kind of leader are you?
- What kind of literature is needed to accelerate a church planting movement?
- How would it be possible to have a consultation or congress toward a church planting movement in your region or country?

ACTION PLAN

- Find a way to spread vision for saturation church planting. Either preach it, write it, or tell it to someone—but do something concrete to pass this vision to people somehow.
- Join in fellowship with others who have the same vision. Find and meet regularly with a group of people committed to saturation church planting.
- Develop some form of communication to spread the vision beyond your personal contact. Try to produce a newsletter, book, video, radio program or something that will communicate the vision when you are absent.
- Find other groups or organizations that will be partners with you toward a saturation church planting movement.

SOURCES

Miller, Basil. *John Wesley*. Minneapolis: Dimension Books, 1943.



Shepherding Within a Movement

MOVEMENT ISSUES

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to give some practical insight into the task of shepherding new churches in the context of a church planting movement.

☞ Main Points

- Church planting movements are normally accompanied by several challenges.
- The Bible provides case studies in which we can find answers to the challenges that are often faced in church planting movements.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know the common issues that arise when the Church spreads quickly.
- Understand how the first leaders of the Church responded to these issues.
- Be equipped to face the challenges that are common in church planting movements.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

It will be helpful to have available a map of the Mediterranean world during the New Testament times as you teach the lesson. Also, careful review of SCP Vision lesson 8 “The First Advance” (Manual Three) will help you be better prepared to teach this lesson.

INTRODUCTION

All over the world where church planting movements are underway, these movements face challenges concerning leadership, doctrine, finances, ongoing evangelism, etc. Where do we find the answers to these difficulties? We may not traditionally think of the Bible as a church planting textbook, but since it teaches divine truth and since much of it was written in response to the expanding church, it is the best place in the world to learn about church planting movements.

I. LEADERSHIP IN NEWLY PLANTED CHURCHES

One of the most common issues in church planting movements is that of leadership. When the Gospel advances powerfully and churches are planted rapidly, there is often a period of time when adequate leadership is difficult to find. With the passing of time, Paul and his co-workers returned to newly planted churches to encourage them (Ac 14:21-22; 20:2), to observe their progress (Ac 15:36), to appoint elders (Ac 14:23) and to strengthen them (Ac 16:5). Prayer and fasting were part of the selection process for choosing leadership.

While churches are developing, they need experienced leadership. Mature indigenous leadership is the best arrangement, and all of the church planting team’s effort must go toward the development of this indigenous leadership. However, rather than force men into leadership prematurely, the apostles allowed churches to exist without elders until they appointed them on the second visit. Sometimes leadership came from outside for a time. Paul sent Silas and Timothy to lead the ministry in Berea (Ac 17:14). He left Priscilla and Aquila in Cenchrea/Corinth (Ac 18:19). Toward the end of his life, Paul

most likely left Timothy to oversee Ephesus and Titus to be responsible for Crete (Tit 1:5). The goal of outside help is to train and release new leadership.

II. CORRESPONDING WITH NEW CHURCHES

Paul's missionary ministry resulted in clusters of churches in four specific provinces—Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia (see SCP Vision lesson 8 “The First Advance” in Manual Three). From the Epistles written to the churches and leaders in these provinces, we can discover how to apply biblical principles for problems new churches face. These letters were written to clarify theology, encourage the believers, instruct concerning church problems and to train leaders.

A. Instructions to the Galatians

Paul wrote the book of Galatians to some of the very first churches he planted (Antioch in Pisidia, Lystra, Iconium, and Derbe) in order to stamp out the false teaching of the Judaizers who taught that obedience to the Mosaic Law was a necessary part of salvation. False teaching is a common weapon of the enemy, and new churches can be most susceptible to it. Paul countered this teaching by re-explaining the role of faith in the Gospel.

B. Instructions to the Macedonian Churches

1. *Instructions to the Philippian Believers*

Paul wrote Philippians from prison in Rome. Philippians is all about joy. What a testimony that Paul was joyful even in prison! It is no wonder that Paul is so joyful as he reveals great understanding into the character of Christ in one of the greatest Christological passages in the Bible (2:5-11). Indeed for Paul, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (1:21).

2. *Instructions to the Church at Thessalonica*

Paul wrote two letters to the believers at Thessalonica. According to 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10, these believers had an impact on their province (Macedonia), the neighboring region (Achaia) and the world. The dominant theme of Paul's writing concerns the second coming of Christ.

C. Instructions to Corinth in Achaia

The church in Corinth was indeed weak and spiritually needy. We learn in Paul's epistles to them that the church was plagued with divisions, jealousies, misuse of spiritual gifts and the Lord's Supper and that they did not know how to respond to immorality. However, Paul did not give up on this troubled church as many church planters would be tempted to do. He even tells them that the answers to their problems are in their midst (1Co 1:4-9).

D. Instructions to the Churches in the Province of Asia

1. *Instructions to the Church in Ephesus*

Ephesus was the dominant city of the province of Asia, where Paul stayed and worked for three years. Many theologians believe that the letter to the Ephesians was intended not just for the Ephesians but also for the daughter churches which resulted from the advance of the Gospel in the province of Asia (Acts 19:9-10). The teaching in this letter has much to do with church planting movements. The statements concerning the purpose of the Church (chapters 2-3) make it clear that God intends for Gentiles (nations) to understand the Gospel through the presence of the Church.

2. *Instructions to the Church in Colosse*

Paul's letter to the Colossians is addressed to a church that he did not plant, in a city he had never visited. The church in Colosse was a part of the movement which started in Ephesus and spread to all of the province of Asia (Ac 19:9-10). The Colossian church was planted by Epaphras (Col 1:7), who had been trained by Paul and was sent out from there to accompany Paul in missionary work in other places (Col 4:11-13; Phm verse 23).

3. *Instructions to Timothy*

After Paul left Ephesus, Timothy became Paul's emissary and a leader in the Ephesian church. Having told Timothy to "stay in Ephesus" (1Ti 1:3), Paul wrote two letters to his "son in the faith" while Timothy supervised the churches in Asia from Ephesus. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul taught actions and precautions necessary to keep a church planting movement healthy. These include watching over doctrine (1Ti 1:3-5), public worship and prayer, the qualifications for leadership, warnings about financial gain, maintaining spiritual integrity, and practical advice on how to deal with people and matters of social action.

From his dungeon, facing his last days on earth, Paul wrote his second letter to Timothy. Here Paul uses the family as the model for relationships between leaders in a saturation church planting setting. Most of the admonishments are personal, as a father to a son whom he loves dearly (2Ti 1:2; 2:1). Paul told Timothy to set an example of how to treat other believers in the church (1Ti 5:1-2). He simply said to treat each other like family! Women are sisters or mothers and men are fathers or brothers. A family atmosphere guarantees that people are loved and accepted. Everyone can feel like they belong.

4. *Instructions to Philemon*

Paul wrote a sensitive letter to his friend Philemon, a member of the church in Colosse. A difficult social issue, that of slavery, had arisen when a runaway slave, Onesimus, became a believer. Paul encouraged Philemon in Christian love to accept Onesimus back as a brother in Christ.

When he treated this problem, Paul noted that he had the authority to tell Philemon to change his position. However, rather than force Philemon to change, Paul wanted to persuade him to take a new position toward his slave. In the same way, when Paul taught in the school of Tyrannus, Scripture says that "he reasoned" or "he discussed" (Ac 19:9). Although it may be more difficult, it is more effective to gently help people change their convictions rather than just tell them what to do. A movement always goes further when people advance the Gospel from their convictions rather than only blindly obeying commands.

On the basis of their relationship as friends and brothers in Christ, rather than from a position of authority, Paul was able to encourage Philemon to change his conviction and accept Onesimus as a brother. This same principle can be used in solving sensitive social issues in the church today. What are some issues facing you in your church, and what guidelines from this example can you apply to resolve them?

5. *John's Vision on the Island of Patmos*

Revelation was given to the Apostle John for the churches of Asia while John was in exile on the Island of Patmos. The seven churches (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea) represent the second generation after the church planting movement.

The Lord Jesus Himself addressed the churches to tell them what really matters to Him. By paying close attention to Jesus' own evaluation of the churches, we can work to plant churches that please Him. Church planters must teach their congregations the qualities that Jesus praises in order to avoid the criticisms with which Jesus reproves the seven churches. For a biblical ecclesiology, or view of the church, chapters 2-3 of Revelation are essential.

The apocalyptic vision of John recorded in Revelation 4-22 is a unique part of the New Testament that in many ways is difficult to interpret. But the message of the vision has one reoccurring theme about which there can be no doubt—**Jesus will build His church!** "All nations will come and worship" (15:4). This should be great comfort to believers in all circumstances.

E. **The Letter to the Romans**

Although Rome was not part of any of the regions that Paul evangelized during his missionary journeys, a strong church developed there as a result of others' labors. Paul's letter to the Romans

is one of the most valuable parts of Scripture. In great detail, Paul explained the meaning of the Gospel about which he was “not ashamed” (Ro 1:16). Paul knew the power of Gospel, for it had transformed his life, as well as the lives of thousands of others. Why is it that we do not see God working in powerful ways today? Perhaps part of the answer has to do with the fact that we fail to fully understand and release the Gospel in ministry.

Example:

The powerful book of Romans has been the spark that has ignited several spiritual movements. In the 16th century a young German Catholic monk and seminary professor named Martin Luther had a desire to be close to God. The problem, however, was that he did not know how and it seemed that neither did the other religious leaders of the day. Luther found the answer he was looking for in 1515 while lecturing on Paul’s letter to the Romans. When he came to chapter 1, verse 17 he rediscovered the biblical doctrine of ‘justification by faith.’ Luther went on to preach the Gospel of salvation as a free gift apart from good works. As the Gospel was preached, countless lives were eternally changed and Europe was transformed.

Example

In 1735 a young Anglican priest named John left England to serve a three-year missionary term among Native Americans in the US, where he encountered many difficulties. Upon returning to London in great discouragement, he went to a meeting on Aldersgate where a group of believers was reading Martin Luther’s introduction to his commentary on Romans. Then and there, on May 24, 1738, John Wesley heard the Gospel for perhaps the first time. Wesley went on to lead one of the greatest revivals the world has ever seen.

III. GUARDING AGAINST HERESY

As we have already seen, doctrinal issues are some of the problems a church planting movement will usually face (1Ti 1:3-5). It is possible to plant many churches, but if they are not strong in biblical teaching, serious problems may arise. Extremes may go from legalism to mysticism. All such teachings must be regulated by Scripture.

A. A Portrait of Christ

A portrait is an accurate picture of someone. A caricature, like those in newspaper and magazine cartoons, twists the accurate image to emphasize one or two aspects of the person’s image. Training leaders to adhere to good, solid Bible teaching will help the Church be an accurate portrait of Christ. Often, because of legalism or experiences, the accurate portrait of the Lord becomes twisted into a caricature. This can happen when a denomination or group of churches strongly urges members to follow only one, or a few parts of Scripture, or emphasize experiences. Remember:

1. *Experience should be interpreted by Scripture and not vice-versa. Scripture is the basis for teaching and training (2Ti 3:16-17).*
2. *Avoid extreme legalism or mysticism (Col 2:18-23). Instead, make Jesus Christ the center of everything (Col 1:27-29; 2:2-3,6-9; 3:4,15-16).*
3. *Avoid heresy which can destroy the church.*

B. True Christianity Requires Love Among Christians As Well As Correct Doctrine

According to church tradition, the Apostle John wrote First, Second and Third John while in Ephesus. John speaks strongly against those who distort the doctrine of Christ (1Jn 2:22) and who do not have relationships that are marked by Christian love (1Jn 2:9).

People who mixed Christianity with popular philosophies of the day distorted correct doctrine (1Jn 4:1-3). People like Diotrefes (3Jn 9) were leaders in the church who caused dissension and division, wanted to be the most important, and did not practice Christian love in their relationships.

The old apostle affirmed that Christ-centered faith and relationships of Christian love are the marks of a movement that practiced true Christianity (1Jn 5:1-2).

IV. RESOURCING

One of the issues in an SCP movement involves the mobilization of resources. Resources include money, equipment, literature, skills, etc. When people lack the resources to do what God has called them to do, they cannot implement the SCP vision. Two principles guide resources in church planting movements.

A. The Principle of Self-Support

Scripture teaches that local giving was part of the church planting movement in the first century. Paul expected churches to support their leaders financially (1Ti 5:17, 1Co 9:3-12). Ministry resources, including money, can be drawn from outside sources in order to get new works started. However, the fulfillment of the Great Commission in a region should be done primarily with the resources and initiative of the believers of that region. At the heart of the issue of resources is the fundamental truth that God's own people provide the primary means for the work of the Gospel. Their own tithes and offerings should be used to support their work.

As Jesus said, "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*" (Mt 6:21). As a person gives *according to one's means*, the person becomes committed in their heart to what they are giving to. If people do not give sacrificially to local ministry, then the work has no heart-felt following. Something very powerful happens when people decide that a ministry or program is *theirs* and that its success or failure depends on God's work through them alone.

B. The Principle of Sharing

The collection from Galatia, Asia, Macedonia and Achaia for the needy believers in Jerusalem (1Co 16:1-2; 2Co 8,9) indicates that churches were expected not only to support the local ministry, but also to give to others in need. While it is common today for "mother churches" to provide for the financial needs of "daughter churches", we see that the opposite took place when Paul collected money for the Jerusalem church. Note also that this collection did not violate the principle of self-support (2Co 8:13-15).

Paul normally supported himself financially in order not to be a burden on others (Ac 18:2,3; 1Co 4:12). He did, however, receive help from the Philippian believers (Php 4:15-20). It is interesting to note that the often repeated phrase "*my God shall supply all your needs...*" is found in the context of Paul congratulating the Philippians for their giving to church planting ministry.

Financial giving is a basic discipline of the Christian life that enables churches to minister, reach out, and to plant more churches. Believers were never to be greedy (1Ti 6:3-10), and it is "more blessed to give than to receive" (see Acts 20:32-35). In fact, most of the giving in the New Testament was done out of poverty, or at least beyond one's means. Wealthy people also have an important role in a church planting movement. However, those who are well off must understand that 1 Timothy 6:17-19 includes six instructions for rich people who turn to Christ: not to be arrogant, not to put their hope in wealth, to hope in God alone, to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. Have you talked to the wealthier people in your church about the six commands directed toward them?

V. EVANGELISTIC AND CHURCH PLANTING STRATEGIES

How can the evangelistic fervor that ignites church planting movements be sustained? This is another issue that church planting leaders face.

A. Address People's Common Identity and Hopes (Acts 2:14-40)

The right words given at the right time move people. Paul asked the church in Ephesus to pray that he would use the right words in his preaching of the Gospel (Eph 6:19). In every culture, among

every people, Jesus is the answer. Whatever the mysteries and deep questions of an ethnic people may be, there is a key message which, when spoken at the right time, will stir many to make life decisions for Jesus Christ.

On the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, the Apostle Peter spoke to the people's common identity and hopes (Ac 2:14). At that time, these people were groaning with expectation for a special time when God would visit the conquered and scattered people of Israel. Peter told of the new time when the Spirit of God would no longer speak only through an elite prophetic community, but through sons and daughters, old and young men and even bondservants! (Ac 2:17-21). Later, Stephen, knowing how the Jews treasured their history, explained how they could find their collective purpose in Jesus' coming (Ac 7). Paul responded to the Greeks' passion for new and mysterious truth when he told the Athenians that they can now know the mystery of the *unknown* God (Ac 17:22-33).

Saturation church planting finds its due place in a nation when church planters have learned to speak to people's identity and to address their hopes. When the Gospel is explained in the context of a nation's own historical and cultural meaning, it has its greatest attractiveness and power. Another notable way to apply this principle is when the 'call to action' is formulated. If the 'call to action' can address the common identity and hopes of people, then it is likely to motivate them.

B. Use Special Events and Times

Big events and celebrations in a nation, region, city, or village can economize effort and time for church planters. The Church was born at the time of a major celebration when thousands of Jews, proselytes and God-fearers came to Jerusalem from all over the world (Ac 2). After their time in Jerusalem, these pilgrims took their new faith back to their homelands. This could explain how the church in Rome was well established before any of the apostles arrived there.

When Paul last returned to Jerusalem, he desired to arrive for Pentecost (Ac 20:16), perhaps because Jews from all over the world would be present. When Jews from Asia recognized him, they accused Paul and gave him an occasion to declare his personal testimony to the international multitude gathered at the temple (Ac 21:27ff). Paul didn't plan it this way, but he took advantage of the situation to advance the Gospel.

Special events like the World Cup, national celebrations and holidays that already attract multitudes, and especially international crowds, are excellent opportunities to reach out. Churches can be planted more efficiently when receptive people already come to a mass event, as opposed to church planters expending much effort to find and attract people or organizing a huge and costly crusade. On a smaller scale, birthdays, name day parties, Christian weddings or funerals can be opportunities for outreach. With appropriate follow up, it can help both church planting and church growth.

C. Evangelize People in Authority

People in authority must be included in any evangelistic outreach. Jesus gave the Apostle Paul his evangelistic strategy when He said, "He is a chosen instrument of mine to bear my name before Gentiles and kings" (Ac 9:15). Paul employed this strategy when he witnessed to the Roman Proconsul of Cyprus, Sergius Paulus (Ac 13:7), as well as to Felix, the corrupt governor of Judea, and his successor, Porcius Festus (Ac 24), to Herod Agrippa (Ac 25, 26), and to Publius, the leading man of Malta (Ac 28:7-10). Though the details are not recorded, we can be sure that Paul witnessed to the Roman Caesar, Nero, as well (Ac 27:24). In going to Rome and appealing to Caesar, Paul's mission changed from a regional focus to one of international impact (Ac 19:21, Ro 1:15).

Before national churches can witness to national leaders, these churches should be praying publicly for them (1Ti 2:1-2). This will result in a society that allows Christians to live a "peaceful and quiet life with all godliness and dignity." Furthermore, as people in authority learn of the Gospel by the clear witness of national believers, these government leaders, though unrepentant, will yet understand how Christians affect their society. And if national leaders have good intentions for their administration of a country, they will sympathize with and respect the values that Christians practice.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are some of the issues that church planting movements face? How does the Bible help us respond to these issues?
- What heretical teachings threaten the Church in your region? What parts of Scripture address these issues?
- What are some of the hopes and dreams of the people you are serving?
- Do you have a regional plan to plant churches in surrounding cities?

ACTION PLAN

List three major events in your culture and tell how you can use them as part of a church planting strategy.

THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH
12
LESSON

Dynamics of the Emerging Church

WHEN DOES IT BECOME A CHURCH?

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain the dynamics of the transition as a group of believers becomes a church.

☞ Main Points

- A group should steadily become a church, rather than making the transition immediately and sometimes prematurely.
- Individual ministry and cell groups should remain a vital part of the new church.
- A new church is the *beginning* of the fulfillment of the Great Commission—not the end.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand the different definitions of a church.
- Be committed to the ongoing use of cell groups.
- Be committed to continued multiplication of the church.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

It would be helpful to refer in this manual to Stewardship lesson 2, "Financial Stewardship", Section III. "Local Church Finances." This section has some relevant ideas about self-supporting churches and complements the discussion in this lesson regarding financial viability.

INTRODUCTION

Just like the birth of an individual, one of the most exciting moments in the life of a church is when it is officially "born." The formal birth of a church is usually not a haphazard event. As in biological life it is a dynamic process in which certain things normally happen before and afterward. In this lesson we will explore this process.

I. WHEN IS A CHURCH A CHURCH?

With God's blessing, the church planter should be able to develop a number of cell groups in his target area. At some point there will be enough believers to begin the process of organizing them into a local church. There are a number of important issues to consider at that time.

A. Who Decides When a Church is a Church?

The first issue concerns who has the right to call the new work a "local church." There are at least three major sources of opinion about what really constitutes a church.

1. *Legal Requirements*

The government of each country probably has specific laws concerning what kind of group can receive the legal status of a church. Biblically there does not appear to be any reason why a church would need to be registered with the government in order to be a church. However, it is often necessary or helpful to officially register as a church in order to avoid unnecessary

legal hassles. Government requirements for registering as a church vary from country to country, as do the benefits and disadvantages of registering. This issue will need to be decided on a case-by-case basis in each area, normally with the counsel of other experienced church leaders.

2. *Denominational Requirements*

If the new church plant is being developed under the auspices of a denomination, or if it would like to affiliate with an established denomination, the denomination will normally have their own guidelines as to what constitutes a church. They may include minimum membership requirements, church polity, financial status, doctrine, or other considerations. Again, these vary so widely that the church planter will have to work through them in his particular situation.

3. *Biblical Requirements*

The focus of this lesson is on the biblical understanding of a church rather than the denominational or legal one. These various concepts of the church can be viewed as a progression:

Table 12.1 Church Criteria

<i>If the church meets these criteria:</i>	<i>It is a church in the eyes of:</i>
<i>Biblical</i>	<i>God</i>
<i>Biblical + Denominational</i>	<i>God & the Denomination</i>
<i>Biblical + Denominational + Legal</i>	<i>God & the Denomination & the Government</i>

Each church planter will have to decide which of these levels of recognition is important for the new work in his particular situation. Of the three concepts, however, the biblical one is the most foundational and important. Any group that does not meet the biblical definition of a church is a cult in the eyes of the Lord—regardless of whether or not the denomination or the government recognizes it. Therefore the biblical criteria for a church are vital to understand.

B. Definition of a Local Church

Church lesson 4 “Defining The Local Church” (Manual One) discussed the definition of the Church in detail. Please refer to that lesson for a more in-depth description. You will also want to refer to the definition of the church that you developed in that lesson. Since definitions will vary substantially, this lesson will use a basic definition for discussion during the lesson time. You should work through this lesson again with your own definition.

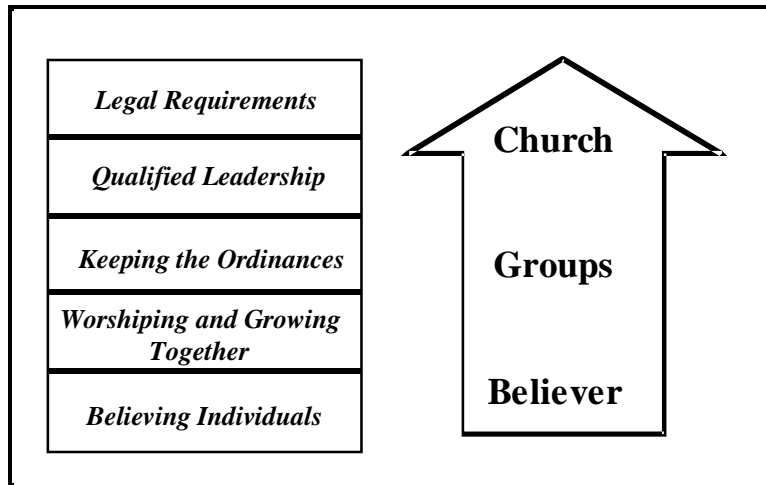
A local church is often defined as *an organized body of those who have professed belief in Jesus Christ, have been baptized, and who meet together on a regular basis for fellowship, worship, instruction in the Word and the practice of the ordinances.*

How exactly a church is organized and who leads the body may vary greatly from one group to another.

C. Distinguishing a Group from a Church

Opinions vary widely as to when a group is organized enough to meet the above definition and legitimately be considered a church. Every church plant moves through the stages in Figure 12.2, moving from individuals, to groups, to a local church.

Figure 12.2 From Individuals to Church



There can be several different types of groups involved in a new church plant, including cell groups and small groups. Cell groups provide growth for a new church through ongoing evangelism, which is not always the case with small groups. Some groups provide a specific ministry focus, such as basic discipleship, youth or family. Although thought and prayer should be given towards using cell groups and/or small groups in a church planting ministry, the organization of the groups is not as important as the people in them. The church is people—groups simply provide structure and an environment in which ministry can happen in and through those people.

If we use the basic definition of a church from section B, we can describe in more detail at what point in the process a group becomes a church. In order to truly be a church, a congregation should meet each of the following requirements:

1. *Be Composed of Believers by Faith in Christ*

The local church must be composed of those who have placed their faith and trust in Christ. Only those who are born again are members of the universal Church, and therefore should be considered members of the local church. A group of unsaved people, no matter how great the number, is not a church. In reality, we can never be completely sure of the salvation of each member, but this should be our goal. Scripture does not specify a minimum number of members.

2. *Meet Together Regularly for Fellowship, Worship, and Teaching*

The early church met together daily, but as time progressed we see them specifically setting Sunday aside in honor of the Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week. There seems to be some room for discretion in light of Paul's comments in Romans 14:5-6. The focus of their meeting was the ministry of the Word and worship that centered on the sacrifice of Christ for their redemption.

There is no reason why a building is necessary in order to be considered a church. The early church met in the Jewish temple courtyard, in the synagogues, and in homes. During the Roman persecution they also met in caves or any other concealed place available. The first church buildings were not built until several centuries after Pentecost. Today buildings are often used, but certainly are not necessary.

3. *Practice the Ordinances*

There are two ordinances—baptism and the Lord's Supper—that all churches agree need to be performed. However, there is considerable variation between the forms they use. Baptism is practiced in various ways, and the frequency of the Lord's Supper varies. Denominational practices often influence these forms, but the functions must be done by the church. In order

to be considered a local church, there should be a workable system in place to administer these ordinances.

4. *Have Qualified Leadership*

The church needs to have enough qualified people to fulfill whatever leadership roles the church deems necessary to be a church. If they believe in pastoral rule, they need to have at least one qualified pastor. If they believe in a plurality of elders, they must have at least two. If they consider deacons necessary, then there must be members qualified to serve. Furthermore, these offices need to be elected or appointed in an organized manor that fulfills the form of government chosen by the church.

5. *Be Financially Viable*

The church is required to support the leaders who give themselves to full-time ministry to the congregation (1 Tim. 5:17-18). The early church also financially helped widows and the poor in the congregation. In addition, they sent money to other churches in need, and helped support missionary church planters. A group that is not supporting itself is not able to fulfill these local church functions. Because of this, some would question whether a group that does not support itself can be considered a church.

Can a group that is not supporting itself be considered a church?

This requirement is possible, even for a very poor group. If every member gives about ten percent of his income, it would take ten families to support one leader. If a lay leader does not need a full salary, it would require even fewer members to support him.

It is important to understand that "income" is not only cash, but also all the non-cash resources that a person has. If someone does not receive a regular cash salary but has a field of potatoes, a percentage of those potatoes should be given to the church or sold for cash in order to help support the church. Committed members of a local church who are exercising their biblical responsibility to give should be able to support not only their own leaders and ministry, but outreach as well.

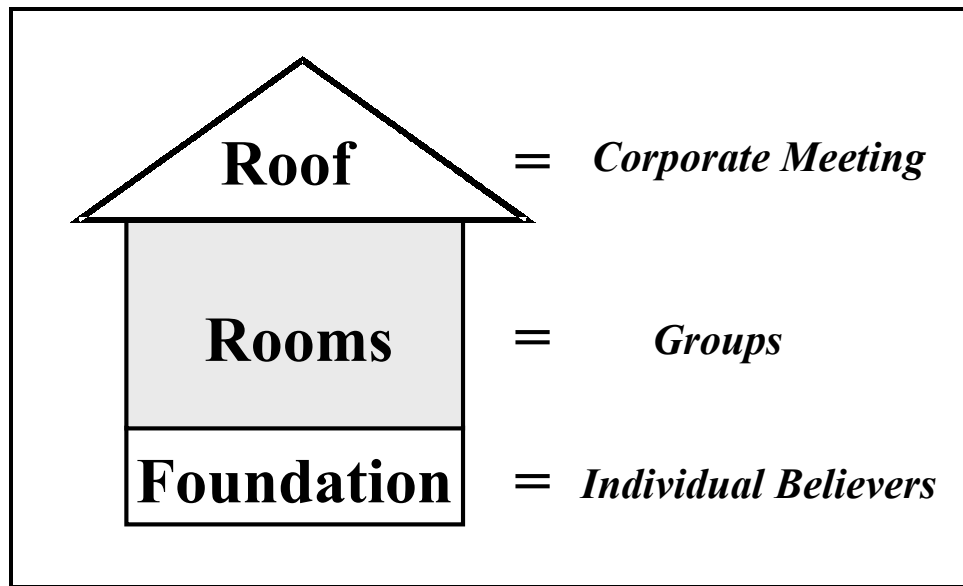
II. ORGANIZING AS A CHURCH

The process of organizing a church is exactly that—a process. All too often, church planters prematurely make the transition from being a group to being a church. There are two major reasons why this is a mistake. First, every group of believers should be learning to fulfill as many church functions as possible from the inception of the group. The members of the group should grow steadily into these roles as they mature spiritually and increase numerically. Second, the groups should never cease to meet as groups when they become a church. The cell groups are vital, and should continue. The corporate church meetings are held *in addition to* the cell groups—not *instead of* them.

A. Component Parts of a Healthy Local Church

The planting of a new local church in many ways resembles the construction of a house (remembering that the church is *not* a building). A house is composed of several parts, which are normally built in a particular order. First, the foundation is laid, then the rooms are built, and then the roof is added. The individual members, groups, and corporate meetings of the church are added in a similar fashion.

Figure 12.3 Building the Lord's House



1. *Individuals—The Foundation*

The image of a foundation is often used in the New Testament, but the identity of the foundation changes according to the truth being illustrated. In different passages, the foundation is Jesus Christ (1Co 3:11), the apostles and prophets (Eph 2:20), the doctrine of repentance (Heb 6:1), and the ministry of the Apostle Paul at the Corinthian church (1Co 3:10). Figure 12.3 uses the foundation in this latter sense. The basic “building blocks” of a local church are the individual believers. Winning individuals to the Lord is the first step in starting a local church. Even if small groups exist, but there are no believers in them, there is not yet a foundation for the church. We can think of the individual believers as the bricks of the foundation. This foundation, however, grows larger and stronger as more “bricks” (believers) are added.

2. *Groups—The Rooms*

Cell groups or small groups are equivalent to the rooms in the house. These rooms are where the activity of the church takes place. The groups are a vital part of the life of the church, just as organic cells are the vital structure of the living body. They are the second stage in the formation of the new local church. A normal house has various rooms, each serving a different purpose. A growing church should also have an assortment of cell groups or small groups, meeting various needs such as evangelism, discipleship, and training. As the foundation (believers) increases, more rooms are added as needed.

3. *Corporate Assembly—The Roof*

There are many bricks in the foundation of a house, and a number of rooms, but only one roof. It covers, protects, and holds together the whole house. The corporate meetings of the local church are like this. They are the culmination of the work. When the roof (corporate meeting) is added, all the normal activities of the church can take place freely. There is a sense of unity and fulfillment.

B. Adding the “Roof”

There are some unique situations or cultures in which the roof is constructed before the rooms of the house. A minimum number of poles or other supports temporarily hold the roof until the rooms can be added. Some local churches are even started this way. They jump from having a few believers to “holding services” on a particular Sunday when the church, by their standards, is officially born. This can be done, but is rarely the most effective way to work. Worse yet, when such

a system is used, the church often fails to add the rooms (cell groups), with the result that the church never reaches its potential.

Using the house analogy, it is easy to see that the “rooms” (groups) should be formed first, and the “roof” (corporate meetings) should be added as a means to draw all the groups together on a regular basis. This allows the advantages of both the cell groups and the large meetings. A new church that builds in this order will be stronger and more effective.

Before a church begins regular corporate worship, consider the following:

- Is there a strong foundation consisting of several multiplying cell groups with a total of about 30-40 people attending?
- Is there a core of people trained as evangelists and disciplers?
- Are ministry leaders trained and ready to take on new responsibilities?
- Are the leaders and church planter(s) united about the philosophy of ministry for the church?

C. Keeping the Foundation and Rooms

No reasonable person ever builds a house, and having completed the roof, knocks down the foundation and walls. And yet a similar bizarre behavior often happens with new churches. Having assembled enough believers to hold a joint service, they stop meeting as cells, and neglect evangelism and individual discipleship. In essence, they destroy the “rooms” (groups) and allow the “foundation” (believers) to crumble.

Cell groups are not a “temporary plan” until the church is formed. *They are the life of the church!*

The importance of personal evangelism, individual discipleship, and cell groups in the *ongoing* life of the church cannot be stressed enough! They are not a “temporary plan” until the church is formed. *They are the life of the church!* They are necessary for the continued growth and maturity of the new church. The church should meet together as a large group *in addition to* individual growth and small group meetings—the large meeting should never *replace* them.

CONCLUSION

If a group of believers meets the biblical criteria for a local church, it is a church in the eyes of God. A church is always a group of people that believe in Christ, but a group of believers is not necessarily a church. Some of the more common distinctions between groups and churches are in the areas of the ordinances (Lord’s Supper and baptism), types of leadership, and financial self-support.

Organizing a new local church does not mean finding a location to buy or rent and starting Sunday morning worship services. Individuals form the foundation of the church, and a new church is started only when they gather together corporately to fulfill all the functions of a church. Groups should be used before and after the birth of a new church to provide a structure for the ministry activity that will happen in any local church.

In order for a church planting movement to happen in any given town, region or country, the local church must have reproduction as a goal. In the same way that a “foundation”, “rooms” and “roof” were built (in that order) to form a new church, this church should also plan and prepare to “build” another new church using this same process. Where are you preparing the next “foundation”?

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Describe the process in which one or more groups becomes a church.
- What are some indications that a group is ready to begin on-going corporate worship?
- Assuming that a new church has been starting using cell groups, describe the role of cells in the life of that new church.

THE CHURCH
13
LESSON

Characteristics of Growing Churches

GET NEW PEOPLE, KEEP THEM AND PUT THEM TO WORK

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain which characteristics must be present in a new church in order for it to grow.

☞ Main Points

- Growth and reproduction is the norm for all healthy things.
- Churches grow when they reach new people, keep them, and equip them to reach out to others.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand how the characteristics of a church will positively or negatively affect its growth.
- Participate in cell groups for evangelizing the lost and for training believers in ministry.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Stress that a mindset of growth is key for both new and old churches. While some of the characteristics in this lesson will be more effective than others in a specific location, the mindset will enable each student to creatively develop the right method for growth.

I. WHAT IS A GROWING CHURCH?

Jesus Christ promised that He would build His church and that the gates of hell would not stand against it. As we look at the history of Christianity, we see that He has been keeping His promise. The church has grown from a few disciples in Jerusalem on Pentecost to hundreds of millions of believers located in nations around the globe. Today the church is still growing at a tremendous rate in Asia, Africa and South America. In other places the growth of the church is much less obvious. Some countries have practically no church, and in others growth is stagnant. Since the growth of the church of Christ is dependent on the growth of individual congregations, a church planter must understand some of the reasons why churches do or do not grow.

It is important to define what we mean by a *growing church* before we note their characteristics. A church can grow in three main ways:

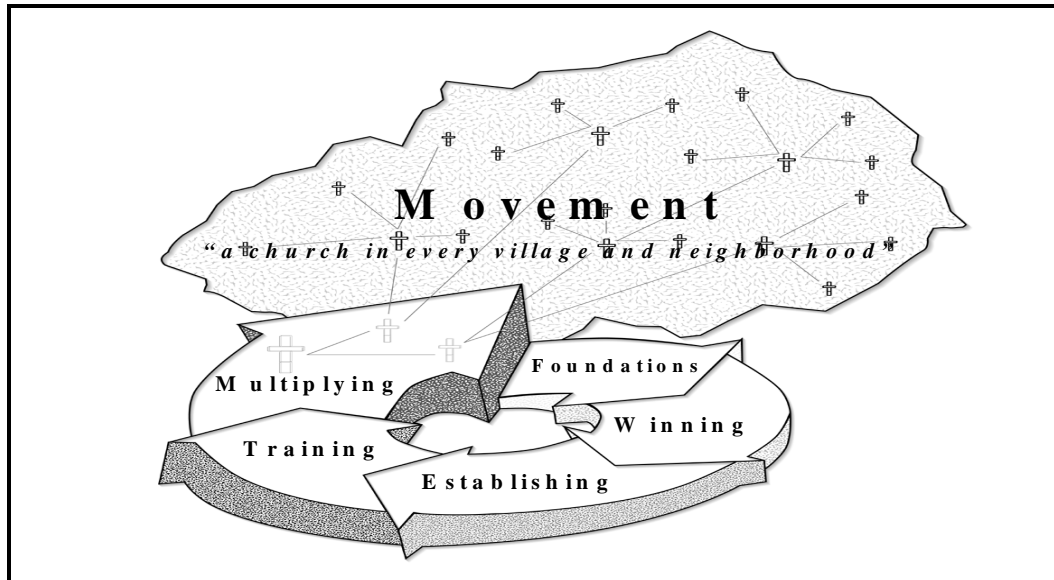
1. Numerically—More believers or more churches
2. Spiritually—Increased biblical knowledge and deeper spiritual walk
3. Socially—More or better effectiveness as “salt” in a lost world

Many churches are content if they see even one of these. Some are satisfied if they simply survive. They may say, “We haven’t seen anyone saved, but we are faithfully serving the Lord.” Others may be so obsessed with numerical growth that they downplay commitment in order to raise their attendance. None of these approaches is biblical. A local church should be growing in each of the ways listed above.

However, a local church that *grows*, but does not *reproduce* is not acceptable to the Lord. The Great Commission instructs us to bring *all nations* into obedience to Him. The Church Planting Cycle in Figure 12.1 illustrates the importance of church planting in accomplishing this goal. Churches that want to be pleasing to the Lord and obedient to the Great Commission will seek to *multiply* themselves by planting

daughter churches, who will in turn plant other churches. This concept is vital to the understanding of what a growing church should be.

Figure 13.1 The Church Planting Cycle



A method that helps the church to grow in one country and culture may fail miserably in another. A good church must decide what is effective and appropriate in its own culture. But there are certain basic characteristics that seem to be universal. Explosive growth does not always happen. Some cultures resist the Gospel for decades or longer. But usually absence of growth signals a problem with the church or its ministry methods.

II. HOW CHURCH GROWTH HAPPENS

The basic requirements to have a growing church are fairly simple, although it is challenging to implement and maintain them. The church must **attract** new people, **keep** them, **equip** them to reach others.

A. Growing Churches Attract New People

Without new people, the church does not get bigger. This is so simple and yet so vital. This growth usually does not happen by accident. We must plan for it and work for it. The church planter must consciously think about where and how his new church can find and attract new people.

B. Growing Churches Keep New People

Bringing more people is the first step. The next one is to keep both these new people and the old ones. Otherwise, it is like filling a bucket with a hole in the bottom—a futile effort until the hole is fixed. Any person in a church has a choice to stay or to leave. A growing church will adapt to such a good job of meeting the spiritual needs of the new believers that they will want to become more faithful in the church.

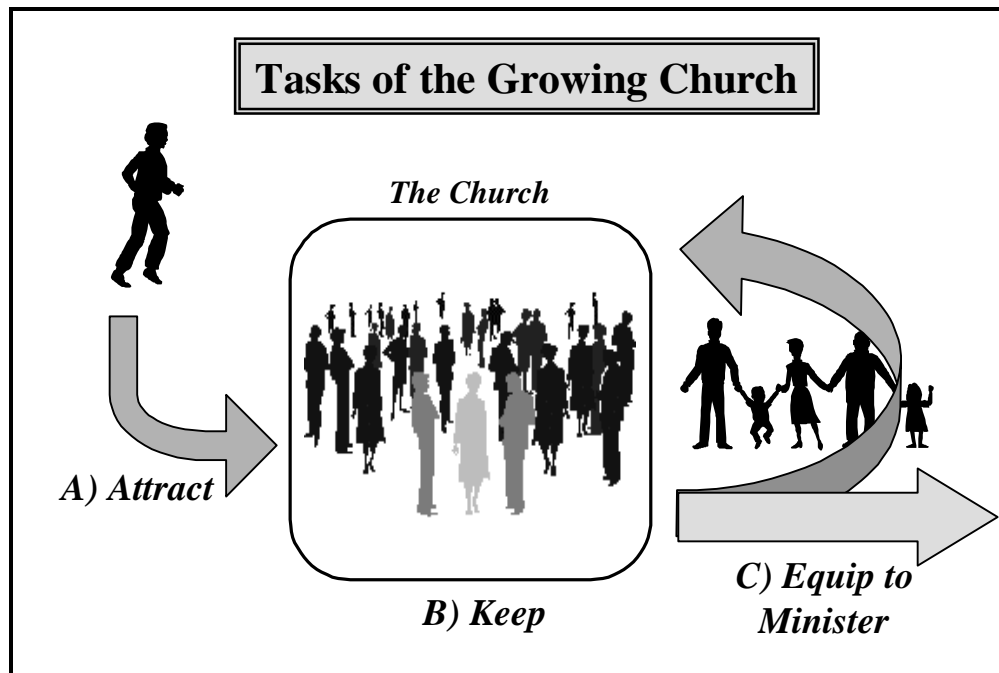
C. Growing Churches Equip New People for Life and Ministry

Ephesians 4:11-16 is a key passage on church growth. It shows that the church grows to maturity as each member of the body is equipped. In a healthy church the leaders consider that their main purpose is to equip the other members. This ministry includes three major area:

- Ministry within the body
- Ministry of bringing the lost into the body

- Ministry of establishing new congregations

Figure 13.2 The Growing Church



The important actions of a growing church are demonstrated in Figure 12.2. How is your church, or your church plant, doing in each of these areas? Where do you need to improve?

III. TWELVE CHARACTERISTICS OF GROWING CHURCHES

Here are twelve practical ways that a local church can accomplish the actions shown in the figure above. A good church should be involved in each area.

A. They Go to the Lost

This vital step is often forgotten. Some churches believe that it is the responsibility of the lost to come to church. This is totally counter to the Great Commission, which commands the church to go (Mt 28:18-20). We are to leave the 99 righteous sheep and seek the lost one (Lk 15).

Any hunter or fisherman knows how ridiculous it would be to expect the fish or the game to come to them. They use all their skill and understanding in order to determine where the fish or game are located and to go to them. "Fishers of men" must do the same.

The early church sought the lost in the temple, the synagogue, the market, and house-to-house. Jesus went to banquets and parties attended by tax collectors, prostitutes, and others of known sinful character. Unfortunately, the "righteous" did not understand this principle. The religious rulers attacked Jesus for "eating and drinking with sinners" (Lk 5:30-32). Jesus did not dispute that He did exactly that. Rather, He said that His purpose was to seek the lost. When a lamb is lost in the swamp, a loving shepherd will go down into the mud and muck to go after it and rescue it.

It takes wisdom and discernment to know where we can and cannot go. But the ministry of Jesus demonstrates that it is important to seek the lost wherever they may be, even if it brings criticism from the "righteous." We must strive to find an acceptable balance rather than throw away the opportunity to minister to the lost where they are.

B. They Use Cell Groups

Many unbelievers will not attend a church, but they can be persuaded to come to the home of a friend where they can ask questions about Christianity in a less threatening situation. These groups should never follow the same format as church. They should be informal, non-threatening, and friendly. The purpose of the group should be to discuss the truth of God's Word rather than to preach at the lost. Cell groups are discussed in detail in these materials.

C. They Participate in Social Activities with Unbelievers

A church that wants to grow will encourage its members to go to sporting events, chess clubs, the market, the pool, the sauna, birthday parties, weddings, funerals, picnics, public meetings, etc. Any activity may be a chance to meet and develop relationships with the unsaved. Christians are to be separate from the *sin* of the world, but not from the *world*. Rather, we are to be in the world as salt and light.

D. They Maintain Natural Networks of Relationships

Most people come to Christ through the influence of someone they know. Every Christian should be developing relationships with unbelievers that will eventually allow them to share the Gospel. If every member managed to develop only one such relationship each year and led that person to Christ, the church would double yearly. Many believers have few relationships with the lost. As a Christian becomes more involved in church life, his circle of friends changes and begins to include more Christians and fewer unbelievers. Consequently, he has increasingly fewer friendships with the lost and less opportunity to attract them to Christ.

The new believer should be encouraged to live an authentic Christian life and evangelize his lost friends.

The best source of contacts with the lost is through the new believer. Unfortunately, new believers are often encouraged to separate from their unsaved friends and spend all their time with believers. This approach severely damages evangelism and hinders church growth.

E. They Change in Order to Win the Lost

The Apostle Paul attempted to become all things to all men in order to win all men (1Co 9:19-23). What did he mean? Certainly he did not become sinful in order to win the sinful. What then did he mean? He was willing to change the way he lived if it helped the lost to listen to the Gospel. Think about what that means to us.

Rather than the believers changing their "culture" to win the lost, many churches expect the lost to change their "culture" in order to come to the church.

The scriptural principle is clear. The believer is to yield his own rights and preferences for the sake of the lost.

Yet the scriptural principle is clear. The believer is to yield his own rights and preferences for the sake of the lost. And the strong believer is to yield to the weak believer. This does not mean that the believer may sin. But he seeks to do everything permissible in order to reach out and meet the lost in a manner that is comfortable for them.

The character traits of the believer draw the lost to Christ. If the believer is gloomy, moody, dowdy, or bitter, his witness will not be effective. A genuine Christian should exude joy despite his troubles, a love for God and others, and peace and assurance about God's love for him. Think about the lists of personal traits or actions in Figure 13.1. Which column, A or B, do you think would attract an unbeliever to a Christian?

Table 13.1 Personal Traits

Column A	Column B
Love for others	Goes to church every Sunday
Joy in trials	Dresses differently
Assurance of God's love	Doesn't drink
Peace in difficult times	Doesn't smoke
Generous with finances and time	Stingy
Loving marriage	Sings in the choir
Well-behaved children	Knows the Christian hymns
Dependability	Knows the Lord's Prayer
Graciousness	Avoids sin

Most Christians would agree that both columns contain good Christian traits. That is not the issue. Which traits are attractive to the unbeliever? The traits in the left column are more likely to influence an unbeliever to listen to our message. Believers in whose lives those traits are most noticeable will be more effective in evangelism.

These characteristics must be genuine. A believer who pretends to love a lost acquaintance in order to win him will be recognized as fake. A genuine Christian is attractive, even to the unsaved. Character traits are best seen in a crisis. When we have problems, the unbeliever can see how we depend on God. When the unbeliever has a crisis, he can experience our love and help. Both situations attract him to the Gospel.

F. They Are Involved With the Needy

Many people come to Christ during a crisis. Unbelievers often pay little attention to God when things are going well. The Lord often uses a crisis to force them to understand their need. Growing churches know that people are more open at those times, and they seek ways to respond to people when they are hurting.

The particular means is not as important as the fact that we demonstrate our love and care for the lost. Sometimes material help is needed because of unemployment, fire or other problems. In the case of illness or death, a sympathetic ear may be the most appreciated way to demonstrate compassion. The key is to keep our eyes open for needs that we can respond to, as did the Good Samaritan.

G. They Quickly Include New People

The way members react to a new person during his first visit may well determine whether he ever comes again. If he feels welcome and accepted, he will probably return again. This is often true of a new believer as well as an unsaved visitor. Many churches in Eastern Europe are very cautious about accepting new people. This caution helped the church survive in times of persecution, and was understandable then. However, continuing to hold this attitude today can be devastating to church growth.

An unsaved visitor normally attends church because he is open to the Gospel. It is important to seize that opportunity to make him feel welcome and to seek to answer his questions. The same is true of new believers, who are compared with newborn babies (1 Pet 2:2). They also need love, acceptance and encouragement to convince them of the need for a close relationship to the church.

H. They Have Vibrant Body Life

The early Jerusalem church is an excellent model of a local church body that was alive and fulfilling the needs of its members. In Acts 2:42-47 we see the main functions of the church body demonstrated:

1. *Powerful, clear Bible teaching and preaching*
2. *Loving and accepting fellowship*
3. *Heartfelt devotion to the Lord's Table*
4. *Life-changing prayer*
5. *Sharing with brothers and sisters in need*

Everyone enjoys being in a group that loves them and cares for them. This is one major benefit of a family, and the church is to be a family. When Christians care for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, people will stay in the group.

I. They Equip Members for Life

Each member is to grow in maturity. For this to happen, the leaders must model the Christian life for them. Real discipleship takes place when the godly members spend time with the younger Christians and demonstrate for them how to grow and how to serve the Lord.

It is surprising how much of a typical church service is intended to evangelize the lost, even though most of the congregation may be believers. Evangelistic sermons do little to help the believer grow to maturity. While the Gospel should be preached in church, a greater emphasis should be placed on messages specifically for the believers. If the teaching is appropriate for the needs of the believer, they will continue to attend the church.

J. They Equip Members for Ministry in the Body

The ministry of the church is to be carried on by the members of the church—not by the leaders. As we discussed in the Church Lessons 9 and 10 (Manual Three), God has gifted all believers with spiritual gifts to be used in ministry. The purpose of the leaders, then, is to train and equip the members of the church to use effectively their spiritual gifts in ministry. When this principle is followed and all the members of the body are active in serving one another and reaching the lost, the church will grow. The entire church body can accomplish so much more than the leaders alone.

K. They Equip Members for Ministry to the Lost

Believers are to help the church grow. In John 15, Jesus said that the believer should bear fruit and that He would prune the branches so that they would be even more fruitful. The will of the Father is that we bear much fruit. This applies to all believers—not just the leaders. Jesus did not define the fruit in John 15, but he commanded us to go and make disciples. Surely the fruit includes the winning of the lost.

Few believers ever win another person to Christ. There are many reasons for this. Some of the most common ones are:

- They are not taught to evangelize until they have been a Christian long enough to lose their non-Christian contacts.
- They are taught so little about the Christian life that they are afraid to try to explain it to unbelievers.
- They are never taught any effective method of presenting the Gospel.
- They assume that evangelism is the job of the leaders.
- Some believers fail to witness because of unconfessed sin in their own lives.

All of these stem from poor equipping of the believers for ministry. A good church planter will be careful to prepare his members for ministry, motivate them, model a soul-winning heart and encourage them as they minister. In this way, he will multiply his ministry.

L. They Equip Members for Ministry to New Congregations

While the growth of a local church is good, the multiplication of local churches is better. A healthy church should not only grow in size but also reproduce itself many times. There are a number of reasons why the establishment of new congregations is more desirable than the simple growth of the mother church.

1. *New Congregations Grow Faster*

It is a fact that new churches almost always grow much faster than old ones. There are many theories as to why this happens:

- Newer churches usually locate in an area where there has been no church, and therefore closer to unevangelized individuals. It is like picking berries and finding a patch where no one else has yet picked.
- New churches are free from old problems. Unfortunately, many older churches have a history of hurts, problems or scandals. Unbelievers may use these as an excuse not to attend. However, they might be willing to try a new church with a clean reputation.
- New churches must grow to survive, and therefore their members more naturally have an evangelistic mindset. They are more conscious of the lost and more willing to reach out to them. They have not yet become complacent.
- People like to be part of a church where there are people of a similar culture. Most established churches have developed a program and style of worship that is appropriate and attractive to their typical member. People of a different age, education or background may not be interested in that church. New churches can design ministry forms that are appropriate for these other people that the established church cannot reach. For this reason, it is usually good if the new church forms do not precisely resemble the old one.
- New churches often do not have their own meeting place and are forced to conduct much of their ministry in homes and cell groups. In reality, cell group ministry is a much more effective way to reach the lost and to disciple new believers. So the lack of facilities becomes an asset rather than a liability.
- Established churches have higher overhead for their buildings. The giving and effort required to build and maintain a large facility sap the energy and resources that could otherwise be directed into evangelism.

The new believer should be encouraged to evangelize his lost friends and acquaintances while he still has a relationship with them.

The giving and effort required to build and maintain a large facility sap the energy and resources that could otherwise be directed into evangelism

2. *Reproducing Churches Grow Faster*

While older churches seldom grow as fast as new ones, they grow faster when they are involved in planting new congregations. This is hard for some to believe, but true. Many wrongly assume that helping to start a new church would weaken the old one. Rather, the increased emphasis on evangelism, outreach and training that are needed for the new work almost always results in growth for the old church! The enthusiasm for growth is so contagious that a stagnant church can often revitalize itself by promoting church planting.

This principle also applies to new churches. The church planter should teach the new congregation about the need to reproduce from the very beginning and encourage them to start other groups as soon as possible. Such a mindset will keep his new work vibrant and growing.

IV. EVALUATING AND MONITORING CHURCH GROWTH

All parents know that it is important for their child to be weighed and measured by the doctor on a regular basis to determine if the child is healthy and growing properly. The same is true of the church. By gathering and analyzing certain types of numerical growth, church planters can gain valuable insight into the health and growth of their churches. For example, the number of baptisms per year in a church is an indication of "conversion growth" and shows how effectively the church is bringing in new people. Increases or decreases in church membership and attendance can indicate whether the church is keeping and equipping the members. Finally, charting the number of cell groups, new church plants, or other ministries outside the church can show whether the church is successfully involving members in the work of the Gospel. Evaluating this data is the only reliable way to know whether the church is doing its part to fulfill the Great Commission.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Is your church growing? In what sense? Numerically? Spiritually? Socially? Some of these? All of these?
- Am I fulfilling my responsibility to equip the believers for ministry, or am I trying to do it myself? How am I equipping them? Is it working?
- Why would an unbeliever want to come to my church? Why would a new believer want to stay? Can I make my church more receptive to them?
- Have I started a new church plant yet? Cell groups? If not, what am I waiting for?

ACTION PLAN

- Attend another church and imagine that you are an unbeliever. Would you come back to that church? Why or why not? How does it compare to your church? What did you learn from this that will help you in your church?
- Think about the churches in your area. Which of them are growing, and which are not. Compare the characteristics of each to the traits in this lesson. Which characteristics appear to be the reasons for their growth or lack thereof? Can you define other helpful traits?



Church Government and Church Offices

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain the major types of church government and the requirements for the officers of the church.

Main Points

- Two major types are Hierarchical and Congregational.
- Elders and deacons must meet biblical requirements.

Desired Outcomes

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

- Have a good understanding of the different types of church government
- Understand how to identify potential leaders.
- Understand the responsibilities and privileges of church leaders.

Suggestions to Trainers

The purpose of this lesson is not to try to convince the church planter to adopt any particular form, but to help him think through the implications for church growth and multiplication of his choice of church government and leaders.

I. WHAT IS A CHURCH?

The Church of Jesus Christ is that invisible body of born-again believers in Jesus Christ—dead, living and yet to be born from every tribe, language, people and nation on earth. This church is often called the Universal Church. Local churches are the visible manifestation in time and place of the Universal Church. One definition of a local church is “an organized body of baptized believers, led by a spiritually qualified shepherd(s), affirming their relationship to the Lord and to each other by regular observation of the Lord’s Supper, committed to the authority of the Word of God, gathered regularly for worship and the study of the Word, and turned outward to the world in witness.” How many attendees it must have, how exactly it is organized and who leads the body vary greatly from one group to another.

Doctrinal and practical differences often lead believers in the same local area to form totally different and separate assemblies. Differing understandings of Scripture have led to numerous varieties of church structure and government. This lesson will attempt to summarize different forms of government so that you, the church planter, can think seriously about what form would work best for your church and what forms would lead to more rapid multiplication of churches.

II. TYPES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Church government can be divided into two main types with several variations of each. A church may or may not be aware of which model of government it uses, but each church will generally fit into one of these forms, or some variation thereof. The various systems are distinguished mainly by the degree of autonomy of each local church.

A. Hierarchical Government

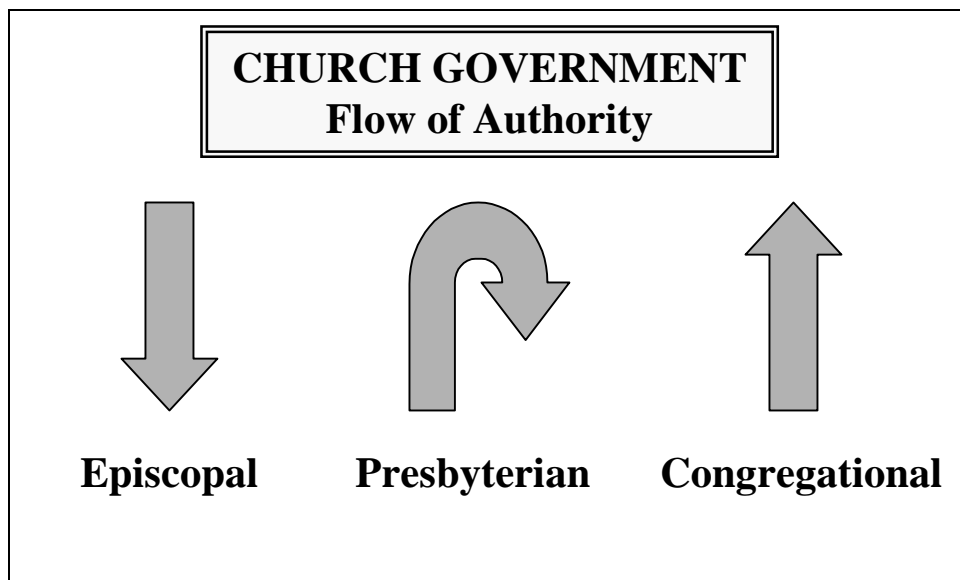
Hierarchical forms of church government vary in style, but in general they indicate “top down” authority. Control flows from the leaders or officials down to the congregations and individual members. There are two major types of hierarchical governments:

1. *Episcopal*

The Episcopal form of government includes a hierarchy that has control over the local church. This control is exercised through the bishops of the church. Authority flows down from the bishops to the presbyters to the deacons and finally to the church members. The bishops have the power not only to appoint the presbyters and deacons who serve under them but also to appoint the successor bishops. In this way, they perpetuate their authority. Episcopal structure is used by the Methodists, Orthodox, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.

This authority for the bishops is often based on the doctrine of apostolic succession or a similar belief. That is, they believe that the authority of the bishops has been passed down through history from the Apostle Peter, who was himself appointed head of the church by Jesus (relevant Scriptures: Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5).

Figure 13.1 Flow of Authority



2. *Presbyterian*

The Presbyterian form of government also has a hierarchical structure, but this hierarchy is not appointed from above. Rather, authority is vested in representatives chosen by the people, both clergy and lay, who act in their interest. The church elects its ruling elders. These elders, along with the teaching elder (pastor), form the session. The teaching elder and a representative of the ruling elders from area local churches join together to form a presbytery, which has authority over the local sessions. Representatives from several presbyteries form a synod, and representatives from each synod form the general assembly, which is the highest authority.

Although Presbyterian government is appointed from below, unlike the Episcopal form, there is one exception. While the congregation chooses its ruling elders, the presbytery ordains the teaching elders – also known as ministers or pastors. These teaching elders are theoretically equal in authority to the ruling elders. They simply have different functions. The teaching elders are responsible for the teaching of the Word and for the sacraments. The ruling elders are concerned with the other decisions involved with running the church.

Support for this structure is usually found in the Jerusalem council (Acts 15).

B. Congregational

In the congregational form of church government, authority is "bottom up." Control and responsibility for governing the local church rests in the members of that church. That authority ultimately comes from Christ alone, the head of the church, and not from any other human body or individual. The members themselves make the necessary decisions within their body and choose their own leaders. In actual practice, they may allow their leaders considerable decision-making freedom, but they are still answerable to the congregation, who must approve all major decisions.

Support for this type is normally found in the passages such as Acts 6:5 where the congregation appeared to ratify the decisions of the leaders.

III. OFFICES IN THE CHURCH

There are a number of words used for the church leaders in the New Testament: elders, deacons, presbyters, overseers, bishops, shepherds, pastors, teachers. Qualifications for only three of these are listed in the Scriptures, so we will look at these. In 1 Timothy 3, Paul gives qualifications for overseers. In Titus 1, he uses the same qualifications for elders, but in the middle of the list uses the term overseer. This suggestion that the terms are interchangeable might help us in determining the offices in the church. (See also Ac 20:17,28 and 1Pe 5:1,2).

A. Qualifications for Overseers (1 Timothy 3:1-7)

The qualifications of the overseer (sometimes bishop) are described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and listed as follows:

- Above reproach
- Having only one wife
- Temperate
- Self-controlled
- Respectable
- Hospitable
- Adept to teach
- Not given to drunkenness
- Not violent, but gentle
- Not quarrelsome
- Not a lover of money
- Manages his family well
- Sees that his children obey him with all respect
- Not a new convert
- Have a good reputation with outsiders

A man chosen as overseer must demonstrate these qualities in his life. The emphasis is on his current character. If he has had a poor reputation in his past life, there certainly needs to be a significant period of holy living to convince the congregation that he has indeed changed his ways and to help keep him from falling into sin.

B. Qualifications for Elders/Overseers (Titus 1:5-9)

In his epistle to Titus, Paul reiterates his list of qualifications for elders and overseers. Notice that this list of qualifications is similar to the expanded list given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

- Blameless
- Husband of one wife
- Children believe and are not wild and disobedient

- Not overbearing
- Not quick-tempered
- Not given to drunkenness
- Not violent
- Not pursuing dishonest gain

C. Qualifications for Deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

The qualifications for deacons are similar to those of the elders, except that deacons are not required to be able to teach. The main requirements for deacons are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 as:

- Respected
- Sincere
- Not excessive drinkers
- Not greedy for money
- Having a clear conscience
- Tested
- Having only one wife
- Managing his children and household well

The spiritual requirements are just as strict as those for the elder. They must also have proven reputations. The only difference, not being required to be able to teach, is readily understood in light of their role. The Greek word *diakonos*¹ that is translated as deacon refers to one who serves. The first appearance of the deacons seems to be Acts 6. At that time there was a problem in the church. Some of the Gentile widows were being overlooked in the distribution of food to the needy. The apostles who directed the church did not think it was right for them to leave their responsibility of teaching and praying. Instead, they asked the congregation to choose seven men who could be entrusted with the task of distributing food.

We therefore understand that the New Testament deacons were responsible for the material and social needs within the church. Since they would handle church finances, the strict spiritual requirements and the need for testing is reasonable. The purpose of the deacons is to allow the elders time to concentrate on the spiritual needs of the church.

In 1 Timothy 3:11 the feminine form of *diakonos* is used. Some churches take this to mean the “wife of the deacon.” Other interpret it to mean a female deacon, or “deaconess.” (See also Romans 16:1 where Phoebe is called a deaconess.) In churches with deaconesses, they have a serving role similar to that of the deacons.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES OF CHURCH LEADERS

A. Responsibilities

1 Peter 5 sums up the responsibilities of elders/shepherds/overseers: to care for the flock of God. Some specific things they are to do are as follows:

- Do the work of an evangelist (2Ti 4:5).
- Govern—The Greek word translated rule or govern is *proistemi*², which means “to be over, to superintend, to preside over, to be a protector or guardian.” Note that Peter makes it clear that in fulfilling this duty Timothy is not to “lord it over” his people, but to be an example to them.
- Read the Word publicly (1Ti 4:13).

¹ δακονος

² προιστημι

- Preach the Word (2Ti 4:1-2).
- Teach the Word (Tit 2:1).

B. Privileges

Faithful elders are worthy of respect. The respect results from the proven godly lives that they have lived in order to be chosen as elders. Their counsel is to be seriously considered by the congregation. In addition, the people should be careful about accusing them of wrongdoing unless it is well supported by at least two witnesses (1Ti 5:19-20). However, if proven guilty of sin, they are to be disciplined more harshly than a regular member. This is in keeping with their public position. They have great power to influence people for good or evil, and they therefore incur a more severe condemnation if they fall.

The faithful elders who teach are also worthy of financial support. Paul makes it clear in 1 Corinthians 9:7-12 that the new church was expected to support those who labor to teach them. Churches often ignore this teaching, and expect their elders, pastors, or church planters to find some other source of income. As a result, elders may be overworked or may not be able to give sufficient time to the work of oversight and teaching. Ruling and teaching the church are serious matters. You must determine within your church context how to fulfill this responsibility to your elders. The goal should be to support them so that they can give themselves to full-time ministry to the church. Even though Paul was willing to work as a tentmaker when there was not yet a church to support him, he immediately switched to full-time ministry as soon as it was possible. This seems to have been the case in Acts 18:1-5 when Silas and Timothy apparently brought a gift from the Macedonian churches (cf. 2Co 8:1-4).

How much is appropriate? Paul uses the term "double honor" in 1 Timothy 5:17-18. It could mean "twice the average wage," but it seems more likely that it refers to honor in two forms—respect and financial reward. In that case, they are worthy of at least the amount that the average member of their congregation receives. If they have no financial need, they may refuse that part of the honor as Paul did (1Co 9:12) but that is the right of the elder, not of the church. It is the responsibility of the congregation to serve them in this way, and thus demonstrate their respect for the teaching of the Word. If they refuse it, the church should use those funds to support the planting of another church, as the Macedonians did in the example above.

V. SUMMARY

Although the New Testament contains each of these types of government and of leaders, it has no specific command on how a local church should be organized. As a church planter, you should carefully and prayerfully consider the options. Your background and denominational affiliation will most likely heavily influence your choice of church government. Part of your responsibility in preparing your cell group to become a church is to teach them about church government and specifically the type of government they as the new church will have.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- As you consider the types of church government described in this lesson, what are some positive things that would contribute to multiplication? What are some negative things that would hinder church multiplication?
- Do you agree with Paul's exhortation to pay the elders who teach? What position will the church that you are planting take on this?

ACTION PLAN

Identify (two) men in your church plant who you think have the potential to be elders. Develop a plan to disciple and test them in the specific character traits required for an elder.

SPIRITUAL CHARACTER

**SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER**

11

LESSON

Love as the Foundation for Ministry

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to produce people who minister from a heart of love.

☛ Main Points

- Our relationship with God impacts how we relate to others.
- The unconditional love God has for us as expressed in the Gospel is our model for relating to others.
- One of the most attractive points of a new church should be the loving relationship that exists between believers.

☛ Desired Outcomes

As a result of this lesson the participant should:

- Become more loving and gracious toward others.
- Understand how to minister to others from a heart of love for people.

INTRODUCTION

We have been learning how the Gospel impacts our walk with God. We have talked about how God loves us as a Father loves a child through grace and mercy. Our relationship with God impacts how we relate to others. The person who lives by faith is not compelled by the law, but by love. His faith produces within him a genuine love. So we see these inseparable qualities of faith and love working together.

I. THE GOSPEL AS A MODEL FOR RELATIONSHIPS

Our spiritual life begins with our spiritual birth. Before talking about the Gospel as a model for relationships, we need to review just what the Gospel has done in our lives. As the table 11.1 describes, there are two basic but very different ways to relate to God. These two approaches affect how we relate to others as well.

Table 11.1 The Gospel and Religion

Gospel	Religion
<i>(God's supernatural attempt to reach man)</i>	<i>(man's natural attempt to reach God)</i>
Grace	Works
Faith	Obedience
Unconditional love	Judgementalism
Transforming Holy Spirit	Personal effort
Grace leads to obedience	Obedience leads to grace

A. The Gospel Saves

The powerful message of the Gospel changes us in many ways. We are declared righteous by faith in the Gospel saving us from the wrath of God and guaranteeing eternal life.

B. The Gospel Transforms

The Gospel affects more than just our eternal destiny. The Gospel message changes us daily. We are made holy by the blood of our Savior with the cross ever before us as the central point of our spiritual lives. We walk by faith believing that God loves us. Out of gratitude for our salvation through the Gospel, we live lives of obedience to God's will. Through understanding our position in Christ, we find strength to overcome sin and grow to maturity.

C. The Gospel Provides a Model for Relationships

Lastly, the Gospel impacts our relationship with others. The Gospel is unconditional love extended to us. This unconditional love then can become a model by which we relate to others. In writing to the Church he had planted in Ephesus, Paul gave just this advice saying "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ, God forgave you" (Eph 4:32). Jesus taught his disciples to pray saying, "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" (Mt. 6:12).

How can the Gospel be a model for relationships? How can we be kind and compassionate to one another? As we will see, Jesus taught us how.

II. GOD'S UNCONDITIONAL, SACRIFICIAL LOVE

God's unconditional and sacrificial love is explained in great depth in the life and teachings of Jesus.

A. The Great Commandment

When Jesus was questioned by the Pharisees regarding the greatest commandment, He summarized it by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:5: "**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." He then added the second greatest commandment, taken from Leviticus 19:18, which summarized the rest of the Old Testament law, "**Love** your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22: 34-40, Mark 12:28-31). Together this is often called the Great Commandment. The Great Commandment is what Jesus wants us to look like: Christ-likeness. It is the summary of the law: holiness.

In their zeal for keeping the Law, the Pharisees seemed to have forgotten these two commandments. They loved the law but not the Giver of the law, much less their neighbor. Nevertheless, these commandments were guidelines for man's relationship with God and with fellow man.

B. The New Commandment

Shortly before His death, Jesus gave His disciples some specific instructions that would be the guidelines to show them how to relate to one another. These guidelines are found in John 13-17. He began by giving a new commandment, "**Love** one another. As I have **loved** you, so you must love one another" (Jn 13:34). This is similar to the great commandment. But, there are two major differences:

1) *The love is among believers.*

In the great commandment, we are taught to love God and our neighbors. In this new commandment, we see that there is to be a special love among His followers: "My children... Love one another" (Jn 13:33-34).

Jesus went on to describe the witness that this love among believers is to the lost when He said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you **love** one another" (Jn. 13:35). When Christians do not love one another, it is one of the worst testimonies. If those who believe the Gospel do not love one another, then how is the unbeliever to understand that the Gospel brings peace with God? When we do not love one another, people wonder where is the power of the Gospel? It brings

When we do not love one another, people wonder where is the power of the Gospel?
--

peace between man and God... should it not also bring peace among men? Our churches are to be a miniature picture of God's Kingdom on earth, where the powerful love of Christ is seen.

2) *The degree of the love.*

In the great commandment, the degree of loving others was measured by the love for self. But in the new commandment, Christ's sacrificial love becomes our standard for how we are to love one another.

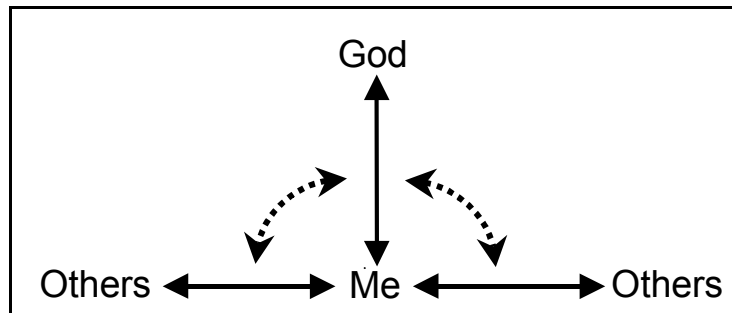
What does Jesus mean when He says He is giving a *new* commandment? (Jn 13:34). In Greek, there are two different words that can be translated "new." The first of these, *neos*³, refers to something that has never before existed. But the word for new that Jesus used was the other word, *kainos*⁴, which means "new in quality." He explained the new quality of love in John 15:12,13: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." Following the example of Jesus, His children must have love for each other that is measured by the love the Lord has for us.

III. GOD'S LOVE APPLIED TO RELATIONSHIPS

The relationship between a person and God will have a direct impact on his relationship with others. In Figure 11-2, we see a simple diagram that illustrates this. The vertical line represents the first part of the Great Commandment "Love the Lord your God..." and the second part of the New Commandment "...as I have loved you." The horizontal lines represent our relationship to others in which we are to love them as Jesus has loved us. The dotted arch represents the fact that the way in which we relate to others is similar to our relationship with God.

The relationship between a person and God will have a direct impact on his relationship with others.

Figure 11.2 Loving God and loving others



If a person relates to God legalistically—there will be a strong tendency to relate to others in the same way. If a person believes that God is angry with them, then he will likely be angry toward others. On the other hand, if a person understands that God loves them unconditionally, then he will be free to love others in the same way.

One way to measure spiritual growth then is to look at how one relates to others. Is it possible to be a good Christian but not get along with others very well? Because of the new commandment, it does not seem so. We are to love God and others.

It is remarkable that love as a part of Christ-likeness is so often overlooked. Why is that? Possibly, because it is easier to obey a list of rules than it is to have our hearts changed. Many kinds of people can obey rules and regulations, but it takes a heart changed by God to love.

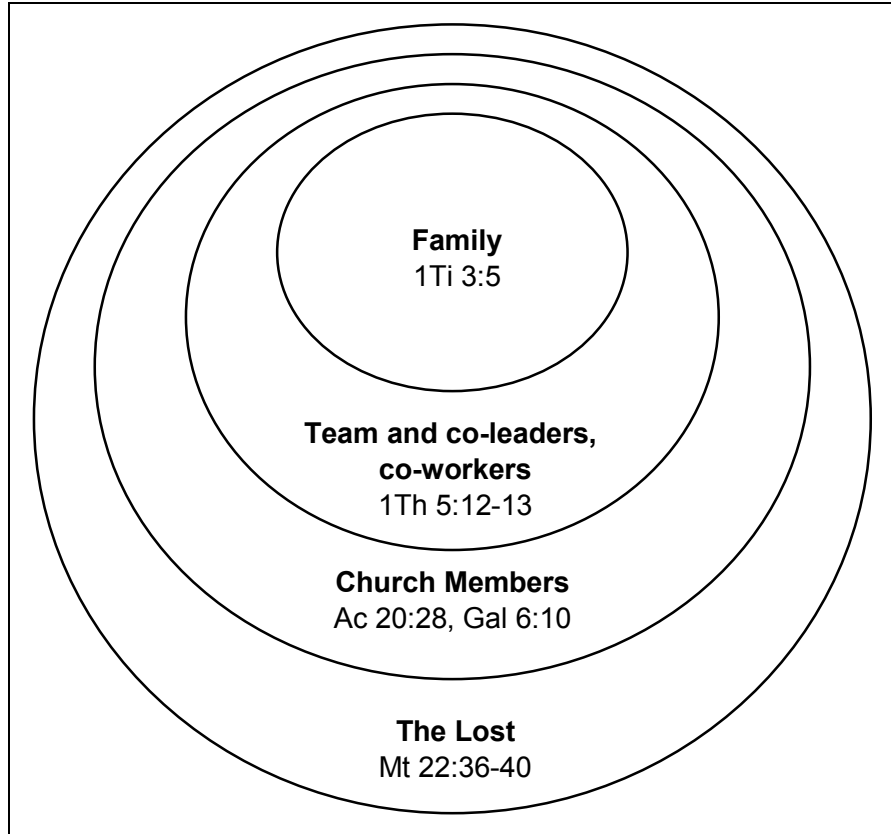
³ νεος
⁴ καινος

IV. LOVE AS A BASIS FOR MINISTRY

The unconditional love of God should be a basis for ministry. Since God has so unconditionally loved us, we are called to love others in the same way. God has so touched us with His love that we should be compelled to pass the love on to others in a way that bears witness to what Christ has done for us.

Who are those in ministry to whom we display this love? Who are the 'others' that God has put in our lives? The closer God has put them to us, the greater responsibility we are to love and touch their lives in the way that God has done to us. The typical church planter then might have the following areas of ministry as displayed in figure 11-3.

Figure 11.3 "Whom Do We Love?"



It may not be natural for you to love some in your congregation. The ministry is difficult. But when God's unconditional love characterizes relationships, it is obvious that God is at work. This then is a witness to the lost. "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another" (Jn 13:35).

The most attractive thing about your church plant ought to be the quality of the relationships that are established. Unconditional and sacrificial love ought to be the norm starting with the church leadership. This is how God loves us and how we ought to love others.

The most attractive thing about your church plant ought to be the quality of the relationships that are established.

CONCLUSION

Spiritual growth is most of all growth in one thing – in God's *agape* love. Spiritual immaturity is first of all immaturity in God's love. Spiritual falls are based on the lack of understanding God's love. And growth in this love is the only cure. May our faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, demonstrate itself in works of love, love to our families, sisters and brothers in Christ, to our churches, to the perishing world. May the Lord strengthen faith in our hearts.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How would you define “neighbor” as used in the great commandment (love your neighbor as yourself)? What would be the results if your whole church obeyed this command?
- What did Jesus mean when he said love one another “as I have loved you?”
- Is it more important for leaders to obey this command than for others in the church? Why or why not?
- How well do you love people?
- Think about the difference love makes in the following situations: family/friends; believers with unbelievers? church members/leaders?
- How should our growing faith in the Gospel affect the way we love others?

ACTION PLAN

- Ask God to show you some believers to whom you should show the kind of love Jesus commanded. Write down their names and what you will do. Leave space to write the results when this is accomplished.
- Ask God to show you some “neighbors” to whom you should show love. Write down their names and what you will do to demonstrate your love for them. Leave space to write the results when this is accomplished.
- Think about someone you are close to (spouse, parent, or child). How do you love this person? In what ways has your lack of faith in the Gospel affected the way you have loved them? What sins do you need to confess to them? Think of concrete ways you want to love this person because of your renewed faith in the Gospel.

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LESSON **12**

Understanding The Father's Heart

☛ Lesson Purpose

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

☛ Main Points

- God loves His children unconditionally.
- We should love as the Father loves.

☛ Desired Outcomes

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

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

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

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

INTRODUCTION

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

I. THREE PARABLES ABOUT LOST THINGS -LUKE 15

A. The Context Of Luke 15

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

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

not associate with sinners. Perhaps they are standing outside in the darkness or on the fringes of the crowd some distance away -so as not to touch any of these sinners. What are the Pharisees muttering about?

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

B. The Parables

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

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

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

II. THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

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

A. The Father

This parable is sometimes called the parable of the Father's love. The father was obviously a loving person who gave his son freedom to choose—even when he made the wrong choice. He continued to show unconditional love to his son, accepting him back, forgetting the past. The unconditional love of the father lightened the hardship of the son's sorrow, opened the doors of hope for his return, showed the way and made the repentance process easier.

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

B. The Younger Brother

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

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

Quite naturally, his selfishness eventually led to his disappointment and despair. When he reached the end of himself, he was truly repentant. He openly confessed his sin and unworthiness before the father (v. 21). The love demonstrated by his father and the way he received him obviously made a profound impact on the son and changed his life forever. What do you think... would the prodigal son ever run away from his father again? Most of us would agree that it is doubtful that he would ever run away again, because he had found what every soul longs for—love. Love is the most powerful motivator known to us (otherwise God wouldn't be 'Love' 1Jn 4:8). This love was available to the prodigal son unconditionally from his father. He is a true son in a spiritual sense. (See Spiritual Character lesson 6 "Living Like Sons Instead of Orphans" and lesson 7 "An Orphan Learns To Be A Son" in Manual Two.)

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

C. The Elder Brother

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

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

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

D. Interpretation

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

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

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

1. What is my attitude toward the lost? Do I despise them? Am I judgmental? Am I compassionate and forgiving? Think of times when you've been around "undesirable" people. What has been your reaction?
2. Do I actively seek the lost or just wait for them to "come home?" Compare Jesus' words in Luke 19:10.

3. Am I uncomfortable “eating with” sinners? Am I more concerned about what people will think of me than I am for the lost sinner?
4. Do I “run to meet sinners” and show them compassion, or do I reject them along with their sin? (For example, how would I react if a prostitute or drug addict came into my fellowship?)
5. Is my love for the Father such that I love those that He loves? When sinners repent, do I rejoice and accept them as brothers and sisters?
6. Am I inwardly muttering about how hard I work and how unappreciated I am instead of rejoicing and celebrating with the Lord?

ACTION PLAN

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

SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER

LESSON
13

Grace Is For The Humble

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to show how the Christian life must be lived in humility. Strength comes out of weakness... and the Christian life must come out of humility.

☛ Main Points

- Christians should be characterized by humility.
- We are called to minister not in our own strength, but in the power of the Spirit.
- Prayer expresses humility towards God.

☛ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand how to serve with humility.
- Know the principle that strength flows from our weakness.
- Make a commitment to a dependent relationship with the Father.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

The humility test is very powerful. It may lead to a time of repentance for the participants. Look for the opportunity to deal with personal spiritual issues wherever possible. Look for good ways of illustrating the concepts in this lesson from your own personal experience.

INTRODUCTION

Many Christians struggle to maintain humility. Some Christians—even leaders—start out humble, but after some success in ministry, they develop a subtle pride or self-confidence that contradicts Christian humility. Perhaps nothing is more deadly to a Christian than pride – and church planters are not exempt from this either. Not only does pride create barriers between Christian brothers, but it is also one of those things that the Lord hates (Pr 6:16-17).

Jesus made it very clear to His followers that they should not be self-serving (Mt 20:20-28; Jn 13:1-16). Many worldly leaders use intimidation or an attitude of superiority to get followers to submit. These things should never be characteristic of a Christian (Mt 20:25,28; 1Pe 5:1-7). On the contrary, humility should be the mark of all Christians, with the leader setting the example as Christ did.

I. HUMILITY—WHAT IS IT?

What comes to your mind when you hear the word “humility?” Many people think of humility as lowliness. We sometimes describe the poorly dressed, poorly fed, poor man as ‘humble.’ While God wants us to be humble, He does not want us to think of ourselves as poor beggars, or paupers. The Scriptures tell us we are His children and joint heirs of His kingdom with Christ. To believe anything else is a great distortion of biblical truth.

Purposely taking the lowest place seems wrong to the world...

Humility is ‘not thinking of yourself more highly than you ought’ (Ro 12:3). The humble person does not draw attention to himself, nor does he do things to state his own importance. Purposely taking the lowest place seems wrong to the world – and maybe even to some of us. But it is the path to

righteousness and the way that Christians, especially leaders, display the Gospel to those around them. Our flesh despises the low place and we have a battle on our hands to take the lowest place. But it is in this place the humble will find grace (Lk 14:10).

“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1Pe 5:5). He does not leave us in our foolish pride. He wants us to be humble. It is from the humble place that we understand how great God is. Do you ever see yourself as being in conflict with God? Could it be that some of the struggles we face are actually God’s efforts to teach humility?

Perhaps the best way to understand humility is to examine ourselves. The twelve questions listed in Table 13.1 will help us understand humility while revealing some of the ways in which we fall short. Consider each question carefully.

Table 13.1 The Humility Test

1. How do you take criticism?
2. Do people find it easy to come to you? Are you approachable?
3. Are you frequently involved in power struggles and arguments?
4. Do you find yourself thinking everyone else is wrong but you?
5. Does anger lurk beneath the surface of your life?
6. Are you able to rejoice when you hear of others' successes?
7. Would others think of you as a critical person?
8. Do you find yourself frequently defending yourself to others?
9. Are you a good listener, able to concentrate on others rather than your answer or what is the right thing to do?
10. Do you purposefully take the lowest place? (Luke 14:7-11)
11. Are you merciful and gentle, or is there a hard edge to your personality?
12. Is prayer the first movement of your heart?

II. EXAMPLES OF HUMILITY

A. Jesus

The Apostle Paul clearly states that Jesus is our example for humility. We learn in Philippians 2:5 that we are to have the same attitude as Christ Jesus, who humbled Himself even to the point of death.

Our example for humility, Jesus, was perfect in all things. Yet, the **perfect man—Jesus Christ—was perfectly dependent!** Note what Jesus said about Himself: *“I will tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by Himself; He can only do what He sees the Father doing, because whatever the Father does, the Son also does”* (Jn 5:19-20). If anyone did not need to be dependent, Jesus was the one. But dependence is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strength. This is the upside-down way of looking at both leadership and the Christian life.

Humility is a recognition that "I am dependent upon God for whatever I need to accomplish."

Humility is a recognition that “I cannot do it alone. I am dependent upon God for whatever I need to accomplish.” In the world’s eyes, such an admission is seen as weakness, not strength. Maybe that is why so many of us have such a struggle with the concept of humility. We let the world set our standards, not God.

B. Paul

The great church planter Paul had much to be proud of by human standards (Phil 3:4-11, 2Co 11:22-29). However, we can see that Paul grew in humility over the course of his ministry. Notice that early in his ministry he describes himself as “the least of the apostles” (1Co 15:9). Later, in his letter to the Ephesians, he calls himself “the least of all saints” (Eph 3:8). And in the last phase of his life he describes himself as the “chief of all sinners” (1Ti 1:15).

Paul also had a “thorn” which we do not completely understand, but which he asked God to take away. Note his comments concerning this request: *“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong”* (2Co 12:9-10). It was more important from God’s perspective for Paul to testify through means of “the thorn” and live in humble dependence on God, than for Paul to be free from the thorn and be proud. God wants His children to depend on Him. God wants you and me to depend on Him.

Our self-righteousness is another form of independence. Compare and contrast the man who is strong on the outside (strong in himself) but weak on the inside with the leader who is outwardly weak but inwardly strong (see Table 13.2).

Table 13.2 Saul and Paul

Saul: <i>Outwardly Strong</i> <i>Inwardly Weak</i>	Paul: <i>Inwardly Strong</i> <i>Outwardly Weak</i>
This man was very strong in his determination to “do the right thing.” His zeal even drove him to put Christians in jail. As a Pharisee, he followed the law strictly. He may have been outwardly flawless, but inwardly he was wasting away (Php 3:4-11).	When Saul was converted, he became less dependent on his own zeal to accomplish things and more dependent on the Father’s strength working in him.. He was no longer interested in how he was perceived outwardly and chose to take the lowest place. Think about how Paul humbled himself with the Corinthians. <i>“Who is not weak and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?”</i> (2Co 11:29). <i>“May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ..”</i> (Gal 6:14). We see a man who was powerful because he did not care what others thought of him. He cared about what Jesus thought about him and as a result, became a powerful person used by God in a mighty way.

III. PRAYER EXPRESSES HUMILITY TOWARDS GOD

Many Christians have little knowledge of how to live in dependence and trust when life seems out of control. Unfortunately, prayer can be another way for us to display independence. Sometimes we pray to gain control of situations that we feel are out of control. But real prayer is about God being in control. It is an acknowledgment of complete dependence on God. The humble man does not pray in an attempt to gain control of situations. Rather, he prays to be linked to the purposes and plan of God. Does this describe your prayers?

IV. CHRISTIAN LIFE CHARACTERIZED BY HUMILITY

Pride keeps us from recognizing our need to depend on God. We started out the Christian life as beggars and God gave us bread to eat. He provided for us much like He did for the Israelites wandering in the desert. Each day, they needed bread from the Father to sustain them. That is the same situation

we are in. But when we decide we no longer need the bread, we get into trouble. We are no longer beggars but rather have our own source of bread. This is independence and it comes with our love for our own righteousness.

Pride and independence also make leaders the dispensers of the bread rather than the guides to where the bread is. This is a dangerous move away from the Gospel. We figure that we have what people need rather than Jesus having it. We encourage dependence on us rather than Jesus. As leaders, we need to take people to the One who has the power, the food, the comfort and the forgiveness.

Pride and independence make leaders the dispensers of the bread rather than the guides to where the bread is.

1 Peter 5:1-4 gives some principles for those wanting to be church elders or leaders. They should be described in the following four ways:

- Shepherd
- Willing to Serve
- Not lording it over others
- An example

The kind of leadership described above is extremely loving and servant-oriented. A follower would naturally want to respond favorably toward the leader who meets the criteria above. People normally do not want to hurt someone who loves them. This is why it is very natural for Peter, in the very next verse (1Pe 5:5), to encourage the young men, no doubt the followers of the elders, to submit to their leadership.

We also learn in verses 5 and 6 that “all” are to seek humility: *“Clothe yourself with humility.”* In other words “seek it.” *“Humble yourselves”* (vs. 6) is a command, not an option, from the Holy Spirit. This exhortation is not just for the leaders or for the followers. It is for everyone.

The following table can help show the difference between the Christian who lives independently and the one who lives in dependence on God.

Table 13.3 - Independence verses Dependence

Independence— <i>PRIDE</i>	Dependence— <i>HUMILITY</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The independent person has a “success/failure” view of things. • Unbelief is a normal pattern for this person because he knows he has limits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person who depends on Christ understands that Jesus is in charge. He lives with this confidence. • Faith is central to this person’s life. The only failure is unbelief.

CONCLUSION

Are you filled with pride or are you characterized by humility? If you are not humble, then you are missing out on great blessings from a mighty God who gives grace to the **humble**. Talk to your mentor about your need to be humble before God. Make this a matter of prayer.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Why do you think many Christians, including leaders, struggle with humility?
- In what ways do you find it hard to be humble?
- Why does God give grace to the humble?
- What difference does humility make in the life of a church planter?

ACTION PLAN

- Find an accountability partner, a person with whom you can share honestly and openly.
- Ask your accountability partner to help you monitor the items included in the humility test.
- In your spiritual journal, document the changes you see taking place in your life.

PRAYER

PRAYER

LESSON 8,9

Concert of Prayer

PRAYING BIBLICALLY

☞ Lesson Purpose

To provide opportunity for the church planter trainees to join together in praying for the fulfillment of the Great Commission—not only in their area, but to the “end of the earth.”

☞ Main Points

- Prayer was the starting point of the spread of the Gospel in Acts.
- Biblical prayer should include intercession for the work of the Lord around the world.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Be more aware of the global scope of the Gospel.
- Be more convinced that prayer is the key to seeing God work as powerfully today as He did in the book of Acts.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Note that this is a two-session block that combines teaching and praying. Each section presents a biblical principle that relates to prayer for church planting. Immediately after each principle is introduced, time should be taken to pray about that topic. You may want to alternate between praying as a whole group and breaking up into small groups.

INTRODUCTION

Every church planter who desires to be effective must be committed to prayer. Prayer is a source of both power and direction from the Lord. Nothing of lasting spiritual value will be accomplished without it. However, it is possible to pray often and fervently, but not pray for the important things. While it is certainly true that God wants us to pray for our own needs, that by itself is not enough. He also expects us to pray for the needs of others, and for the fulfillment of His plan to reach all nations—that is, the Great Commission.

I. THE GOSPEL FOR ALL PEOPLE

God’s heart desires for all to hear the Good News of the Gospel. Jesus Christ left heaven in order to provide salvation through His shed blood, and the apostles traveled throughout the known world of their day to announce that fact. Many believers today are content to care for their own needs or the needs of those who are close to them and ignore the needs of the world. In some ways, the early church struggled with this same problem. The first believers were all ethnic Jews, and they had a difficult time deciding to take the Gospel to the other nations. What finally convinced them? In a word, prayer. There are four very significant occasions in Acts where prayer provided the power or the motivation to witness, or both.

A. The 120 disciples in Acts 1:12-14

The final command of Jesus before His resurrection was for the disciples to wait in Jerusalem. They spent their time together “*constantly in prayer*” in an upper room. The result of this extended prayer meeting was the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the powerful preaching of Peter, and the conversion of 3000 people in one day!

B. The Jerusalem Church in Acts 4:23-31

The young church in Jerusalem faced strong opposition from the religious authorities, who ordered them to stop spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In response, the believers met together and poured out their concern to God. The result was an outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit and the accompanying boldness to continue their witness despite the opposition.

C. Peter on the rooftop in Acts 10:9-15

At this point in Acts, the Gospel had not penetrated beyond the Jewish people. Once again, God used prayer—this time the prayer of Peter alone—to bring a desire to reach even the Gentiles. Peter was unwilling to even *enter the house* of a Gentile or to *eat with him*, let alone to witness to him. But after God met Peter in his prayer time, he not only willingly went to the home of Cornelius and opened a door of faith to the Gentiles, but he even defended the right of the Gentiles to be saved before the hostile Jewish believers (Acts 11).

D. Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Acts 13:1-3

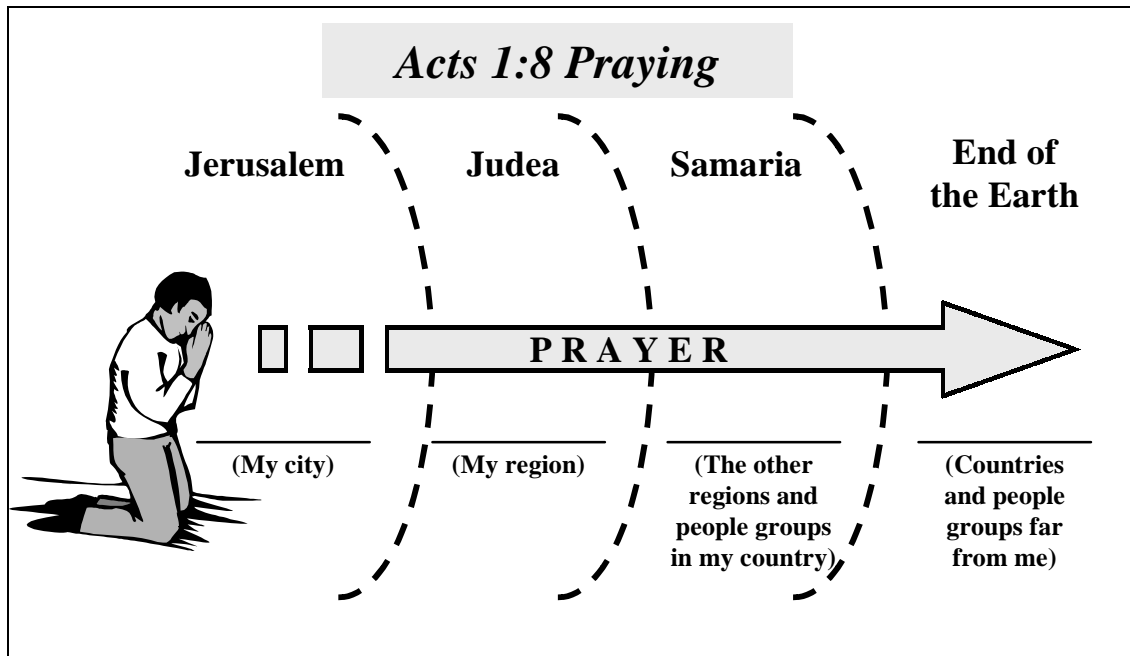
The first serious attempt by the early church to truly deal with the Great Commission and take the Gospel to *all nations* is found in the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. Those journeys grew out of a prayer meeting of the Antioch church. In this instance, the Bible specifically says that they were fasting. Prayer Lesson 5 explained that fasting was normally a setting aside of food or drink for the express purpose of *undistracted prayer and fellowship with God*. It was during this intense time of communion with the Lord that He instructed them to set aside Paul and Barnabas for missionary work. The church immediately complied and sent them off *with prayer*.

II. PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

It took the early church a long time to understand their responsibility to reach all nations. This is one biblical example that we should not repeat. At the same time Jesus told them to wait for the Holy Spirit, He also told them *where* and *to whom* they were to preach the Gospel. It was to go to those in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:4-8). And yet we follow the history of the church through thirteen chapters of Acts before they took this seriously. How sad!

The purpose of the following concert of prayer is to focus not only on our personal and local needs, but also to expand our prayer to the "end of the earth." That was the Lord's intention. As you look at the figure below, think about what each of the areas might represent to you, and fill in the blanks accordingly. Refer back to these as you move through the prayer time.

Figure 8.1 Acts 1:8 Praying



III. CONCERT OF PRAYER – PRAYING FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

The following section presents biblical, strategic topics for prayer which facilitators and leaders can use as a foundation to more effectively focus and guide their prayer groups and networks. Use this format as a guide for today's concert of prayer.

A. Pray for Personal Needs and Problems

Even though our prayer groups are to pray for saturation church planting, we sometimes have to release our own burdens so that we can better keep our minds on the things that are on God's heart for our nations, regions, cities, towns, villages, and neighborhoods. Philippians 4:6-7 tells us that as we pray about our anxieties God's peace will guard our hearts and minds in the things of Christ.

Divide into groups of two or three, briefly share personal needs, and spend time taking turns praying for each other.

B. Pray for God's Church

As we look at the needs of the church, we may be tempted to pray about things that bother us personally or even pray with a critical attitude. This is not wise as the church is Christ's bride (Ephesians 5:22-32) and no groom appreciates a negative attitude toward His beloved bride. The following prayer requests can help guide our prayer for the church.

Spend a few minutes praying together as a group for each of the following areas:

1. Pray for Unity

When Jesus prayed for believers, he prayed for unity. He prayed that we would be one because of our love for Him and for the Father, and our love for one another that resembles the love between Jesus and the Father (Jn 17:20-23). This contributes to saturation church planting because through this unity the world will know about Jesus.

2. *Pray for the Love of Christ*

The Apostle Paul prayed for the church in Philippi to abound in love, but not in blind love. He prayed for an intelligent love with deep knowledge and insight (Php 1:9). This contributes to saturation church planting because as we love one another all men will know that we follow Jesus (Jn 13:35).

3. *Pray for Obedience*

Paul prayed that the church in Ephesus would understand her call, and the great hope that the call of God holds (Eph 1:18). This contributes to saturation church planting because as the Church understands her call, she will multiply and take the Gospel to the world (Mt 28:18-20).

C. Pray for More Workers for God's Harvest

This is a direct command from Matthew 9:38. If Jesus commands us to pray for something, and we are faithful to pray, will He be faithful to answer? Could it be that there is such a shortage of workers because there is a lack of prayer for this very thing the Lord Jesus himself commanded? Think about it.

Ask the Lord to send more workers into His harvest both here and around the world.

D. Pray for Church Planters

Paul was a church planting apostle. Knowing the needs of his calling, he asked the church in Ephesus to pray for him that he would have the right words to say and the boldness to proclaim the Gospel (Eph 6:19-20).

Pray by name for those among you and others that you know are planting new churches.

E. Pray for Political, Social, and Religious Leaders

1Timothy 2:1-5 gives clear instruction to Christians to pray for governmental leaders and those in authority. The *purpose* of this prayer is so that there will be peace—resulting in the *salvation of many*.

Divide into small groups again and pray for your government and other leaders by name, asking that God might use them to create a better environment for the preaching of the Gospel.

F. Pray for Your Nation and the Nations of the World

Paul preached to the Gentiles, but he openly stated that he interceded to God for his own nation, Israel. In Romans 10:1 he wrote, "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved." In another example, following the prayers of the saints in heaven, God blessed their intercession by purchasing men from all the nations for Himself with the blood of Jesus Christ (Rev 5:8-10). As we pray for whole nations, we contribute to saturation church planting before the throne of God.

Close this concert of prayer by taking the remaining time to pray as one group for the salvation of your own people, and also for those of other people groups in your country and around the world. Mention each one specifically and by name as God brings them to your mind.

LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP
6
LESSON

Servant Leadership

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to discuss the importance and implications of servanthood as an attitude for leadership in church planting movements.

☞ Main Points

- Leadership is “what” and servanthood is “how.”
- Servant leadership is the biblical model for Christian leaders.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know the difference between worldly leadership and servant leadership
- Be committed to leading as a servant rather than as a boss.

☞ Appendix

6A The Leader’s Checklist

INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest needs for church planting movements is for biblically motivated leadership. When worldly approaches to leadership are imported into the church, or when people rely on their natural inclination instead of God’s Word, the tendency is towards power-motivated, controlling leaders. If we do not break this yoke of non-biblical leadership and unleash the resources of the Body of Christ, there is little hope that the world can be evangelized and brought under the Lordship of Christ in our lifetime.

Christ left us with an example of how to lead others, and our pattern for leadership should come from His example. His approach to leadership involved the giving of Himself to His followers.

I. WORLDLY LEADERSHIP

There is a tendency to view leadership as a matter of authority. Some feel that authority gives them the right to lead by ruling others. Thinking this way can result in devious and self-serving leadership. We see examples of this in politics, education, business etc., which can create a tendency for us to lead according to the ways of the world, since those ways are so familiar to us.

The world views leadership as a matter of authority.

Worldly leadership is based on certain assumptions about how people are motivated, such as:

- You can’t trust people to do what you want them to do.
- If you trust others too much, they will take advantage of you.
- Leaders assume authority on the basis of either their position or by their personality.
- People will do what you want them to do only when motivated by reward, or threatened by punishment.
- Leaders should avoid close contact with their followers, or their followers will view them as weak.

Do you agree with any of these statements? Why or why not?

The assumptions above are common in many leaders. They may not say it outwardly, but inwardly, they may think of their leadership task from a selfish, despotic perspective. Listen to the 'self talk' of the following leaders and discuss how each one is selfish:

- *I know best what is to be done. After all, I am the best trained, most experienced, and better informed about our task than anyone else. My followers expect that from me as the leader.*
- *As the leader I cannot do everything myself, so I need the help of my followers to do the work, but I do not need their ideas or plans to implement what is to be done.*
- *I suppose I should listen to my followers. These days they expect that much from me. But, I don't expect to hear anything new. I'm quite confident we'll end up doing it my way.*
- *Of course, I am the one who handles the proceedings and controls the pace of all meetings. After all, the agenda is mine and I've thought each point through already.*

II. SERVANT LEADERSHIP

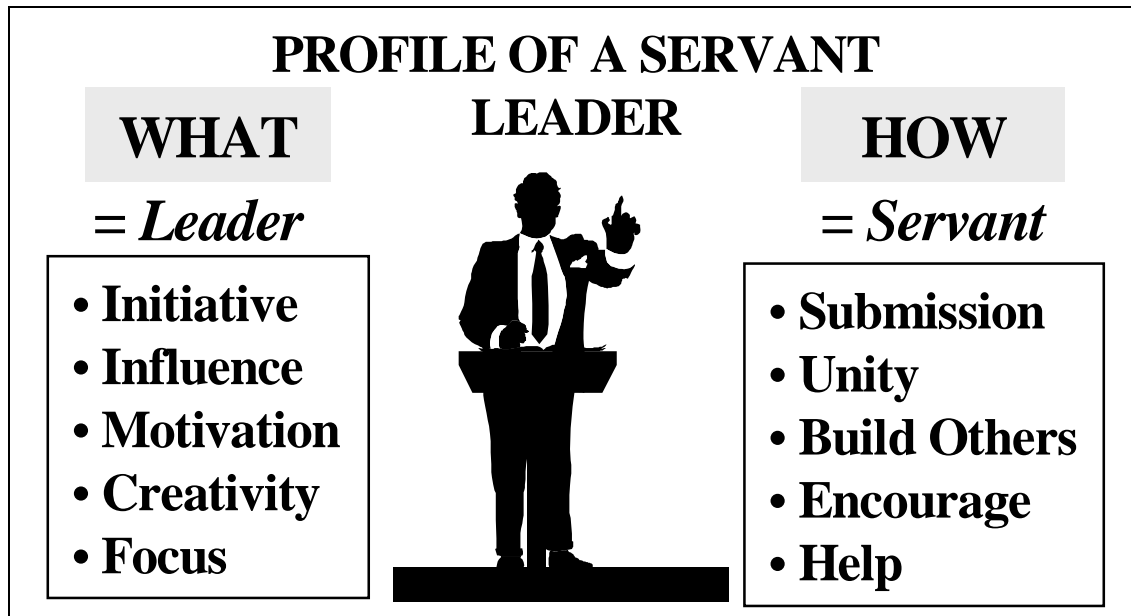
Jesus took time to clearly explain the world's way of leading (Mt 20:25-28). He pronounced "Not so with you," and made it clear that the disciples should never employ heavy handed, self-centered methods of leadership. Instead, those who follow Jesus are to be "servants of all."

A. Servanthood and leadership can coexist

An initial glance at the words "servanthood" and "leadership" appear somewhat contradictory. On the one hand, a servant is a person employed by another, who does the will of his employer. His job security depends on it, as well as his honor as a hired servant. Servanthood implies responsive activity, subservient position, and a submissive spirit.

Leadership, on the other hand, implies initiation. It involves direction, influence and motivation. It requires pro-activity, creative involvement, focus, and building others up so that together they can produce more than each person could individually. Leadership is *knowing where one is going, and having the ability to inspire others to go along.*

Figure 3.1 The Servant leader



So how can the two fit together? Whereas leadership describes the 'what' of our work, servanthood addresses fundamentally the 'how' of our work (the needs of others). We lead as servants. To be a

“leader” in the worldly sense does not require servanthood. However, in the task of spawning church planting movements, it is a must.

B. Christian principles concerning motivation and leadership

- People are made in the image of God and therefore have intrinsic worth (Ge 1:27-28).
- People are motivated to perform with excellence in recognition that everything is to be done to the glory of God (Col 3:23).
- People will not grow and develop unless they are trusted and given freedom both to succeed and to fail.
- A leader is appointed by God and assumes authority from Him (Ro 13:1).
- Successful leaders view others as friends, not as subordinates, and interact with them in a spirit of openness and humility (Jn 15:15).

III. NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Jesus and the Apostles not only taught about servant leadership, but also demonstrated it with their lives. Their example should continue to challenge us as we minister today.

A. The Example and Teaching of Jesus

Jesus' leadership should not be self-serving (Mt 20:25-28; Jn 13:1-16). Jesus put aside his own honor to serve—most graphically in the upper room as he washed the feet of the disciples. Eventually, his unique ministry led him to physically die for those he under his care (Php 2:1-11). He took the form of a servant in order to carry our burden of sin. He invited the lost to come to him and find rest from their burdens. He said, *“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light”* (Mt 11:28-30).

As a great leader Jesus ignited the most amazing movement of all time, the movement of his worldwide church. Yet Jesus was also clearly a servant. How ironic that it was from this position as a servant that Jesus started the movement we are discussing today.

Jesus calls his disciples “friends” and himself a “servant” (Jn 15:15). The disciples did not demand this of him. The disciples' role was one of deepest respect and obedience. In ordinary relationships, these roles are often reversed. The leader demands respect and obedience, as followers look for a friend and a servant.

Jesus also taught his disciples the importance of being servant leaders. In Matthew 20:25-28, he warned them not to follow the world's system of leadership. Rather, he challenged them to follow his example by giving their very lives to seek and save the lost.

B. The Example and Teaching of Paul

Perhaps the best example of Paul's servant heart is seen in his second letter to the Thessalonians. Look closely at how he described his service among them:

“We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked day and night in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you” (1Th 2:6-9).

Clearly Paul felt that his position as an apostle entitled him to serve others and bear their burdens, rather than to be served. He taught us to do the same:

- *“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves”* (Ro 15:1).

- *“And we urge you, brother, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone” (1Th 5:14).*
- *“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal 6:1,2).*

C. The Example and Teaching of Peter

In his first epistle, Peter makes it very clear that leaders in the church are expected to be servant leaders (1Pe 5:1-4). Peter appeals as one who saw Christ's suffering first hand and even alludes to Jesus' teaching on leadership (Mt 20:25-28) by instructing these elders not to 'lord it over' those entrusted to them.

The life of Peter confirms that he believed what he taught. He suffered greatly in the Lord's service. Tradition says that Peter was crucified upside-down *at his request*, because he did not feel that he was worthy to be crucified in the same position as Christ.

IV. APPLICATION

Servant leadership is the biblical approach to leadership. In simple terms, servant leadership means that the leader puts his followers' well-being ahead of his own. Christian leaders are first and foremost servants. Intimidation, superiority, and force should never be characteristic of a Christian leader (Mt 20:25-28, 1Pe 5:1-7). The Christian leader is not a “ruler” in the sense of a dictator [the word “rule” (Greek root ‘arch’) is never used in the New Testament to describe relationships between Christians]. Instead he is a servant.

Servant leadership means that the leader puts his followers' well-being ahead of his own.

Qualities and Characteristics of the Servant leader

- The servant leader maintains and builds unity (Eph 4:3). He avoids needless arguments about ownership, credit or territory.
- Servant leaders are not threatened by others' strengths and accomplishments. Instead, they recognize the value of these strengths and use them to help achieve the goals of the group.
- The servant leader is a “builder up” of others. The servant leader works to encourage and lift up others in every possible way. They celebrate the victories of others, no matter how small.
- Servant leaders are pro-active to move issues ahead, while maintaining meekness and a consideration of others.
- Servant leaders speak well of others at all times.
- The servant leader seeks to build a broad base of leaders to lead with him.
- Servant leaders recognize and use authority appropriately (positional, relational, experiential, personal, spiritual).
- A servant leader does not draw his meaning, worth or reputation from the position he holds.
- A servant leader does not make decisions based on his progress, advancement, comfort, increase of authority or position at the expense of those he serves.
- A servant leader's commitment to his followers' progress, their ministries, and their increase is a key expression of his love.
- A servant leader develops other servant leaders, so as to provide a strong base of leadership for new, reproducing churches.

CONCLUSION

The attitude of the servant leader is that his job is to lead others to do what God wants from them. His job is not to 'lord it over' others, or manipulate people into doing what he thinks is best. Instead, he is to build up others in all areas of life and ministry. The success of a servant leader is measured by the accomplishments in the lives of those he leads.

The servant leader must build up others in all areas of life and ministry.

A servant leader realizes that before God, he is on the same level as those he leads. His authority to lead is not really his but comes from God, so that he is not free to use this authority in any way he wishes. He must use this authority in the same way that Jesus did, as a servant to those he was leading.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Why is it difficult for a leader to be a servant leader?
- What are some of the burdens that a church planter should be willing to bear for others?
- Describe what a church planter would look like who was a servant leader.
- What changes in your own life and ministry do you need to make to be a better servant leader?

ACTION PLAN

Complete Appendix 6A, "The Leader's Checklist." Evaluate your own leadership style based on the results of this checklist. As a leader, determine areas in your life and ministry that need to change.

SOURCES

Engel, James F., Jane Overstreet, and Terry Sparks. *Leadership: Making Human Strength Productive*. St. Davids, PA: The Center For Organizational Excellence, Eastern College, 1996.



The Leader's Checklist

Use the scale below to evaluate your qualities as a church-planting leader. Circle the one number (from 1 - 5) that best represents how well each statement describes you. It may also be useful to allow someone you know and trust to evaluate you honestly, such as your spouse or a spiritual friend. Then compare the results to determine points of agreement and disagreement. From this you may want to make some changes in your ministry style in order to be more effective in church planting.

Circle one number for each question

		Poor			Excellent
1.	I am always willing to take faith-motivated risks for God.	1	2	3	4 5
2.	I have the ability to communicate a God-given vision to others.	1	2	3	4 5
3.	I am committed to evangelism, church planting and the starting of cell groups.	1	2	3	4 5
4.	I like to take initiative.	1	2	3	4 5
5.	I am willing and able to work through interpersonal conflict.	1	2	3	4 5
6.	I am able to create ownership of ministry in others.	1	2	3	4 5
7.	I can utilize the spiritual gifts and abilities of others.	1	2	3	4 5
8.	I walk with Christ.	1	2	3	4 5
9.	I am a servant leader.	1	2	3	4 5
10.	I have the full cooperation and support of my family.	1	2	3	4 5
11.	I relate well to the unchurched and the unconverted.	1	2	3	4 5
12.	I approach challenges as "opportunities" rather than as "problems."	1	2	3	4 5
13.	I follow through on goals that I have set with others.	1	2	3	4 5
14.	I am resilient when faced with hard times.	1	2	3	4 5
15.	I have a "call from God" to do church planting.	1	2	3	4 5
16.	I know how to delegate to people.	1	2	3	4 5
17.	I train others to use their gifts more effectively.	1	2	3	4 5

LEADERSHIP
7
LESSON

Leadership Dynamics

Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain how the leader, group and task are interrelated, and how they together influence the church planting process.

Main Points

- The leader, the group, and the task all influence leadership success.
- Varying leadership styles are appropriate in different situations, but leadership of a church planting group should be group-centered.

Desired Outcomes

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

- Know his or her natural leadership style.
- Be committed to being more 'group-oriented' in his or her leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Why is it that some leaders fail and others succeed? Why do many leaders excel in some situations and fail in others? In the same way, is it really possible to describe a generic kind of leader who will be successful in all situations and in all cultures? Can we make bold statements such as "A leader must always . . .?" Many have tried to do just that, and failed. A study of leadership that looks only at the skills and qualifications of the leader is missing an important part of the equation.

The answer to the questions above is complex because several factors influence the effectiveness of leaders, of which the skills of the leader is only one part. Instead, leadership involves the interrelationship of three factors, as shown in figure 7.1:

- The characteristics of the leader.
- The characteristics of the group.
- The nature of the task.

In order for a leader to guide his group in successfully completing its task, these three factors must fit together. The leader must be able to lead the group and understand how to approach the task. The group must be capable of completing the task and willing to follow the leader. In order to ensure that a group committed to planting a church is reasonably well prepared for the task, it is necessary to evaluate the 'chemistry' between all three of these elements.

In order for a leader to guide his group in successfully completing its task, three factors must fit together.

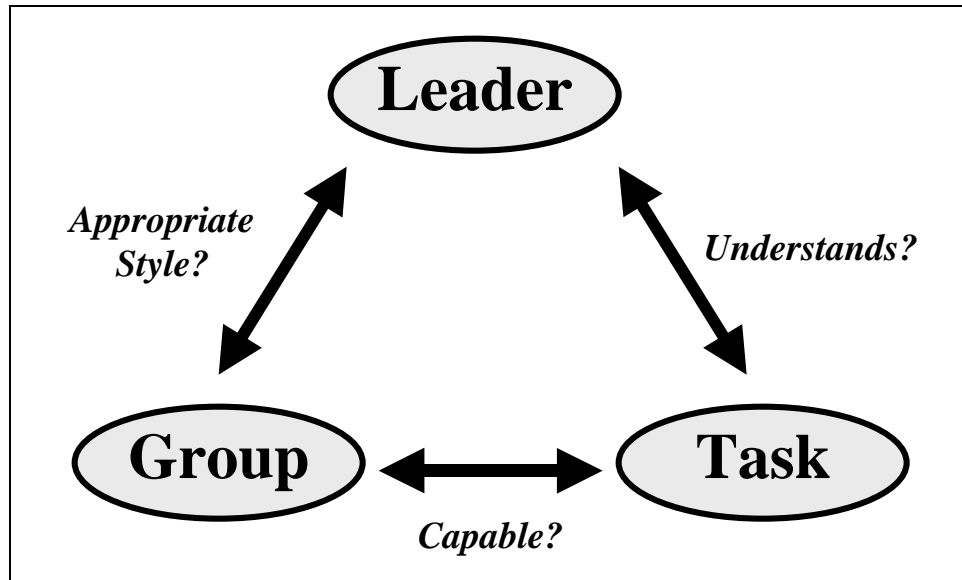
I. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LEADER

The leader, while not the only factor, is the most important variable in the leadership process. Little happens without leadership, and the right leader can make all the difference in the world. Sometimes a group has no clear leader. This is a common ministry problem—no one rises up to take leadership. If, however, the group is accomplishing the task, one or more members of the group are probably fulfilling the leadership role—even if this is not recognized. In fact, there are situations where several people will direct the task by consensus, intentionally choosing not to have any one leader. While this works on

occasion, it is difficult to make progress on any task without one person to coordinate and make sure that group decisions are followed up. This is the primary reason that committees have such a bad reputation of not accomplishing much.

This lesson assumes that your church planting group has a leader—even if the difference in authority between that leader and the other members is minimal. It is also assumed that you are probably that leader, and that you desire to do a better job of leading. What are the important factors in the relationship between leader, the group, and the task?

Figure 7.1 Three Factors of Leadership Success



A. The Person of the Leader

The character of the leader has already been dealt with in previous lessons, so we will only touch on it here. That does not mean it is not important. On the contrary, when we are dealing with the spiritual task of church planting, the heart of the leader is probably the single most important factor in the group's success. That is why it is of such importance to the Lord, and why it should be the top priority for us (1Sa 16:7).

Based on what has been discussed in previous leadership lessons in Manual Two, consider the following:

- To what extent do you fit the 'profile' of a leader in the context of church planting as discussed in Leadership lesson 2, "Profile of a Leader"?
- Obviously no one fits the profile perfectly. How do you as the leader deal with the areas in which you are not gifted?
- Do you follow the biblical principles of leadership as outlined in Leadership lesson 1, "Biblical Principles of Leadership"?

B. How the Leader Relates to the Group

Leadership styles vary from leader to leader and from situation to situation. Figure 7.2 illustrates five styles of leadership that are common. The leader's style may range from "leader-centered" to "group-centered" depending on how much the leader shares control with the group.

It can be argued that there is a time and place for each of these five styles of leadership. However, the 'leader-centered' end of the scale would normally only be appropriate when the group lacks the maturity or understanding to make good decisions, or perhaps in a crisis situation.

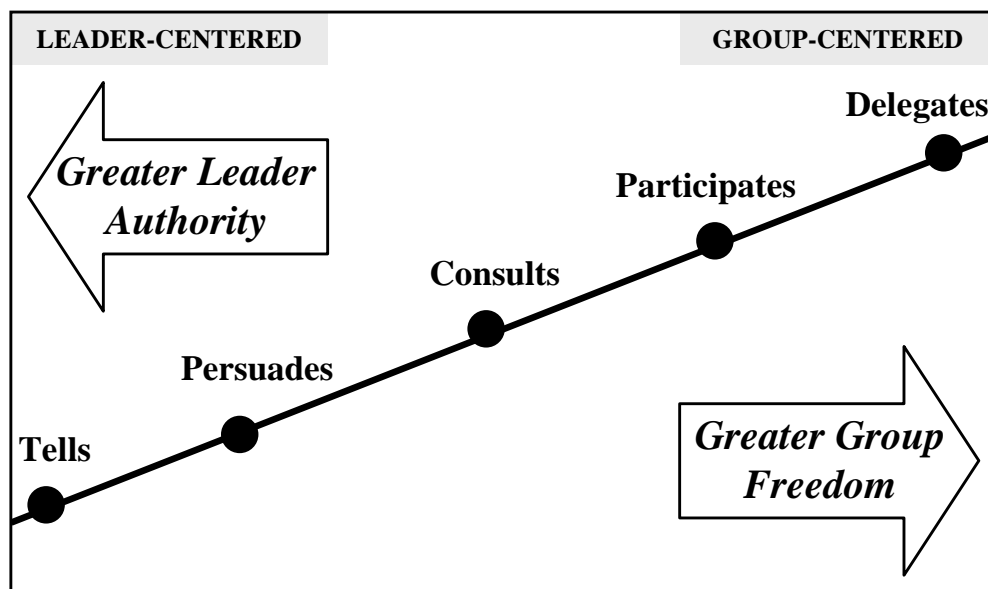
There is a time and place for each of these five styles of leadership.

For the purpose of church planting, there should be a significant level of maturity and spirituality on the part of all those who are ministering and directing the work. Therefore, a leader of a church planting group should expect to mainly use the 'group-centered' styles of leadership. Problems arise when the leader of the church plant is only comfortable with 'leader-centered' styles. In that case, the leader has four options. He can:

- Learn to change his style
- Give up the leadership role
- Work alone
- Frustrate the entire group and hinder the planting of the church

As you look at figure 7.2 and read the discussion of each style of leadership, evaluate your own preferred style. We say "preferred" because although most leaders may be able to use a number of different styles, they tend to be more comfortable in one of them.

Figure 7.2 Five Common Leadership Styles



1. *Telling*

Leaders identify problems, consider options, choose one solution, and tell their followers what to do. Leaders may consider members' views, but members do not participate directly in decision-making.

2. *Persuading*

Leaders make decisions and try to persuade group members to accept them. A leader using this style may point out that they considered the organization's goals and the interests of the group members. They even point out how the members will benefit from carrying out the decision.

3. *Consulting*

Group members have opportunity to influence decision-making from the beginning. Leaders using this style present problems and relevant background information. They invite the group to suggest alternative actions. Leaders then select the most promising solution.

4. *Participating*

Leaders participate in the discussion to a similar degree as the other members, and agree in advance to carry out whatever decision the group makes.

5. *Delegating*

Leaders define the boundaries within which to solve problems or accomplish tasks. Then they turn it over to the group to work out solutions or to implement the tasks.

Remember that none of these five styles is inherently right or wrong. The military, for instance, has had great success in *telling* soldiers what to do, with no discussion allowed. Even in church planting situations, there might be some times when it is best and simplest if the leader makes certain decisions without consulting the group. Usually this happens when there is an urgent need to make a decision *now!* However, in all but extreme situations, the leader of a church plant should consult those with whom he or she is working. A good leader needs to know when each leadership style would be appropriate, and be growing in his or her ability to use other than his natural style when necessary.

The leader of a church plant should normally consult those with whom he or she is working.

C. **The Leader's Understanding of the Task**

It should be obvious that a leader must understand the task to be accomplished and know how to carry it out. However, leaders are often appointed solely on the basis of personality or past leadership ability, even if they do not understand the task at hand. Some may be intelligent enough to learn quickly and succeed, but many fail in this situation. It is strongly desirable that the leader should have a thorough understanding of the task.

Church planting is too important a task to commit to leaders that do not understand it, or who are not willing to learn about it. In fact, a leader who is not a learner will seldom guide a group to successful accomplishment of its task. Therefore, a leader of a church plant *must* understand the process of church planting, and be growing in his or her knowledge. The role of the leader is crucial. If the leader has faulty assumptions or ideas, the church plant will probably fail.

It is not necessary that the leader know *everything* about church planting. If so, no church would ever be planted—for lack of leaders. In the same way, it is not even necessary that the leader know more than any other member of the group. Perhaps another member is an 'expert church planter', but is not a particularly capable leader. The best solution in that case is for the more gifted leader to assume the leadership of the group, but to make sure that he adopts a 'group-centered' style so that the group benefits from the experience of the more knowledgeable member(s).

It is not necessary that the leader know *everything* about church planting.

II. **CHARACTERISTICS OF GROUP**

By the 'group', we mean 'whoever the leader leads.' The leader may not be in control of this factor. You may work with people that you did not pick, but God has led you together. Whether you personally chose the group members or not, you can improve your leadership and the group's success by being aware of the nature of the group.

The church planting group must be leading godly lives, and be able to perform basic functions such as evangelism, discipleship, and building relationships. If the members are capable in these areas, your task as a leader will simply be to keep them focused on the goal of planting the church. If there is a deficiency in one or more areas, you will need to find a way to develop competency in those tasks. Therefore, a careful evaluation of the group will be very profitable, and enhance their chances of establishing a solid, growing church. There are several areas to consider.

If the group is deficient in some area, the leader will need to develop their competency in those tasks.

A. The Group Members' Skills and Abilities

Look at the group you work with and consider the following questions:

- How much experience do group members have in evangelism, discipleship etc.? Do you need to concentrate on training?
- In what ways are some of them ready to be released for ministry?
- Are your group members aware of their spiritual gifts?

The answer to these questions will affect the progress of the group. You cannot lead the group where they are unprepared to go. If your group lacks ministry skills, you will need to train them.

B. The Group Members' Commitment to the Task

Perhaps you have a group of skilled people to work with. Some may have planted churches before; others are experienced evangelists or cell group leaders. But perhaps your group members are not available to participate in the task because of other commitments.

- Do employment schedules interfere with ministry meetings and activities?
- Do family obligations interrupt the focus of group members?
- Do the members think that the church plant is of vital importance?

Perhaps group members are committed to the church plant, but have very different ideas about the kind of church they are establishing. They may expect different ministry styles, or have conflicting visions of church structure. If your team has not worked out a clear plan and strategy, this kind of problem will probably arise. You will have great difficulty moving the group forward until you all agree on what you are moving towards.

C. The Relationships Between the Members

Leadership is largely "people" business. A large part of ministry is dealing with others. If there are relationship problems among those you work with, it will interfere with the task sooner or later. Leaders need to continually monitor the relationships among the group members. If the group does not trust each other, progress can be inhibited. If members are competing for recognition or position, true cooperation will be impossible. A variety of motivations and hidden agendas may unconsciously interfere with the goal.

It is also possible that one or more members of the group might have a relationship problem with the leader. This often arises when leadership styles conflict with expectations. A leader might use a very directive style with a group that values freedom, thereby making the members feel belittled. Or, in the opposite case, a leader might defer decisions to a group that would rather have stronger direction from the leader, and thus feel confused or have trouble knowing what to do. Both issues should be addressed and a workable compromise reached.

Problems often arise when leadership styles conflict with group expectations.

How do you deal with interpersonal conflict as a leader of others? An experienced leader offers the following advice:

When I sense tension among those I lead, or when someone displays "disruptive" zeal for a particular point of view, I try to ask myself "what is going on here?" Oftentimes there are hurts, fears or interpersonal issues below the surface that are coming out in an unusual way. Perhaps I have offended this person, or maybe he or she feels unappreciated by the group. By spending a bit of extra time with the seeming "troubled" person, perhaps giving them a chance to open up, I am often able to reassure them of their worth and acceptance by me and the group. Often, this is all that is necessary to improve harmony among us.

III. THE NATURE OF THE TASK

The third factor in leadership is the task. The task is the purpose for which the group exists. It is important that the task be clear in the mind of each member. The responsibility to keep this goal before them falls squarely on the shoulders of the leader.

It is the leader's responsibility to make the task clear.

There are two extremes:

- 1) failing to keep the task clearly before the group, and
- 2) overemphasizing the task to the detriment of group relationships.

The first extreme causes the group to flounder doing unimportant activities, or to get so caught up taking care of the group that they forget the lost to whom the Lord has sent them. The second extreme results in wounded relationships and an inability to model Christian community.

Your task is saturation church planting. As the leader, you need to continually evaluate whether or not your group is making progress in planting the church. Your research helps you to understand your particular situation and focus your efforts in the important areas. In addition to what you have learned in your research, you need to consider how the following issues affect the difficulty of planting a church in your target area, and adjust your expectations accordingly.

As a leader, you need to continually evaluate whether or not your group is making progress in planting the church.

- Are you planting a church among resistant or receptive people?
- Are you or members of your group "outsiders" or "foreigners" among these people?
- Are there economic realities that make the church planting effort difficult?
- Do you have enough information about your context? Do you and your group understand your task?
- Do you have a clear plan and strategy that takes the results of your research into account?
- Are there any unique spiritual dynamics that must be confronted?
- Are there any political pressures that are affecting the situation?
- Do you have the resources needed to complete the task?
- In what ways has God prepared you and your group for this task?
- Are there any 'open doors' that are proving effective in the work, and which you need to use more fully?
- Are the people that your group has already reached growing and being disciplined in the Lord? What corrections do you need to make to your strategy to better help them?

CONCLUSION

As you can see there are many factors that affect the leadership process. As a church planter you need to watch your own leadership abilities and skills, shepherd and train your group and monitor the various realities of the task. The action plan at the end of this lesson will help you take stock of your factors.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are the three main factors that affect the success of leadership?
- What is the most typical style of secular leadership in your country?
- What is the most typical style of leadership within your churches?
- What style of leadership was exercised by those Christian leaders who have had the most positive influence on you in the past?

ACTION PLAN

Write a report on the various factors in your leadership situation by answering the following questions. Give this report to your mentor and discuss it with him before the next training session.

- 1) Describe yourself as a leader
 - What leadership style do you use the most?
 - Which limitations do you see yourself as having? What can you do to compensate for these limitations?
- 2) Describe your group
 - Describe their skills and abilities.
 - What is their level of commitment to the task?
 - Are there any interpersonal conflicts that need to be addressed?
- 3) Describe your task
 - Are you planting a church among resistant or receptive people?
 - Are you or members of your team “outsiders” or “foreigners” among these groups?
 - Are there economic realities that make the church planting effort difficult?
 - Do you have enough information about your context? Do you and your group understand your task?
 - Do you have a clear plan and strategy that takes the results of your research into account?
 - Are there any unique spiritual dynamics that must be confronted?
 - Are there any political pressures that are affecting the situation?
 - Do you have the resources needed to complete the task?
 - In what ways has God prepared you and your group for this task?
- 4) Conclusion
 - As a result of what you have learned, what do you need to focus on?
 - What leadership style would be most effective in your situation, and why?

SOURCES

D'Souza, A., and Engel, J. F. “Leadership Styles, Being a Leader” in *Leadership: Making Human Strength Productive*. St. Davids, PA: The Center For Organizational Excellence, Eastern College, 1996. (Used by Permission)



Styles of Interaction

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce styles of interaction, to give the leader a frame of reference for understanding how he or she can most effectively work with others.

☞ Main Points

- Interaction styles are not the same as leadership styles, but affect leadership.
- All interaction styles have their strengths and weaknesses.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know his/her own style of interacting with others.
- Understand how conflicts arise because of different interacting styles.
- Identify one way to improve his/her effectiveness with others.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson is a combination lesson and workshop. Trainees will evaluate their own interactive style using the table in Figure 8.1 (allow 15 minutes for this activity). Then refer back to the results of the evaluation as you work through the explanation of each kind of interactive style. This lesson is best done with lots of discussion among participants and trainer.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a social process. Leaders deal with people, and interpersonal relationships are a large part of effectiveness. As a church planter, your effectiveness is greatly influenced by your ability to understand and relate to other people. *Interaction styles* focus on interpersonal relationships, whereas *leadership styles* focus on accomplishing a particular task. There is, of course, some overlap, and both are important considerations for a leader. In this lesson we will look at several styles for interacting with others. You will have an opportunity to discover your own tendencies in dealing with others. The evaluation tool in this lesson will also be useful in understanding others.

I. DISCOVER YOUR STYLE OF INTERACTION

God has made us all different and calls us to different tasks. This means **everyone is not like you**. When we expect others to behave like us, to think like us, and to see things the way we do, then we end up building relationships only with people like us. We then fail to appreciate others, and often find ourselves in conflict.

We need to take an objective look at ourselves in order to see how we affect others. We may offend others and not know it. We may feel unable to motivate others and not know why. The following paragraphs contain an exercise which can help you to discover your style for interacting with others. When you discover your interactive style, you can begin to make changes to maximize your strengths and minimize your weaknesses. This can reduce

When you discover your interactive style, you can maximize your strengths and minimize your weaknesses.

conflict with others, and help you to be more effective.

A. Directions for Evaluating your Interaction Style

Figure 8.1 contains four columns of statements. Respond to all of the statements in the table by putting a 0, 1, or 2 in the space provided beside each statement.

0 = This statement never describes you.

1 = This statement sometimes describes you.

2 = This statement describes you very well.

Figure 8.1 Evaluating Your Interaction Style

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
I grasp the big picture more quickly than others around me _____	I am a person who generates enthusiasm in people around me _____	People say I demonstrate patience and understanding _____	I can be counted on to carry out a task I am given _____
I like to make things happen quickly _____	I work best when I am free from the control of others _____	People say that I am easy to get along with _____	One of my greatest strengths is paying attention to detail _____
I am not very good at details _____	I often put people ahead of programs _____	I am a good listener _____	If a job is worth doing, it is worth doing very well _____
I often challenge the status quo _____	Management of time is difficult for me _____	People are just as important to me as the ministry program _____	I need to know exactly what is expected of me _____
When necessary, I will take control to make things happen _____	People like to be around me _____	I do best in situations where people work together in harmony _____	I don't want to make decisions without having all the facts _____
I sometimes find it hard to be a good team player _____	I tend to take it personally when people disagree with me _____	I am most effective when my work situation is stable and secure _____	I have difficulty in expressing my feelings _____
Some people say that I am not a very good listener _____	I don't do very well with facts and detail work _____	I do best when people let me know that I am appreciated _____	I am a cautious person who hesitates to take risks _____
I often get bored when my ministry becomes routine _____	I find it easy to express my thoughts and feelings _____	Too much change threatens me _____	I function well within known guidelines and policies _____
I get frustrated when other people resist my ideas _____	I do best when I sense that others really like me _____	My superiors can count on my loyalty _____	I am critical when my performance falls short of standards _____
I welcome challenge and change—the more the better _____	I am effective in motivating others to work together _____	I do everything I can to meet the needs of those who are close to me _____	People often wonder just what I am thinking _____
Total for Column 1: _____	Total for Column 2: _____	Total for Column 3: _____	Total for Column 4: _____

B. Scoring

When you are finished, add up your answers in each column and write the totals in the spaces below each column. Refer to these numbers as you continue to work through the rest of the lesson.

C. Interpreting the Results

There are four basic styles of interaction. The four columns in figure 8.1 represent these four styles. Again, these styles of interaction differ from “leadership styles” introduced in the last lesson because they apply to everyone, whether they are leaders or not.

You can now determine your normal interaction style by filling in the totals from figure 8.1 into the spaces beside “Total for Column ...” in table 8.2 below. Next, find the highest number and place a “1” beside it in the space under “Rank.” Then, rank your second highest style as “2,” your third highest as “3,” and the lowest as “4.”

Table 8.2 Your Style

Totals from Figure 8.1	Style	Rank
Total from Column 1:	DOER	
Total from Column 2:	MOTIVATOR	
Total from Column 3:	TEAM PLAYER	
Total from Column 4:	THINKER	

You now know which of these four interaction styles are the strongest and weakest. You are ready to look at what each one means, the various strengths and weaknesses of them, and what you can do to improve your interaction.

II. THE FOUR INTERACTION STYLES

None of these four styles is better than any others. They all have their own strengths and weaknesses. God uses all personalities in His kingdom.

A. The Doer

“Take charge and rise to the challenge of bringing about change to make ministries more effective.”

Doers tend to be capable people, able to accept challenges and solve problems in a quick and effective way. They are people of action and can be depended on to get things done. Doers are not afraid to take risks; sometimes they take on too much work and may appear impatient when there is no apparent progress.

Example: Paul (Php 4:13)

<p><i>Desires Situations Which Allow:</i></p> <p>Freedom, authority, variety, difficult tasks, opportunity for advancement, encourage individuality</p> <p><i>Those who are similar may see you as:</i></p> <p>Decisive, independent, efficient, practical, determined</p>	<p><i>Responds Best to Others Who:</i></p> <p>Provide direct answers, stick to business, stress logic, provide pressure</p> <p><i>Those who are different may see you as:</i></p> <p>Harsh, pushy, dominating, severe, tough</p>
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SOME ACTION STEPS

- Learn to listen, be patient

- Be less controlling
- Develop greater concern for people
- Be more flexible and supportive with people
- Explain why things are as they are

B. The Motivator

“Motivating and influencing others to work together to achieve important outcomes”

Motivators are optimistic and enthusiastic people who are very good at relating to others. They are often very articulate and can explain ideas and possibilities in a way that inspires others to get involved. Their tendency to get excited about new things may make it difficult for them to follow through on some tasks.

Example: Peter (Mt 14:28,16:16)

<i>Desires Situations Which Allow:</i> Prestige, friendly relationships, freedom from control and detail, opportunity to motivate and help others, free expression of ideas	<i>Responds Best to Others Who:</i> Are friendly and democratic, provide for recognition and acceptance, seek social involvement
<i>Those who are similar may see you as:</i> Stimulating, enthusiastic, dramatic, outgoing, personable	<i>Those who are different may see you as:</i> Excitable, egotistical, reacting, manipulative, talkative

SOME ACTION STEPS

- Be less impulsive—evaluate your ideas
- Be more results-oriented
- Control actions and emotions
- Focus more on details/facts
- Slow down, listen, don’t talk as much

C. The Team Player

“Cooperate readily with others to carry out the vision and plans”

Team players are supportive, loyal people who have strong sensitivity to the needs of others. They can be counted on to carry out tasks as assigned by their leaders and will not offend those they are committed to. Team players may not work well alone as they sometimes lack personal initiative.

Example: Barnabas (Ac 15:37-39)

<i>Desires Situations Which Allow:</i> Individual specialization, group identity, established work patterns, security, clear goals and job description	<i>Responds Best to Others Who:</i> Serve as a friend, allow time to adjust to change, allow freedom to work at your own pace, provide support
<i>Those who are similar may see you as:</i> Supportive, willing, dependable, reliable, agreeable	<i>Those who are different may see you as:</i> Conforming, awkward, dependent, slow, reticent

SOME ACTION STEPS

- Be less sensitive to what others think
- Be more direct
- Be more concerned with the task itself

- Face confrontation and be more decisive
- Learn to say 'no'
- Do more to initiate action

D. The Thinker

“Motivated to carry out visions and plans with excellence and attention to detail”

Thinkers are conscientious, orderly people who have great perception for details. They can be counted on to follow through on projects that others find too complex. Thinkers are challenged by unexpected changes and tend to become rigid in the face of ambiguity.

Example: Luke (Luke 1:1-4)

<p><i>Desires Situations Which Allow:</i> Specialization, precision, planning, security, stability, limited risk of failure</p>	<p><i>Responds Best to Others Who:</i> Provide reassurance, maintain supportive atmosphere, specify methods and standards</p>
<p><i>Those who are similar may see you as:</i> Thorough, persistent, orderly, serious, industrious</p>	<p><i>Those who are different may see you as:</i> Critical, stuffy, picky, indecisive, moralistic</p>

SOME ACTION STEPS

- Focus on doing the right things—not just on doing things right
- Respond more quickly
- Begin to trust your intuition and be less fact-oriented
- Be more willing to take risks
- Be more open and flexible
- Don't be afraid to develop relationships

Do the results describe you? You may want to share your results with a spouse or someone who knows you well to see if they can verify these results. Remember that the styles do not match people perfectly. You may find that you do not fit exactly into any one of these four styles. For most people the two groups in which they scored highest will shed light on their style.

Take some time to share what you have learned about yourself up to this point with the other trainees. In small groups answer the following questions:

- What is your preferred working environment?
- What kind of people do you respond best to?
- Describe your actual working environment. How is it like or unlike your preference?
- Have you had difficulty influencing those whose style you suspect is different from your own?
- What have you learned about yourself that you did not realize before?
- What steps can you take to be more effective with those around you? Do you need to be more direct? Do you need to listen more? Do you need to be more outgoing?

SUMMARY

What can you do, now that you know a few things about yourself, to be more effective with others? As was already said, each of these styles has its unique strengths as well as weaknesses. You will want to utilize your strengths and learn to grow through your weaknesses.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

For each of the four groups of people, describe the strengths and weaknesses in terms of the church planting process.

- How do doers approach the church planting task? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- How do motivators approach the church planting task? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- How do team players approach the church planting task? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- How do thinkers approach the church planting task? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

ACTION PLAN

- As a way to understand these four categories, pick out five people that you know from your circle of friends and quietly observe them in various situations and discreetly note their actions or statements that verify their interaction style.
- Consider the “action steps” that follow each of the styles. Identify two that you will consciously work on before the next training session. Share this with your mentor, and ask your mentor to give you feedback on how you are doing.

SOURCES

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LEADERSHIP
9
LESSON

Leadership Needs

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the trainee see what kinds and how many leaders are needed for local churches and for the whole body of Christ (The Church) in his nation.

☞ Main Points

- The saturation church planting task requires a variety of leaders.
- Every believer should be trained for leadership, although not all will excel at it.
- The lower the level of leadership, the more leaders are needed.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know the four levels of leaders described in this lesson.
- Be able to assess the leadership needs in his ministry.

INTRODUCTION

A church needs leadership. We would probably all agree with this statement. But it also raises a number of other important questions. What kinds of leaders are needed? Who should be a candidate for leadership training? Where should church leaders be trained? How should they be trained? Who should train them? What roles should they assume in church life? Dwight Smith, a mission leader, has said that "Without leaders, there will be no tomorrow; there will only be a repetition of today."

Without leaders, there will be no tomorrow; there will only be a repetition of today.

When these types of church leadership questions are discussed, there are two common false assumptions. The first assumption is that the leaders can only be trained in special programs (a Bible institute or seminary) and then be sent out to work in local churches. The second assumption is that leadership means "pastors." These assumptions only limit the options available to fill leadership needs. This lesson will attempt to provide a better understanding of the real needs for leadership in the Church.

I. WHAT KIND OF LEADERS DOES THE CHURCH NEED?

The narrow understanding of church leadership as a pastor only, while common, ignores the fact that many other kinds of leaders are needed in the Church if we are to fulfill the Great Commission. Neither is it the Lord's will that pastors alone carry on the ministry of the Church. There are at least four levels of church leadership that have been identified. Using these levels, we will describe the tasks of the leaders along with the various kinds of training programs needed to prepare them for service.

Many kinds of leaders, in addition to pastors, are needed if the Church is to fulfill the Great Commission.

Before we determine what leaders the Church needs, we must remember our definition of leadership that was presented in earlier lessons. Leadership is *influence*. We must be careful not to fall into the trap of thinking of leadership as a formal position, but rather as influence. Using that definition, we can now think of church leaders in terms of the people who are able to influence others to grow spiritually

and reach the lost. Obviously, the Church needs a huge number of that kind of leaders. In fact, *most*, if not all, Christians should be able to do these tasks.

This new way of looking at leaders for the Church shows the importance of training not only a 'select few' leaders, but for a much broader training of believers in general. Not all will be capable of the same level of leadership. Some have more natural ability to lead, or are spiritually gifted for those roles. They may lead very large churches, or groups of churches. Others will lead in less sensational ways, such as in small groups. The four levels of leadership are:

It is important to train believers in general for leadership, rather than just a select few.

A. Small Group or Cell Group Leaders – The Practitioners

These leaders have a less formal leadership role than do the church leaders or pastors, but it is one of the most vital positions. These leaders have the most direct contact with the lost, and with both new and mature believers. They are in many ways the 'front line.' The "higher" levels of leadership really exist to help train, mobilize, and envision this group to carry on the majority of the church planting work. While such a leader should be a growing Christian, there does not seem to be the same strict guidelines for this level of leaders as there is for elders. This is a good place to use less mature believers in ministry. It will be a stretching experience for them, and as they mature and succeed, they can be given additional responsibility. Much of the actual ministry of the early church happened in small groups with this kind of leadership (Acts 2:46-47).

B. Local Church Leaders – The Equippers

Local church leaders have responsibility to equip the entire local congregation for ministry, and to guide them in that task. They were never intended to do the work of the ministry by themselves. Rather, their role is too important to spend time "waiting tables." Those in this category might be called brothers, elders, deacons, pastors, or something else, depending on the particular church association to which they belong. There might be only one, or many, depending on the size of the congregation. They have awesome responsibility before the Lord, and should be chosen carefully. Only those of proven character and godly lives should be considered for this level of leadership.

C. Regional Church Leaders – The Mobilizers

By the time a person has risen to this level of leadership, they should be spending most of their time motivating others to do the work of the ministry. In this way, they can multiply their efforts and make the maximum impact with their experience. Those in this level of leadership might be called overseers, bishops, presbyters, or many other titles. The name is much less important than the role they fulfill. This level is perhaps most vulnerable to the sin of pride, and therefore must be chosen carefully.

D. National Church Leaders – The Envisioners

National leaders are those who are able to help others see what could be. They spend their time clarifying the goal of our activities for the rest of us. While the *mobilizers* keep the movement machinery running, the *envisioners* steer us toward the target of bringing the Gospel to every nation. Unity and cooperation among the believers is key to fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus prayed that the unity of the believers would be a testimony that would prove to the world that He was sent by the Father, and that He loves us (Jn 17:23). And yet, maintaining that unity without compromising the truth of the Gospel is a monumental task. Very few leaders have the wisdom to be able to fulfill this role as national church leaders.

Few leaders have the wisdom to be able to be national church leaders.

It should be noted that there is a natural and appropriate blurring of the lines between the tasks of the four kinds of leaders. These categories represent the *primary* functions of each leadership level. In reality, all four levels should fulfill the other roles to a lesser degree. For instance, a pastor should also envision. A small group leader should equip. A national leader should mobilize, and so on. However,

they should spend the majority of their time, and be most gifted in the areas listed for their level of leadership.

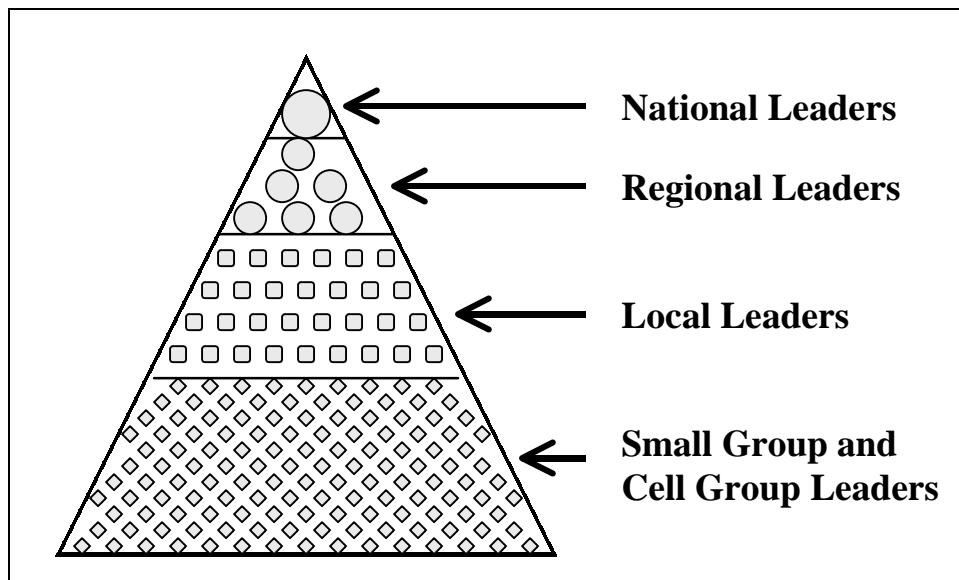
There are various ways to classify the levels of leadership, but for our purposes, we will use these four. And although these training materials focus on the first two levels, this does not mean that the other two are not important. Rather, regional and national leaders usually begin their ministries in the first two levels, and are given more responsibility as their abilities are recognized.

It should also be noted that a variety of people are needed to fill these leadership roles. In order for a church planting movement to happen, many different groups need to be motivated and lead. While qualified men will be needed for many positions, there will also be a need for women leaders and youth leaders. In some situations, single men and women may be better able to devote the time and energy needed if the movement is to spread. This was the case in the New Testament, where the Lord greatly used the Apostle Paul as a single man.

II. HOW MANY LEADERS DOES THE CHURCH NEED?

Leadership needs in the Church can best be illustrate by the pyramid in figure 9.1. This figure demonstrates the fact that many more leaders are needed at the bottom of the pyramid than at the top. This is because of the increasing number of groups to lead as we go down the pyramid. There are a relatively small number of national churches, but each of them may have many regions. Each regional church may be comprised of a large number of local churches. Each healthy local church will have many small groups and/or cell groups meeting together for edification, prayer, worship, evangelism, and other activities and needs.

Figure 9.1 The Church Leadership Level Pyramid



Thus, the answer to the question "How many leaders do we need?" is "As many as we can possibly train!" When we consider all the levels of leadership, we see that the need is massive, and is increasing as people are won to the Lord, small groups are formed, and new local churches are established. This leads to the next logical question.

A. The 'Sand Table'

Ministry will rise or fall on its leadership. This means that before a church can add new members, it must expand its leadership base. This is analogous to piling sand on a table. You can pile only so much sand on the table before it is covered. When there is no more space on the table then the table is covered and the sand assumes the shape of a pyramid with all the extra sand running off

the table. If you want to add more sand and build a bigger pyramid, you must expand the base of the table.

The point of the pyramid principle is simple. If you want to grow, you must start by expanding the base. Potential leaders can be found right in your cell groups and churches. They simply need to be identified and trained. Train new leaders and your church will be able to grow in health and numbers. If your church is not growing then it is very likely that it does not have enough leaders at a certain level. For instance, does your church have enough small group leaders? If not, perhaps you need to concentrate on leadership development so that your church can be more effective at reaching others for Christ.

Potential leaders can be found right in your cell groups and churches. They simply need to be identified and trained.

B. The 'Jethro Principle'

Secular leadership experts have said that for effective group action, whether in the military, business world, or in the social realm, 10-15% of the group must be in leadership positions. This percentage ensures that the group has proper communication, supervision and interaction so that they can accomplish something. In other words, there should be one leader for every seven to ten people being supervised.

It is not surprising that God provided us with a biblical example of leadership ratios thousands of years before these secular experts made their discoveries. In Exodus 18, Moses was exhausted from leading the people of Israel. His father-in-law, Jethro, saw this, and suggested a better way to lead the people. This example that we will call the 'Jethro Principle,' is still valid. He advised Moses to appoint leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. How many leaders is this? Let's add up the leaders for a group of 1000 people:

Table 9.2

For Each 1000 People	Kinds of Leaders	Number Needed
1000 ÷	1000 =	1
1000 ÷	100 =	10
1000 ÷	50 =	20
1000 ÷	10 =	100
Total Leaders Needed Per 1000		131

From Table 9.2, you can see that according to the 'Jethro Principle' there should be 131 leaders for every 1000 people being lead. If we state this as a percent, 131 out of 1000 is 13.1%. That number matches the secular 10-15% figure very well. Here is a simple test for you. In your current church or church plant, 10-15% of the people should be leaders. Multiply the number of people you have by 0.15 (or 15%) to see how well you are doing:

Total number of people in my church (plant): _____
Multiplied by 15%: X 0.15
Number of leaders you should have: _____
Number that I really have now: _____

How are you doing? Congratulations if you have even more than 15%. If you have less, it is important that you begin to work on developing leaders.

III. WHERE DO WE FIND THESE LEADERS?

The Lord never gives us a task to complete unless He knows that it is possible. We can accomplish this seemingly impossible task if we are careful to follow His instructions, and some basic scriptural principles of leadership training.

In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus told a parable about three servants. While the parable has a specific purpose, verses 21 and 23 repeat a noteworthy phrase, "You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things." This concept is reasonable, and seems to explain how we can find the leaders that we need. We should look for those who are faithful in 'smaller' leadership roles, and give them increasing responsibilities. We have already seen this when we looked at the levels of leadership. Success (and faithfulness) at lower levels was always the requirement for higher roles.

Therefore, this increasing need for Christian leaders for the Church will have to be met by discipling new believers and training them for leadership. This is where we should look for leaders, and where we should begin to train. This is not to suggest that new converts are immediately ready to serve as a church leader. They are not, and the Bible warns against rushing this process (1Ti 3:6). However, the fact that they can not immediately *serve* as leaders does not remove our responsibility to begin to train them for possible *future* service. We should focus on developing faithfulness, godly character, and a servant attitude immediately. As men and women prove faithful, they should be given both more responsibility and more in-depth training.

Fig. 8.3



SUMMARY

The time is now to get more serious about training more leaders at more levels. Future growth and church health depends on it. We cannot assume that the right kind of leaders will emerge from the training institutions when we need them. Local church leaders need to take initiative in this.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How many people in your church are functioning at some level of leadership?
- What is the greatest leadership need in your ministry at this time?
- What can you do in your church plant to train cell group and small group leaders?
- Who are the leaders in your region? Where and how have they been trained?

ACTION PLAN

Study the training programs and leadership needs in your region. What training is available for each level of leadership? How can you benefit from these resources in your church plant? Share the results of your study with your mentor.

SOURCES

Womack, David A. *The Pyramid Principle*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1977.

LEADERSHIP
10
LESSON

Training New Leaders

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to stress the responsibility of church planters to multiply themselves through the training of other leaders. It is not enough just to delegate responsibility; leadership must be multiplied. This lesson describes a simple on-the-job training technique that can result in multiplication of leaders.

☞ Main Points

- Moses, Jesus, and Paul all modeled the training of new leaders.
- Training should take into account both the needs of the ministry and the needs of the new leader.
- The leader should gradually involve and release his trainee.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know how leaders were trained in the Bible.
- Know and use the 5-step process to train a new leader in a new task.
- Be committed to multiplying himself/herself through the development of other leaders.

☞ Appendix

10A Qualities to Encourage in a New Leader

INTRODUCTION

Leadership development is one of the most important aspects of church planting and church growth. Without leadership development, church members remain forever dependent on the church planter and his team. Growing churches normally have a program, formal or informal, in which leaders are trained to assume responsibility. Stagnant churches often do not.

As a church planter, you must multiply yourself by developing other leaders. Early in the church planting process when the church planter is spending most of his time engaged in evangelism, he needs to begin identifying and building up those who might be future leaders. At later stages in the church plant, he is likely to spend most of his time involved in leadership development. Leadership development is essential in order to create an active, growing church. How do we do it? First, note the following biblical examples:

I. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF LEADERSHIP MULTIPLICATION

A. Moses and Joshua

Moses accomplished incredible things for God. He liberated the children of Israel from Egyptian slavery and brought them to the border of the promised land. Joshua was at Moses' side as a reliable fighter from the beginning of Moses' leadership (Ex. 17:9-14). Joshua went with Moses on Mt Sinai to receive the law and commandments, (Ex 24:12-13), and seemed to have special permission to enter the 'tent of meeting' where God met with Moses (Ex 33:7-11). Joshua's great faith was best displayed when he and Caleb alone believed that God would give them the strength to conquer Canaan (Nu 14:6-9).

At a certain point in Moses' life he asked himself a question that all leaders should frequently ask: "Who is going to replace me?" Moses recognized that Israel would need future leadership, and he asked God for a replacement. God chose Joshua, who had been learning at Moses' side, and then told Moses to delegate some of his authority to Joshua so that the people would know that Joshua was the man of God's choosing (Nu 27:15-22).

Moses saw the promised land, but did not enter into it. Joshua, however, saw the realization of Moses' dream when he victoriously entered the promised land with all Israel. Moses could have become jealous of the fact that he would not enter the promised land, but that Joshua would (Dt 1:37-38). Instead, however, Moses handed off the leadership gracefully to Joshua, just as God had instructed (Dt 31:7, 34:9). Moses serves as a shining example of a servant leader who seeks the best for the people and the Lord's work, rather than his own glory.

B. Jesus

Jesus had a plan to spread the salvation message to the whole world. How did he go about it? He taught large multitudes on many occasions, but his real focus was on the development of his very close followers. This relatively small group of men would carry on the message of salvation with even greater impact after He left. Jesus personally began to select these men before He initiated His larger preaching ministry (Jn 1:35-51).

Jesus spent three and a half years demonstrating the power of His message in His preaching and healing, and later in His sacrificial death and miraculous resurrection. He was a living model of His message for His disciples. At the earliest appropriate time, Jesus gave His disciples a chance to participate in the ministry by sending them out as missionaries (Mt 10). When their ministry was not successful, Jesus provided timely instruction to rectify the problem (Mt 17:14-21). Their training in ministry was evidently more important than the actual tasks they accomplished. Jesus prepared his disciples to be able to carry on without his physical presence. He had enough confidence in his disciples to give them the "keys of the kingdom" (Mt 16:19), and put the future ministry into their hands (Mt 18:18-20).

Jesus taught large multitudes on many occasions, but his real focus was on the development of his very close followers.

We see, therefore, that Jesus multiplied Himself in the lives of others in order to accomplish His purpose. He said, "follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt. 4:19). Jesus was himself a fisher of men, so He essentially said, "follow me and I will make you what I am!" In leadership development, we are also interested in training replacements rather than just finding helpers. Our desire should be to see trainees eventually reach or even surpass the level of success that we have had in ministry.

C. Paul

We see Paul's commitment to developing leaders most clearly in his words to Timothy in 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.*" He refers to the "many witnesses" present as he taught Timothy. Both Jesus and Paul disciplined men in small groups, rather than "one-by-one." We need to follow their example by equipping leaders "in action." In this way, others will observe in a practical way how to develop leaders. Remember, discipling others is something that is not only taught; it is caught.

Paul was anxious for Timothy to learn how to equip others. Note his reference in 2 Timothy 2:2 to *faithful men*. The selection of those who are to be trained is an important part of the training process. The main requirement for Christian ministry is faithfulness. Paul was not only passing *information* on to Timothy, but also a *method* of equipping others. As Paul monitored and disciplined Timothy, so Timothy would learn to watch and disciple others. Paul had to be sure the training pattern could be repeated to a third and even a fourth generation.

Paul trained Timothy for the ministry almost as if he were his own son, but Timothy is by no means the only one to have been trained by Paul. We read of Silas, John Mark, Barnabas, Aquila and Priscilla, and Apollos—all of whom learned from Paul to various degrees. The last missionary journey of Paul seems to have been a training/discipleship trip. During this trip we read of seven people (Ac 20:4) traveling with Paul, most of them learning from him. In his own epistles, Paul mentions Epaphras, Demas, Archippus, Titus, Phoebe and many others. For example, in the conclusion of his epistle to the Romans, Paul greets 27 people, many of whom had worked with and may have been trained by Paul.

Timothy is by no means the only one to have been trained by Paul.

You should use this pattern explained in 2 Timothy 2:2 and modeled by Paul by involving potential leaders in all you do during the time you are together. Whether planning group meetings, visiting the lost, counseling hurting people, praying for lost sheep, or teaching—all should be joint projects.

II. TRAINING OBJECTIVES

You have already been introduced to “Z-Thinking.” In a church planting context, that means planning with the final outcome in mind. Effective leadership training also requires that we look ahead to the needs of the new church as we train. The main questions we need to ask are: “*What are we trying to help people to become?*” “*What kind of leaders are needed?*” “*What are we aiming for?*” “*What does a finished product look like?*” These foundational questions are important, since they guide the training process.

We need have a clear picture of the leadership needs, but we should also be careful not to squeeze the wrong person into those molds. When we find “faithful” people who have leadership ability, they should not be trained in a rigid, inflexible program. Each potential leader has his own personality, abilities, spiritual gift, background, and experience which *must* be taken into account. Therefore, when training potential leaders, consider the following factors:

Effective leadership training requires that we look ahead to the needs of the new church as we train.

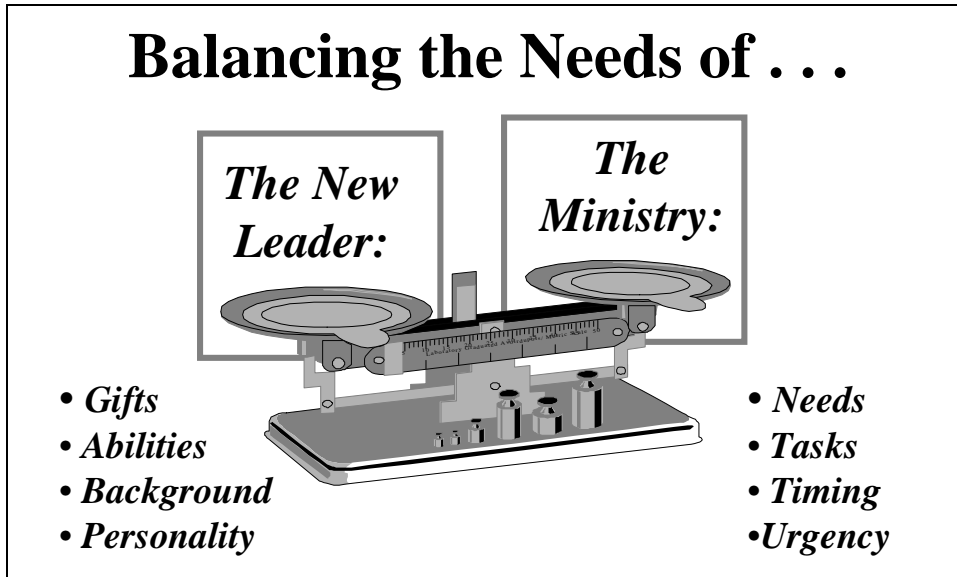
- *Spiritual Gifts* - Remember that God has gifted each member of the body. People will gravitate to and find fulfillment in ministry that uses their spiritual gifts. For example, someone with gifts of mercy and administration might be effective in coordinating a soup kitchen or helping the elderly, but not in teaching a Sunday school class. Place growing leaders where they best fit, and not simply where there is a need for a “warm body.”
- *Abilities* - Everyone has natural talents or activities that they have learned through effort and practice, and which may also be helpful in ministry. However, these *natural* abilities cannot replace *spiritual* gifts, so we need to be careful not to force growing leaders to focus on ministries that they *can do*, but for which they do not have a spiritual gift. The ideal situation, of course, is to find a ministry ‘fit’ that uses a leader’s gifts as well as his or her abilities.
- *Ministry needs* - The needs of your church planting ministry should also influence the training process. If a person’s gifts do not fit into a particular ongoing ministry, they probably should be trained in some other setting. However, a new leader’s spiritual gift may not be immediately obvious—they are usually discovered through service. God may want someone to develop a skill for which they have no previous experience or apparent giftedness. It is also true that a leader often has to learn to fulfill roles that are needed to help move the church planting ministry forward. While a Christian leader should focus on his gift, he is not excused from being involved in other areas of ministry. For example, Timothy needed to learn to be an evangelist (2Ti 4:5).
- *Experience* – Past experience in leadership should be carefully evaluated, because it can either positively or negatively influence the future leadership success of the trainee. It might be a *positive* experience because the trainee has probably already learned some hard and valuable lessons about leadership. These need not be repeated, and can save time in the training process. It can also help to quickly identify strengths and weaknesses of the trainee. However, it can be *negative* if it has taught or reinforced an authoritarian or other non-biblical style of leadership. It can also make

potential ability hard to discern—indication of capability might just be experience, or lack of experience might make it appear that there is no ability.

- *Personality* – There are so many factors of personality that we cannot possibly mention all the combinations. For instance, a potential leader may or may not interact easily with people—a vital skill. One leader might be easily depressed and need lots of encouragement, while another is upbeat and positive. Be aware of these and other factors as you choose and train leaders.

Prayerful consideration of these factors can reveal what God is calling potential leaders to become. Review them and adjust them to the actual situation in your ministry and for your trainees. This is easier said than done. It takes wisdom, and sensitivity to develop a new leader to his or her potential, meet existing needs in the church plant, and not slight either. Figure 10.1 illustrates the difficulty and importance of finding this balance.

Figure 10.1 Keeping the Balance



Once these dynamics are understood, the trainer should evaluate the trainee and determine how best to develop the leadership skills and qualities of the trainee in the current church planting situation. Each situation is different, just as each person is different.

An approach that is often effective is to form a list of the strengths and weaknesses of the trainee, and write down specific areas of growth that you want to encourage. As you compare potential leaders to this list of objectives, it will help you know how to approach the training process for each of them. For example, if a leader in training falls short of a particular objective, then a “learning activity” can be designed to help him grow in that area. Note the following examples:

Table 10.2 Objectives Lead to Learning Activities

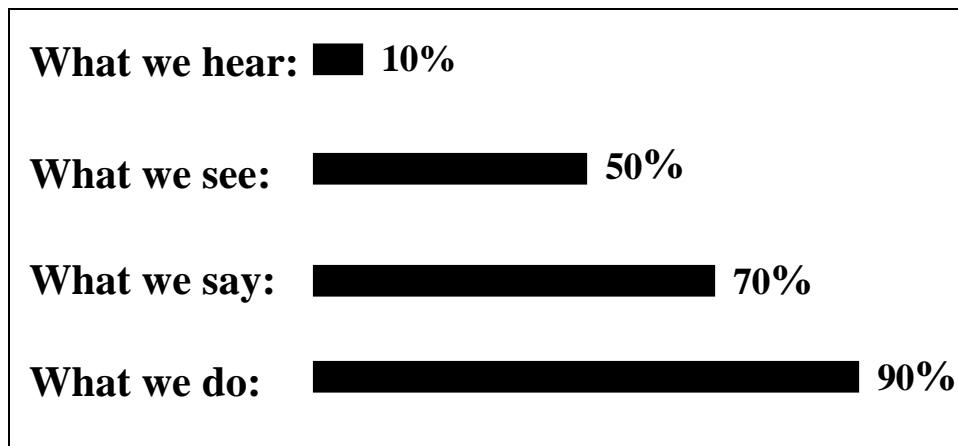
TRAINING OBJECTIVE	LEARNING ACTIVITY
To improve poor preaching skills.	Let him see exactly how you prepare your sermons.
To increase Bible knowledge enough to be able to lead a cell group effectively.	Have him take a correspondence course to increase his understanding of the Bible.
To strengthen weak nurturing (pastoral) ability.	Have him study the pastoral epistles inductively (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus).
A mature believer aspires to be a cell group leader but does not relate well to unsaved people.	Have the potential leader try to befriend an unsaved person and keep a record of his experiences in growing this friendship.

III. FIVE-STEP PROCESS FOR TRAINING NEW LEADERS

This process for training new leaders has already been explained in cell group lesson 9, "Training New Cell Group Leaders." Cell groups offer wonderful training ground for developing new leaders. They provide opportunity for training leaders "on the job," realizing that **we learn best by doing**. Always remember training is an active process. Do not place all the emphasis on knowledge and information. Instead, look for creative ways to get the aspiring leader to **DO** things. He will learn most from what he does.

Figure 10.3 shows how much of any presentation is remembered at the end of thirty days, under normal circumstances. The retention depends on what kind of involvement we had in the learning activity. It is clear that we remember best when we are involved in *doing* the activity.

Figure 10.3 How Much Do We Remember?



The following five-step process can be used to help a potential leader develop a particular skill. It is an activity-based process.

A. Step 1: "I Do It"

In the training of leaders, you should lead by example. Perhaps the number one rule in leadership development is to be the kind of leader others will want to imitate. Often training fails because it has not included good modeling of a concept or skill. Model ministry before you require it of your trainee.

B. Step 2: “I Do It; You Watch”

While the trainee also ‘watched’ in step 1, it was a more passive, one-way activity. In this step, we have in mind an active, two-way interaction between the leader and the trainee. The trainee knows he is being prepared to lead, and is absorbing everything he can learn by observing your ministry. Explaining your actions is very important. Take nothing for granted. Explain what you do and why you do it the way you do. Explain the ministry principles which guide your actions.

C. Step 3: “We Do It Together”

Be sure you have performed the particular ministry skill with your aspiring leaders to give them hands-on experience and to help them to see and learn from their mistakes in a secure environment with their mentor (you). This step is a bit like a child learning to ride a bike with the parent steadying it as needed. Your presence will give the trainees confidence that you can help if they have a problem, but they will also be able to test out the things they are learning from you. The length of time that this stage continues depends entirely on how soon you and the trainee agree that he or she is ready to try to lead by themselves.

D. Step 4: “You Do It; I Watch”

Observe your aspiring leader perform the ministry skill. Do not step in. Allow them to succeed for fail as they are able. Then, after the event and in private, objectively explain the strengths and weaknesses you have observed. Review the objectives at this point. It is important to explain both the positive and the negative, but whenever possible, emphasize the positive. Provide a learning activity to strengthen the weaknesses if necessary.

E. Step 5: “You Do It”

As soon as you think new leaders are ready, turn the task over to them. Don’t rush it, but usually our tendency is to wait far too long, and cripple the new leader by our continued presence. You should remain a close friend, treating the new leader as your equal. The process does not end with the training of another leader. We are interested in the multiplication of many leaders. Therefore encourage the new leader to soon begin to multiply himself in the life of another.

Table 10.4 Five Steps

The Step	The Leader	The Trainee
Step 1	<i>Do</i>	-
Step 2	<i>Do</i>	<i>Watch</i>
Step 3	<i>Do</i>	<i>Do</i>
Step 4	<i>Watch</i>	<i>Do</i>
Step 5	-	<i>Do</i>

These five steps do not always need to be followed in a strict fashion. Often, however, training fails because part of the process is not followed. Consider the young aspiring leader who was asked to preach a sermon, but was not trained in this process. His sermon was not very clear and every one concluded, including the young man, that preaching was not his gift. In reality, he just needed to see and receive a little guidance on how to prepare a sermon.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Why is leadership development important?
- How were you trained as a leader? Describe the formative activities that helped you develop your leadership ability.
- How many generations of leaders are described in 2 Timothy 2:2?
- How is Matthew 4:19 like 2 Timothy 2:2?

ACTION PLAN

- Pick a common task that you know how to do well like driving a car, cooking pancakes, or building a wooden stool. Teach someone else to do it using the 5-step process described in this lesson. Describe the results to your trainer or mentor.
- In a small group with other trainees or with your church planting team, pick five objectives from Appendix 10A, "Qualities to Encourage in a New Leader." Describe how this 5-step process can be used with each training objective.

SOURCES

- Allen, Roland. *Missionary Methods - St. Paul's or Ours?* Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1962.
- Steffen, Tom A. "Leadership: Ten Implications for Cross-Cultural Church Planters." N.p., n.d.



Qualities to Encourage in a New Leader

I. GENERAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are necessary for leaders at any level:

- Is building an intimate relationship with God.
- Demonstrates the fruits of the Spirit.
- Uses his/her spiritual gifts in ministry.
- Has a growing love for God and others.
- Demonstrates moral integrity.
- Is committed to the authority of the local church.
- Shows love and concern for those in his/her fellowship.
- Relates well to other bodies of believers.
- Applies biblical principles to relationships.
- Manages interpersonal conflict well.
- Listens to others and responds appropriately.
- Is convinced that the Bible is the word of God.
- Has a working knowledge of the Old and New Testament.
- Studies and applies the Bible.

II. LEADERSHIP TRAINING OBJECTIVES FOR SMALL GROUP LEADERS

Small group leaders should also display the following abilities and character traits:

- Demonstrates a passion for souls.
- Practices personal evangelism.
- Relates well to the lost.
- Can present the Gospel clearly.
- Can give a clear personal testimony.
- Has been discipled.
- Shows sensitivity to the newly converted.
- Shows love for his/her disciples.
- Forms disciples who in turn disciple others.
- Can lead a group inductive Bible discussion
- Understands the need for cell groups as a foundation for healthy growth.
- Is able to effectively lead a cell group meeting.

III. LEADERSHIP TRAINING OBJECTIVES FOR LOCAL LEADERS

Local leaders also need to be characterized by the following traits:

- Is a model disciple worth imitating.
- Understands that the Church is God's vehicle for world evangelization.
- Knows the biblical basis for church planting and missions.
- Is able to use various methods and techniques of evangelism.
- Is able to conduct basic research in preparation for a church growth and planting.
- Is able to lead public worship.
- Teaches the Bible effectively in a group or one on one setting.
- Identifies and develops potential leaders of cell groups.
- Can organize believers into a self-governing, self-nurturing, and mission-oriented congregation.
- Understands how to put biblical functions into culturally relevant forms.
- Builds and works well with a team.
- Knows how to delegate responsibility.
- Sets goals, makes plans and establishes objectives to attain them.
- Develops the giftedness and abilities of others.
- Is pro-active.

IV. LEADERSHIP TRAINING OBJECTIVES FOR REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEADERS

Regional and national leaders should reach an even higher standard of character and abilities:

- Is able to preach and teach.
- Will be able to provide spiritual guidance and counsel to a wide variety of situations.
- Has advanced understanding of the Bible and Theology
- Can train church workers for evangelism, discipleship, cell group leadership, stewardship, and worship or other areas of ministry as needed.
- Builds and uses cell groups to saturate a community and mobilize the body of Christ..
- Portrays a growth mentality.
- Demonstrates seeker sensitivity, assimilate new comers.
- Is able to administer baptism and the Lord's supper.
- Communicates vision which inspires others.
- Can lead others into discovering their gift(s) and applying it in ministry.

CELL GROUPS

CELL GROUPS

10

LESSON

Discussion of Cell Group Questions and Problems

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to provide for a time of interactive discussion between the trainees regarding problems and questions they have about cell groups.

☛ Main Points

- Interactive discussion of real cell group problems.

☛ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand some of the common problems which arise in cell group ministry.
- Use personal experience to provide answers to some of the questions or problems which are discussed.
- Apply answers and suggestions given by other trainees to help solve problems or answer questions in his own cell groups.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson has been designed to provide for a time of interactive discussion between the trainees. Your role is one of a facilitator, or mediator, between the trainees. You will need to ask the trainees for their problems or questions. Do not provide answers or suggestions yourself – allow the answers to come from within the group, if possible. In the unlikely event that none of the trainees has any questions or problems, there are some suggested common questions given in the lesson. Try to use the experience of the trainees to answer the given problems and questions during this lesson time.

Emphasize that the trainees need to think about the solutions or suggestions which are discussed and determine how they can be applied in their own groups. Encourage them to write down specific, concrete ways in which they will try to resolve some of the problems in their own groups.

I. THE REALITIES OF CELL GROUP MINISTRY

Max has been leading a cell group for over four months. Although six people come regularly to the cell group meetings, they don't seem to be growing much in their faith, and the group does not express any interest in reaching out to people around them. They seem content to meet weekly, to talk about their problems, and to study the Bible a little. Max is growing more and more frustrated, and does not know what he can do differently in order to help the members of his group become more spiritually mature. Some days he feels like giving up on the group altogether.

As "Max" has discovered, cell group ministry can be both rewarding and frustrating. When things are going well in a cell group, it can be very satisfying for the cell group leader. However, when problems arise, it can be very difficult for the leader to prayerfully work through them.

In any cell group, problems will arise at one time or another. The purpose of this lesson is to provide a time of discussion of various problems or questions which the trainees may have regarding their own cell groups. It is hoped that some of the trainees will have experienced similar problems or difficulties and will have some suggestions for the group. If questions arise which have no easy answers, the group can take as much time as is needed to discuss possible solutions or answers to those questions.

II. QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

Begin discussing problems or questions in your cell group(s). The trainer will be responsible to mediate the discussion time. If the group of trainees has had extraordinarily good success with their groups and they have no problems, the following list can be used to discuss typical areas of problems in a cell group ministry. Remember, this list is only in the event that the trainees have no further questions or problems to discuss:

- The cell group is not growing spiritually.
- The leader cannot find an apprentice leader.
- The cell group does not want to multiply itself.
- The cell group cannot find a good place to meet.
- The cell group is not growing numerically.
- Some type of conflict exists between two or more group members, and the leader cannot seem to resolve it.

III. SOLUTIONS

Every cell group is different, and each problem situation has its own unique characteristics. Even so, often there are common underlying principles or reasons for the problem. Each cell group leader should listen carefully to the suggestions or solutions which are offered during the discussion time of this lesson. If possible, he should think about how to apply the principles of the given solutions in his own cell group if he is experiencing a similar problem.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What is the largest problem or concern in your cell group(s)? Was a solution or suggestion given during this class time which you can use to help solve this problem?
- Do you know other cell group leaders who were not in this class but who might benefit from this time of discussion? How could you encourage them and share with them some of the things you learned?
- Who can you talk to about ongoing or future problems in your cell groups?

ACTION PLAN

- Write down the three main problems you are experiencing in your cell groups.
- Based on today's discussion, write down at least two possible solutions to each of these problems.
- Pray for wisdom in implementing the solutions you just wrote down. Plan to implement them as soon as possible.

CELL GROUPS

11

LESSON

Cell Group Multiplication

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to equip the trainee with the skills and knowledge which are necessary to be able to facilitate multiplication in a cell group.

☞ Main Points

- Multiplication in cell groups is intentional.
- Clusters facilitate the natural process of cell division and multiplication.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand why it is necessary for a cell group to reproduce itself.
- Understand how to use “clusters” to help with the multiplication process.
- Learn how to deal with several typical barriers which can make it difficult for a cell group to multiply.

I. THE GOAL OF MULTIPLICATION

The group was meeting together for the last time. Things couldn't have been worse. Their leader was leaving, the apprentice was unreliable, others in the group were squabbling and vying for positions of prominence, and one member was about to be exposed for embezzlement, fraud, and disloyalty. Defeat and fear permeated the atmosphere of the room as the leader stood to speak. He said,

"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God . . ."

The leader was Jesus, the dysfunctional cell group was the twelve disciples, and the meeting took place just hours before His arrest, trial, and execution. In spite of the advanced deterioration of this group's morale during the multiplication stage, by the power of the Holy Spirit, it survived to multiply again and again. Within a generation, its numbers had increased exponentially to fill the Roman Empire.

In the same way, each cell group which is approaching the multiplication phase needs to consider Jesus' words: *"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God..."* (Jn 14:1).

No matter how difficult this transition may seem, multiplication in a cell group is for the greater good of the Kingdom of God. Our ultimate goal in cell group ministry is the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Our method of approaching that goal is through cell groups which evangelize, disciple believers, equip leaders, and reproduce. Without reproduction, this goal will never be reached.

Our ultimate goal in cell group ministry is the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

It has been stated before that cell groups can be used as “building blocks” for a larger ministry strategy. Cell groups which reproduce themselves can be used to strengthen existing churches and start new churches. In this way, they can be used as a foundation for a church planting strategy. In the same way, multiplying cell groups makes it possible not only to see new churches started, but also to help develop and advance a saturation church planting movement in a region or nation. Cell groups naturally contribute to the small “grassroots” activities of evangelism, discipleship and leadership development which are necessary in order to see a movement of new churches started.

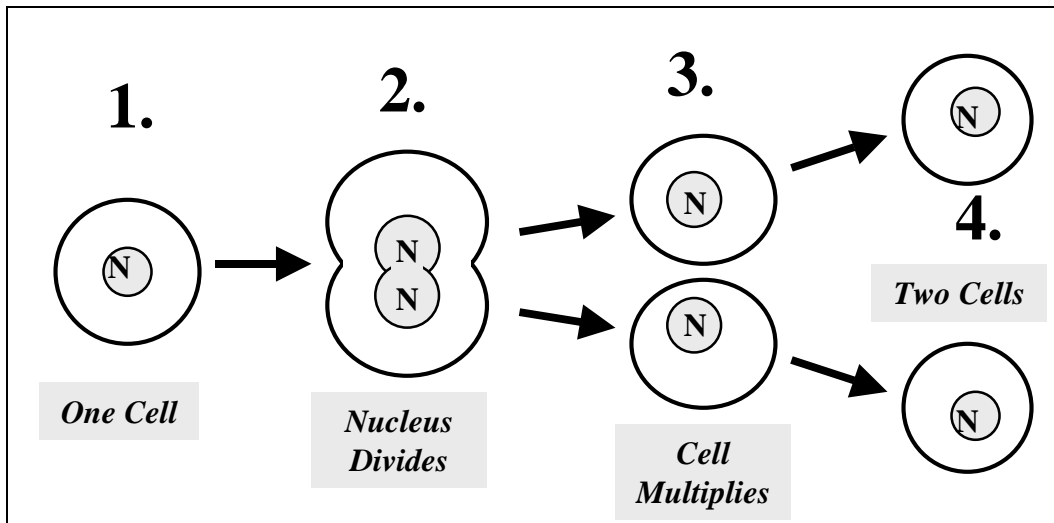
In many ways, multiplication is the culmination of many months of effort in a cell group. It is an important occasion for the group, and one which should be encouraged and celebrated. Although there are several things that the cell group leader can and should do to prepare the group for multiplication, perhaps the most important is simply to trust in God, that He will lead the one group to become two. By His power and the leading of the Holy Spirit, multiplication is a process which will happen over and over again in cell groups.

II. THE PROCESS OF “NATURAL” MULTIPLICATION

A. Biological Multiplication

In biology, cells multiply by a process of growing and duplicating themselves. Each cell has a nucleus (shown as “N” in Figure 11.1), which controls the activity of the cell. As the cell is nourished and grows, the one nucleus begins to grow and develop into two nuclei. When the right amount of growth has taken place, the one cell multiplies into two, each with its own nucleus. This process of growth and duplication continues over and over again, as long as the cells are nourished and can grow.

Figure 11.1. Biological Cell Multiplication



Multiplication in cell groups also happens in a way similar to biological cell reproduction. Each cell group has a leader, who provides the right “conditions” for the group to grow and be nourished. If the cell group is not nurtured and developed (i.e. spiritual growth and evangelistic outreach), the group will not grow. The leader provides the example, teaching, and incentive to the group members to reach out to the people around them. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, these friends and acquaintances are brought into the group and have opportunity to learn about Jesus and receive Him as their Savior.

As the cell group continues to grow in maturity, the cell group leader also begins to work with an apprentice leader. This new leader learns from the words and actions of his mentor, and in many ways becomes an imitator (1 Co. 11:1) of the mentor. When the apprentice leader is mentally and spiritually prepared to lead his own group, the original cell group will multiply into two groups. Each group has its own leader, and can begin the process of growing and multiplying again.

When the apprentice leader is mentally and spiritually prepared to lead his own group, the original cell group will multiply into two groups.

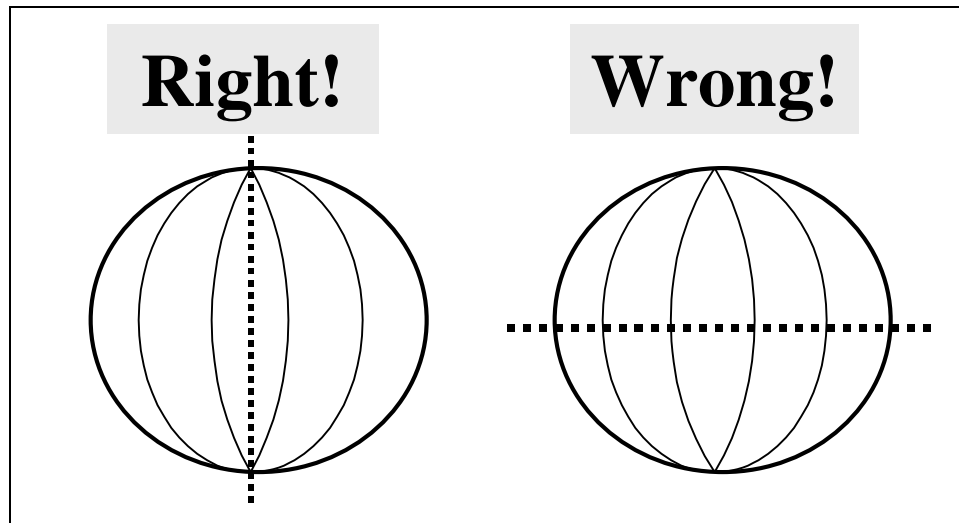
God created biological cells with the purpose and ability to duplicate themselves. However, without the right conditions for growth and development, this will not happen, and the cells will eventually die. Cell groups also have the potential to grow, develop and

duplicate themselves. In the same way as a biological cell, without the right conditions for growth, this will not happen in a cell group.

B. Natural Clusters

Imagine a cell group where the leader is holding two large, juicy oranges. He asks for two volunteers from the group to each peel one of the oranges and then divide it in half. However, they each must use a different method to do this. The first person must divide his orange in half crosswise, along its equator. The second person must divide his on the north-south axis, along the naturally occurring segments.

Figure 11.2 Dividing an Orange



You can imagine what will happen with each orange. A parallel can be drawn to what can happen in cell groups when it is time to form two groups from the one. A group torn apart, without regard for the naturally occurring friendships within the group, can make a big mess. If you split a group arbitrarily, by numbers, by geographical boundaries, or by some means other than natural relationships, you may end up with many injured group members.

However, if you identify naturally occurring clusters of relationships within your group and then divide the group by these clusters, the result will be much more beneficial. To encourage the formation of these clusters, start early in the group's life to experiment with different compositions. Observe how your members naturally divide into sub-groups of three, four, or five members. Note who gravitated toward whom, and who took leadership. Try this for three or four weeks to see if any specific clusters are naturally developing.

Identify naturally occurring clusters of relationships within your group and then divide the group by these clusters.

You may wish to plan for the formation of these sub-groups by drawing a diagram of the relationships. What groups of three, four, or five people are most alike? Who has children with similar ages? Similar jobs? Similar interests? Who has previously developed friendships or networks of relationships? You can allow these sub-groups to form on their own, or you can encourage certain people in the cell group to form a sub-group based on what you know about their personalities and interests. Clusters will be, in a sense, "mini cells." You will want to meet as a large group for most of the cell group meeting, but you can dismiss into clusters for Bible study, for prayer or for sharing.

Your apprentice leader should either naturally, or by your suggestion, begin to work with one of the clusters. If there are several clusters in your cell group, have your apprentice work with the cluster which seems to have the greatest potential for becoming a new "daughter" cell group. By being involved, the apprentice leader will develop closer relationships with these members and will be better prepared to lead them when it is time to start a new group. This also contributes to a better

pastoral care within your group. Many people will talk more freely in a smaller group of three to five than they would before a larger group of ten or more people. Linking people into a cluster means that their absence will be noticed more quickly. They will realize that their presence is needed, and they will be touched by the others in such a way that they will become more committed to the group.

Clusters can also be used to help identify potential apprentice leaders. Experience has shown that in a small group of people, one person will always naturally emerge as the leader if no one has been assigned that role. As a cell group leader is prayerfully determining who might become the apprentice leader, he or she can examine the clusters to see which members are naturally emerging as “leaders” of the clusters. These are people whom the leader should pray about and perhaps approach about becoming an apprentice leader.

C. Steps to Multiplication

Multiplication in a cell group is intentional – the leader and members of the group must set this goal before themselves, and actively work towards reaching that goal. This is the only way that multiplication will be seen as a natural part of the life cycle of a cell group. If the cell group leader does not make multiplication a priority, the members of the group will not make it a priority, either.

1. Preparing Ahead for Multiplication of the Cell Group

The cell group leader should prepare the cell for multiplication throughout the life of the cell. In order to provide the right “conditions” for growth and multiplication of a cell group, the leader has several responsibilities:

- The leader must continually give a vision to the members that their one group will develop into two. This vision must start when the group starts, not several weeks before it is time to multiply. He should explain why multiplication is good and necessary to help fulfill the mandate which Christ gave us in the Great Commission.
- The leader must encourage the group to reach out to the unbelievers in their network of relationships. Without numerical growth, there is no need to multiply.
- The leader must provide an environment in the group where discipleship takes place between the believers. Without spiritual growth, the need to multiply may not be clearly understood.
- The leader must mentor an apprentice leader who will take the responsibility for leading one of the two groups. As the time for multiplication approaches, the apprentice must develop an overall goal for his new group, as well as a plan for at least the first several meetings. The leader should review this with the apprentice and offer advice or suggestions.
- There must be a planned date when multiplication will happen. The leader must hold the group accountable to completing the process of multiplication on or near that date.

2. Implementing the Multiplication of the Cell Group

Assuming that a cell group leader has done all these things, how should the cell group actually be multiplied?

- Discuss the upcoming changes with the group. People who have never before been in a group which has multiplied will be, in varying degrees, apprehensive about multiplication. They mistakenly believe that the strength of the group consists in who belongs to it rather than to Whom it belongs. Take their fears seriously and help them through. During the multiplication process, LISTEN, PRAY, & ENCOURAGE. Do all you can to keep discouragement or negativity from becoming the dominant force. Read and meditate on John 14-17 to gain spiritual insight on how Jesus handled the multiplication stage with his group of disciples.

- Determine who will lead which group. In some cases, when a cell group multiplies, the apprentice leader will become the leader of the “daughter” cell group. However, this depends entirely on the group itself, and it is just as acceptable for the current cell group leader to begin working with the new group, while the apprentice leader becomes the leader of the original group. This sometimes works well when the members of the new group are not as spiritually mature as are the members who stay with the original group.
- Decide who will join the new group and who will stay with the original group. The cell group leader needs to ask the group members to pray and decide which group God wants them to be a part of. He or she should not ask which leader they would like better. This can create competition, disunity, stress and an uncomfortable situation for everyone involved. The leader should not presume or choose which members will go with which groups. Any suggestions should be made carefully without even the appearance of coercion or manipulation. Rely on the Holy Spirit to arrange the groups the way He wants.
- Choose a meeting location for the new group. The new group needs to decide where it will meet. This might be in the home of the new leader or in the home of one of the new group members. It is important to decide on a location and to make arrangements to use it. The new group members need to feel a sense of stability, security and identity in the place where they will meet together.
- Plan to meet with the apprentice leader to continue to mentor him/her in the new group. The cell group leader must plan to spend time with his apprentice leader after multiplication happens. The first several weeks and months of the new cell group will be the most difficult for the new leader. Having a mentor close by to pray with and discuss problems with will be immensely helpful for the new cell group leader.
- As a group, decide when the last meeting date of the original group will be, and plan to make it a celebration! Review and give thanks for all the things God has done in and through the group. Pray for each other and for the future of both groups. Rejoice that through two groups, more people can be reached with the love of Christ. Show the group the importance of this step in helping to fulfill the Great Commission. Have a special “commissioning” for the new leader and group members – gather them together and pray for them, that God will use them mightily in their new group.

Sometimes when a cell group multiplies, the apprentice leader becomes the leader of the “daughter” cell group.

Each time a new cell group is started, there are naturally some doubts, fears and uncertainties. What if the new group is not as “good” as the original group? What will change? How will the relationships be different? It is important to remember that the new group will be significantly different from the old one. Don’t expect that everything will be the same as it was in the original group, because it won’t. The Holy Spirit desires to work through the lives of the believers in the new group in a unique and special way.

Perhaps most important is simply to trust that God is in control and that He will guide and direct both the old and the new groups. Jesus said in John 14:27, “*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*” These are words to live by, and especially during the time when a cell group has reached the phase of multiplication.

III. BARRIERS TO MULTIPLICATION

The topic of multiplying cell groups is of great interest among cell group members and leaders. Two dynamics in cell groups wage war one against the other. The first is the fact that multiplying a group is healthy for both the group and the kingdom. The second is the fact that, left to their own devices, very few groups ever would multiply. Multiplying is perceived as a potentially painful event, a split which severs relationships. People want to get together and stay together. They rarely realize that the group that focuses only on its own members and needs will grow stale or die within one or two years.

Left to their own devices, very few groups ever would multiply. People want to stay together.

In any cell group, there are some common barriers which can prevent multiplication from happening. The following table describes some of these barriers, and offers suggestions to the cell group leader as to how he or she can overcome them. Of course, there may be other barriers or hindrances which are unique for your culture or context. If so, try to think about how you could possibly overcome those barriers so that multiplication can happen in your cell groups.

Table 11.1 Barriers to Cell Multiplication

Problem	Suggestions
The group does not understand the importance of multiplication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cell group leader must not only give a vision for multiplication, but he or she must also explain <u>why</u> multiplication is so important. The cell group members must understand what benefits there are for the group and for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.
The group understands the need to multiply, but they are comfortable with each other and do not want to split.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you wisdom in understanding your group and your unique situation. Stress the importance of multiplication and explain that it is the next step in the natural progression of the life of the group. Demonstrate how multiplication is being obedient to God's command to "go and make disciples" in Mt. 28:19. Through multiplication, your cell group has an important and active role in helping to fulfill the Great Commission. Pray about dividing the group along natural lines, using the cluster concept.
There is no apprentice leader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First, the cell group leader must spend time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to give him wisdom about whom to choose. Then, he must purposefully make this choice and begin to disciple and mentor the apprentice. Use clusters in your cell group to possibly identify naturally emerging leaders. Pray about these people as potential apprentice leaders for a new cell group. For guidelines on choosing an apprentice leader, review the Cell Group lesson in Manual 3, "Training New Cell Group Leaders"
There is disagreement about who goes with which group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your group has several clusters, consider using one or more clusters to start the new group. Consider lines of natural relationships in the group. Ask each group member to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to make it clear to him/her which group to be with. Conduct an open and honest discussion in the cell group meeting to find out the reasons for the lack of unity in this decision.
The cell group members feel the apprentice is not yet qualified to be a cell group leader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait to start the new group until the apprentice is ready. Involve the apprentice in ALL aspects of ministry with you. Have the apprentice do more and more of the ministry in the group. Have the cell group leader do less and less ministry. Set a new date for the apprentice to become a cell group leader and strive to develop him or her mentally, emotionally and spiritually before that time.

There can be barriers to multiplication in any cell group, but if the leader thinks about the possible problems beforehand and works proactively to overcome the barriers before they become problems, many of them can be avoided altogether. The most proactive thing which the cell group leader can do is to continually keep the vision and benefits of multiplication before the group from day one.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How does multiplication in cell groups help to advance a saturation church planting movement?
- What are “natural clusters” in a cell group? How can they be used to help a group move through the multiplication phase? What can happen when a group is ready to multiply and the members are divided arbitrarily, without consideration for the relationships in the group?
- How can clusters be used to help identify potential new cell group leaders?
- What is the most common barrier to multiplication in a cell group? How can it be overcome?

ACTION PLAN

- Clusters in a cell group will sometimes just naturally occur. If your groups do not already have clusters in them, consider using them during different parts of the cell group meeting. Do you see any benefits to using clusters in your groups?
- Begin to think about what needs to happen in each of your groups in order to reach the goal of multiplication. Write down five things that you will do in the next three months in order to move your groups closer to multiplication.
- Think about potential barriers to multiplication in each of your groups. What can you do ahead of time to overcome them and to avoid problems when it is time to multiply?
- Develop a plan for multiplication in your groups. Be sure to include your apprentice leaders in this process so that they will also be equipped to plan for the multiplication of their groups. Pray about and include in your plan a multiplication date for each group. Find someone that will hold you accountable to implementing this plan for multiplication.

SOURCES

- Portions of this lesson were quoted with permission from an article entitled, *Multiplication* by Dan Smith (Small Group Network, 1996. <http://smallgroups.com>).
- Logan, Robert. *Multiplication of Cell Groups*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d.

DISCIPLE MAKING

DISCIPLE MAKING

6

LESSON

Disciple Making Workshop

DISCUSSION OF PRACTICAL ISSUES RELATED TO MAKING DISCIPLES

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to allow the church planters to interact on all assignments in this track and other practical issues related to disciple making.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Have a broader understanding of practical issues related to disciple making.
- Have a greater respect for the creativity within the Body of Christ for addressing disciple making concerns.
- Have a stronger conviction of the importance of assessment and planning in the disciple making process.
- Have in hand an initial written draft of a plan to disciple the believers to whom he ministers.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Be sure to advise the person responsible for setting up Manual Four training sessions that all trainees must bring their completed Disciple Making Plan to be admitted to Manual Four training. This material will form the basis for discussions held in the first half of this lesson

Also advise the person responsible for coordinating Manual Four training sessions that all trainers should be prepared to participate in a disciple making workshop in the second half of the hour. This question and answer workshop should address practical questions from the church planters. In the event that church planters do not have questions, trainers should be prepared to comment on questions contained in this lesson

Create posters or blank overhead copies of the **Disciple Making Plan** (from Appendix 5A, Manual Three) for completion during large group discussion. This may be needed if the small group discussion is not workable because of poorly completed assignments. It is imperative that trainees work through the process and consider the issues and sequencing of disciple making. In order to make the best use of the time allowed for this session on disciple making, it is important that participants move quickly into small groups of 5 to 8.

For reference purposes, church planters should have in hand their completed **Disciple Making Plans** which they prepared during or after Manual Three training.

I. SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS (1/2 HOUR)

Allow one-half hour for interaction on the process and product of developing a disciple making plan for individuals and fellowships. Appoint someone to steer the discussions, using the following questions as a guideline. Try to include everyone in the discussion.

1. Did you find this exercise practically useful in your ministry? How?
2. How did you determine the order in which you would address issues?
3. What elements of follow-up (skills, concepts, or values) do you believe must be included in the first months of a new Christian's life? Why are these so important? How can _____ (pick one of the elements) best be developed in the life of a believer or church?

4. How did you personally become convinced of the importance of _____ (issue/truth/skill or concept)?
5. What forms are you most comfortable with?
6. Have you attempted to balance the forms so that one or two are not over-used or ignored?
7. What are you doing to spread out the work of making disciples where you are? How are you preparing “disciple makers”?
8. What will you do next week to move disciples forward in their faith, hope and love?

II. DISCIPLE MAKING WORKSHOP (20 MINUTES)

We can generally expect that the practical realities of ministry, combined with the stimulation of the training environment, will create in church planters a hunger to learn more about how to make disciples. If church planters are reluctant to ask questions, however, the following may serve to whet their appetites.

1. Describe an event, incident or activity in which you were involved early in your Christian life that decisively helped you advance in your walk with Christ.
2. What one nugget of truth would you pass on to those beginning to make disciples?

III. CONCLUSION (3 MINUTES)

This is the last lesson in the disciple making track of church planter training. In this track, we have sought to bring to your attention the strategic importance of disciple making in the church planting process. We've looked at disciple making in terms of basic follow-up and preparing the eternal Bride of Christ. We have seen the goal of disciple making. We have talked about the need to assess the current spiritual condition of an individual or church. We have introduced a tool to plan to meet these needs practically, and created opportunities for you to develop and discuss your own plans.

We encourage you to continue to consider disciple making as a way to reproduce yourself in the lives of others and multiply able workers for reaching your villages, districts, cities and country for Christ.

ACTION PLAN

In light of the discussion during this workshop, review and evaluate the disciple making plans you prepared after Manual Three training for each person you are discipling in your church planting ministry. Make any necessary changes to your plans based on what you learned during this workshop. Remember that the plans you have created are not static – they will and should change with time and with growth on the part of your disciples. Periodically review and update the disciple making plans you have for each of your disciples.

STEWARDSHIP

STEWARDSHIP

1

LESSON

Introduction to Stewardship

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain the significance of our stewardship before God. All that we have is His. Therefore we are not merely required to give a portion back to Him, but rather to use all that we have for His work and glory.

☞ Main Points

- The key issue in stewardship is our faithfulness.
- Stewardship extends far beyond our money to include our possessions, our time, our spiritual gifts, etc.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know the principle of being a steward of God's possessions for Him.
- Understand that values are foundational to stewardship.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Begin the session by asking trainees what things God has given to them. List these things on a chalkboard or overhead transparency.

I. WHAT IS STEWARDSHIP?

Stewardship is the term used to describe the activity of a steward. A steward was one who controlled the possessions of his master. His role was a very responsible one, and it was vital that he be a person of honest character. The possibilities for theft or misuse of his master's possessions were great.

As we look at the principles concerning the steward we will see that true stewardship involves how we deal with the resources God has entrusted to us. This includes our:

- money
- time
- possessions
- bodies
- families
- ministry

II. WHY TALK ABOUT STEWARDSHIP? TWO ISSUES

A. The Issue of Faithfulness

Stewardship is being responsible with what God has given us. From man's first day on earth, we have been stewards of God. Man was created to have dominion over creation (Ge 1:28). The Lord placed Adam in the garden to till and to keep it for Him (Ge 2:15). Although man usually does not understand that he is simply a steward of the Lord's creation, the Scriptures clearly state that the

earth and everything in it belongs to God (1Co 10:26). Whatever we possess is given to us by God to use for His glory. He is watching our faithfulness, and will reward us accordingly.

B. The Issue of Values

How people relate to the items listed before (in point I) shows where their heart is. As Jesus said "Where your treasure is there will be your heart also." In other words you can tell a lot about a person's heart by the way he treats his money or his valuable things.

Our values are the ideals or things that we think are important in life.

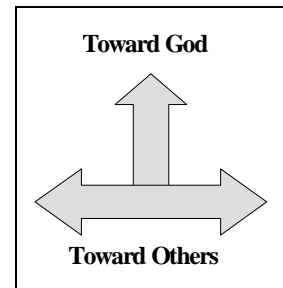
Our values are the ideals or things that we think are important in life. Some people value possessions or comfort. Others value family or service to the community. We literally spend our life and our time on those things that seem essential and vital to us personally. In Matthew 22:37-39 we find what is sometimes called the 'Great Commandment', in which Jesus summarized all of the Bible's values in a two-part statement.

1. Our Highest Value Concerns Relationships with God—"Love the Lord Your God"

Vertically speaking, we are to serve God. Loving and relating to God is our highest value. Since it is natural for us to spend time with those we love, each believer should spend personal time in study of God's Word and prayer. When we lose personal intimacy with the Lord, we miss God's blessing and lack power in ministry.

Serving God with all our ability is not an emotion for the moment, but a daily decision that involves all our resources. The more efficiently a believer utilizes his time, possessions, etc., the more effective he is in serving his Lord. Personal time with the Lord is something that needs to be planned into a church planter's busy schedule or it just won't happen. A healthy relationship with God is an essential prerequisite before moving on to serving others.

Fig. 1.1



2. Our Other Values Concern Relationships with Others—"Love Your Neighbor As Yourself"

Horizontally, we are to serve others. The relationship of love we have with God should spill over into love for others. 'Others' includes our families, co-workers, members of the church we belong to, and the lost with whom we share Christ. As stewards we should manage resources so that the needs of these 'others', those God has put in our care, are met.

Church planters are some of the busiest people in a community. Properly managing time, money and other resources will help a church planter be a better servant to others, by enabling purposeful ministry instead of allowing circumstances to control progress.

Before we can discuss stewardship in any more detail, we must check our values. The Great Commandment should be our guide concerning our values and priorities. Are you a person who loves God with all your heart and also loves others as yourself? If this is so, your stewardship should give evidence to that.

III. STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES IN THE BIBLE

There are many examples of stewards in the Bible. Most of the wealthy people had stewards. Rather than personally concern themselves with administrating their daily affairs, they would hire a reliable, capable man as a steward. The steward did not have his own possessions. Rather, he was permitted to live in the master's house, eat at his master's table, and clothe himself from his master's possessions. Rather than have his own possessions, the steward had access to all the wealth of his master.

A. The Meaning of Stewardship

Several words are used in the Bible for the concept of stewardship. Translations vary, but the general meaning is still clear. Some of the terms used are as follows:

1. *Steward (oikonomos⁵)*

This is the most specific word for one who acted as a steward. He was responsible for the administration of his master's wealth. He had great authority in the household. The root of the word 'steward' is the same as the root of 'household.' This person was normally a slave, but was considered reliable enough to be chosen for this important task. This word is used in Luke 12:42, Luke 16:1-3, and 1 Corinthians 4:1.

2. *Overseer (epitropos⁶)*

This term seems to be used when the person is in a position of authority over other people. In Matthew 20:8 he is the paymaster for the workers. In Galatians 4:2 it refers to one who was responsible to tutor a child to maturity.

3. *Slave (doulos⁷)*

The slave belonged to another person. The steward was usually a slave, but not all slaves were called stewards. The slave did not necessarily have any authority over other slaves or over his master's wealth. If he did have this authority, the term 'steward' was appropriate. Examples of slaves who functioned as stewards are found in Matthew 24:45 and Matthew 25:14.

4. *Servant (doulos)*

In many translations, the same word is rendered as both 'slave' and 'servant.' It can carry both meanings. In the Bible times, there were slaves who existed in abject poverty and misery, and there were also servants who led a much better life. However, both belonged to another person, and so the same word was used.

5. *Stewardship (oikonomia⁸)*

Stewardship is the office or function of the steward, rather than the person. When we speak of our stewardship, we are referring to our responsibility to administrate something. Examples of this word are found in Luke 16:2, 1 Corinthians 9:17 and Ephesians 3:2.

The steward was a slave who was entrusted with the authority to administrate and care for his master's wealth.
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From the usage of these words, we can form a reasonable picture of what stewardship means. The steward was normally a slave who was entrusted with the authority to administrate and care for his master's wealth, household, fields, business, other servants, or even to tutor his son.

B. Joseph—An Example of Stewardship

Joseph may be the best example of a good steward. He first managed the household of Potiphar, the Egyptian official who had purchased him as a slave (Ge 39). Although Potiphar was not a believer, he soon saw that God was with Joseph and prospered all that he did. Therefore Potiphar committed all that he had into Joseph's hands, except for his wife (Ge 39:9).

As the steward of Potiphar, Joseph was able to feed and clothe himself from his master's goods. He lived in Potiphar's house and directed both Potiphar's household and his fields. But the story of his temptation by Potiphar's wife clearly shows that Joseph never forgot that all these things belonged to his master and that there were limits to what he could do. He could enjoy the fruits of his labor as long as his master was pleased with his stewardship, and as long as he did not sin against Potiphar.

⁵ οἰκονομος

⁶ ἐπιτροπος

⁷ δουλος

⁸ οἰκονομια

Later, Joseph again was made a steward, first of the jailer and then of Pharaoh himself. As steward of Pharaoh, he was the wealthiest man in Egypt after Pharaoh. However his position depended on his faithfulness to administrate the affairs of Pharaoh in a manner that pleased Pharaoh.

C. Stewardship in Parables

Because the steward was so common in biblical times, Jesus used parables about stewards to convey truth about the believer's relationship to God. What is the truth that Jesus wants to communicate to us through the image of the steward?

1. The Good Steward Is Faithful

In Luke 12:42-48 Jesus teaches that a steward must be faithful even when his master is not present. If his master returns suddenly to find him occupied with his master's business, he will be rewarded. But if he is not prepared for his master's return, he will be dealt with severely. This parallels the situation of the believer. Our Lord is gone, and will return suddenly. We need to be faithful in His absence.

2. The Shrewd Steward Uses His Position to Prepare for the Future

Jesus told another stewardship parable in Luke 16:1-12. This parable is a bit surprising, since the steward is praised for cheating his master. The parable certainly is not intended to promote dishonesty. Rather, it teaches a very clear message about the wisdom of using the things in our possession now to prepare for the future. The wicked steward realizes that his position is temporary, as is our life on this earth. He decides to use everything in his power to prepare for a good reception for himself when his job is over. Jesus said that he acted more wisely than we often do. We should be using all we have on earth to lay up treasure in heaven.

3. Stewards Will Be Evaluated According to Their Ability

The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 is very familiar to us. Each servant is entrusted with money while his master is gone. They are therefore stewards of those talents. However, they are not given equal amounts. Rather, each one received according to his master's evaluation of his ability. When the master returned, he rewarded each one for his faithfulness. The one who was given two talents received exactly the same praise as the one who received five. Only the one who squandered his talent was judged. The key issue was the steward's faithfulness and not the amount of things that he was given.

D. The Accounting

The Apostle Paul also clearly taught that we are stewards of Christ. Church planters and leaders are especially responsible to minister the mysteries of God (1Co 4:1-2; Eph 3:2; Tit 1:7). He also taught that our master is coming back suddenly, at a time when we do not expect him (1Th 5:2). When Jesus returns for His church, He will judge whether we have been faithful in our service for Him (Ro 14:4-12; 2Co 5:10). Each of these passages is specifically addressed to Christians. The fact that Jesus will judge believers is even more clear in 1Corinthians 3:10-15. In that text, Paul describes how fire will test our works, and we will either receive a reward or suffer loss, depending on how we have served. This obviously refers to believers, since even the one who has nothing worthy of reward will be saved (v. 15).

IV. OUR STEWARDSHIP

A. Our Money

Most believers know that they should give a portion of their money to the Lord. However, a true understanding of stewardship results in a different attitude. Not only should we give, but we should not waste money nor should we spend it on things that are not pleasing to God. After all, it is His money. We do not have any money. We only have God's money entrusted to us. Either by giving it to the church or by spending it on the things that would please Him, we in essence give it back to God.

We do not have any money. We only have God's money entrusted to us.

B. Our Time

Our time is perhaps our most precious possession because there is no way we can increase it. We all have a certain number of days which have been given to us by God (Ps 139:16). He expects us to use them for His glory. When Jesus was taken up, the angels rebuked the disciples for standing around looking at the sky (Ac 1:11). They were to get busy with keeping His command to wait for the Holy Spirit and then to take the Gospel to all nations. Paul reminds us to be diligent to live godly lives, as the day of our salvation is drawing near (Ro 13:11-14). He also tells us to make use of every opportunity in these evil days (Eph 5:15-17). God has appointed tasks for each of us to do, and given us a limited time in which to accomplish them (Eph 2:10). We must carefully evaluate how we spend our time to make sure we do all that He desires for us to do.

C. Our Possessions

Even sincere believers often neglect this area. They may think that God wants a portion of their money, but that is all. If they have a very small monetary income, they may feel they need not give. In reality, the Bible never limits our giving to our money. The Old Testament tithe was normally given from the increase in livestock or crops. A large portion of the sustenance of the New Testament believers would also have been in a form other than cash. God desires for us to give a portion of *whatever* we receive. It may be a salary, potatoes from our garden, milk from our cow, or some other kind of income. The source is not important. God is the ultimate source of all we have, and He expects us to remember that and to honor Him from it.

A large portion of the sustenance of the NT believers would also have been in a form other than cash.

Are you willing to use the possessions God has entrusted to you to please Him and minister to others? The members of the Jerusalem church sold the things they possessed in order to be able to give to those in need (Ac 2:44). We are first introduced to Barnabas in Scripture when he sells his land to give its value to the church (Ac 4:36-37). God richly blessed him and chose him as the companion for the Apostle Paul.

D. Our Bodies

Few Christians think about this responsibility, but it is important. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1Co 6:19), and are for God's glory. Even though the Bible does not prohibit drinking alcohol, smoking or taking drugs, these things can damage that temple and hinder our ability to serve the Lord. Stewardship of this temple requires that we be careful to avoid that which is harmful to our health. This would also include lack of exercise or sleep, poor diet, or anything else that is harmful.

E. Our Families

Our families are our greatest gifts from God. If we cannot manage our families well, then we are not qualified to manage the church (1Ti 3:4-5). Our families do not interfere with our ministry. They are to be a part of it, and our family life should prepare us to minister effectively. As we grow in our ability to care for our families and lovingly instruct them in the Word, we learn to more effectively care for and instruct our brothers and sisters in Christ.

F. Our Ministry

1 Peter 4:10 tells us that all believers are to be faithful stewards of the grace of God by using their spiritual gifts to minister to others. A proper view of ministry will lift a burden from the shoulders of most church leaders. The ministry is God's ministry. It is His work and not ours. We are merely His servants, using His resources to complete the task. If we lack resources, He will supply them. If we are faithful, we will accomplish all that God desires. We need not feel a crushing burden if things are difficult. Rather, we need to wait on the Lord for His direction and strength.

It is imperative that we spend time with God each day. When we are sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading, we will make better choices, and the ministry will be more effective. Even Jesus felt the need to commune with the Father for wisdom. This is especially evident when He had a major decision to make, such as where to work (Lk 4:42-44) or who to choose as a disciple (Lk 6:12-16). We need the same wisdom. If we never forget that we are merely servants doing God's will, we will listen to Him often.

V. STEWARDSHIP AND THE CHURCH PLANTER

Good stewardship is extremely important for church planters. They will need to use all their gifts, possessions, time and money well in order to plant a new church. They will also need to understand their responsibilities to care for their bodies and families as they balance them with ministry. They must apply stewardship principles to themselves and teach them to others.

A. Applied to Themselves

Church planters face a difficult task. They must rescue captives from the hand of a powerful unseen enemy and establish new strongholds for the Lord. They are not capable of such things in their own strength. But they are God's servants using His resources that He has provided for them to accomplish His work. He will provide all that is needed. Their responsibility is to use it carefully. Everything that they do, from giving to use of time, should be weighed in light of their need for His blessing and their role as His stewards.

Your example and consistent teaching will help new believers understand how to be good stewards.

If you have difficulty with stewardship it may be due to a lack of focus. Checking values can help bring focus to life in ministry. Are you characterized as a person who loves God and others? (Mt 22:37-39). Is the way you treat your time, possessions, body, family, ministry, etc. in harmony with this?

B. Taught to Others

Effective church planting requires the involvement of each member. From the time of their conversion, we need to teach each new Christian about his responsibility as a steward before God. Do not assume that others will learn to be good stewards on their own. **Our example and consistent teaching** will help new believers understand how to be good stewards.

Specifically, new believers should be taught to:

- Give generously from their money and other possessions.
- Find and use their spiritual gifts in ministry to build up the church.
- Give of their time for the ministry to believers and unbelievers alike.
- Care for their families in order to know how to care for other believers.

CONCLUSION

The Christian is a steward whether he knows it or not. All that we have is the Lord's and we are expected to use it for His glory. This principle applies to all believers—not just to church planters. But church planters have a special responsibility because we are the ones who must demonstrate this principle in our lives and teach it to others. To whom much is given, much will be required.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are the resources that God has supplied for you? List them.
- What areas described in point IV are the hardest to manage? Why?
- Can a poor person really give to the Lord? Should he or she? How much?
- What should new Christians be taught concerning stewardship?
- How are values important in the discussion of stewardship?

STEWARDSHIP

2

LESSON

Financial Stewardship

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to show how sacrificial giving and self-supporting churches can enhance church planting success.

☛ Main Points

- God desires that we have the faith to give sacrificially to His work.
- Self-supporting churches grow faster than others.

☛ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand how being self-supporting helps a church grow and mature.
- Participate in giving to a greater degree, and teach others to do the same.

☛ Suggestions to Trainers

Try to avoid a heated debate on the issue of tithing. The main point of this lesson is that we are responsible to use money for God's glory. Focus on that issue, which is relevant no matter what someone believes concerning tithing.

Be alert in the event that some in the training have experience in budgeting and could share it with others.

I. EXPLORING THE BIBLE

The Bible has a lot to say about money. We have selected the following passages to help us understand God's mind concerning our financial giving.

A. Tithing in The Old Testament Law

The people of Israel were required to give a tithe, or ten percent of their produce, to the Lord and His work (Lev 27:30-32; Nu 18:23-24). In addition to these required tithes, there were also many other offerings and taxes that are called tithes. A serious Old Testament believer who attempted to keep the Law probably gave somewhere around 28 percent of his income back to God. This consisted mainly of livestock and produce from his fields.

Technical aspects of Old Testament tithing aside, the tithe was a personal spiritual discipline that God promised to respond to. Failure to give the tithe was considered by God to be robbery, since it belonged to Him. God challenged the Israelites to test Him on this, promising to pour out His blessing on those who brought the whole tithe to Him (Mal 3:8-12).

B. The Free-Will Offering for the Tabernacle

The tithe was by no means the only method for collecting funds in the Old Testament. During the wandering in the wilderness, God instructed Moses to collect a free-will offering from the people to build the tabernacle (Ex 25:1-8). The people gave of their livestock, their personal things, and even their labor in response to this call (Ex 35:4-29). They were not compelled to give but gave willingly.

In fact, they gave far more than was necessary, so that Moses had to ask people to stop giving! (Ex 36:4-7).

C. David Models Giving for the Building of the Temple

David understood sacrificial giving, so much so that he refused to give to God that which cost him “nothing” (1Ch 21:24). King David sacrificially gave of his riches so the temple of the Lord could later be built by his son Solomon (1Ch 29:1-5). David’s giving was an inspiring example to others, and after him the leaders of Israel gave (1Ch 29:6-9). David’s prayer following this offering indicates his attitude about giving (1Ch 29:10-20). We learn that David gave with a spirit of praise and thanksgiving unto God. David also indicates that riches and wealth—everything belongs to the Lord (1Ch 29:16). Giving is simply an opportunity to return to God a small portion of what He has given. David even wonders out loud how God could allow him such a privilege as giving (1Ch 29:14).

D. Giving Out of Poverty

Jesus praised the widow who gave a tiny amount (Lk 21:1-4). He did this because her two small coins amounted to one hundred percent of her wealth. This event occurred before the church was established at Pentecost. Therefore even before the church age, when there is no question that God required a tithe, the Lord was pleased when believers freely offered more than that amount. It is also clear that He is interested and is watching to see how much we give.

There is another clear principle in this passage. The temple was an expensive building covered with gold (Mk 13:1; Mt 23:16). Certainly the temple did not need the poor widow’s money. But Jesus was pleased that she gave it anyway because He considered that she gave it to God rather than to the temple. It did not matter that the religious rulers were hypocrites, or that He knew the Romans would destroy the temple in a few years. We give to God rather than to man. But we give to God through the church.

F. The Financing of New Testament Church Leaders

Spiritual leaders in the New Testament were supported in a variety of means. Jesus and the disciples were supported, in part at least, by the women who traveled with them (Lk 8:1-3). When Jesus sent his disciples to preach the Gospel in Galilee He instructed them to expect to be provided for by those to whom they would minister (Mt 10:10; Lk 10:5-8). As a servant of God, the Apostle Paul had the right to be supported financially by those among whom he ministered just as the Old Testament priests were supported (1Co 9:4-14). Here and elsewhere (1Ti 5:18). Paul encourages churches to support those who minister to them. For his own reasons, Paul did not always exercise his right to receive financial support from those to whom he ministered. For example, Paul received no financial support from the Corinthians, even though he could have requested it (1Co 9:12). Instead, Paul mostly supported himself through tentmaking in order to not be a burden on the church (Ac 8:2,3; 1Co 4:12).

We learn as well that the Philippians gave to Paul’s ministry (Php 4:15-20). It is interesting to note that the often repeated phrase “*my God will meet all your needs*” is found in the context of Paul congratulating the Philippians for their giving. Paul knew that God would supply all the needs of the Philippians because they had given generously to his ministry. In other words, God will supply when we have faithfully given.

G. The Collection for the Jerusalem Saints

Paul set out to collect a special offering for the needy saints in Jerusalem who were experiencing a famine. In his first letter to the Corinthian believers he described exactly how the offering should be collected (1Co 16:1-2). He expected every believer to give willingly on the first day of each week (Sunday). No exact percentage was stated. Rather Paul asked for an amount “in keeping with their income.”

In Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians he again taught on this offering. Second Corinthians 8:1-6 and 9:6-11 contain perhaps the most challenging principles on giving in the New Testament. Paul

begins by using the example of the giving of the Macedonian churches (2Co 8:1-6). They gave generously out of poverty, even more than they could humanly give (trusting God). The Macedonians were inspired by the fact that they had first given themselves to God.

Those who give this way enjoy a wonderful promise from God that He will reward them in proportion to their giving. Indeed, God will generously provide for our needs if we have the faith to give generously to Him (2Co 9:6-11; Lk 6:38).

II. PERSONAL GIVING

There is an important spiritual principle that runs through the Bible that every Christian should learn. The principle is very simple. In God's economy the ability to give and receive is not restricted to the available resources. In other words every believer, no matter how poor, should give. As explained in the treatment of many passages above, poverty is no excuse. Everyone is to give to God. Furthermore, when God's people give all they can in faith, it is always enough. God uses these gifts in miraculous ways multiplying them several times over. This is illustrated in the story of the widow of Zarephath (1Ki 17:7-16) and in the feeding of the 5,000 (Mk 6:30-44). In both cases, what was given was not much but it was all there was—and that was enough when in God's hands.

In God's economy the ability to give and receive is not restricted to the available resources.

Giving to God's work should be a regular practice of every believer's life. While most Christians are aware of this responsibility, opinions vary as to how much should be given. Is the tithe still required in the church age? If not, how much should we give? Many believe that tithing was a practice prescribed in the Mosaic law which, like the dietary laws, was not carried over to the New Testament (Ro 10:4; Gal 3:25). Others believe that since tithing pre-dated the Mosaic Law (Ge 14:19-20) and Jesus affirmed the practice, though showed concern about the motivation (Mt 23:23), that God expects us to observe the practice today.

All believers who have studied the New Testament passages on giving would probably agree that ten percent, a tithe, might be a good minimum for our giving to the Lord. It would seem that if a percentage was required in the Old Testament, the New Testament believer with his greater understanding of salvation might want to give more.

Regardless of the percentage of income that a believer decides to give, it is important to realize that income does not consist only of cash that is received as wages or salary. If all that we have belongs to the Lord, then a tithe should be given also for other types of income such as crops, livestock, etc. If a person receives little or no cash income, this does not mean that he is somehow exempt from tithing. He has other means by which he lives, and these resources should also be taken into consideration when he brings his tithe to the Lord.

The following principles guide giving for believers:

- Every believer should give.
- Our giving should be in proportion to our income, both cash and non-cash. Imagine if God made your income proportional to your giving!
- We are to give even in our poverty.
- We are to give with generosity and because we desire to – not because someone forces us. Giving must be from a willing heart in order to please God.
- We are to give more than we are able (trusting God).
- Our financial giving should follow the giving of ourselves to God. Giving is a demonstration of devotion to the Lord.
- God rewards us in proportion to our giving. God promises to generously provide for our needs if we have the faith to give generously to Him.

In Malachi, God promised the Israelites that He would open the storehouses of heaven and pour out His blessing if they gave. Today we have the same kind of promise. Stewardship means that all resources that have been entrusted to us belong to God. If we are faithful to give back to Him, then He will bless

us beyond our need. If we forget to whom it belongs, and are stingy with Him, we will miss out on blessings from God. We have no guarantee that the blessing from God will be financial. God may bless the giver spiritually.

III. LOCAL CHURCH FINANCES

One of the responsibilities of the church is to handle the tithes and offerings of God's people with care and integrity.

A. Self-Supporting Churches

The tithe in the Old Testament enabled the temple, and later the synagogues, to support themselves financially. When all households gave 10% then, even with as few as 10 families, a new household, the household of God, could be established. With this in mind, it has been a Jewish custom to build a synagogue in any city that has 10 or more Jewish families.

Whatever one believes about tithing in the New Testament, the principle behind tithing, that a church can and should support itself, remains true. With the exception of the offering to Jerusalem due to a famine, it was normal in the New Testament for each church to take care of its own financial needs. For example, Paul told the Galatians to support their own teachers (Gal 6:6). He told Timothy to teach churches to care for their poor and widows (1Ti 5:3-10), and to pay their teachers of God's word (1Ti 5:18).

Churches which take the responsibility to support themselves tend to grow and multiply faster.

Research will show that churches who take the responsibility to support themselves tend to grow and multiply faster than those which do not. There are several advantages to self support:

1. *Self Support Develops Maturity*

Dependency on others outside the local church can lead to a poor sense of dignity and lack of opportunity to develop. However, when a church supports its own ministry and manages its finances, it develops maturity through the decisions that come with such a responsibility.

2. *Self Support Builds Responsibility*

It is common for a worker who receives funds from another church or agency to feel more responsible to those who pay his salary than to the church he ministers to. In such a situation, needs can go unmet as the leader focuses on the needs of his "employer" rather than the needs of the flock. The opposite is likely to be true as well. Church members may not feel responsible for the needs of their leaders and may take the leaders for granted. For whatever reason, givers tend to feel a sense of ownership for the things they give to (Mt 6:19-21). In other words, people highly value what they invest in. It is essential that local people own the ministry of the church for it to flourish in their community.

3. *Self Support Exercises Faith*

Self-support may bring many trials and difficulties. However, the trials are opportunities to grow in faith (1Pe 1:6-7, Jas 1:3-4). Self-support really is a faith issue. The absence of self-support is often not due to poverty, but is due to lack of faith. There are examples of both poor people who are able to support their own churches, as well as people with riches who expect outsiders to support their church. The question is "Will God provide for His people or won't He"? People of faith will answer that affirmatively. Is it wise to pray for God's provision and not be willing to be the answer to that request? Obviously it is not wise. To do so would be "faith without works." However, when God's people give sacrificially and with faith, believing that God is faithful, God gives back in ways that they could not have imagined.

4. *Self Support Improves Testimony to the Lost*

When a church is supported by foreign funds then the perception is that the faith proclaimed by the church is a foreign faith. This often hinders the community witness. This is especially true for salaries. When people receive salaries from a foreign source they may be considered

hired salesmen instead of true believers with an authentic faith. On the other hand, when members of the church support the ministry sacrificially there can be little doubt about their loyalty.

If a church expects outsiders to pay the bills, will they also expect outsiders to evangelize the community?

5. *Self Support Allows for Unlimited Growth*

When funds come from an outside source then there is nearly always a limit to the funds. Often the system requires investing resources to promote the ministry to potential supporters. In other words, it costs money to receive money. There is also the fear that funds could be cut off at any time. The result is that there is a limit to how much money can be received, and the church does not grow. On the other hand, in a self-supporting church where people are taught to give, funds will increase as new people are won to Christ and incorporated into the church. As the church grows the giving increases so that there is no limit on what can be done.

When a butterfly is born it must endure a great struggle to escape from the cocoon. A well meaning observer may wish to help the butterfly out of the cocoon. But if he does, he actually hinders the growth and development of the butterfly so that the butterfly is likely to die soon after emerging from the cocoon. According to God's design, the exercise of climbing out of the cocoon is just the exercise needed to develop the strength necessary for life as a butterfly.

The same can be true of a new church. If it does not learn to support itself early on, it may remain dysfunctional forever, never learning the joy and strength of self-support. Each new church should have the opportunity to mature in its own faith and follow God's plan of support and growth.

B. Managing Church Finances

Managing finances in the church must be seen not as normal business or administration, but as a spiritual ministry.

1. *Teach Systematic Giving*

Whatever you believe about tithing, emphasize the joy of giving, not the law of tithing! Biblical giving, whether a tithe or not, is an act of faith, a symbol that all one has belongs to God. When people give willingly they often give more and receive a greater blessing.

Leaders should give as an example to others. Recall how King David's giving was an example to other leaders and to the whole nation of Israel (1Ch 29:1-20). The pastor or church planter who does not emphasize giving in order not to appear greedy does not do others any favor. He deprives his people of the privilege of participating in the ministry, and the church loses the resources that God in His wisdom has provided.

Lack of stewardship can also hinder the planting of other churches. Small groups of even ten families who are giving ten percent or more of their income can easily support a pastor at the same level at which they live. However, if they do not understand their responsibility to give, the church planter will need to find resources elsewhere that could be used to plant another new church. It should be clear that this is not pleasing to the Lord, who wants us to saturate our countries with churches and disciples and thus fulfill the Great Commission.

The pastor or church planter who does not emphasize giving in order not to appear greedy does not do others any favor

2. *Develop an Acceptable System for Expenses*

Christians around the world have different methods for managing church finances. Regardless of the method, it is important that Church leaders estimate the cost (Lk 14:28-30) in planning for ministry. Many churches, taking this responsibility seriously, write a budget which is simply an estimate of how much money will be needed for a certain period of time. A budget might include expected expenses for the following:

- Administration/planning

- Charitable ministries
- Discipleship/training ministries
- Evangelism
- Facilities/equipment
- Missions
- Salaries
- Worship

Budgets may be written (perhaps annually) by those who handle the finances (finance committee) but should be approved by the spiritual leaders of the fellowship. Budgets should be written prayerfully with ministry goals in focus.

3. *Train and Release the Church Treasurer*

People will hesitate to give if they feel that the money will not be managed well. The guidelines in (Figure 2.1) are suggestions for managing finances in a responsible, honest fashion.

In your ministry you may or may not choose to write a budget. You may not choose to use the guidelines suggested. The important thing is not the form, but the function. A system for collecting and distributing funds should include: several people, prayerful planning, accountability, regular collecting, careful record keeping, and regular reporting.

IV. FINANCING AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS

Church planting movements normally require finances to support ministry at a variety of levels, from the local mobilization level to the infrastructure at the highest levels. People must be trained and mobilized, material must be produced and disseminated, leaders must meet to pray and sharpen vision, research must be done, churches must be planted. All this requires finances. Where do these finances come from?

Since the advance of the Gospel requires funding, giving is an important component of church planting movements. A movement is driven by faith, and people of faith give or their faith is dead. Jesus described a spiritual mystery related to financial giving when he said, "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*" (Mt 6:21). As a person gives financially and substantially *according to one's means*, the person becomes committed in the heart to their investment. If someone saves money and pours it into a house, or a car, or education—whatever they paid for—this is what they will treasure and love. The same will happen if someone gives to advance the Gospel from a heart of love for Jesus. Giving to God's work increases a person's interest in it *from the heart*, transforming them inwardly and outwardly.

Those who are involved in a movement must be willing to give sacrificially to it, or the movement has no heart-felt following. Something very powerful happens when people decide that a ministry or program is *theirs* and that its success or failure depends on God's work through them alone. Foreign financial support can help church planting movements, but in the long run foreign support means the agenda is set by outsiders. In essence then it belongs to someone else. This can kill a movement.

Figure 2.1 Guidelines for Managing Tithes and Offerings

- Offerings should be received and accounted for by at least two members of the church.
- Accurate records should be kept detailing the amounts given at all offerings.
- All persons who count offerings should sign their names, indicating that the amount is correct.
- A finance committee of at least three members should be responsible for overseeing the disbursements of the offerings according to the guidelines established by the official church leaders.
- A treasurer should be appointed from the membership to keep a careful record of all church funds. The treasurer should keep church money in a safe place for future use.
- Offerings that are given for specific purposes should be used for only that purpose.
- Annual financial reports showing what was received and how it was disbursed should be made available to all members.

Is it possible for movements to be sustained by local financial support? The answer, as you might expect, is "Yes, it is possible." Where people have a burning vision and driving faith for church planting movements, God provides the resources, as can be testified to by believers around the world. India, one of the poorest nations in the world by most economic standards has several examples. The Friends Missionary Prayer Band is an indigenous movement that supports 1,000 Indian missionaries and has 30,000 prayer supporters. The ministry operates without outside funding. Instead, 10 members of a prayer band support their own evangelist.

CONCLUSION

In God's design, individuals as well as churches are to develop in maturity and faithfulness before God. Remaining in a state of dependency does not promote the maturity and faith that is necessary for the mission God has given to us. Many believers find it difficult to trust God with financial matters. But God invites us to put Him to the test in this area. If you find it difficult to give to God's work then bring that before the Lord. He will prove faithful.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Are you willing to give above your means, like the Macedonians?
- What should new Christians be taught concerning giving?
- Do you determine the amount of your tithe based on your cash income only, or also on other resources with which God has blessed you?
- How would you explain giving to a non-Christian who thinks that churches only ask for money?
- What effect does outside funding have on a local church?

ACTION PLAN

- Record your income from all sources (including non-cash) and your giving for a week or a month. This is between you and God. Calculate what percentage you give to Him. Are you pleased with this? Is He?
- Divide your church's total offerings for a month by the number of adults represented to find the average monthly giving per adult. Multiply that figure by ten to see how much each adult would have to live on each month if their giving really represented a tithe. How do you think your church is doing? Do they need more instruction in this area? If so, develop a plan to teach them. Remember that the purpose of this is to help them understand stewardship, and not to enact a legalistic requirement of giving which you will enforce. God loves those who give freely.

SOURCES

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STEWARDSHIP

3

LESSON

Time Management

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to demonstrate the importance and wise use of time from a biblical standpoint and to acquaint church planters with basic principles for using their time effectively.

☞ Main Points

- Keeping a time log can help the church planter wisely evaluate the use of his most precious asset—his time.
- Writing a schedule is another helpful time management technique.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand the biblical principles regarding time management.
- Know the principle of the importance of time and the need to take steps to use time wisely in all areas of life.
- Participate in using a tool that can help the church planter make better use of time.

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

It is highly recommended that the trainer begin preparing for this lesson far enough in advance in order to go through the “Practical Implementation” section himself. In short this lesson will take on much more significance if the trainer has personal and practical experience with this exercise. Take time to share your experience of successes/failures in tabulating and analyzing your schedule, as well as your goal setting, plus any new daily schedules that result from your working through this exercise. The more personal you can make this lesson the more impact it will have on those you are training.

INTRODUCTION

There doesn't seem to be enough time in a day to accomplish all that is demanded. Your spouse says you need to spend more time at home with the children. New believers need some quality time to be discipled. A future leader of a cell group needs to see you. There are always those who are sick and need a visit. And don't forget about preparation time for the Bible studies and the Sunday sermons. The list of tasks, those time consumers, goes on and on. And don't forget about time for God. And what about time for yourself? You need time to contemplate your walk with God, your goals in life, your ministry and where it is headed. You also need time to rest.

TIME: A gift that God has given to each of us. It is a valuable resource; once it has been spent it is unredeemable. As a resource, time needs to be used wisely with a constant view to eternity. Proper time management can help you (with the Lord's help) control your time rather than time controlling you. We recognize that most research on time management is done from a Western perspective, and all the practices may not be able to be applied in your culture. But, to the extent that you can apply them, we believe you will find them helpful. This lesson will provide guidelines as to where you should spend your time and offer a practical way to manage your time in a way that honors God.

Proper time management can help you control your time rather than time controlling you.

I. ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES—LEARNING HOW TO MANAGE TIME

Time management is largely an issue of values or, more specifically, *priorities*. Clearly understood priorities should be the basis for organizing time. *Priorities enable life and ministry to have purpose instead of a situation where circumstances control progress.* In essence, this lesson is all about establishing priorities in life and ministry.

A. Biblical Principles for Managing Time

- Your life belongs to God; make Him the Master of your time (Ps 24:1; Jos 24:15).
- Time is a limited resource—use it wisely (Eph 5:15-17). Serve with a sense of urgency and with an awareness that your life may end at any moment (Ps 39:4-5).
- Set priorities and make time commitments based upon your God-given talents and gifts (1Pe 4:10; Pr 16:3). Time should be used appropriately (Ecc 3:1-8).
- Genuine stewardship of time results in bountiful blessings from the Lord (Mt 6:20; Ps 37:23-24).
- Use of time communicates a clear message about your real values (Eph 5:15-17).

B. Priorities for the Church Planter

Time management is, in part, an issue of commitment. How one treats his time shows what he is committed to—even what he loves. If your schedule is such that you cannot spend time with people who need you, then it may show a lack of commitment to them. Commitment to others should be evident in the way we spend time.

Our love for God and others (Mt 22:37-39) should affect our time management. Specifically the following four priorities can be used to guide our time management.

1. *Daily Time of Devotion and Prayer with God*

Fellowship with God should be your number one priority. Serving others in a right way is impossible without God's presence and power that comes from personal time with Him.

2. *Time with the Family (1Ti 3:4-5; Tit 1:6)*

Time spent with family is valuable time. The quality of a church planter's family is directly related to his qualifications for ministry in the context of a church. Make family time a priority.

3. *Ministry Activities Related to a Church Planting Ministry (Eph 4:11-13)*

You have a responsibility to evangelize, disciple, train and release others. The key to all these activities is developing relationships, which requires time. You will also need to prioritize time for Bible studies, sermon preparation, office administration, counseling, etc.

4. *Ministry within the Community or Community Outreach (Mt 28:19-20, Ac 1:8)*

Church planting is an evangelistic activity. You must be out in the community among those you are evangelizing.

II. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

A. Log Your Current Use of Time

The most practical way to schedule your time is to first record how you spend your time each day over the period of one week. What do you do with your time? Use the table (Figure 3.1) following to write down, hour by hour, everything you do each day. This will help you determine your priorities. This is not an exercise to do everyday of your life, but rather is a tool to determine whether your actual use of time matches your priorities.

Figure 3.1 Time Log

TIME LOG							
Instructions: <i>This log helps you to evaluate how you spend your time each day. Keep this log with you and write down how you spend each hour for an entire week. This will give you a factual picture of how you actually spend your time versus how you would like to use your time for God's purposes for you.</i>							
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
13:00							
14:00							
15:00							
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17:00							
18:00							
19:00							
20:00							
21:00							
22:00							
23:00							
24:00							

After filling out the time log in figure 3.1, categorize your activities. Use the table in figure 3.2 as a guide. Note that the list in this table is not exhaustive. You may want to develop your own categories that are appropriate to your own lifestyle.

Figure 3.2 Use of Time Analysis

USE OF TIME ANALYSIS	
Instructions: Based on the information you recorded on the time log, group your time usage into several main categories. Record the total number of hours spent for each category.	
Category	Total hours
1. <u>Morning routine.</u> Note how much time it takes to get dressed, eat, etc.	
2. <u>Daily devotions.</u> Note when and how much time you spend in daily devotions.	
3. <u>Spouse.</u> How much time do you spend with your mate? (for example: spending quality, one-on-one time reading together, praying together, etc.)	
4. <u>Family.</u> How much time you spend with your family (family devotions, helping children with homework, playing games, walking, etc.).	
5. <u>Ministry.</u> How you spend your day at your office or church (sermon preparation, phone calls, meetings, home, hospital visitation, etc.)	
6. <u>Meals.</u> When and where you have your meals and with whom.	
7. <u>Evening routine.</u> What you do each evening (Bible studies, evangelistic campaigns, hobbies, etc.)	
8. <u>Sleep.</u> When you retire for bed. Do you get enough sleep each night?	
9. <u>Other.</u>	

B. Analyze Your Use of Time

Now that you can see clearly how you spend your time, your priorities will become evident. There is not a direct proportion between the measure of priorities and the amount of time spent, but there is a general correspondence. For example, if your spouse is a high priority and you do not spend any special time with him or her, then time needs to be rearranged to be sure that your relationship is a real commitment.

Ways to improve the use of your time should now be more obvious. Look at your time log (figure 3.1) and your time usage analysis (figure 3.2) and answer the following questions to identify patterns:

- What activities do you do repeatedly?
- Are you giving priority to the most important areas of your life?
- Are there any consistent blocks of wasted time?
- What specific changes would you like to make in your schedule?

You should be able to identify your current priorities: in other words, the major roles and responsibilities in your life. List the things that are most important to you in the following space:

Does your analysis of your use of time reflect these priorities? What adjustments would you like to make?

C. Write a Realistic Schedule

Using the Time Log (figure 3.1) again plan your schedule for the next week, based on your priorities as well as what you have learned from the prior week's observations. If you feel that there were certain elements missing from your activities, then make time for them. It would be best to make changes to your normal schedule in small increments.

1. *Choose at least one priority and schedule specific time to meet that priority. Note these examples.*

Example #1

PRIORITY: My relationship with the Lord.

GOAL: Arise one hour early three mornings each week to pray. This may mean going to bed one hour earlier to ensure the proper amount of sleep.

Example #2

PRIORITY: My relationship with my spouse.

GOAL: Arrange a special time every week devoted exclusively to one another.

2. *Eliminate those things which are not an efficient use of time or a priority.*

Are you doing things that other people in the church are both more qualified and willing to do? Learn to disciple people and delegate responsibility to them. Help others discover and use their spiritual and natural giftedness. Guide them in their ongoing development as leaders. Delegating tasks to those under your leadership will not only save you time, but will help them mature in their Christian life.

3. *Schedule family time.*

Time spent with your family is very valuable. The quality of a church planter's family is directly related to his qualifications for ministry in the context of a church (1Ti 3:4-5).

4. *Schedule ministry activity*

This includes time for study, evangelistic outreach, church administration, discipleship, leadership training, prayer events, visitation, etc.

5. *Schedule a rest time.*

Keep in mind that you are not wasting time when you are resting. Rest will ensure better health and more energetic ministry throughout the entire day. You may need to take a nap in the middle of the day to have energy for a ministry that often ends late in the evening. You

also need to prayerfully and carefully consider scriptural commands to have a day of rest. As a church planter your Sunday (the typical “day of rest”) will be a very intense day for you. Many pastors who face the same dilemma choose a different day, such as Monday, as their “day of rest.”

6. *Strive for balance in your week.*

If you have a heavy schedule one day, schedule a lighter day the next day.

D. Review Your Progress

Your skill in making better use of time will improve as you practice these steps. You may want to make yourself accountable to someone regarding the goals you have set. If you really want to learn to manage your time in order to be a better steward, then you will take whatever steps are necessary to bring about the desired change. Consider placing in your schedule a regular time with someone whom you respect and who has agreed to make himself available to you. Mutual accountability and fellowship will be very valuable to your entire life.

CONCLUSION

It is not a sin to plan, to manage your time, to schedule your day, week, year and even your life. In fact, it is just the opposite. Proper time management can increase ministry effectiveness and honor the Lord. The potential for sin is there if we minimize the importance of relationships in our managing of time. Time is a resource but an unhealthy focus on time can destroy relationships rather than build them. Be careful of extremes. Seek to be balanced in this area.

You are well aware that church planters, by the very nature of their work, are very busy people. Time management will help you, as a church planter, to be more effective. There is an old proverb that can sum up the subject of time management: "IF WE FAIL TO PLAN, WE PLAN TO FAIL!" Periodically evaluating your use of time, using the exercises in this lesson, can help you make sure that you are using your time wisely.

If we fail to plan, we plan to fail!

We all want to hear from our Lord one day, "Well done, good and faithful servant." It is our hope that this lesson will assist you to achieve the "well done" in your life and ministry.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- Read Luke 10:38-42. Note the priorities of Mary and Martha. How do these verses relate to this lesson? Which of these people are you most like?
- Read Luke 4,6,9,11. Note how Jesus set aside time to pray. Do you do this as well? Do you pray with your spouse on a regular basis regarding your life and ministry?
- A careful reading of Luke 9:51-62 shows that Jesus had a certain task that he had to accomplish within a certain period of time. What was that task? Did the importance of this task have any effect on his relationship with people? Do you think that he purposely planned for extra time in this task so that he could continue to focus on relationships?
- Read Exodus 18 and note how Moses solved his time management problem.
- Read the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25:14-30. Replace the word “talent” with the word “years” and your name for that of the first servant who received five talents. You have received five years from the Lord. Share how you have invested the Lord’s time for which He praises you and that ultimately brings Him glory.

ACTION PLAN

- Read the book of Nehemiah and look for instances where Nehemiah demonstrated any elements of time management which have been brought out in this lesson.

- Begin to tabulate your daily activities for one week. Analyze the results and then set a goal to implement a change in time usage. Tell either your spouse or a close friend what your goal is and keep that person updated on your progress in achieving your goal.
- Develop a plan to decrease your time involvement in some aspect of your ministry by delegating it to others. Share this goal with someone and keep them updated on your progress.

STEWARDSHIP

4

LESSON

Strategic Planning Process

☞ Lesson Purpose

The Purpose of this lesson is to introduce trainees to a practical method of strategic planning which can be used for any phase of ministry and will allow them to prioritize and link ministry activities to their ministry purpose.

☞ Main Points

- Strategic planning is a process.
- Strategic planning is a tool to help you stay focused on your ministry purpose.
- If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand how to develop a strategic plan for a church planting ministry.
- Know how to define objectives and set measurable goals.
- Participate in the process of preparing a strategic plan for a church-planting ministry.

I. WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Strategic planning is a means to help the church planting team be most efficient and effective in their work of church planting. It is a process by which church planting team members link themselves, their families, their ministries – everything – to the strategic “Z” that they have identified for their church planting ministry. After working through a strategic plan, the church planting team should be able to understand and differentiate between “best” activities – those which will take saturation church planting work farther, faster – and “good” activities – those activities which have a place in church life but do not rapidly bring an entire region to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Strategic planning helps the team to define its direction, its organization and its resources to accomplish specific activities toward reaching “Z.” Strategic planning is not about being better organized; it is about living purposefully, focusing our time and energy on the “best” activities of what God is calling us to do: to see our regions filled with living churches.

Biblical Examples of Strategic Planning

In both the Old Testament and New Testament, strategic planning is evident.

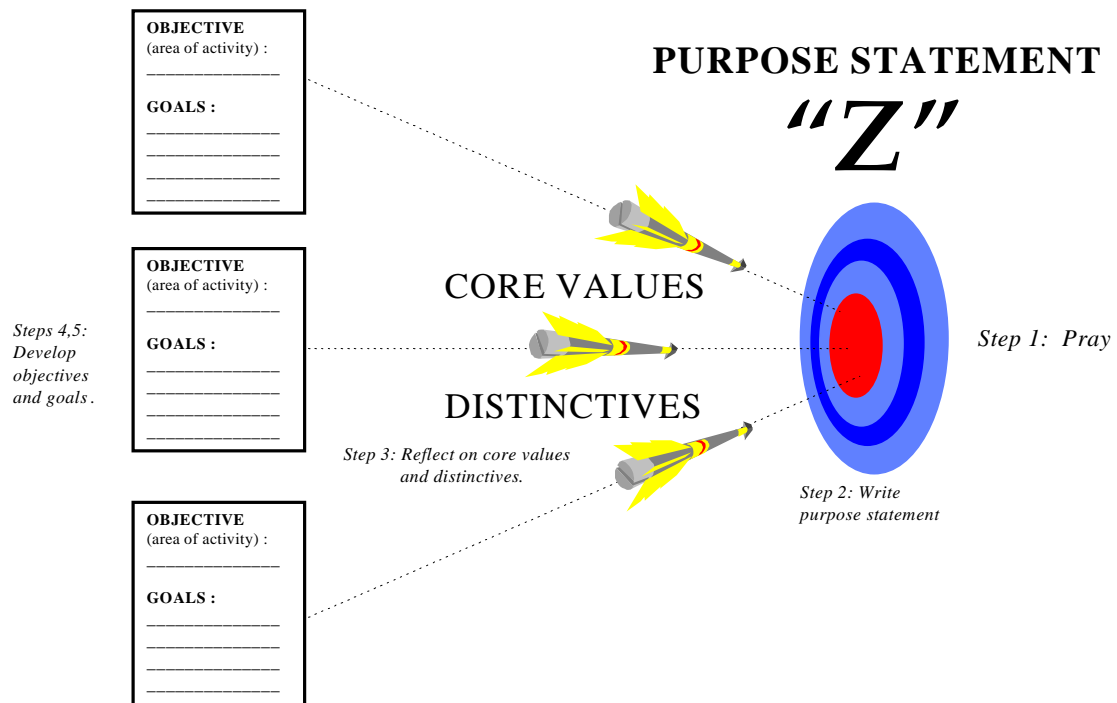
- Joseph, with God-given wisdom, developed and implemented a plan to save the Egyptians and surrounding nations from starvation during seven years of famine (Ge 41).
- Nehemiah surveyed the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and developed and implemented a plan for rebuilding the city wall in spite of many obstacles and risks.
- Jesus’ life and ministry reflect that He had a very definite purpose and definite means to fulfill that purpose. For example, Jesus confidently directed His steps toward the cross (Mt 16:21-23). He focused His ministry on the 12 disciples and among the Jewish people.

II. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning is a multi-step process and contains five major components: purpose statement, core values, distinctives, objectives and goals. Together they comprise a strategic plan. This plan is developed and updated regularly according to the process outlined below. Planning should not be done without much prayer before and during the planning process. Church planting is spiritual work and so requires a dependency on God for wisdom and to have the mind of Christ (Jas 1:5-7; 1Co 2:16). The strategic planning process is best done at least by two persons.

Figure 4.1 The Strategic Planning Process

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



It is important to remember that the resulting strategic plans are not unchangeable. Rather, they are a working plan of what you and your team see as the best activities to do, at this moment in time, in order to progress towards your strategic "Z." As you begin to implement the activities identified in your plan, you may recognize other issues or concerns which might cause a modification to your strategic plan. That is why it is important to review your strategic plan on a regular basis. A plan is only useful if it helps you to live more purposefully and keep your ministry focused on the most important activities.

A. Step 1: Pray

With your church planting team, pray for wisdom and clarity of vision from God. Ask God to guide and direct your planning time, to help you to listen to one another, and to have the "mind of Christ" in your planning. In addition, enlist several friends to pray for your team as you work through the process.

B. Step 2: Write or Review Your Purpose Statement

The purpose statement is the foundation of your planning. Review the region you have targeted for your ministry, whether a neighborhood, a village, a city, a county, or a country. Review also the kind of ministry which God has called you to do – church planting, prayer mobilization, literature distribution—based on your targeted region and your ministry.

Review the purpose statement you prepared earlier for your ministry. If you haven't done this yet, then write your purpose statement. Your purpose statement should be only one or two sentences and should answer the question, "Why does our team (or group) exist?" and should reflect both your target region and your ministry.

Some examples of purpose statements are:

- This team exists to enable evangelicals to fill Romania with reproducing congregations. (National church planting facilitation team).
- This team exists to fill this county with reproducing churches. (Church planting team).
- This team exists to assist local prayer ministries in this city to pray together and to more prayerfully support the work of church planting in the city. (Prayer team).

Have the recorder write the purpose statement on the chalkboard (or paper) so that you can look at it collectively. With your team take time to review this purpose statement and ask yourself the following questions:

- Does this statement still reflect our purpose, or has it changed?
- Is this statement in agreement with our core values and distinctives? If not, what do we need to change to make it agree?
- Is the purpose statement clear and concise?
- Does the purpose statement define our "Z" – the target region or people group we are trying to reach and the type of ministry we are called to do?

If necessary, make changes to your purpose statement in answer to the above questions. Keep the finalized purpose statement in front of the team to refer to during the rest of the planning process.

C. Step 3: Reflect on Core Values and Distinctives

Core values are the fundamental, biblically based concepts that you are committed to and highly esteem. As you and your team determine what your core values are, the only way to be on safe ground is to base each value on Scripture. These values will help you clarify what you do and what you do not do. Any strategies which you develop that are not in line with your core values are either likely to fail or to be destructive.

Some examples of core values are:

- *Local Church:* We believe that the local church is God's primary instrument for evangelism and nurture, i.e. the main method He uses for doing His work.
- *Multiplication:* A multiplication model, rather than an addition model, is the only church-reproducing model which can ever reach the goal of whole-nation disciple-making.
- *Servant-Leadership:* We believe servant-leadership should be developed by empowering and releasing gifted people.
- *Accountability:* As a team we believe we must be mutually accountable to each other, to a local church, and to our leaders. We believe that through our accountability to these groups, we can maintain a close relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- *Integrity:* We are committed to the following ethical values as we conduct ourselves in this work: excellence, honesty, integrity in finances...

Distinctives are the things that make you unique. They help to define your identity. They reveal what you are known for and how you relate to others. They may provide boundaries that affect cooperation with others, positively or negatively. They should protect you from going off in directions away from your purpose.

Some examples of distinctives are:

- We work only among Muslim people.
- We focus our efforts on training trainers of church planters.
- We seek to cooperate with all evangelical denominations and organizations working in our target area.

Identify the core values and distinctives of your ministry team. This is a good activity for brainstorming. Have team members say what they think are the values and distinctives of the team. The recorder should write down every idea that is shared. Next, take a look at the list. Evaluate the values and distinctives which were named during the brainstorming activity. Do they reflect biblical values? Does the team agree that this is a value or distinctive of your team? Cross out or rework any values or distinctives which are not representative of your team. Have the recorder write out a finalized list of core values and distinctives on large paper so that they can be kept in mind during the rest of the strategic planning process.

D. Step 4: Identify Your Objectives

Once you have identified your purpose, your core values and distinctives, the next step is to identify your objectives. Objectives answer the general question, "What will you do?" What are the major thrusts of your ministry? What are the general directions in which your team will direct its efforts? Objectives are the general categories of activities you will be involved in as you work toward fulfilling your purpose. Some examples of objectives for a church planting ministry are:

- Research the target region and people
- Mobilize prayer for church planting
- Evangelize
- Train and mentor leaders for the emerging church
- Train and mentor other church planters
- Develop reproducing cell groups
- Mobilize other churches in the region for church planting

This is a good activity for brainstorming as follows:

- Ask the team, "What areas will we continue to concentrate our energies on over the next three years?"
- Have team members say what they think the team's objectives are. The recorder should write down every idea that is shared.
- Next, take a look at the list. Evaluate the objectives which were named during the brainstorming activity. Do they agree with your purpose statement, core values and distinctives? Cross out or rework any objectives which do not help you fulfill your purpose statement or are not reflective of your values and distinctives.
- Prioritize this list and cut it down to no more than seven objectives. Most teams or individuals usually cannot work on more than seven different objectives at a time.
- Have the recorder write out a finalized list of objectives on large paper with space so that goals can be added.

E. Step 5: Set Goals

In goal setting, you actually define the specific steps you will take in a specified time period (three months, six months, one year...) to achieve your objectives. While objectives are general in nature, goals are specific in nature. Goal-setting helps you move from fire fighting to fire prevention – from simply responding to the urgent to managing the important. Defining specific, clear, measurable goals will allow you to think through the steps, A, B, C...which eventually reach "Z," your purpose. A goal that is well written can be taken by any person and explained perfectly to someone else, even

though that person had nothing to do with the writing of the goal. Good goals have the following characteristics:

- **Time Limit.** A good goal needs to have a definite time limit for its completion. The amount of time will depend on what you consider necessary for finishing the task. If you are doing strategic planning on an annual basis, the maximum time limit for completing your goals should be within the next year. EXAMPLE: By the END OF JUNE...
- **Able to be Accomplished.** A good goal will make the person “stretch” in order to accomplish the task. At the same time it will not put the task outside the reach of the person. If goals are unattainable, there will always be a hesitancy to even try to accomplish the goal. EXAMPLE: PREPARE THREE INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDIES...
- **Measurable.** A good goal will include a way to measure as to whether or not the goal has been reached. There are many ways to measure: by writing, by speaking, by performing some task, by observing certain things...If you do not have a measuring device, then there is no way to know if or when the goal is attained. EXAMPLE: LEAD THE PREPARED STUDIES IN MY CELL GROUP...
- **Clear Language.** A good goal will use clear, precise language to communicate what is the precise task to be accomplished. Many times words like “know” and “understand” are used in writing goals, but these words are open to many interpretations. For example, how many ways are there to “know” something? We know things by our senses, so there are at least five ways to “know.” If “knowing” is qualified by “how,” then it might be permissible to use. Again, how can you measure “understanding”? Words need to be chosen carefully to make sure they convey what was intended.

Example Goal

By the end of June I will prepare and lead a series of three inductive Bible studies in my cell group on the theme of “The Great Commission and Church Planting in our City.”

It is quite common for there to be several specific goals for each objective. While your team might decide on four or five main objectives, you might end up with ten or more specific goals that will help you reach your objectives. You will need to determine how many goals need to be set for each one of your objectives to be effectively met. You should answer the following questions as you work on your goals:

- What measurable thing(s) will we do this year toward accomplishing this objective?
- How will we accomplish these things?
- How will we measure our success?
- What will happen if this goal is not reached? (This will help you evaluate the priority of the goal.)
- What advice, resources, or training do we need to accomplish this goal?
- What obstacles or problems need to be overcome to achieve this goal? (This will help you to evaluate how realistic is your goal.)
- Who will work on this goal? When should it be finished? How will you know when you have accomplished this goal? (Unless someone takes responsibility for the goal, it will not get implemented.)
- Who can help us to be accountable for our goals?

The recorder should write down the team goals for each objective along with the projected completion date and the responsible party.

When you have completed the above exercise, you will have finished the strategic planning process. You now have in your possession a ministry purpose statement, a listing of your core values and distinctives, your overall objectives, and your specific goals. Use this “document” as a starting point for future strategic planning sessions with your team (group).

CONCLUSION

- A strategic plan is useful only if it is seen as a working document and reviewed on a periodic basis. If you have goals which have short deadlines, you may want to review your strategic plan quarterly, but definitely semi-annually or annually. Usually your purpose statement, core values, and distinctives do not change. They are the foundations of what God has called you and your team to do. Until that purpose is fulfilled, it remains the same. However, as you continue to work towards your purpose, and your understanding of it grows, you may find yourself refining your purpose.
- The objectives and the goals are tools to help you keep focused on achieving your purpose. They help you to prioritize your work, to concentrate on the important activities God has called you to do, and to think through practically what must be done in order to achieve your purpose.
- Finally, you must remember that no plan is perfect. It is a guide to help you stay on the right track. The best-laid plans are nothing if the Lord is not in your work. As the writer of Proverbs reminds us, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Pr 3:5-6).

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What is the difference between strategic planning and being well organized?
- Can you think of other areas of life in which strategic planning may apply?
- What are some other examples from Scripture, or from your own life, in which you have seen effective planning lead to effective results?
- How would you respond to the statement, "Hazy goals produce, at best, hazy results"?
- What are ways in which people in your culture brainstorm about ideas to solve problems?

ACTION PLAN

Do strategic planning with your church planting team or the leadership of your emerging church. Be prepared to share your strategic plan at the next training session.

STEWARDSHIP

5

LESSON

Strategic Planning Process Workshop

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to provide practice for the trainees in carrying out a strategic planning session in a team setting.

☞ Main Points

- Strategic planning is critical to church planting ministry.
- Strategic planning is not a difficult task.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know how to carry out a strategic planning session in a team context.
- Be more confident about how to do strategic planning.
- Be committed to doing strategic planning with the church-planting team.

During this hour we will put into practice the concepts we learned in the previous lesson about strategic planning. You will be formed into groups of four or five persons each and will work as if you were a church-planting team. Because of time constraints, we are assuming that your “team” has already developed its ministry purpose statement and decided upon its core values and distinctives.

As a team you have set as a ministry objective to have a **weekend youth retreat**. The task now is to develop the following types of goals using as a model the characteristics studied in the previous lesson.

- Develop a general goal for the weekend retreat.
- Develop a goal for a specific activity during the retreat.

Be sure to check your goals against the characteristics presented in the last lesson to make sure they meet the qualifications of good goals.

You have thirty minutes to work on this activity. At the end of this time we will let each group share its goals for review and evaluation by the class.

THE FAMILY

THE FAMILY

1

LESSON

Biblical Roles in the Family

☛ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of the lesson is to present a clear biblical and foundational teaching for marriage and the role of the husband, wife and children in a family.

☛ Main Points

- In marriage, God is able to complement the strengths and weaknesses of the husband and wife to make them complete, which enables them to best serve Him.
- The ministry of a church planter includes his family, since the family is a visible and biblical indicator of leadership ability and discipling effectiveness.

☛ Desired Outcomes

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

- Understand the purpose of marriage from the perspective of the One who ordained it.
- Have a better understanding of the biblical teaching about the roles of the husband and the wife in the marriage relationship.
- Understand family relationships as an analogy of the Church.

INTRODUCTION

The Church has become the centerpiece of God's kingdom on earth. Within this community of believers, God has called all of His children into loving relationships with Himself and with each other. Some have been called to serve the Lord and the Church in a state of singleness and others in a state of marriage. But whether married or single, everyone has been placed in a family.

The family is one analogy used to describe the Church. Your understanding of the relationships in physical families will influence the way you look at the family of God. It is important, therefore, that you as a church planter understand biblical roles within the family for your own life and ministry. Moreover, Paul, writing to his young leader Timothy, reminds Timothy of the responsibility of a leader within the church. Paul asks, "If a man does not know how to manage his own household well, how will he take care of the church of God?" (1Ti 3:5). This thought-provoking question challenges all church leaders, especially the church planter, to evaluate his own ministry within his family. How is his management of his family if his family is a proving ground for his leadership ability in the church?

"If a man does not know how to manage his own household well, how will he take care of the church of God?" (1 Timothy 3:5)

As you are busy with responsibilities for doing evangelism, discipling, and training leaders, seeking that the new church plant grows well, you must also remember that your own family remains the clearest indicator of leadership ability and discipling effectiveness. If the church planter develops habits that fail his ministry to his family, these may carry over to the new church as well. A church planter must give attention to his family relationships as part of his overall work of ministry.

I. THE MARRIED COUPLE

The basic unit of the family is the married couple. Reading the story of creation in Genesis, we see that when God created man in His image He created him male and female. These two people living together

as one (Ge 2:24) were a reflection of the image of the triune God who lives in perfect unity in diversity. As one, they were to live in a loving relationship that would result in reproducing children. They were given a task to perform: to rule over the fish, birds and animals of the earth. When they sinned, disharmony entered the loving relationship, reproduction was with pain, and instead of ruling over the earth they tried to rule over each other.

Part of the redemptive work of Christ is the restoration of the image of God within the marriage relationship. There are three principals that will serve as a foundation for the discussion of the roles within marriage.

A. Three Guiding Principles

1. *Husbands and wives have equal worth.*

From Galatians 3:28 we realize that God has designed *husbands and wives with equal worth*. A person's value is not based on function, or role, but rather on the fact that he or she is created in the image of God.

A person's value is based on ... the fact that he or she is created in the image of God.
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2. *The husband and wife are to be interdependent.*

In 1 Corinthians 11:11, we see that God has designed *the husband and wife to be interdependent*. The church is made up of men and women of all kinds of personalities. One of the distinguishing factors of the church is that its members coexist in unity. There are different depths in these relationships, but the marital relationship may be one of the most complex. In a Spirit-filled marriage, interdependency will be beautifully modeled. And of course this witnesses to the interdependency that exists in the Godhead.

3. *There is an order of responsibility in the family.*

From 1 Corinthians 11:3, we understand that God has designed *an order of responsibility in the family*. Just as there is a functional order in the Godhead, there is as well a functional order in marriage. God is the head of Christ, who is the head of every man, who is the head of his wife.

II. THE ROLE OF THE HUSBAND

A. To Be the Head of the Wife: Ephesians 5:23

Paul states that the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church. This leadership involves responsibility and accountability before God for the family. Since the emphasis of the passage is on the husband's love for his wife, this is the most important part of his responsibility.

Husbands are to seek the best for their wives, even at their own expense. Headship defined this way becomes a high and holy calling. As church planters, the future of your marriage and/or of those who will be a part of your ministry depend on absolute clarity about this role. Headship is a calling to empower another human being; it's not a license to indulge one's self. One very practical outworking of this concept is in the area of spiritual gifts. The husband should be actively involved in assisting his wife discover her spiritual gifts. This will be an ongoing adventure as a wife's gifts are discovered, developed and released into ministry.

However, some people argue that according to Genesis 3, man is supposed to rule over his wife. The actual text of Genesis 3:16 does state: "...your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." The Hebrew word translated "rule" means to dominate, to keep beneath, to rule over as an absolute sovereign. The word is used of kings and public officials throughout the Old Testament. But keep in mind that Genesis 3:16 is a statement of the curse, not of the kingdom. It foretells how fallen men will dominate women and subjugate them to positions of lower status. This has been the case in thousands of cultures over thousands of years.

Harsh dominance is not the way of Christ. So when Paul says that a man is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church, he's not supporting the curse—he's breaking it! He's showing how men can break the cycle of misery and the "me-first" mentality that the fall inaugurated.

So what was the leadership style of Christ?

This style is outlined in Luke 22:25-27 and is described as servant-leadership. "Servant" and "leader" are not terms that combine naturally. They seem to be in opposition. Yet, in God's kingdom, to be the "head" is to be this unique blend of leader and servant. It's true that men have been given authority to lead their wives, but the style is to be that of a servant, not as a lord. The aim, then, is to be a source of life to them. The husband's leadership of his wife is to be modeled after Christ's leadership of His bride, the Church. Christ doesn't exploit the Church. He doesn't dominate her, or force His leadership on her. On the contrary, He earned the right of leadership by expending Himself for His bride, and ultimately by dying for her. According to the model of Christ, leadership of the husband over his wife is characterized by:

The husband's leadership of his wife is to be modeled after Christ's leadership of His bride, the Church.

- Responsibility, not rank
- Sacrifice, not selfishness
- Duty, not domination

B. To Care for the Core Needs of the Wife

Consider Peter's admonition in 1 Peter 3:7, "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life."

Wives need their husbands to live with them in an understanding way. This means that husbands need to relate to their wives knowledgeably, aware of the fact that they are different from men. Besides the obvious physical differences, there are vast psychological and emotional differences. Husbands should then give attention to the following three core concerns.

1. Companionship

The first is that wives need companionship. God designs women for deep, ongoing relationships and they expect their husbands to meet that need. They want and need the companionship, availability and interest of their husbands.

2. Security

The second need is security. A woman needs the security of a man. She needs to know he can protect and provide for her. She needs to be able to trust him. Biblically, these things are the responsibility of the husband (1Ti 5:8).

3. Significance

The third need is for significance, which is a need shared by both husband and wife. The husband often receives significance from his job, his role in the church, or other activities outside the home. But so much of what the wife does is hidden from view. The one person who can really appreciate her unique contributions, the one who can honor her accordingly, is her husband. She is a friend, a nurturer, and a soul mate. Part of the leadership role is to make her feel honored and not taken for granted.

C. To Carry Out the Duties of a Father

The main responsibility of a father is to bring up his children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4). This includes teaching them the ways of the Lord (De 6:7), and disciplining them as necessary (Pr 19:18, 22:6, 23:13,14, 29:17).

III. THE ROLE OF THE WIFE

Proverbs 31:10 asks the compelling question, "An excellent wife, who can find?" For a woman to be an 'excellent' wife is for her to understand God's design for a wife and, by His grace, to be conformed by Him to that design.

A. A Helpmate

God created the woman to be a helpmate to man (Ge 2:18). She is the emotional and physical complement that makes a man more suited to His purposes and service before God. She does not make him whole in the spiritual, emotional or physical sense. However, she does make him more complete than he was by himself without her. She brings to him perspective, emotions, gifts, and weaknesses he himself does not possess. Together, sealed and gifted by the Holy Spirit, the husband and wife are complete and are best able to serve the Lord.

Together, sealed and gifted by the Holy Spirit, the husband and wife are complete and are best able to serve the Lord.

B. Supportive

As she is complementary to her husband, the wife is also a support to him. Support of him is part of her "chaste and respectful behavior" (1Pe 3:2) toward him. She knows his strengths and weaknesses, and she builds him up for his work. Proverbs 14:1 shows that a woman can build up or tear down her house. She can build up the emotional strength and resolve of her husband, or she can help to destroy him, shaming him and being as "rottenness in his bones" (Pr 12:4b).

C. Submissive

The wife also has the responsibility to be submissive to her husband. There is no more often repeated command for the wife than for her to be submissive to her husband (Eph 5:22, Col 3:18, 1Pe 3:1), a characteristic of godly women such as Abraham's wife, Sarah (1Pe 3:6). And yet, her position of submission is a very powerful one. By faith she submits to her husband and appeals to her heavenly Father. Like the king's heart (Pr 21:1), the husband's heart is in the hand of God. As she submits to her husband, she submits to God and allows His hand to move in the life of her husband. By her acts of submission, she allows God to win her husband to greater obedience to Himself (1Pe 3:1). She is not commanded to rebel to sway her husband's opinion. She is commanded to submit by faith in order to release God's hand to work in her husband's life and her own.

D. A Manager

Scripture gives the model of an industrious wife who labors for her husband's and her household's profit (Pr 31:10-31, especially verse 11). Unlike the wives of Samaria who, in Amos' time, oppressed the poor and needy and made insatiable demands upon their husbands (Am 4:1), the woman of Proverbs 31 fears the Lord (v. 30), serves her husband (v. 12), builds up her house (v. 27), causing her husband's reputation to increase (v. 23) and for him to trust in her (v.11). Her secret is that she is an able support for her husband, caring for and managing his household, making it a harmonious and profitable place that produces much good for him. She serves him, holding him in esteem, though managing his home more ably than he could. The husband can only glorify God for His goodness in giving her to him (Pr 19:14).

E. A Mother: Titus 2:4

The core role of a woman doesn't stop with loving her husband. Titus 2:4 goes on to encourage her to be a "child-lover." Children, especially young ones, need tremendous doses of personal attention, support, and of course love. Children need the awesome power of their mother's presence. According to many childcare experts, healthy, normal child development requires a close, loving, and sustained relationship with at least one person during a minimum of the first two years of life. Titus indicates that the mother should provide that care, but the dominant cultures of

our day are, for the most part, abandoning these Scriptural principles and instead are *seeking their own self-interests*.

IV. THE ROLE OF CHILDREN

A. To Obey Their Parents in the Lord

Ephesians 6:1 says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." This instruction from Paul to the church in Ephesus raises several questions that the church planter should address:

- Is he referring to minors only?
- Should adults continue to obey their parents, even if no longer living in their parents' home?
- If an adult remains in his or her father's house, does this apply?
- Does the "in the Lord" mean that if a parent is not a Christian, the child does not need to obey him or her?

B. To Honor Their Father and Mother

Paul's instruction quotes from the Old Testament and reminds the Ephesians that this is the first commandment with a promise: "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (Eph 6:2-3, De 5:16).

CONCLUSION

This lesson is of value to you either as a single or married church planter. As you understand the biblical roles with the family, your own life will be strengthened, your entire congregation will be helped and the community in which you live will see the oneness and love of God modeled through you personally and through the teaching and counseling opportunities that God will give.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- If you are a single person, how can this lesson be of benefit to you in your ministry?
- If you are married, can you say that your marriage mirrors God's image by demonstrating oneness?
- Are you experiencing companionship in your marriage? What does this look like?
- What factors in society and within marriage make it difficult today to be an effective spouse? What is the greatest struggle in being a good spouse?
- What factors in society and in the Church make it difficult to live as a single person today? What is the greatest struggle in being a single person?

ACTION PLAN

- Read 1 Peter 3:8-12. The attitude of selfishness destroys unity. Taking this into consideration, read once again the passage above and then list things you should do when your mate is selfish.
- A husband's servant-leadership is the only thing that makes a wife's submission reasonable. A passive husband makes submission impossible and a domineering husband makes submission intolerable. Servant-leadership, on the other hand, makes submission a joy. In light of these thoughts, answer the following questions:
 - How would your becoming a servant-leader affect the ability of your wife to be submissive?
 - How would she respond in other areas if you were more of a servant-leader?
 - Does the Bible teach anything about to whose leadership single women are to submit? What guidelines can you find?
- In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul addressed the issue of oneness among Christians. Read Philippians 2:1-4 and then think about how verse 2 explains how to achieve oneness in a relationship.

How can you apply these principles in your family life, whether in a marriage or in other family relationships?

- As church planters you will have many opportunities to provide biblical counsel to unbelievers and believers who have suffered from failed marriages or who are presently experiencing disunity within their marriage. As well, you will have opportunity to provide counsel to men and women who are contemplating marriage. Start a small group discussion with some unmarried men and women of your age that are contemplating marriage in the future. Guide them in discovering the biblical patterns discussed in this lesson and the practical outworking of these patterns.

SOURCES

Lewis, Robert and Hendricks, William. *Rocking the Roles*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991.

THE FAMILY

LESSON 2

Parenting

☞ Lesson Purpose

The Purpose of this lesson is to help church planters understand and apply biblical principles for parenting.

☞ Main Points

- Parenting requires walking by faith.
- God's Word gives us some principles that should be applied to parenting.

☞ Desired Outcomes

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

- Know what the Bible teaches about parenting.
- Be able to evaluate his or her own parenting by biblical standards.
- Develop ways to improve his or her parenting

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Use this material to give the trainees the basic biblical principles. Resist the urge to "tell them how to do it." Leave time for discussing the questions at the end, either in small groups or all together.

INTRODUCTION

Christian bookstores are full of books with instructions for Christian parents. These books contain many specific models, each claiming to be THE biblical way. But although the Bible does give us certain directives, what it does not give is step-by-step instructions for raising children. In this lesson we will look at some biblical principles that can be applied to parenting situations. Because each child is a unique person with unique needs, how parents apply the principles is a matter of prayerfully seeking wisdom from the Lord. Like the rest of the Christian life, parenting is a walk of faith.

In the Great Commission, Jesus instructed His followers to make disciples of all nations... teaching them to obey all things He had said. The role of a parent is like that of the church planter: to make disciples and to teach them obedience to God. For church planters who are parents, the parenting role has great significance: it is significant for the family members themselves, it is significant for their testimony to the world, and it is significant for the church. The way parents relate to their children is reflected in the way they relate to the church (1Ti 3:4,5). For church planters who are not parents, this lesson is still important because the same principles apply to helping spiritual children within their ministry.

I. SOME INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

A. No Guarantees

Contrary to what is often thought, the Bible does not make any guarantees that if parents do everything right, children will love the Lord and serve Him. A verse that is often cited as a promise from God is Proverbs 22:6, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." If their children grow up and reject the Lord, they feel that the Lord has betrayed them.

Please notice that this verse is stating a principle of cause and effect: if you do "X" then "Y" will result. The book of Proverbs, which was written to help guide youth to righteous living, has many similar statements. Training children when they are young will start them down the path to righteousness. Rather than a promise that is true in all cases, this verse states a general principle that if parents train their children to obey the Lord when they are young, when they are old they will continue on His path. The fact that sometimes children do depart from the Lord in no way diminishes the principle or the parents' responsibility to train their children in the Lord's ways. Most children who receive such early training do continue in it.

B. No Perfect Children

Why then do some children who have started out walking in the path of righteousness "turn from it"? Every person is a sinner who has choices to make. Proverbs 1: 29 speaks of those who "...hated knowledge and did not fear the Lord." Ultimately, every person must choose for himself whether or not he will follow the Lord. Even children with good training may make the wrong choice.

C. No Perfect Parents

God is the only perfect parent; earthly parents are not perfect. No matter how much they love the Lord and their children, they will sometimes fail (1Jn 1: 8-10). No one has all the answers. Parents need to be constantly and prayerfully seeking the Lord's wisdom for training children in the way they should go.

II. SOME BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

Although there are no guarantees because of the sinful nature of both children and parents, God has given us certain principles to guide us in the training of children.

A. Model Love and Obedience for the Lord (Dt 6:4-9, 17)

In the Old Testament, God commanded Israel to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength... Impress (His commandments) on your children... Be sure to keep the commands of the Lord." They were to do this at home, walking along the road, when they lay down and when they got up. Loving God and keeping His commandments was to be a lifestyle that the parents should develop and pass on to their children.

B. Direct Your Children to Keep the Way of the Lord (Ge 18: 19)

When speaking about the parents' responsibility to direct their children, the Bible often equates this with discipline. Verses like Proverbs 3:11,12 and Hebrews 12:5-11 remind us that discipline is necessary. But the reason for it is because the father (both Heavenly and earthly) loves the child. Whenever discipline is administered, it should be done with a love that has the best interest of the child in mind. The child must be able to discern that love in the midst of the discipline. The desired result is that the child learns to keep the ways of the Lord.

C. Do Not Exasperate Your Children (Eph 6:4)

Many parents are so intent on the second part of Ephesians 6:4, bringing up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord, that they forget the first part, do not exasperate your children. Stories of Christian workers whose children have become bitter and turned from the Lord are numerous. These children often tell stories of parents who were overly strict, unfair, demanding and authoritarian: parents who exasperated their children in their zeal to train them to love the Lord. Unfortunately, often family devotions are seen as times the parents can preach at the children. The result is children who are bitter and resentful toward their parents and toward God.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- What are some practical ways you can make love for and obedience to the Lord a lifestyle in your home?
- What are some practical ways you can check to see if your discipline is done out of love? What do you consider the biggest hindrance to that kind of discipline?
- What are some practical things you can do to make your family devotions a time the children will enjoy?

ACTION PLAN

List some characteristics you desire your children to have spiritually, socially, mentally and physically when they are 18 years old. Then write the name of each child on a separate sheet of paper. List what you are doing or need to do to help that child attain each of these characteristics.

SOURCES

- Kimmel, Tim. *Raising Kids Who Turn Out Right*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1993.
- Phillips, Mike. *Building Respect, Responsibility & Spiritual Values in Your Child*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1981.
- Stanley, Charles. *How to Keep Your Kids on Your Team*. Nashville, TN: Oliver Nelson, 1986.