

# Church Planting

**Ted Grosbach**

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## INTRODUCTION

“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen” (Mark 16:20).

What a great and mighty revival we read about in the Book of Acts! Clearly, God mightily used these men and women of the early church to take the gospel to the lost and sinful world of nearly 2,000 years ago. But it was no special talent or skill they possessed that made them so effective in their work. In fact, we read in Acts 4:13 that the religious leaders of the day were amazed that the Lord had so greatly used two “unlearned and ignorant men” like Peter and John in Jerusalem. So, what was it?

Jesus told us in Mark 4:26-28 about a process. It is a process that He instituted and that is eternally true. It is the system of casting seed or sowing the seed. He told us that the kingdom of God is “as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” The responsibility of ensuring the growth of the seed into maturity is the Lord’s, but the responsibility of sowing that seed is ours.

A term used in the science of seed production and utilization is *viability*. This refers to the time during which the seed is able to germinate under proper conditions, including the proper light, moisture, oxygen, and soil. Some seeds, like those of the willow tree, are viable for only a few days after separation from the parent tree. In other words, if they are kept for more than just a short time without the proper conditions, the seeds will not produce. If they do produce, it will only be a weak plant. Other seeds are viable for longer periods of time. The Indian lotus seed has the capacity of producing fruit after a period of two hundred years from the time it is separated from its parent plant! Each seed in its own context has a time to be sown, a place to be sown, and a promise of a harvest.

*Geotropism* refers to the marvelous way in which, after germination, the new root of the young plant will move toward the earth by gravity. Then the shoot of the plant will grow away from the gravity of the earth and thereby spring up above the surface of the soil. The farmer never worries about how the seed is lying in the earth. He only knows that his responsibility is to ensure that the seed is in the earth! Though we in the church may not understand all of the ways by which God makes spiritual seed to grow, we have a great responsibility to be the sowers of that seed.

Paul told us in Galatians 6:7 that whatever we sow is what we shall reap. James even told us not to expect olive berries from a fig tree or figs from a grapevine (James 3:12). It is certain that in God's kingdom the harvest will be based upon what was sown. Church planting, based on New Testament principles, using New Testament methods, will produce a New Testament revival harvest!

Our goal of establishing self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating churches on the national level must start on the local church level. We must start with the seed to realize the blade, the ear, and finally the full corn in the ear. Then we will use a portion of that corn to sow again and see more and more fruit. In this study we will examine the what, why, where, when, who, and how of planting new churches in our fields of labor.

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is the process Jesus talked about in Mark 4:26-28?

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2. What will church planting based on New Testament principles produce?

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3. What did Paul say in Galatians 6:7?

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4. Where must our goal of establishing indigenous national churches begin? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What is meant by “viability”? How does this relate to church planting?

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6. Each seed in its own context has what three things?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Personal Study Notes**

## Lesson One

# What Is Church Planting and Why Is It Necessary?

“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:47-49).

## FOCUS

This lesson is designed to remind us that the Great Commission and our obedience to it is forever involved with the successfulness of church planting.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Throughout the New Testament we find exhortations by Jesus and the apostles to go and evangelize (Acts 8:4; I Corinthians 9:16). In Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, and Luke 24:46-49, we read what has been called the Great Commission of Jesus to His followers. In Acts 1:8, Jesus revealed that the church would shortly thereafter receive power, and that this power must be used to systematically spread the gospel of His death, burial, and resurrection. It would grow from Jerusalem into all of the surrounding area of Judea, then into Samaria, and finally unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

From the very birth of the church, we have had a mandate to take the only true and saving message of repentance and remission of sins to a lost and dying world. Planting churches in new areas has always been the desire of the true body of Christ.

## What Is Church Planting?

Evangelism is the natural result of the new nature after spiritual birth. The apostles saw themselves as owing something to the world. Paul said in his epistle to the saints at Rome that he was a “debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise” (Romans 1:14). He went on by saying that he was ready to preach to those at Rome also (v. 15). A feeling of gratitude to the Lord for what He had done drove him. He reckoned that if he had been given the opportunity to be saved, then all men everywhere should have the same opportunity.

Paul told the Corinthians that he was constrained by the love of Christ (II Corinthians 5:14). He felt he had no real choice but to serve Jesus in humility and in response to the burden placed there by God.

Where does this burden come from? In Isaiah 6:1-8, we read of the burden of a great prophet of God. In response to God’s question of “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah answered, “Here am I; send me.”

We must notice that this burden to respond and to go starts with a look at the Lord. Isaiah seemed to have a glimpse of God like never before. He saw Him high and lifted up. He had a vision of the glory of God and then realized how unclean he was before the greatness of God. Because of Isaiah’s genuine repentance and humility, God’s grace touched him and forever changed him. It was then that Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord as He asked for a messenger to send to a people lost in self-righteousness and stubborn rebellion.

Surely, this is the means by which a true burden for souls arrives. Congregations that look only inward will soon become only self-serving and miss the bountiful harvest that God has ordained. As Isaiah learned, we must get our eyes off ourselves and onto the Lord in order to realize where we fit in the plan of God.

The same burden that individual saints feel also operates in the body as a whole. Church planting is the result of responding to this burden. Each congregation of truly born-again believers will look upon the world with a deep spiritual desire to start new assemblies in new areas.

These new assemblies must be started properly; that is at the right time, in the right place, and with proper oversight

A commitment must be made to ensure that, once started, the new assembly will continue to flourish under the inspiration and direction provided by the Holy Ghost through anointed leadership. Just as the seed that is planted

at the right season under the right conditions will produce a harvest, so will a church planted in the proper way produce a spiritual reaping.

## **Why Is It Necessary?**

Churches that are not growing are dying. Part of growing means spreading the gospel outside of the existing borders of the church. Planting new congregations is an expression of faith demonstrating the church's true God-given burden to reach the lost. Jesus Himself declared that He had come to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). If His Spirit really dwells in us, and if we have given ourselves to His cause, then the same Spirit should propel us into the harvest in order to reach that which is lost!

We cannot and will not win souls to the Lord simply because we are commanded to do so. We do it in response to the love of God working in us and through us.

Is it any different for the body as a whole? Can a national church ever be satisfied with what they already have seen? Will the move of God within cause them to be concerned with a greater harvest that beckons them? We must learn to see church planting as a priority. It is an integral part of the overall growth and revival of the church.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he spoke of being built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ and the apostles. In Ephesians 2:21, he explained that this building is the temple of God and that it is "fitly framed together." The *Williams New Testament* puts it this way: "In union with Him the whole building is harmoniously fitted together and continues to grow into a sacred temple through its union with the Lord."

Planting . . . growing . . . harvesting . . . re-planting—this is the way of the Lord in His church. It is more than a commandment; it is a way of life, the natural result of His dwelling in us.

## **The Pauline Perspective**

Of all of the first-century apostles, we read the most about Paul. It is his missionary journeys that we follow through the Book of Acts, and his epistles are the ones that we study throughout most of the New Testament. To study the New Testament church method is to study the methods and philosophy of Paul the apostle, Paul the missionary. To Titus he wrote, "Ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee" (Titus 1:5). Paul believed in and practiced church planting. Again, in Acts 14:23, we read how Paul and Barnabas "ordained them elders in every church." The method of evangelism that Paul employed was church planting.

In Paul's letter to Timothy, he defined the character traits necessary and the spiritual qualifications needed to be ordained as an elder or as a deacon. These men were needed because new congregations were being started (planted) in new cities and villages. He was careful to delineate the authority and responsibility of an elder or pastor, because he understood the importance of the long-term commitment needed to produce a missions-minded congregation. He knew the importance of timing, personnel, and geographical significance of a new area.

He was burdened to reach important centers such as Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome. It was through Paul's focused efforts and intensive training of leaders at Ephesus that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:10). In Acts 16:4-5, we find Paul and Timothy traveling "through the cities . . . and so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."

Shortly thereafter, Paul received a vision in the night, beckoning him to go into Macedonia where the Lord was calling him to preach the gospel. In Acts 17, as Paul arrived in Athens, the capital of Greece, "his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry" (Acts 17:16).

Can we say that we are stirred when we see entire cities held by the power of the devil? Are we stirred enough to take action? Do we have a plan in action that targets new towns and villages with new congregations? Are we in the process of training new leaders and equipping them with the necessary tools to have revival in those new areas?

In *Breaking the Stained Glass Barrier*, David A. Womack lists ten parts of what he refers to as "Paul's Ephesian Method." These represent the way in which Paul (and the other apostles) began new works and established them in the faith.

1. Having a single purpose
2. Having preliminary planning adequate to meet the need
3. Cooperative teamwork
4. Forming a basic nucleus
5. Mass communications (the process of mass evangelism, assimilation of new converts into the churches, and returning these to the masses again in order to reach more prospects)
6. Establishing congregations (church planting)
7. Training national leaders
8. Maintaining the momentum
9. Overcoming opposition
10. Becoming a missionary church

Please take careful note of points 6 and 10. We must endeavor not only to plant new works as part of the natural cycle of a vibrant, spiritual church, but also ensure that these new congregations mature and become missions minded as well. Our daughter works must grow up to become mothers as well.

To become a spiritual parent is great, but to watch your spiritual children beget spiritual children is sometimes even more rewarding! So it should be with congregations. They should become more and more sensitive to the Lord and then respond by faith to start new churches whenever and wherever possible. These new works will in turn mature and produce even more works. What could be more rewarding? And how else could we ever fulfill the prophecy of the Lord in Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (*New American Standard Bible*).

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. Give three Scripture references that record the Great Commission.

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
B. \_\_\_\_\_  
C. \_\_\_\_\_

2. In Acts 1:8, Jesus told us that the power He would send must be used for what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What will happen to congregations that have only an "inward" focus?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What is church planting? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What was Paul's major method of evangelism? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. David Womack suggests/lists ten parts to “Paul’s Ephesians Method.”  
What are the two parts of which we should take careful note?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_



## Lesson Two

# Where Should Churches Be Planted?

“And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also” (Acts 17:6).

“And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10).

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

## FOCUS

Just as the Lord Jesus was not a respecter of persons, neither should we be. Everyone ought to know who Jesus is.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

It seems evident that the apostles followed the command of Jesus to take the gospel everywhere. We read in the Book of Acts about the church being founded in many cities of the ancient world. Cities like Damascus, Antioch, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, the cities of Galatia, Thessalonica, were all reached with the saving message of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. The apostles remembered the words of Jesus when He told them to go, but they also felt the urgency in the Spirit and the burden of compassion to spread the gospel of salvation. They felt what He

felt, and they became His feet and His hands ministering to the world that they knew. Jesus had said in John 14:12, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”

Though the disciples probably misunderstood His words then, during the revival in the Book of Acts they fully comprehended the importance of what He had told them. The miracles were the same as Jesus had performed and the teaching was certainly the same. What had changed was the magnitude of the teaching and the ministry. They were reaching far more people than Jesus could have reached by Himself. They were going everywhere and telling everybody.

And yet, when we closely examine the missionary journeys of Paul and either Barnabas or Silas who accompanied Paul, we find a certain strategy that prevailed in Paul’s actions. We can be safe in assuming that this strategy was God-given, and that a similar plan of action can be expected today as we dedicate ourselves to taking this gospel everywhere to everybody. In fact, to simply state that we should go “into all the world” might bring a certain frustration to the church leaders of today. Our means are limited, whether we speak of the resources of the church as a whole or of the means of a local congregation.

How can one local church go into all of the world? How can a large organization like the United Pentecostal Church International reach into the entire world? With limited resources like funds and trained and equipped manpower, we must be very careful to have a plan formulated and directed by the Holy Ghost. Jesus once told His disciples, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (Luke 18:27). Reaching the world seems like a task that is insurmountable, yet step by step, under the constant guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, we shall reach the world. How can we decide where to begin?

## **The Plan**

Whether we are considering evangelizing an entire nation, or reaching into a neighboring area of a local church, we must have a well-defined plan of action. This must start with a prayerful approach to finding a comprehensive means of effectively reaching the area to be evangelized. When meeting with key leadership personnel, carefully consider the following points.

- 1. The geographic size of the area to be reached.**

Outline a clear definition of the area to be evangelized. Where exactly will the church be planted? Based upon the size of the area, population, etc., how many church centers will be started?

**2. The geographically strategic parts of that area..**

Here we are speaking of targeting the area to be evangelized. What, if any, are the large cities or towns of that area? Are district or regional centers included? Is an administrative capital involved? Is there a center of higher learning? What is the political climate? Is this an ethnic or tribal stronghold? What is the economy like? What is the area's current exposure to Christianity as a whole and its teachings? Based upon the answers to these questions, we can begin to shape the model church that we would like to minister in this area. Ministry has always been based upon need. Without a clear definition of the need (as well as the potential), we can never define the ministry to meet that need.

**3. The time investment needed to reach that area.**

Do we have the resources, based upon the time needed, to continue the work once started? Bearing sheep only to let them die in the wilderness is not the will of God. Once we commit to the work of church planting, we must be willing and prepared to continue and administer the work, enabling the work to grow, prosper, and eventually to develop new works under it.

Many young men want to become evangelists, but pastors are the need of the hour! Paul told Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist, [and] make full proof of thy ministry" (II Timothy 4:5). Pastors that are burdened to open up new works can do the work of evangelists in many cases, and thereby make a full (complete) demonstration of the ministry that God has put inside them. Simply moving from place to place, supposedly sowing seed but not establishing strong congregations of believers is not the answer to reaching the world. Church planting is the answer.

**4. Is the focus of the evangelism in a rural or urban setting?**

The answer to this question helps determine the kind of personnel that will be needed to meet the need. We need different training schemes for different kinds of ministry. While long-term Bible school training is necessary, shorter-term education that can qualify leaders for smaller works may be needed. City people have different needs than farmers. City congregations do better with city

pastors. Rural people have different needs and different ways, needing different ministry than city congregations can provide.

**5. Job descriptions of key personnel that will be needed.**

In a comprehensive plan to reach an area, after deciding the first four factors, it should be possible to determine the kind of personnel required. This in turn should lead to a clearly defined job description for those personnel. By this we mean the boundaries of responsibility, authority, etc. Who will be responsible for what? Is there a time constraint on these responsibilities?

**6. The trained manpower that is currently available.**

Now that we have fully described the responsibilities and limits of authority needed to effectively start the new work, we must appoint someone that is already qualified and trained to accomplish the task. Whether trained in a Bible school, at the local church level, or by any other means, the leader or leaders must be ready for the task. It is important to note that manpower should always be in training for the jobs that are ahead. The call of God is essential to these leaders. They must feel a personal and deep attachment to the work ahead of them. The threefold qualification (spirituality, training, and gifts) is one of the most necessary criteria for appointing people to positions of leadership. We will discuss these three qualifying factors more fully in another lesson.

**7. Training programs to further equip existing leaders and to provide new leadership.**

Before opening a new work, we must be ready to implement the programs necessary to train future leaders in the new work. The ministries developed to meet the needs of the growing work will need qualified leaders. Where will we find leaders for the youth work, the ladies, the home fellowship or cell ministry? They will be members that are trained for these ministries.

The new work must be equipped to become not only a center of evangelism (reaching new converts), but also a center for edification (leadership development and personal growth of the converts). Leadership equals revival. If no new leaders are being trained, then the revival of the new work will not proceed. There will be a shortage of “ministers” for the work of the ministry, which is training saints to become all that God wants them to be.

**8. Facilities to contain the revival once it has begun.**

Though the new work can begin in homes, the time will come when the new converts will join together. One of the basic parts of the Christian experience is fellowship in the body, a communal spirit wherein we can minister to and love one another. Power flows in joint worship, testimony, and edification of one another.

The converts must be joined into a congregation, and this requires having some means of “housing” this revival. The kind of facilities necessary for the growth of the church must be considered. Will it start in a rented building or in a purchased facility?

What kind of support from the national work will be available for the new congregation when it decides to expand or build? Just as members must know what is expected of them, local churches should also know what is expected of them. What exactly will be the ties that bind together the local assembly with the national work? What are the responsibilities and obligations of “affiliation” on the part of the national leadership as well as the local leaders?

**9. Administration of the new work.**

From the very beginning of the work, every congregation should feel a close attachment to the body of Christ as a whole. Proper administration or church government should account for this. The new pastor of the new work should be “in touch” with an overseer on a local or regional level. He also should understand the links to the national level of leadership in the nation. It is very important for the converts of a new work to sense that they are now part of something “big.”

Large congregations develop a “church personality” that helps define who they are. It is much easier for new converts in an existing large work to assimilate themselves into the doctrine, the holiness, and the philosophy of the local church and its teachings. In a new and smaller work, however, it takes time and patience to see the new converts gradually become accustomed to the new life in Jesus Christ.

To help facilitate this, it is important that the pastor provide means by which his converts can realize that they are part of a large, growing, church movement. He can accomplish this by taking his members to district, regional, and national meetings in

which his members will see that they are part of something that is much larger than their local church.

The national work will also feel the responsibility to bring the “big church personality” into the local congregation. This is accomplished by frequent visits and teaching/preaching by national leaders and missionaries. Clearly defined administration also provides accountability for the new pastor. He then understands his obligations to the national direction of the church, and also what the national leadership will do for his congregation. Reports are essential to this administration.

#### **10. Future support of the work.**

As already discussed in the sections on training, facilities, and administration, the new work must understand what kind of support it can expect from the “mother” church (whether another local church that has daughtered the work or from the national level). The main consideration here is that of never allowing the new, local congregation to feel separated from the mother, especially during its infancy.

Adults and children are different. Children will become adults eventually, but there are very critical times of development that must take place. During these developmental stages, it is critically important that the “parent” nurtures, supervises, and loves the child. Let us not begin what we cannot finish!

#### **11. How will the church spread? What are the next steps?**

These are essential questions in our planning. What are the next God-directed steps in the growth development of the church? Where are doors opening for future works? What is the potential of each new opening? What are the target areas for revival?

#### **12. Prioritizing the goals, or, what needs to be done NOW?**

The key word is *now*. As we have seen, resources never seem to be enough for what we would like to do. Therefore, we must prioritize what needs to be done next. Ministries are started according to need; therefore, we must be able to define, at any particular time, the present needs. The next logical step, then, is prioritizing a list of needs and implementing ministries as means and manpower become available.

## The Pauline Perspective

As we read and study the Book of Acts, we begin to notice that Paul was careful in his missionary efforts. He carefully obeyed the leading of the Spirit and wisely made the best use of his time and work in the spreading of the gospel. He was mindful that key leaders were necessary in the development of the early church, and was also particular about where new works should be opened.

Acts 16:12 tells us that when Paul came to “Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia . . . [he was] in that city abiding certain days.” The fact that Philippi was a chief city was important to Paul. Like Ephesus, it was a city into which many people traveled for various reasons. Therefore, it would be a center for Christian training, after which those reached while at Philippi could carry the gospel of Jesus Christ into different parts of the region and the world. In fact, the epistles of Paul represent several “key” areas of the ancient world in which Paul made a considerable investment of time and effort. These were significant centers of commerce like Ephesus and Corinth, centers of education and the arts like Athens, centers of government like Rome, etc. Laodicaea was mentioned in the subscript of I Timothy as another of the chief cities of the day.

In Acts 28:7 we see Paul ministering to Publius, the chief man of the island of Melita. Paul was sensitive enough to the Lord to realize that there would be both key people and key areas in which and through which to focus his efforts of evangelism.

Finally, when we study Acts 16:6-10, we find an occasion when Paul’s desire was different than the will of God. He had tried to go deeper into Asia Minor, but the Holy Ghost prevented him. He then tried to reach Bithynia but the will of God led him to continue on the path that he was currently traveling. At the very end of this road was the last city of western Asia Minor: Troas, a seaport. At Troas Paul received a vision from God telling him the next step was to go into Macedonia to spread the good news. Verse 10 is Paul’s assurance to us that the Lord will certainly lead us in His great work if we will only allow Him to do so: “And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.”

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is the answer to reaching the world? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Even though reaching the world may seem impossible, how can we do it?

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3. Where was the church founded according to the Book of Acts?

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4. What is essential to leaders? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What is the key word in prioritizing goals?

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6. According to Acts 16:10 where did Paul receive his vision and what was he told in this vision? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What is one of the basic parts of the Christian experience? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. We can never define the ministry to meet a particular need without what? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Personal Study Notes**

## Lesson Three

# When Should Churches Be Planted?

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2).

“Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn” (Matthew 13:30).

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Galatians 4:4-5).

## FOCUS

God’s timing may not be our timing, but His timing is always best.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

God is the master of time. He knows when we should move forward, when to remain, and even when to retreat. He knows the world and the needs of its inhabitants. Best of all, He knows how to reach the world with the saving message of salvation through the name of Jesus Christ. Walking with the Lord and doing His will means staying close to His side. This is His work, His church, and His revival. To move too fast is just as dangerous as moving too slow or not moving at all. Both mean that we are outside of His timing, and therefore outside of His plan. The timing of when to open new works is just as crucial as the location of the new work.

## **The Strategy of Timing**

Acts 17:32-33 records Paul's final days in ancient Athens, the Greek city widely referred to as the birthplace of democracy. The apostle had tried very hard to reach the Athenians with the message of Jesus. He had debated with them at Mars' Hill. He had tried to explain the identity of "the unknown god" that they ignorantly worshiped. Verse 32 tells us that after all of these efforts, some mocked Paul and others simply said they would hear him again at a later time. But notice Paul's reaction in verse 33: "So Paul departed from among them." Paul must have realized that the time was not right for the revival at Athens. He had sown the seed, but the harvest was still distant.

Instead, as we see in Acts 18, he continued on to Corinth where he found Aquila and his wife Priscilla. These dear people responded, along with many others. In Acts 18:5, Paul was "pressed in the spirit" to leave off witnessing to the Jews and concentrate on the Gentile population of the great city of Corinth. The result is one of the great revivals and one of the great churches of history. (See verse 10.)

So what is the strategy of timing in relation to church planting? It is being aware of the times. It is being aware of the possibilities. It is being prepared to move when God says move. If we are not prepared, it does no good to be sensitive to His voice when He asks us to plant. Being sensitive, prepared, and responsive are keys to obeying the timing of God.

## **The Beginning**

Successful church planting begins with a vision. Whether the new work is one that a "mother church" is starting as a daughter, or if it is a home missions work, the vision must be received by the leader that will be responsible for directing the work. He must feel it as a calling from the Lord. There will be times of frustration, hardship, and even times of near despair, but the calling, if it is a sure one, will carry the leader through those dark times. Knowing that he is in the will of God will make all the difference. If, on the other hand, the calling and vision are not certain, then circumstances may become difficult enough to drive the leader away, as he thinks that God is using those circumstances to redirect him somewhere else. The vision will help maintain the momentum of the new work. When all else says "stop," the vision will say "go on"!

This leader's vision must be in harmony with the vision that the national leadership has for the overall work. Sometimes pastors and local church leaders fail to see with the "big picture" in mind. They carry a limited view of what God is doing. This is natural, as local church leaders focus on

the task that they must carry out. The national direction of the work, however, is a responsibility that only national leadership can fully understand. If a local leader has the desire to evangelize a new area, it must be agreed to by the national board of the nation, in order to ensure that the new work will not be started in confusion and will not be in conflict with any other congregation. It will not be allowed to start if there is no hope of it continuing after inception. "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay" (Ecclesiastes 5:5).

## **The Prerequisites**

Before commencing a new work, certain things must already be in place. Let us consider four of these absolute necessities in planting a church:

### **1. A leader must be available.**

As said before, the leader must carry the momentum of the new work through a deep burden and personal vision and understanding of what God really wants to accomplish in the new work. The leader must be trained and equipped in order to carry out this responsibility. He must have the tools at his disposal that he will need in order to plant, nurture, and finally harvest the crop, and he must be adequately trained in the use of these tools. He must feel a personal responsibility for the work. In the next lesson, we will discuss in detail the character, training, and qualifications of such a leader.

### **2. A structure must be available.**

A system must be in place through which the leader can organize the new work. A means of evangelizing, discipling, edifying, and training the new converts for their ministry in the church should be available. A local church government that will help the leader in administering the new work in harmony with the national organization must be operational. Ministries must be available that will meet the needs of the new community, whether for those in the church or for those outside the church. Obviously, in the beginning, these ministries will only be in the mind of the new pastor. He must, however, be properly trained in these available ministries so that he will be able to implement them when necessary, and will also be able to train new leaders of those ministries in the new congregation.

### **3. Support must be available.**

The connection between the new local work and the national organization must be strong, with proper oversight of the new work by the regional leadership. Accountability on both parts of the organization, local and national, is a must. A clear understanding of the responsibilities of both levels of leadership is required.

The local leader should know that he will be supported in his efforts to build the new congregation. He must know the limits of such support as well. He should understand that the new work will be expected to stand on its own as soon as it is able. He must also realize from the outset that the new church will be expected to daughter new works in the future.

On the other level, the regional and national leadership must be confident that the local leader and the new congregation will be committed to working in harmony with their direction of the overall work that they administer. The national and regional leaders must be committed to supply whatever support becomes necessary in teaching, encouragement, and regular visits.

The new work cannot be ignored or left alone to die in neglect. Financial assistance may be necessary in the beginning, with the understanding that this must change as soon as the new work begins to stand on its own. The target of a mature church becomes the common goal of both local and national leadership, and both teams will be working together to achieve this goal.

#### **4. Means must be available.**

Whatever financial needs that are necessary to start the new work must be available before the church begins. The leadership (both local and national) must have a clear picture of what these needs might be. They should also know that these means are ready to be used in conjunction with the new work, or, at least, that there is a plan in place to supply these needs. Extravagant plans that call for unavailable financial resources only lead to confusion in the end. The subject of “financing the new work” will be addressed in a later lesson.

### **The Pauline Perspective**

One of the greatest revivals of the first-century church was the one overseen by the apostle Paul at Ephesus. We read of the revival in Acts 19. However, one of the greatest clues to why it was so great is not found in Acts, but in I Corinthians 16. In I Corinthians 16:6-9 we find that though Paul was

uncertain about when he would have the opportunity to visit the saints at Corinth after passing through Macedonia, he was very certain about the need to be in Ephesus. In verse 9 he stated, “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.” The *Weymouth New Testament* puts it this way: “For a door that offers wide and effective service stands open before me.” In this verse we see two important things:

1. Paul was aware of the enemy—“many adversaries”—that faced him at Ephesus.
2. Paul was aware that the time was right to act by faith. In fact, according to Acts 20:31, the apostle spent three years at Ephesus in not only evangelism, but in equipping the church to have greater and greater revival. He had realized the potential of the work of God in Ephesus (the vision), and he was willing to invest sufficient time and work in seeing that potential reached (the prerequisites were in place).

Paul had for a long time a tremendous burden for the work of God at Rome, the capital of the world at that time. He had feared that false teachers would come in and pervert the gospel of Christ. He stated in Romans 1:13 that he had purposed to go to Rome, but that he had been hindered. The *Living Letters* translation of the verse says, “but God did not let me.” The timing just had not been right for Paul’s visit. But finally, in Acts we see a great determination on Paul’s part to go to Rome. Immediately after Paul’s work was through in Ephesus, he told the elders there that he would go to Jerusalem despite several warnings and appeals to avoid the city. Others had been warned of Paul’s possible arrest and persecution by the Jews there.

But Paul was adamant in his decision to go. He said in Acts 20:24, “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

Then in Jerusalem—and as prophesied in advance—the Jews arrested and convicted Paul. He saw, however, an opportunity for his visit to Rome by appealing his case before Caesar. (See Acts 25:11.) Though the arrest, conviction, and final transport to Rome would mean his eventual execution, Paul saw the timing was right for his ministry to the church at Rome. In Acts 28:30-31 we read, “And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.”

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is the strategy of timing in relation to church planting?

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2. Where does successful church planting begin? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Explain how God is the “Master of time.” \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Why will “vision” be important in times of frustration, hardship, and near despair? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What are four prerequisites that need to be in place before starting a new work?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_\_

6. What things will a pastor of a new work need to know about financial support? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Why did Paul insist on going to Rome even though trouble awaited him there? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. According to I Corinthians 16:9, what two important things do we see concerning Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Personal Study Notes**

## Lesson Four

# Who Should Be Used to Plant Churches?

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together” (John 4:34-36).

## FOCUS

Are we burdened when we look upon the lost state of our fellow man? Do we feel the need to spread this gospel near and far?

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

From the beginning, God has had one great goal in mind: saving humanity to live forever with Him in His kingdom. Jesus, the manifestation of God in the flesh, was the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). All that the Lord has done, is doing, and will do is centered around this single purpose of man’s redemption. To be involved with this work of God is to do the will of God. Jesus said it was His meat, or His nourishment. It was what sustained Him in this life, and what moved Him from day to day.

The burden of reaching others with the truth was what led Him to Calvary, and even more, it was what kept Him on the cross when everything and everybody screamed at Him to come down from the tree and save

Himself. In John 5:30, Jesus told the Jews that He had not come to seek His own will, but God's. In Luke 19:10, He declared to Zacchaeus that He had come to seek and to save that which was lost. The church needs laborers that have the mind of God, that possess an understanding of God's eternal purpose, and that comprehend the significance of the mission of salvation to the lost.

In John 6, Jesus taught the difference between the carnal and the spiritual. He declared that real life was in Him (drinking His blood and eating His flesh). Many of His followers were greatly offended at this teaching. It was just too strong for them. It was a teaching of no compromise, of being either with Him or against Him. The flesh wanted something simpler, with less commitment, but Jesus had no such compromise to offer. After many had walked away, He challenged the disciples with the question in verse 67, "Will ye also go away?"

This question still rings in the ears of every follower of the teachings of Jesus Christ. At some point in our lives, He will challenge us to go a little further, to work a little harder, and to give a little more in sacrifice. Will we simply seek a compromise? Simon Peter, though he did not fully understand his own words at the time, gave the reply that Jesus still seeks from believers: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). In other words, Peter had declared that the only life with any meaning is to do the will of God!

When we ask concerning who can be used to plant churches, we must start with this principle. We need workers, leaders, and pastors that have the same vision and burden of the Lord Jesus Christ. The church needs men and women that can say with Isaiah, "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

In this lesson, we will look at the vision, the motive, and the qualifications of a planter.

## **The Vision**

As we saw in lesson 3, planting a new church begins with a vision. This vision is really a "connection" between the planter and the Lord of the harvest. It is a transfer of the burden of the Lord to the leader. It is a glimpse of what God would like to do through the leader and in the lives of those to whom the planter will be sent. It is not a revelation that "I can go," but rather a clear understanding that "I must go." Where else could we go, when Jesus alone has the words of eternal life—for us and for others. The vision must be clear enough and tangible enough that the church planter can say it is what nourishes him. It must become the meat that sustains him.

In Ecclesiastes 11:4, the writer declared, "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." Neither circumstances nor personal ambition propel us into the harvest. Therefore, neither adversity nor personal sacrifice and suffering will pull us away from the harvest! Always before the face of the church planter will be the vision that God has provided. The successful church planter will be the one who, like the apostle Paul, can say, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14). The following verse, according to the *Phillips New Testament*, says, "All of us who are spiritually adult should set ourselves this sort of ambition" (Philippians 3:15).

Part of the vision comes from experience. It is partially based upon the level of experience of the planter. What has been his experience in the work of the Lord? What has he seen the Lord do in the past? What does he believe the Lord is capable of doing in the future?

Another part of the vision is inherited. It has been passed on to him from the Lord directly, and indirectly from the mother church or other church elders and leaders under whom the future planter has served. A pastor who thinks big can certainly help to pass on his vision to the leaders working under him in the harvest. Being part of a home missions work from the very beginning can help one of the members become a missionary himself.

Finally, part of the vision can be taught. We can help faithful members realize the need of the harvest, equip them with the tools for the harvest, and help them realize that God might be calling them into the harvest. We must always be on the lookout for members of our churches that are receiving the vision of the Lord for revival. Pastors should be challenging members with the vision. He should then allow those who respond, the opportunity to be charged with greater responsibilities in the kingdom of God. This will help them to become experienced workers with the Lord. We must learn to wait before the Lord in prayer, discern His will, and answer His call to service.

## **The Motive**

Paul told the church at Corinth, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (I Corinthians 3:5-7). God's harvest field has no room for those who seek personal fame and glory!

One of the strongest themes of the New Testament is humility. Paul realized that he had been crucified with Christ, and yet he lived. He

recognized that the life that he had was actually the new life of the Lord in him, allowing him to do by faith what God wanted him to do. It was no more and no less than that. This was the great apostle's motive (Galatians 2:20).

Personal ambition and trying to prove one's self-worth by building a church are not godly motives. Seeking position is not the same as seeking to do the will of Him that sent us. These carnal motives are like the tares that the enemy sowed in the field of Matthew 13:24-30. The law of Moses carefully described how seed was to be sown in Israel. According to Leviticus 19:19, the Israelites were not to sow a field with "mingled seed."

The word *mingled* here refers to different kinds of seed being placed in the same field. It was forbidden by God. In Deuteronomy 22:9, we see the same commandment concerning the growing of grapes: "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds."

Purity in the way we plant is essential today as well. We must have purity of doctrine, for example, and purity in holiness. And we must have purity in our motives. Anything else will be simply tares. Tares are plants that closely resembled wheat, but when matured, are actually poisonous to man. It takes some time before one is able to recognize the presence of tares in the wheat fields. The similarity in the young plants is too strong to notice the difference at first, but eventually, and sadly, the tares make themselves known to the planter.

We must guard against this problem in our fields of revival. Notice in the parable that the tares were sown "while men slept." To appoint a leader or future church planter that has not demonstrated faithfulness, loyalty, and humility will only bring poison into the household of God.

## **The Qualifications**

The qualifications necessary for church leaders fall into three major categories. These three areas are used to determine the eligibility for use in church leadership at any level, whether as a leader in the local assembly, or as a planter of a new missions work. Leaders will become qualified through proper training, spiritual demonstration, and the presence of necessary spiritual gifts.

Let us consider each of these qualifying factors individually.

First, *there is no substitute for proper training*. Paul referred in Romans 10:2 to the danger that Israel had fallen into by their "zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." To possess desire and burden is absolutely necessary, but leaders need training as well. Our God-given skills must be sharpened through teaching and practice, and by experience. Pastors should consider regularly

scheduled leadership training an absolute must as part of the local church ministry. Saints should know that in the local assembly there will always be further opportunity for growth and usefulness in the work of the kingdom of God. They must see that necessary training in leadership skills will be provided, making it possible for them to realize their true potential.

Leadership training classes should focus on teaching about personal ministry, communication, the Word of God, prayer, teaching skills, the importance of lay ministry in the local church, etc. There is an endless list of needful teaching that the pastor should feel responsible for providing. If the pastor is unable to provide the teaching himself, he should be able to point future leaders to where they may be trained in these areas. Pastors should keep careful records concerning who has taken part in these classes. In this way, the pastor will know who has successfully completed the training portion of the qualifying process for use as a leader or church planter.

Since this course deals with church planting, specific training should be offered that will provide potential church planters with the necessary teaching for starting a new work. It is true that some things will only be learned “on the job” after having commenced the new work. That is what experience is all about. However, to ignore the experience that others have to share will only hinder the work that God wants to perform through new leaders. Seasoned, successful pastors should pass on their knowledge and experience to leaders being trained under them.

Second, *church planters must be qualified by spiritual demonstration*. Some people become very good at “talking” like Christians, but they never seem to be able to “walk” like real Christians. The prophet Samuel was certainly one of the greatest Old Testament characters. He, however, made a great error in thinking that God would choose someone like Saul to replace Saul, the backslidden king of Israel.

In the well-known passage of I Samuel 16, we find Samuel sent to the house of Jesse, a man of Bethlehem. Here, Samuel would anoint the future king of Israel that would replace the carnal Saul. Samuel had been the prophet used by God to anoint Saul when he had first been chosen by God to become king. Saul had been a powerful young man then, very tall and strong.

In chapter 16, we find Samuel looking for one of the older, stronger sons of Jesse as the obvious choice of the future king. But God had a different plan. Samuel, seeing the eldest son Eliab, said, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is before him.” But the Lord simply answered, “Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (I Samuel 16:6).

We are looking for men that are qualified spiritually. They will be those who have demonstrated a right spirit, an attitude of loyalty, unity, humility, and faithfulness. These are men who have demonstrated their willingness to participate in the work of the Lord. They have been faithful in the little things, and now will be trusted with the great things (Luke 16:10). If a leader in the local assembly has struggled with faithfulness or has not cooperated with the pastor in the work of the church, how will he be able to spiritually survive the battlefield of planting a new congregation? We must be very careful to view prospective leaders the way that God sees them, in the Spirit.

Third, *part of the qualification is in the area of spiritual gifts*. Paul, in Romans 12:5-8, talked about gifts that differ “according to the grace that is given to us.” Grace is the unearned favor of God bestowed upon us in order to accomplish a specific task or ministry. Therefore, we can know that the Lord will enable us by His power and equip us with the spiritual tools we need to accomplish the ministry He has chosen to work through us.

We have all seen men and women that have failed at producing a spiritual harvest. They have been frustrated in their attempts to do a work for God. Their intentions were good and their motives were pure, but were they actually called for that particular ministry? Some pastors have failed in building a congregation, and in retrospect, we can see that they were more aptly suited to be good and strong leaders in the local church under the direction of a dynamic pastor. Perhaps they felt as though the only “advancement” in the ministry was to become a pastor, but the gifts that should accompany this kind of ministry were never present. If only they had been offered ministry at the local church level in which they could excel according to the grace that was given them, they would still be producing a spiritual harvest in the local church.

As church leaders, we have the responsibility of recognizing these gifts in our members, and also of helping them to nurture and develop these gifts. By doing this we are helping them to recognize their places in the kingdom ministry, and preventing the frustration that comes with being “in the wrong spot at the wrong time.”

Several of these spiritual gifts are described by Paul in I Corinthians 12. Gifts such as prophecy, miracles, healings, discernment, governments, and helps are named as being needful. Romans 12 reveals others such as teaching, ministry, exhortation, and giving. All of these have their places in the ministry of God through the church, and we must learn to direct the operation of these gifts according to the will of God.



## The Pauline Perspective

There is no doubt about the apostle Paul's burden to plant churches throughout the first-century world. He instructed Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). Again, to Timothy in I Timothy 3, Paul outlined some of the qualifications that are absolutely necessary to men who would become pastors and deacons.

As we read these, it is important to note that all of the qualifications but one concern the leader's character. The only one that deals with personal ability is that the pastor be "apt to teach." Some of the other New Testament translations render this as "skilled in teaching," "with a gift for teaching," or "qualified to teach." All of the other named qualifications are directed at the spiritual character of the potential church leader. In II Timothy 2:14-15, Paul told Timothy the reason for writing these things. He said that he hoped to soon be with Timothy (at Ephesus) but that if he were delayed, it was imperative that Timothy understand the importance of appointing the right people for the great responsibility of being leaders in God's church. Building on anything other than the proper spiritual foundation is to build on sinking sand.

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is the initial step in planting a new church? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What are three ways we receive a "vision"?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What type of laborers does the church need? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. How does a leader become qualified/eligible to plant a church?

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5. What is one of the strongest themes of the New Testament?

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6. What did Paul instruct Timothy to do in II Timothy 2:2?

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7. What two passages of Scripture dealing with spiritual gifts were mentioned in this lesson?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson Five

# The How of Church Planting

## Part One: The Foundation

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13).

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6).

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20).

## FOCUS

A house with a proper and strong foundation will last.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

When we speak of the *how* of church planting, it is not the intention of these lessons to lead the reader to believe that there is a simple way of having successful revival through any mechanical means. The church is spiritual. It is born of the Spirit, directed by the Spirit, and continues to grow because of the Spirit. There will never be a program that brings revival or church growth.

We must be led by Jesus Christ in total surrender to His will. He must give the power and the direction for all of our evangelistic efforts. If our work is not energized and directed by Him, we will be guilty of trying to copy the things of the Spirit with the work of the flesh.

However, certain spiritual principles can and must be applied to the ministry of planting churches. These are essential in laying the proper foundation on which to build a new work. In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus warned us of the danger of building on something other than His truth. To follow His leading in the harvest is to build upon the rock. To ignore His sayings and not do them is to build upon the sand.

In introducing this lesson, it is perhaps better to begin with *how not to plant a church*:

- **At the wrong time**

As we saw in lesson 3, proper timing is essential. Planting a crop in the wrong season is a guarantee of failure. Harvesting also must take place at the full maturity of the crop. The Lord will certainly urge us to action at the right time.

The key is *positioning* ourselves to be useful to God. Positioning refers to making the necessary preparations in order to be equipped and ready when the Lord does direct us to plant. What a pity it would be to be called when we are not ready, or worse yet, to be so unprepared that we are not even called! In Mark 4:25, Jesus said, "For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath."

A modern way of saying the same thing might be, "Use it or lose it!" The Lord considers His abiding grace and blessing as an investment, and He expects a return on that investment. Not using the gifts, power, and anointed guidance of His Spirit is ensuring a great failure in the harvest. In fact, it guarantees that we will be *out of position* for being used by Him in the manner that He has ordained.

- **In the wrong place**

Though it is true that we were commissioned to go into all the world and preach to every creature, the Lord will provide a well-defined strategy for this. A haphazard approach will only lead to frustration and disappointment. We must wait on the Lord to give

us the eyes of the Spirit, to see what He sees, and to understand where He is directing us.

- **With the wrong leader**

The epistles of the New Testament are full of admonitions concerning false teachers and men that would try to subvert the church. In Paul's letter to Titus, who had been left behind to organize the new church work on the island of Crete, he explained the importance of the character and training of the men who would be ordained as "elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). Paul clearly defined the need for demonstrated faithfulness; that is, a proven soundness in their walk with the Lord. He went on to warn of many "unruly and vain talkers . . . who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not."

In I Timothy 3:6, Paul advised Timothy that a bishop must not be ordained with responsibility if he is a novice. The word *novice* here in Greek is *neophutos*, meaning "one who by inexperience is unfitted to act as a bishop or overseer" (W. E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*). Both of these dangers can lead to the fall of the new work into confusion or even to false doctrine.

Give prospective leaders sufficient time to demonstrate their faithfulness and their soundness in teaching, as well as gain valuable experience while working under the direction of a proven and successful elder. The church administration must approve these men if they are to be entrusted with starting and overseeing new works.

In Acts 15, we find this very principle. Certain men had gone into churches teaching unapproved doctrines. The elders at Jerusalem solved the problem by writing an official letter to the churches saying that the church had not sent out these men, and that the church headquarters in Jerusalem did not sanction the doctrine they taught. They emphasized that the men actually ordained by them (Barnabas and Paul) were "chosen men . . . that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 15:25-26).

- **With an incomplete support structure**

The Lord always finishes what He begins. This should be true with us as well when we are in cooperation with Him in His work. One

of the fundamental goals of evangelism is the identification of the new convert with the mystical body of Christ as a whole, and then a local congregation.

The conversion of sinners without the discipling process is without benefit.

In fact, it can even have a negative effect. To start an evangelistic effort in a new area with many being born again, and then not continuing that work, causing the new converts to spiritually die from neglect, may leave a negative attitude in the area toward the church. Even later, when another leader comes to reopen the work with a greater desire and lasting burden, those in that area may be reluctant to receive the gospel the second time. They may well remember that this is the church that does not follow through with their commitments. There must be a full dedication to the new work, on the part of the organization supporting the work, and on the part of the pastor leading the work.

- **With an incomplete vision**

Every vision has boundaries to. Every leader should have a vision of that which the Lord has called him or her to do. What are the limits of this vision? How can the vision be expanded? Is the vision sufficient to carry us through the work? Can we see the order of the work and the next necessary steps that must be taken? Successful church planters will have these questions answered before they even begin the new work. They will have a vision, and they will be able to pass on this vision to the people they will lead. To try and lead without knowing where we are going is futile. Those who follow us must be assured that we know the way that God is leading us.

## **The Sure Foundation**

Paul told Timothy that despite the attempts of some to overthrow the faith of some, “the foundation of God standeth sure” (II Timothy 2:19). The foundation Paul spoke about here is the rock on which we are to build—Jesus Christ. Jesus, in fact, told us in Matthew 16:18 that He would build His church upon this rock. It will be built. And we can be part of that great construction.

In Ephesians 2:20, Paul reminded the church that the household of God is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” Earlier in the lesson, we referred to Jesus’ admonition in Matthew 7 of building on the rock and not on sinking

sand. In Luke's account of this parable, Jesus told us that the wise man first "dugged deep" in order to lay the foundation on the rock (Luke 6:48). Digging deep means spending sufficient time in preparation so that there will be no doubt of the building standing after construction. Digging deep means not looking for fast results, but rather a slow and steady growth in quantity and quality of the new congregation. Digging deep also means work.

Throughout the New Testament description of the early church, we can clearly see that the first goal of evangelism was reaching the lost, and the second (and certainly no less important) was establishing the new converts in strong congregations. In other words, the main objectives of the church were *evangelism and edification*.

In a beginning work, these two objectives are usually pursued one at a time in cycles. First comes an intense period of evangelism, followed by a time of edifying those reached through the evangelistic efforts. These new converts must be assimilated into a congregation where they feel part of the Christian family. Here, in the shelter of the communion of the saints of God, they will begin their spiritual growth and development. After this period of edification, they themselves must be employed in the harvest. Therefore, what follows next is another evangelistic effort, followed again by more edification. This cycle of evangelism and edification occurring at different times is normal for a growing and somewhat undeveloped church.

Later, however, there should be programs and ministries developed and introduced that will accommodate and ensure both evangelism and edification simultaneously. From the outset, the pastor of a newly planted church must begin working toward this goal. The pace of this development must be carefully watched, similarly to that of the growth of an individual member. To push a saint too much in the beginning can bring frustration and lack of progress. To be too hesitant in pursuing growth, and therefore work too slowly, also will retard growth. It is the same principle with an individual congregation. The new church must be challenged to higher and higher goals, but at the right time.

## **The Structure**

From the beginning, the new leader should be endeavoring to build a structure that can provide ministries that are adequate enough to meet the goals of evangelism and edification. These goals must include:

- Spiritual birthing of new converts
- Nurturing these converts

- The spiritual growth and development of the new members
- Training in specific ministry
- Usefulness of members in those ministries
- The transfer of burden and vision of the pastor to the congregation.

The structure will normally be patterned after the mother church, or in the case of a home missions work, according to the experience of the leader. This is why it is so important to establish new works on the pattern of the New Testament church, thereby ensuring that future works that spring from those churches will be according to the same pattern. By establishing strong congregations, we are building bases from which we can launch stronger and stronger evangelistic thrusts. This is the only way in which the church of today can effectively reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## The Pauline Perspective

Paul not only had a deep burden to evangelize the world, but he had a strong conviction that it must be reached properly. He said in I Timothy 4:16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." The word *continue* here is *epimeno*, meaning to "continue on these things." Paul exhorted Timothy to remain on the foundation and never allow any substitute.

Another well-known verse concerning Paul's careful approach to evangelism is II Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Certainly, the apostle never intended that Timothy would do things in exactly the same way as Paul, but he did expect the same spiritual principles to be in force.

Paul's last meeting with the elders of the church at Ephesus contains some interesting exhortations (Acts 20:17-36). He had abundantly labored there for three years, pouring himself into the work of God at Ephesus. He had recognized the strategic importance of a strong church in this commercial center of the ancient world.

It was Timothy who would continue as pastor of the Ephesian church after Paul's departure. This is the reason we find such a comprehensive epistle as I Timothy, written to the young pastor while Paul was in prison in Rome. The book contains several sections that deal with administration, training of leaders, principles of pastoring, the importance of doctrinal purity, and so on. It is clear from Paul's concern about the work at Ephesus that he intended the church not only to flourish, but to become a center of evangelism that reached all of Asia Minor.



It is also clear that it was at Ephesus that Paul demonstrated the team concept of evangelism. The New Testament mentions the names of many of Paul's associates, but never so many as at Ephesus—men and women like Aquila, Priscilla, Timothy, Titus, Gaius, Erastus, and Aristarchus. More would join the work as it progressed, and as the need for trained leadership became more and more evident. Apollos, Sosthenes, Tychicus, and Trophimus also ministered in the new work of Ephesus and stand as witnesses to us of the need of a comprehensive plan to reach a new area with the gospel. The new work that Paul spent three years opening, establishing, and expanding was to serve as a model not only for that region, not only for that time, but for us as well when we lift up our eyes and look on the fields, white already to harvest.

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. List the five instructions given on "How Not to Plant a Church."

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
B. \_\_\_\_\_  
C. \_\_\_\_\_  
D. \_\_\_\_\_  
E. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Explain what "digging deep" means. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. (Fill in the blanks) \_\_\_\_\_ not only had a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, but he had a  
\_\_\_\_\_ that it must be \_\_\_\_\_.

4. What are the two main objectives of the church?

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
B. \_\_\_\_\_

5. We will be guilty of what if our work is not energized and directed by Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Who would continue as the pastor of the Ephesian church after Paul's departure? \_\_\_\_\_

7. The new work Paul started serves as a model to whom? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Lesson Six**

# **The How of Church Planting**

## **Part Two: The Method**

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20).

“And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus” (Acts 19:8-9).

## **FOCUS**

A church needs constant growth to be considered healthy and productive.

## **WHAT I HAVE LEARNED**

### **The Pauline Perspective**

Paul understood the need for congregations. After a period of three months teaching and preaching at Ephesus, he separated the disciples into a congregation. No longer meeting in the Jewish synagogue, he found a location where they could gather, a school operated by someone named Tyrannus. The time had come when it was more beneficial to have a congregation of believers in and through which the saints could find strength, benefits, and the manifest presence of the Lord.

The Christian experience is certainly contacted individually at first, but it is important to note that there are many exhortations in the Scriptures that make reference to the “body” and its ministry. Congregations also provide the opportunity for members to participate in the Great Commission through the joint efforts of the assembly.

These first “churches” were probably synagogue style in worship, and met in homes or, in some cases like Ephesus, in rented facilities. Each city had a bishop or pastor that oversaw the general work in that area, and deacons that led meetings in individual homes. Perhaps the Romans tolerated these meetings as long as they perceived the new Christianity and its worship as just another part of the Jewish religion, but in and of themselves, Christian meetings were illegal. The meetings or services, conducted on Sunday, the first day of the week, were simple in content, concentrating on ministering to the basic needs of the new believers. This ministry most certainly included teaching doctrine, baptism, worship, Holy Ghost baptism, and so forth.

The need defined the ministry, as it should still be today. According to the New Testament, the method of church planting was simply:

- Preaching to the crowds (whether publicly, in synagogues, in homes, and so forth)
- Bringing together the new converts (in homes, synagogues, or schools)
- Worship instituted along with instruction in doctrine and practical Christianity
- Elders and deacons chosen and trained for use in further ministry

We should note that there are no appeals to the Jerusalem headquarters for pastors for the newly opened works; neither are there any requests for financing the new works.

Today the two primary means by which we open new works come either through the mother/daughter concept or the home missions concept. In this lesson, we will explore these two methods.

## **The Mother/Daughter Concept**

A pastor should be congratulated for having successfully started and pastored a church. But there is still more to be done. The feeling of “having done all we can” is a deceptive one. Just as a church without growth is not healthy, it is also not healthy to stand by and watch as the communities around us fail to receive the only gospel that saves.

The Book of I Samuel opens with a moving story of Hannah, the wife of Elkanah. This was a marriage based upon love and mutual respect. Elkanah dearly cared for his wife Hannah, but the marriage had never been blessed by the addition of children. Hannah was barren. One day when Hannah wept and would not eat, Elkanah asked her, “Am I not better to thee than ten sons?” (I Samuel 1:8). Hannah knew there was more to her life than her husband’s love. She felt destined to be the mother who brought something great into the world, a child who would be dedicated to the Lord and His work. Nothing could stop that desire and nothing could become a substitute for it!

This is a beautiful picture of the church that is so dearly loved and cared for by Jesus Christ. He bought it with His own blood. He is our Friend, our Lover, and our Husband. But isn’t there a destiny felt by the true members of the Body of Christ? Isn’t there a feeling that we should be New Testament “Hannahs” who will not be satisfied until we bear spiritual children?

Jacob’s wife, Rachel, cried out in Genesis 30:1, “Give me children, or else I die.” Strong, mature congregations must recognize this burden that God inspires. The churches’ destiny includes “spiritual motherhood.” After Hannah had poured out her burdened request to God, the priest Eli spoke with the answer that she had sought for so long, “Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him” (I Samuel 1:17). This will be the answer He gives us as well if we will only surrender to the call of spiritual motherhood.

Parenting a daughter work begins with *identifying the target*. What community is God directing us to. What are the possibilities? What are the potential problems? One of the easiest ways that a daughter church can be started is through the home fellowship group or “cell” ministry. When a home fellowship group reaches a certain size and there is a leader has accepted the call to the new area, the group can become a daughter congregation, meeting on Sundays. Like spokes coming from a central hub, every mature church should send out branch works to the communities surrounding it. Home fellowship groups that meet during the week can easily become daughter churches as they acquire sufficient members to help sustain the new work.

We must also be able to *identify the helpers*. Who is spiritually able, trained, and qualified to lead the daughter congregation? This is why ongoing leadership training and qualifying must be taking place in mature congregations. In fact, this is one of the signs of a healthy church. A need for trained leaders will always exist. If the pastor’s burden and vision is successfully being passed on to growing members, those whom God is calling into pastoral ministry will respond.

*Identifying the place and time* comes next. Will the new congregation start in a home or a rented facility? Where is the most central place in regards to the new and yet-to-be-reached saints? Will these be Sunday morning services? Is it better to start on Sunday afternoon, allowing the pastor of the mother church to be in charge of the services? This might also allow members of the mother church to attend, thereby bolstering the faith and expectancy of the new services.

In the case of a daughter congregation, the mother church supplies the *vision* that is so important. It is the pastor's vision that has started the new work, and his burden that will continue the momentum necessary in the beginning. Gradually, however, this vision will be passed on to the eventual leadership of the daughter church.

The experience of the mother will also greatly benefit the new work and will shape the early growth of the daughter. What has worked in the growth of the mother church will surely be tried in the daughter. Mistakes made by the mother can be sometimes (but not always) avoided in the daughter work. The goal is producing a daughter of which the mother can be proud. We should strive to start works that will become self-sufficient as soon as possible. Independence from the mother comes as the daughter begins to mature and is gradually able to stand on her own. Soon after, it too will become a spiritual mother of another new congregation. Each existing church planting just one daughter work would mean doubling our present outreach.

Bible schools can also become mothers. While attending school, students can start satellite works in the near vicinity of the school, or in some cases, be allowed to travel farther on weekends in order to plant new works in new areas. This is an excellent way of accomplishing two important things: first, the student gets practical training as well as learning the Scriptures; and second, the student's work can be closely monitored by the school officials during the crucial period at the beginning of the new work. Valuable experience will be gained by these students that are afforded such an opportunity, and many new works can be planted.

Finally, it is important that the mother church continue to provide the necessary help to its daughter as long as it is required. In the beginning or infant stage of the daughter, it is obvious that continuous help is needed. But as the daughter grows, it will become less in terms of time required, but more focused in nature. There will be certain areas of the daughter work that will be targeted by the mother for assistance.

As an example, there could be "power teams" sent by the mother to some Sunday services. These teams can help the faith of the daughter

congregations in the worship, in the teaching and preaching, and in the altar call portion of the meeting. Trained altar workers are very important in every church. In a new congregation, these altar workers are scarce. They are yet to be trained and have not gained the experience so necessary in ministering to people during prayer. The mother, however, should have enough trained personnel to be able to share teams of these workers occasionally with the daughter.

What a difference it makes to have seasoned veterans of the Lord's work present in a service! What a blessing it is for a daughter to enjoy this kind of support from its mother church! Financial help will also be required from the mother in the beginning, but the daughter congregation must be taught to assume the load of their work as soon as possible. Spiritual daughters, like natural daughters, must become responsible members of the church. At first, church reports, tithing, and visitation follow-up will probably be directed by the mother church for proper administration, and later will be surrendered to the responsibility of the daughter.

## **The Home Missions Concept**

The home missions concept refers to a trained pastor being sent out by the church into a new area, previously unevangelized. This is the process seen so often in the Book of Acts. Many of the points discussed in the mother/daughter concept will continue to apply here. For example, the need for identifying the target community, the helpers, as well as the time and place of meeting will still be essential. The vision, in this case, must be a combination of the vision of the leader who is sent and of the national leadership that is sending him. They must be in complete agreement about the need, the structure, the goals, and the method. There should be a clear understanding of what is expected on both parts. The experience of the leader while at his home church will provide a large part of the direction that the new leader will pursue in opening the missions work. This is one of the reasons why the national leadership must be careful in its choice of who will go to a new area. What are the leader's real qualifications, and what is his past experience? While experience is certainly no guarantee of success or failure, it is very valuable.

This new work and its leader/pastor will be working alone most of the time. Therefore, it is critically important that the new pastor has demonstrated his loyalty to the organization and to the doctrine, and proven himself faithful in the administration of church work. He should have the recommendation of someone who has watched him labor. He will not be working with the benefit of the help that a mother church can provide, so he must be a motivator of himself and of others. He must be prepared to train those needed in the ministries of the new church. At first he will be the head of all ministries, the

teacher, the preacher, the youth leader, choir director, etc. He must be ready to face every adversity, knowing that his best friend is the Lord Himself. He must realize that although the national organization will want to help all it can, this help will be sporadic, and that there will never be the time or opportunity for enough of that help.

Initial contacts with residents of the target community can be made in many ways. This can be done through mass evangelism strategies like open-air crusades, tent meetings, Bible studies taught in individual homes by the new pastor, or simple invitations to newly made acquaintances. In the next lesson, we will look at what to do with these new contacts and how to get started in “planting the church.”

## Having a Plan

Whether a new church will be planted by a home missions effort or by a mature congregation branching off a daughter work, the key is to always follow a plan. Every church that is beginning to show the signs of spiritual maturity should have a plan for reaching out into the surrounding areas. These areas may be neighborhoods in a large town, or they may be villages not very far away from the mother church. The pastor and leadership of these mature churches should meet regularly, not only for discussing and analyzing the progress of their work in the local church, but also to map out a strategy for planting a new work in these neighboring areas.

Our towns and cities are not yet saturated with too many churches. There is always room for more growth and therefore, for more congregations. When will we have enough? The answer to this question can be found in Matthew 25:19-21:

“After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What are the two primary things by which we open new works today?  
A. \_\_\_\_\_



B. \_\_\_\_\_

2. How does parenting a daughter work begin?

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3. What was the method of church planting according to the New Testament?

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4. What implications can be drawn from the statement, "Each existing church should plant at least one daughter work"?

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5. What does the home missions concept refer to?

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6. Where can the answer be found to the question, "When will we have enough churches"?

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7. When Bible schools are "mothers," what two important things can be accomplished? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Why is it critically important that a pastor demonstrate his loyalty to the organization and the doctrine and show himself faithful in church work administration? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Lesson Seven

# Getting Started

“And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred” (Mark 4:8).

“And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together” (John 4:36).

## FOCUS

It doesn't matter who plants the seed and who waters it. We need to remember that only God can give the increase.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

“Getting Started” sounds like a big job indeed! And yet, it is simply a matter of beginning by sowing the seed. In Mark 4, Jesus gave the parable of the sower and the seed. He taught us that the seed will fall on different kinds of ground: the hard ground by the wayside, the ground full of stones, and thorny ground that chokes out the young plants. But He ended the parable with the encouragement that some seed will fall on “good ground” and will bring forth fruit. It's guaranteed! No matter in what portion of God's harvest field we find ourselves, a revival is waiting to take place. Some revivals will be like the seed that brought forth thirtyfold; others will bring forth sixtyfold; and others will yield a hundredfold.

## The Pauline Perspective

Paul knew very well that though he had planted and Apollos had watered, it was God who gave the increase (I Corinthians 3:6). He had the wisdom to understand that easy results wouldn't be found everywhere. To some, like Lydia in Acts 16:14, the word shared had immediate and lasting results. He enjoyed great success in building the revival in Ephesus, where in two years "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:10). Yet, after only three weeks in Thessalonica, Paul and Silas were forced to leave the city that had broken out in rioting because of the gospel they preached. (See Acts 17:1-10.) Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to establish and comfort the new believers there (I Thessalonians 3:2).

At Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas were forced to conclude that they must focus their ministry on the Gentiles and not the Jews who were displaying a very hard and stubborn spirit (Acts 13:44-46). In order to make this Spirit-led judgment, however, they had to sow the seed wherever and whenever they could at the beginning.

In Acts 14, Paul saw the beginnings of a church at Lystra, but "certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead" (Acts 14:19). Two verses later, after preaching in Derbe, Paul returned to Lystra. Why return to the town where he had been stoned and left for dead? Paul had seen the potential for a great harvest in Lystra. Where he had sown the seed, he had seen the beginnings of true growth. In other words, he recognized Lystra as having lots of "good ground" on which to plant a church and see a harvest.

The words of the apostles at Jerusalem were ever in the mind of Paul. In Acts 13:2, we read, "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." There was too much work yet to be done to waste time trying to sow the seed of the Word of God on ground that was too hard, too stony, or too thorny. Once Paul determined the type of ground he was encountering, he pursued the planting of churches on the soil that would produce a harvest.

## **The Initial Contacts**

While the church planter sometimes will be specifically led by the Holy Ghost to certain individuals and groups, the majority of his time will be spent initially broadcasting the seed onto as much ground as possible. By doing this, and remaining sensitive to the Spirit, he will be able to determine which ground is receptive to the gospel.

"Go everywhere and tell everybody" must be the motto of the church planter in the beginning stages of the new work. In fact, this should remain the cry of the church as it grows in the Lord. Though the pastor's time will

transition from doing most of the sowing to that of administration, comfort, preaching, teaching, and training, he will be responsible for ensuring that the new congregation assumes the responsibility of continuously sowing the seed.

Contacts are made through witnessing on the street, in the village, at the workplace, and from house to house. Mass evangelism also produces large numbers of initial contacts that must be followed up. Open air services, tent meetings, and large crusades can produce lists of visitors. Therefore, it is imperative that every such crusade or meeting be organized so that the names of visitors to the service can be traced after the meeting concludes. There must be a determination on the part of the pastor (and whatever help he has) to visit each and every visitor that attended the crusade, tent revival, or open air meeting.

Whether the list of visitors is composed of ten or two hundred names, each one is a potential member of the new congregation. They have displayed some faith and interest simply by attending; therefore, they may further pursue more truth if given the opportunity. It is not sufficient simply to invite the visitors back for another service during the service. They deserve a personal visit by the pastor (or his helpers). This should be done in the visitor's home, where it is important to try and secure the visitor's willingness to have a Bible study taught.

As we saw in lesson 6, in the beginning of a new work, the leader is probably the only one really ministering. (This will be somewhat different in the case of a daughter work where there may be workers already trained in some areas of ministry who will be valuable helpers to the new pastor.) He will be making the contacts and following them up. He will be transforming the contacts from mere acquaintances into Bible study recipients, from "outsiders" to new members. He will group these Bible study participants into home fellowship groups when possible and will be teaching both the Bible studies and the home fellowships.

Part of identifying good soil also takes place after the contact has become a new member. Who is showing potential in ministry? Who can be trained to take some of the responsibility of the pastor? The responsibility of the pastor, after all, is "perfecting . . . the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12).

From the very beginning of seeing new converts born into the church, the church planter should start training programs to equip these members for ministry in visitation, witnessing, teaching Bible studies, and home fellowship groups. Then as the congregation grows, training will be needed in areas that directly boost the Sunday services: ministries like teaching Sunday school, training altar workers, and leading the choir, and so on. The pastor will learn

to spot soil that is receptive and the soil that will never produce. He must invest his time in planting the seed on the good ground, knowing that the Lord will respond with harvests of thirty, sixty, and an hundred fold.

## **The Home Bible Study**

From the very birth of the church, there have been home Bible studies. Acts 5:42 tells us, “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

These Bible studies accomplish two main things:

- Implanting the Word of God in the heart of the listener
- Impacting the new contact with the love of the Lord through ministry

Sometimes the content of the Bible study is not as important as merely being in the person’s home on a regular basis, praying with him, and touching him with the compassion of Jesus Christ.

Other times, the Word of God, so sharp and powerful, is the agent that starts a permanent change from carnal to spiritual. From shortly after the church planter’s arrival in the new area, he should be teaching home Bible studies. And after this new work has matured, home Bible studies should still be being taught (fewer perhaps by the pastor, but certainly many by the congregation).

Volumes have been written concerning the kinds of Bible studies that can be taught, and it is not in the scope of this lesson to describe any particular one. The church planter, however, must be qualified in teaching such a study, and must train members of his new congregation to do the same. As soon as practicable, he must qualify new members to become teachers themselves, able both to break the bread of life to new contacts and to minister to them by the Spirit of God. The new pastor can take members that are showing promise with him as he goes to teach Bible studies, and gradually allow them the opportunity to teach as well.

These Bible studies should have some form of organization; that is, the teacher should be held accountable for teaching them in a timely manner. Missing appointments or being slow to start a study after the initial contact has caused many potential saints to become discouraged and lose interest in the new church.

A congregation that truly cares will follow up its commitments. It should be the goal of the pastor to have each new contact taught a home Bible study, whether by him or by members he has trained in this valuable ministry. Much spiritual “soil testing” takes place during a home Bible study. Many people reveal that they are not good ground at the time of the study. Others show great progress and results during and after being taught.

The teacher must try to remain sensitive to and be led by the Spirit of the Lord to know when to proceed and when to quit if necessary. Some Bible studies show results after just a few sessions. Others need months of time and energy invested before the light finally shines through. There is no substitute for one-on-one ministry, and home Bible studies serve as the medium through which this ancient and apostolic duty can take place.

## **The Home Fellowship Group**

While the one-on-one ministry is vital to a growing church, group ministry is also needed as well as a vehicle by which members may be used in group ministry. Of course, several forms of ministry can occur only in the setting of the Sunday service, where a larger number of saints can share the manifest presence of the Lord and enjoy the feeling of security found only in the body as a whole.

Some ministry, however, is restricted by large numbers of participants. Not everyone in the church service can share a testimony, lead a chorus of praise, or lay hands on others during prayer. James 5:16 exhorts us to confess our faults one to another so that earnest prayer might be made and spiritual, emotional, and physical healing take place. This would be very difficult in a congregation of many people. Smaller groups, where real Christian fellowship can be felt and demonstrated, are needful in today’s churches.

The Greek word for *fellowship* or *communion* is *koinonia*, meaning “sharing in common, participation, and contribution.” It is more than a handshake after church service on Sunday. Paul taught us in Galatians 6:2 to bear one another’s burdens, thereby fulfilling the law of Christ. We can use the four components of the name to illustrate the valuable contribution home fellowship groups can offer to a new congregation:

### **Home**

Home speaks first of all about the setting of the meeting. At home people can be more comfortable and even more relaxed than in a church service. They can “lower their guard” and hopefully, allow us to get inside their walls of defense. It also describes the convenience of a house setting. A church building is not needed to begin the ministries of a church. By bringing those who have been participating in home Bible studies into the

new home fellowship group, we can begin their experience of group ministry. Here they will be able to receive and also learn to give. They will learn valuable lessons in practical Christian living and doctrine during times of teaching, but the members will also have opportunity to learn to minister to others. This is the real blessing of the home fellowship group, where members learn their parts in the body ministry, and realize their personal importance in the kingdom of God.

### **Fellowship**

The church is not a building, and its activities are not limited to those that take place on Sunday morning. The church consists of members that have vital roles in ministering to each other. The home fellowship group serves as a place for restoration, feeding, burden-bearing, spiritual growth, evangelism, spiritual warfare, deliverance, and the development of future leadership. It provides a certain security in knowing that one belongs to a group that really cares.

### **Group**

Unity develops in these groups as the exhortations of Paul in Romans 12 are fulfilled. Participating members begin to see how they each fit in, as well as fully realize how their individual contributions (materially and spiritually) are valuable aids to the congregation as a whole. There is strength as each member helps to uphold and edify his brothers and sisters in the group. It is a good place to bring new visitors, even before they experience the Sunday gathering of all of the members.

### **Ministry**

Home fellowship groups are a medium in which existing leaders can “practice” and sharpen their skills in ministering to the household of God. The pastor will not only see that intensive training of potential leaders is necessary, but also that they be given the opportunity to use and develop skills and techniques they are learning. These leaders will recognize the importance of their ministries in focusing, directing, and administering the move of the Spirit in these home fellowships. They will be learning valuable skills that will benefit them personally, as well as bless the members of the group and combine with the efforts of the other home fellowship group leaders in “growing” the church. These leaders will be sharing a large part of the pastor’s responsibility in reaching the community and in discipling the membership of the congregation. This means they will also share some of the authority that pastors possess.

## **The Sunday Service**



One of the first considerations in regard to starting Sunday services is when. To rent a hall, a classroom, or other facility before there are sufficient people to attend these meetings seems futile. Efficient use of home Bible studies followed by and coexisting with home fellowship groups means that people will be ministered to even without the financial burden of a Sunday service. The thought here is this: Bible studies lead to the formation of home fellowships (composed of Bible study participants and “graduates”), and these home fellowships can be brought together for a gathering of all the participants, that is, the Sunday service.

Sunday church should not be considered the only means of ministry, but rather as having a specific ministry itself. When the congregation meets as a combined unit, there is strength in numbers, there is a clear manifestation of the Lord’s presence in the group, and visitors should feel a touch of God in power. As was discussed in the section on home fellowships, certain forms of ministry can only take place with smaller numbers of participants. Conversely, some aspects of church ministry will be accomplished only in the Sunday church service!

## **The Model Church**

This is one of the most crucial aspects to consider when planting a new work. The new church should be targeted from the onset as a model church of the future. This new congregation will, after all, become a pattern for any future daughter works it begins. Especially in a regional or district center, this new work will become the model for future satellite congregations that will spread from it as a base. This “model” can be a good one or a bad one. It will set the pattern in a positive way or a negative way. Either it will shine as an example of spiritual growth in quantity as well as quality, or it will hinder the future growth of other churches by setting the example of stagnation or carnality.

Each of the ministries within any local church should be moving forward together in order to accomplish the well-defined goals of that church. Develop a comprehensive plan at the local church level that describes the goals of the congregation, as well as the steps needed to accomplish those goals. The absence of this plan will only lead to meager and scattered attempts at evangelism, leadership development, and church growth. All pastors should be accountable in their responsibility to spearhead the efforts of a local church in reaching a new area with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

At any time, the pastor should be able to describe the future of the work, the problems of the present, and the way in which he is taking the congregation forward by the grace of God. This is the calling God has given him. The apostle Paul told the believers in I Corinthians 11:1, “Be ye followers of me, even as I

also am of Christ.” The *Berkeley Version of the New Testament* says, “Pattern after me as I pattern after Christ.” A clearly defined plan to reach the new area should accompany the pastor into the planting, cultivating, and harvesting of the portion of the field God has assigned to him.

In his book, *Strategies for Church Growth*, C. Peter Wagner describes four things that must be investigated if no fruit results from the sowing of the seed.

- *Be sure you are in the vine.* This refers to John 15:16. Branches that bear fruit are locked into the vine that supplies all the resources necessary to grow fruit.
- *Be sure you are preaching to the right people.* Look for and recognize the “good ground.”
- *Be sure you are using the right methods.*
- *Be sure you are working hard enough.* And make sure you are investing your time and energy in the right ways.

Finally, the goal of establishing a church that is self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing must be set at the beginning of the new work. While this is normally a goal targeted when considering the national work as a whole, it applies to the local church level as well. A healthy congregation is one that continues to sow seed and reap a harvest (evangelism and edification). It will also be a church that gives sacrificially and lets members know what is expected of them. The new congregation must also be one that governs itself through a clear form of local church government and administration. In another lesson, we will examine the administration of the newly planted church.

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. After seeing new converts born into the church, what should the church planter do?

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2. How does Jesus end the parable in Mark 4? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Bible studies accomplish what two things?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Explain the function and importance of the home fellowship group.

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\_\_\_\_\_

5. What should be the motto of the church planter? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. A congregation that truly cares will do what? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What three things does a growing church need?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

8. According to C. Peter Wagner, what four things must be investigated if there is no fruit after the seed is sown?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

9. What is one of the first considerations regarding the commencement of Sunday services? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. What two things identify a healthy congregation?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

11. Explain how the model church can be a good model or a bad one.

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## Lesson Eight

# The Nucleus of the Local Congregation

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his” (II Timothy 2:19).

## FOCUS

Pastors, work toward bringing unity to the “nucleus” of your church; for these members are the ones who will help you carry the load.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

### A Nucleus in Every Church

In any church congregation, no matter the size, a “congregation within the congregation” exists. In the last lesson, we discussed the sowing of the seed. In Jesus’ parable of the sower and the seed, He emphasized that not all ground on which the seed fell was good ground. In the case of the stony ground, the young plant grew rapidly at first, but later when the sun was up, it was scorched. On thorny ground the results were similar. The thorns grew around the new plant and choked it, causing it to die. Only on the good ground was the harvest what it should have been.

In the explanation of the parable, Jesus taught some people hear the Word of God with gladness, but later they are offended by persecution or affliction and do not endure for long. Others who hear the word later are choked by the deceitfulness of riches and lust for the things of the world. Only those that hear the word and receive it deeply into the soil of their hearts will produce harvests that are thirtyfold, sixtyfold, or an hundredfold.

Pastors of every church should realize that within the church is a group of saints who will be the strength of that assembly. They will be the ones on whom to build the revival that God so desperately wants. This is the nucleus of the congregation. Pastors should know that this is a normal part of the growth of a church. They should not be discouraged by the many that will hear the word but never really take it to heart and become fruitful. Pastors of new works must know this from the very beginning of their work. This nucleus will be at all stages of the growing church. From this group of strong members the pastor will form his “team” that will share the load of building the work of God in the new area. These will be the saints he will train intensively in leadership and they will assume places of responsibility and authority in the local church.

## Identifying the Nucleus

Pastors should be looking for members who will, as I Corinthians 1:10 tells us, speak the same thing and have no divisions among them. They will be people that share the pastor’s vision and his burden. They will be perfectly joined together by the job that has been put before them by the Lord. These are the members of the church who clearly show they are going in the same direction as the pastor. As he follows Christ, they follow him. In other words, they demonstrate that they are dedicated to doing the will of God.

We need to look at something that Paul shared with his son in the gospel in I Timothy 4:12, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” In this verse we find a great list of identifying features of those who will form the nucleus of any congregation:

- ***In word.*** This is what they say. They are showing that they agree with the direction that the pastor is taking and that they are willing to go with him. They are saying that they are with him in doctrine and in policy.
- ***In conversation.*** The word here in Greek is *anastrophe*, meaning “manner of life.” This word is used to describe the daily lifestyle of someone. This means that their actions are in agreement with what they say.
- ***In charity.*** This word speaks of true love that comes from God and works through the church. It refers here to our relationships with others. These are Christians who not only allow the love of God

into their hearts, but who also allow it to move through them to touch others.

- *In spirit.* We must look for the members of the new congregation who show signs of being led by the Spirit. Paul said in Romans 8:14, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”
- *In faith.* This means that they are directed in their actions by the Word of God. They are acting with His strength in order to accomplish His task. We are not looking for those who “talk” a big faith, but those that live it!
- *In purity.* By this we mean that these will be the saints that separate themselves from the world and who find what real holiness to the Lord means.

It is obvious that not everyone will fall into this category. Some “members” will never become fruitful in the kingdom of God. They will simply never make the necessary dedication and sacrifice to become what they could become by the power and grace of God. Many pastors have expended too much time and energy trying to resurrect “dead saints.” The new leader of a church recently planted should be able to identify key individuals who will receive what the Lord desires to give.

Someone has said that leaders should spend 80% of their time working with 20% of their people. While the numbers may not always be exactly 80/20, the principle is a sound one. Pastors and leaders should invest the majority of their precious time in those who show that they are the key individuals described above. This is nothing more than “sowing on good ground.” This brings us to another major point in working with the nucleus of a congregation.

## **The Nucleus Is Not Always the Majority**

When a daughter church has been started with a group of believers who are strong and spiritual, the possibility exists that the nucleus at the beginning is also the majority of members. This may change, however, as more and more visitors attend the church services and begin to call the church their home.

For a pastor who starts a home missions work, the situation could be entirely different. He might begin the services with a few that have been taught a home Bible study and who have been formed into one or more home fellowship groups. Along with these, there will be visitors who have

come because they were invited to the Sunday meeting. The pastor (and any key saints with him) may be overwhelmed by the majority, which in this case is not all that spiritual. This majority may now even begin to work *against* the progress of the new church. When the faith and vision of the pastor urge the church to move on, the unbelief of the new visitors (as well as the carnal saints) can stop any progress or perhaps cause the church to move in another direction.

In some sad cases, a home missions pastor might consider this a matter of “us against them.” It is during this period of overcoming the unbelief of many that the burden and commitment of church leadership are so crucial. A pastor with a burden wants to see everyone saved, of course. The fact is, however, that not all drowning men will reach for the lifeline that is offered to them. Not every visitor will repent and be baptized, and not every member of every congregation will submit himself to the Lord in order to be used by the Spirit in the local church.

As we discussed in an earlier lesson, pastors are called (Ephesians 4:11-12) to equip the church membership for the work of the ministry. The next verses describe the aim of this ministry: “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:13-14). Therefore, it is paramount that from the very beginning of a new church, the pastor identify the nucleus and begin to build the house of God upon it. Gradually, and only by building the revival upon a spiritual foundation, the nucleus will become more powerful than those who have little faith.

New pastors are often tempted to appoint members who have a good standing in the world to places of spiritual authority in the church. They think that if a person like this is rewarded with position in the church, he or she will remain loyal to the work. This has proven many times over to be false. Building a structure without a foundation is quick, but it can never stand for long. We must dig deeply into the ground and base the future revival that God has guaranteed on a solid footing of spirituality. No worldly position, no singular talent, no amount of financial strength, and no abundance of carnal personality can ever become a substitute for spiritual dedication and loyalty to the work of God as He builds the church.

### **Qualifying New Leadership**

While identifying the nucleus of the congregation is absolutely necessary, it is not enough to stop there. The pastor must continue providing leadership to these members who have proven their dedication. He must help



them realize their true spiritual potential. In other words, he should show them the areas of responsibility and leadership that are awaiting them.

Qualification for leadership in a newly planted work must take place and include the three primary areas discussed in lesson 4: training, spiritual demonstration, and spiritual gifts. It must be continuous. Training programs should fit the need at the time in the church. Jobs should be delegated to aspiring leaders and key members through which they may demonstrate their loyalty and faithfulness, as well as practice their newly found skills in ministry. Finally, teaching and guidance must be provided to show how ministry is accomplished through the Holy Spirit. The next lesson will discuss specific training programs and use of new leadership.

## The Shepherd

In Hebrews 5:12 the saints are told, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.” When a congregation is composed of people that are spiritually immature, it is the fault of the pastor. In the beginning of a new work, a time of spiritual infancy in the church is expected; however, it should not continue forever. Saints will grow if they are nourished and protected. Children grow and mature. If our children are not growing, we know something is wrong, and we take action to correct the problem.

Pastors should fulfill four primary responsibilities in order to grow a mature congregation:

- 1) **The pastor must feel personally accountable for the success or failure of every ministry within the local church.** Delegation is absolutely necessary, but this does not mean that he totally surrenders his personal obligation to oversee the progress and development of the delegated ministries. For example, if the choir is not ministering properly in the church service, it is the pastor’s ultimate responsibility to find the solution for the problem. The pastor should not place blame on someone inadequately trained to carry out the function of a delegated position. A choir leader that does not know the goals of the choir, nor understand the ways in which a spiritual choir can minister to the needs of a congregation will only become frustrated and confused.

The same applies to any ministry of the local church. The leader of the ladies ministry must know what is expected of her. The youth leader should understand where he should be directing the youth group. They should all be involved in an integrated program

of the local church to minister to the needs of the congregation and the community. If a particular ministry of the local church is failing, the pastor should ask these questions:

- Is the leader adequately informed of what he or she is expected to do?
  - Is he or she adequately trained to accomplish the task?
  - Is he or she capable of doing the job?
  - Does this leader need to be replaced by someone more capable?
- 2) **The pastor must provide training in ministry for those who will be in leadership roles in the local church's various ministries.** The pastor can do this himself, or he can direct these leaders to training resources that will provide the necessary learning in ministry. As the church grows, the training program must grow as well to meet the expanding needs of leadership in an expanding church ministry.
- 3) **The pastor must identify the potential role of each member of the congregation.** This seems like a huge task at first, yet it represents one of the most basic and vital responsibilities of a shepherd. A pastor should be able to look out over the congregation and give an account of each member's spiritual condition. Just as the shepherd inspects his flock on a daily basis to check for sickness, injury, or other problems, so should the spiritual shepherd look for the healthy or unhealthy signs in each of his flock. As the church grows in size, the pastor will add more staff to the pastoral ministry to ensure that this can continue to take place.
- 4) **The pastor must help each member to reach and achieve that potential.** Each member should learn to see himself as God sees him in order to understand how he might be used by the Lord in the body of Christ. We often drag with us into the church the old ways of the world. These include the ways by which we used to look at ourselves; that is, as unworthy, unimportant, and having little or no impact on those around us. Jesus, however, considers us as new creatures. (See II Corinthians 5:17-20.)

Identifying the nucleus comes from this proper look at the congregation by the new pastor. As more and more members are added to the church, the pastor continues to recognize the good ground on which sowing and reaping will take place. He will continue to love and minister to all that come to the church, but he will also recognize that he must devote the majority of time and effort in developing those who show real potential in the kingdom

of God. By doing this, he will ensure that the congregation becomes all it should be by the grace of God.

## **The Pauline Perspective**

“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus” (Acts 9:26-27).

When all of the church leaders at Jerusalem were ready to reject Paul and his ministry, someone looked with God’s eyes and saw potential. Barnabas saw something no one else saw: an apostle not yet fully developed. It is also interesting to note that the Lord called out Barnabas and Paul together in Acts 13 to become missionaries. The Lord knew Paul could learn many things from Barnabas, and Barnabas was the one to give Paul the opportunity in ministry that he needed to become the great apostle we know him as today.

Barnabas had recognized that Paul was surely part of the nucleus of the first-century church leadership, and worked diligently to develop this potential. It is no wonder the apostle Paul told us later that he could “do all things through Christ.” In Paul’s own eyes, he considered himself as a “wretched man” in Romans 7:24, but in Romans 8:37, he saw himself with God’s eyes as “more than a conqueror.” Based upon this valuable experience afforded him by Barnabas, Paul learned to devote his ministry to church planting and leadership development, a ministry that reaches through his epistles to our work today.

## **WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?**

1. What did Jesus emphasize in His parable of the sower and the seed?

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2. What is the nucleus of a congregation? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. List the identifying features that will form the nucleus of any congregation and give the Scripture reference as well.

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4. What can the unbelief of new visitors do to the progress of a church?

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5. What are pastors called to do in reference to Ephesians 4? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What are the four primary responsibilities pastors should fulfill in order to grow a mature congregation?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_\_

7. When a particular ministry is failing in a church, what four questions should the pastor ask?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_\_

8. What did Paul see himself as in Romans 7:24? \_\_\_\_\_  
In Romans 8:37? \_\_\_\_\_



## **Personal Study Notes**

## Lesson Nine

# Reproductive Training: Developing New Leadership

“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee” (Titus 1:5).

“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine” (I Timothy 1:3).

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (II Timothy 2:2).

## FOCUS

The pastor should not be a one-man band. He must determine the potential in members and train leaders to help him with the work.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

### The Pauline Perspective

There is clearly no doubt at all that the apostle Paul recognized the need for qualified leaders in the work of God. He also knew there must be a continuous program of qualifying these leaders in order to fulfill that need. The examples given by Paul to Timothy in the second chapter of II Timothy – a soldier, an athlete, a farmer, and a vessel – are symbolic of the character necessary to a spiritual leader in God’s household. The Scriptures provide a

balance in Paul's recognition of the need for leadership and his demand that these leaders be trained and proven. (Compare Acts 14:23 with the teachings of I Timothy 3:1-13.) In fact, it is after Paul's writing regarding the qualifications of bishops and deacons that he told Timothy in verses 14-15, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." It seems Paul desired to come and teach these principles himself to the rising leadership at Ephesus, but recognizing that he was being hindered from coming, he decided to write these verses.

Paul instructed Titus that elders were to be appointed in every city as Titus himself had been appointed. The system was simple and complete:

- Reach someone with potential.
- Develop that potential.
- Work with that person while he or she gains experience and is proven in the work.
- Release that new leader with clear responsibilities.
- And finally, charge that leader to do the same with someone else.

Acts 19 describes the beginning of the great apostolic revival at Ephesus. Paul had found twelve "disciples" of the Lord there and had preached more fully the gospel of Jesus to them. After baptizing them and seeing them filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul continued his teaching and evangelism for three months. When he encountered resistance during his meetings in the Jewish synagogues where he had been meeting with the new converts and with new contacts, he decided to separate the believers and probably continued to meet with them in private homes throughout the region.

An interesting observation must be made concerning the last part of Acts 19:9: "And separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus." Verse 10 then tells us that this continued for a period of two years. At first it may seem this simply refers to the preaching of the gospel that Paul had initially begun soon after his arrival. But it is important to remember that he had "separated" the believers and then began the "disputing" of verse 9.

The word for *dispute* here in the Greek is *dialogomai*, signifying "conversing, arguing, or disputing." Several translations of the verse shed more light on this passage. The *Twentieth Century New Testament* says, "... and gave daily addresses in the lecture hall of Tyrannus." The *Berkeley Version of the New Testament* translates it as, "... and went on holding discussions in the schoolroom of Tyrannus." We must remember that this went on for two more years. This was certainly something more than evangelizing; it was training!



In Acts 20:17, Paul called for the elders of the church at Ephesus (the region). By this time he had been gone for only a few months after spending his three years at Ephesus. Where did these elders come from? They had been discipled, trained, proven, and sent by Paul. They had passed the course taught by the apostle in the school owned by Tyrannus. Paul wrote in I Corinthians 16:9, “For I have an opportunity here that is great and calls for work” (*The Williams New Testament*). Paul had no doubts concerning the magnitude of the potential revival at Ephesus and of the impact it could have on the rest of Asia. He recognized that there would be a need for trained leaders to administer this revival, and therefore, set about early in training and qualifying these leaders. The ministry of Barnabas to Paul had by this time clearly shown results. Paul had learned the secret of “reproductive training,” the key to developing new leadership.

## Identifying the Need

The development of new leadership cannot begin without clearly defining the needs of the congregation in terms of evangelism, growth, and discipleship, and then setting the appropriate goals to help accomplish this mission. The system works like this:

- Identify the needs;
- Target the necessary ministries;
- Define the leadership required;
- Determine the training programs to be developed and instituted.

Pastors of new works must be careful in spotting areas in which the church should be expanding. Further ministries to enhance the outreach of the church as well as training for the purpose of discipling the new converts will be needed. All of the work done initially by the pastor must be shared more and more with the membership as the congregation continues to grow. While once the pastor was the leader of every service, there will be leaders trained to take over some of this responsibility. The same will apply to areas of ministry like outreach, teaching, preaching, Bible studies, home fellowship groups, and various ministries designed for youth, ladies, young marrieds, and so on.

Since it is the will of God that our churches continually experience growth, new ministries will always be needed; therefore new leadership will be needed; and therefore new and continuous training to provide that qualified leadership will be needed. The pastor must be the trainer and equipper in the beginning. As suitable leaders are developed under his ministry, he will be able to turn over some of this responsibility to others that

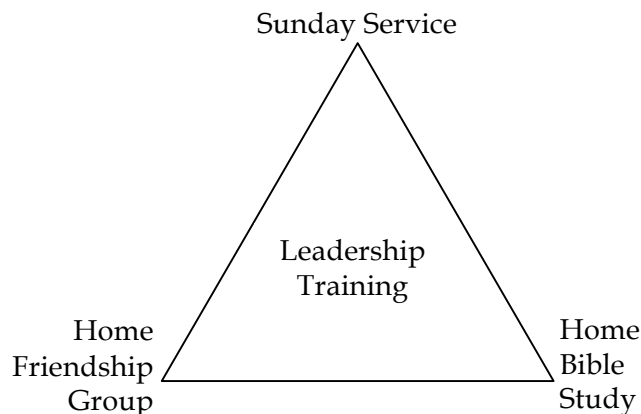
can continue the training programs under the general oversight of the shepherd/pastor.

The pastor will continue being the one ultimately responsible for the progress of the local congregation. If the church is failing in some form of ministry to the community, the pastor must identify the need, outline the proposed ministry necessary to meet the need, target the leadership required, and then provide adequate training for those potential leaders. This was the way of the apostles and should continue to be the method we pursue.

## **The Four Main Ministries of the Local Church**

Generally speaking, all of the specific ministries of a local church fall under one of four main areas:

- The ministry of the church through the Sunday service.
- The ministry through the home fellowship group.
- The ministry through members teaching home Bible studies in the homes of visitors and new converts.
- The training ministry that provides leaders to support the other three. Auxiliary ministries like youth, ladies groups, choir, etc., are useful in establishing converts and reaching out also, but serve in a supporting fashion to the three above. These four main ministries could be represented by the following:



The three corners of the triangle represent the ways through which new converts are brought to a knowledge of the Lord. They are invited to a church service, or participate in a home fellowship group, or perhaps are taught a Bible study by one of the members of the local congregation. Whether the visitor has come through the Sunday service, the fellowship group, or the Bible study, he or she must in turn be introduced to the other

two corner ministries of the local church. That means if a visitor comes on Sunday to the church, he should be directed to the nearest home fellowship group, and also be introduced to someone who will be responsible for teaching a personal Bible study in his home. The same applies for the other two corners. If someone is first contacted through home Bible study, that should lead to a visit to the Sunday service as well as an invitation to participate in the local home fellowship group.

The center of the triangle represents the training programs made available by the local church to further equip the believers in personal ministry skills. It is in the center because the potential leaders trained there are drawn from the three corner ministries. New members with potential identified by the pastor and other leaders will be personally invited to participate in the leadership training available and applicable to their gifts and talents.

After being trained, they will be directed back out to one or more of the corner or auxiliary ministries of the church. This system provides for an ever expanding source of trained leadership that will be necessary in a growing revival church. By ensuring that these four ministries are continually active, the pastor can rest assured that both evangelism and edification will be coexistent in his congregation. New members will be reached, and then they will be trained for ministry and released into the harvest adequately equipped for effective service.

Many church members become frustrated and lack fulfillment in their walk with God because they are not sufficiently equipped by the leaders of the church for personal ministry. The Great Commission applies to us all, every member, in every congregation! We can participate in this mandate corporately through the local church as a whole, but also, and perhaps more important, as individual saints who are trained and equipped for personal labor in the harvest field of the Lord. Someone once said the only ability necessary in the kingdom of God is “avail-ability,” but being available also means being prepared so we can answer the call to responsibility when it comes.

## **Training “Gaps”**

In lesson 8 we saw that the shepherd should be aware of the condition of his sheep. Spotting their potential, their problems, and their spiritual fulfillment is an important part of the shepherd’s responsibility over the flock. Being fulfilled means being involved. But being involved means being prepared to be involved. To expect saints to be effective in the church as good soldiers, good farmers, good spiritual athletes, and vessels of honor is certainly fitting, but to expect these results without preparing them in these areas is faith without works, which is always dead. This kind of thinking

begins in the model church. Every mother church must consider itself as a model to those that will be sent out from it. The model may be a good one, a shining example of faith in action, a church where the believers are trained and energized to the task of evangelism and edification. Or, it may be a model of inefficiency and frustration where even the strongest of saints is puzzled with what to do next and how to go about doing it.

Part of this philosophy must include *careful analysis* of past and present programs and methods in the local congregation as it matures. What works? What is lacking? What are the goals and are they being met? What can and should be done to further these goals? What we should be doing tomorrow begins with understanding where we are today. *Communication* is necessary as well to ensure that the shepherd is “in touch” with the needs of the community and with the members of the congregation.

In his book, *The Indigenous Church*, Melvin Hodges points out five potential gaps in training programs:

1. **The gap between the intellectual development and the spiritual development of the leader.** This occurs when more emphasis is placed on the mind than the spirit of the potential leader. We must be careful to ensure the full qualification of the leader in teaching and example, in leading him or her to more learning, but also leading him to the cross of Jesus Christ.
2. **The gap between knowledge and practical ministry.** Is what we are teaching pertinent to the ministry targeted? Is the training program clearly directed toward a real need that exists in the congregation? Theories will never satisfy the member who hungers to be more useful in the hand of God. Members need to know they can be fruitful. There must be a direct application of what is learned in training to the ministry intended.
3. **The gap between the “clergy” and the “laity.”** This generally results from adopting the traditional view that certain things can be handled only by the “clergy.” Pastors sometimes forget that they too are saints. While it is true that, administratively, pastors will have different responsibilities and therefore different authority than the general membership, it is not to say that we should limit the saints to an ineffective spectator-type status in the church. Rather pastors should be involved in reproducing their burden, their vision, and their ministry in the membership. This not only will add to the church, but will in fact multiply the effectiveness of the shepherd/pastor.

4. **The gap between the training programs offered and the actual need.** We must remember that our ministries are defined by need, and therefore our training of leaders is based upon the expansion of those clearly defined ministries. To qualify leaders for no reason is as useless as having no training ministry when there is abundant need! The two must go hand in hand.

Need=Ministry=Leadership=Training.

5. **The gap between general training programs and training the right people.** Building on sand leads to collapse. Sowing on stony or thorny ground leads to disappointment. Training and appointing “trained” members who are not spiritually qualified also leads to disaster! While anyone may participate in the classes offered by the pastor in his training programs, he should carefully monitor those who are making the proper spiritual advances in order to become fully equipped for service. These will be the members God uses mightily in the local church revival.

## Future Church Planters

By narrowing or completely eliminating these gaps, the pastor is guaranteeing the growth of the church through effective ministry of the membership. This was the pattern established in the early church, and must serve as the pattern for today’s worldwide effort to reach out and plant churches. As members of the local congregation become personally involved in soulwinning, discipleship, and leadership in their churches, the next step for some will be a deep burden to carry the revival outside the boundaries of that congregation. In other words, this is the start of the burden and vision to plant another church! Part of a growing church’s leadership training structure must include training directed toward those prospective church planters of the future.

Proverbs 29:18 tells us, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Providing the vision means providing the training and equipment needed by the saints to carry out the work of the ministry. Paul simply said it this way in Ephesians 4:16: “Under His direction the whole body is fitted together perfectly, and each part in its own special way helps the other parts, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love” (*The Living New Testament*).

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. Summarizes the examples Paul gave in II Timothy 2. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. By what system was Titus appointed? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is the key to developing new leadership? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What must the pastor do if the church is failing in some area of its ministry to the community? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Explain the "Four Ministries of the Local Church" triangle. \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is an important part of the shepherd's responsibility over the flock? \_\_\_\_\_

7. List the five potential gaps in training programs as pointed out by Melvin Hodges.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

- D. \_\_\_\_\_
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

8. What does “Providing the Vision” mean?

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## **Personal Study Notes**



## Lesson Ten

# Administration of the New Work

“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (I Corinthians 4:2).

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).

## FOCUS

In order for the work of the church to be smooth and efficient, everything must be done decently and in order.

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

In Luke 12:42, Jesus asked His disciples, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?” He was challenging His disciples with this question. Who would be faithful to distribute “food” to those in the household of God? The context of the teaching was faithfulness, vigilance, and being prepared for the coming of the Lord at any time. The Lord was concerned with having servants who would demonstrate their readiness for the future by good stewardship in the present.

The apostle Peter stated, “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (I Peter 5:1-2).

It is the will of God that church leaders feed the flock of God with their portion of meat in due season. Sowing seed and planting new churches will produce nothing if not properly administrated. We must be accountable in the revival. Every level of church administration serves to ensure that each level of leadership is properly carrying out its responsibility of the oversight of the body.

## **The Need for Local Church Government**

A congregation consisting of the pastor, his wife, and two saints doesn't need much church government. But healthy churches grow. Accounting for four souls may be easy, but properly overseeing the revival that the Lord wants to have requires careful administration. Therefore, it is imperative that, from the very commencement of the work, the new congregation adopts a form of local church government that is consistent with the objectives of the leadership on the national, regional, and local levels.

Just like the national church, the local congregation must strive to become self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-governing. Remembering that his new church should become a model for future works, the local pastor will seek to provide an adequate structure to accommodate the revival, as well as to ensure that his congregation remains in harmony with the national organization. The national level leadership serves, after all, as a support to the local pastors in realizing the growth of the national church. It is in the local church that the overall revival will take place, not in the national board meeting room. Strong churches will be built upon strong spiritual leadership, strong spiritual principles, and a strong local church government.

Local church administration or government presupposes that there exists a group of believers that share something in common with one another. A form of local church government begins with defining these common attributes:

- ***Doctrine*** is something that church members share in common, and part of governing the church lies in clearly defining that doctrine. Members of a local assembly should know what the church as a whole believes, so they feel a part of something that is unified. Defining doctrine also defines who is and who is not a member of that assembly. Privileges such as voting or holding an office must be based upon being part of the fellowship.
- ***Direction*** is also something that unifies a congregation. Members should know where the church is going under the leadership of the local pastor, and also that they are part of a larger entity (the

national church) that is striving for the same goals as those they are seeking at the local level. Local church government will include the means by which the local congregation can be joined together in fellowship with the other churches in the organization.

- *Delegation* is also defined through the adoption of a local church government. This means outlining the jobs available and the authority and responsibility attached to each job. Each member should understand the role of the various positions of leadership in the local assembly, at the regional level, and also at the national headquarters, as well as the qualifications for holding one of these posts of leadership.
- *Dialogue* is provided for in a form of local church government. Channels of communication and command are clearly defined in the congregation. Members must know what is expected of them, as well as what to expect from the pastor and other leaders of the assembly. Business meetings will be conducted through which the leadership of the assembly is accountable to the congregation. In times of confusion, doubt, or threat, the membership will know how to properly communicate their grievances and concerns. The church government policy also defines the means of communication between the local assembly and the national administration.
- *Discipline* is an important part of the new assembly and is spelled out in the church government. How and when to discipline members or leaders must be clearly defined so that there is no question in the future of the church. This will also provide for a consistent use of disciplinary actions necessary.
- Finally, *demonstration* of the apostolic method is made through the government of the local church. Bishops, pastors, and deacons and deaconesses are all clearly seen in the New Testament church of the Book of Acts. To show the new assembly that we seek not only New Testament methods but New Testament results we should provide for these offices, train the leadership needed to fill these offices, and form a government that uses these offices.

## Obligation to the National Work

From the very first day of a newly planted church, the pastor and membership—however large or small—must know they are tied to a national

organization. They must realize they are part of something big and powerful in the nation that will strive to support the local assembly however necessary and whenever possible. Just as individual members must be able to see where they fit into the congregation, each local church should see how it fits into the national organization of the work.

In II Timothy 2:2 Paul exhorted Timothy, the bishop at Ephesus, to commit the responsibility of propagating the gospel to “faithful men.” Accountability must be at every level of leadership in the church. The local church and its leadership must feel obligated to cooperate with the national direction of the work of God. Part of this cooperation means the free flow of information from the national headquarters to the local church and from the local level back to the national leadership.

Establish a means of regular reporting at the beginning of each new assembly. Reports including monthly progress, income, expenditures, and so on, provide a means by which the national leadership can monitor the growth of the local church. It also provides an important means of accountability for the local leadership. Not being held accountable can easily lead to laziness and even unfaithfulness in directing the local congregation. Lack of accountability breeds division and in some cases rebellion in leadership of the local church.

Real spiritual leadership has nothing to hide and is therefore glad to participate in the reporting system. Lack of this willingness and harmony represents a potential problem with the local pastor. Home missions pastors who receive some kind of support from the national level must certainly feel obligated to account for what they are doing to grow the church. Daughter churches are responsible for reporting the progress of the congregation to the mother assembly.

One common characteristic of spiritual leadership is that of submitting to other leadership. Church government and administrative procedures provide a means through which the local church and its leadership can be in subjection to higher spiritual authority. Just as each of the individual ministries in a local congregation must be working together to promote the overall growth of the church, so also must each individual assembly be working in harmony under the national leadership to realize the comprehensive revival of the national work.

The pastor of a local church feels an intense burden and desire to evangelize his area and expects that leaders within the congregation will assume his vision and help him to carry out what he feels is the mandate of that local assembly. The same is true of the national leadership as they will be expecting that pastors will work together with them as they fulfill the vision of the overall work in the nation. This is part of being in subjection to authority.

The form of local church government that will help to administrate the newly planted congregation will in most cases be supplied by the national organization. This will include a statement of affiliation through which the local assembly can declare itself as part of the national fellowship. While specific details will have to be worked out in each new church, the central portions of the governing policy will remain the same, bringing an administrative unity to the fellowship of churches. Issues such as property, ownership, election of officials, business sessions, and the like will be thoroughly described in the church government procedures that every assembly will follow. The best time to begin this strict adherence to local church government policy is at the very beginning of the assembly. Every potential leader sent out to plant a church should have a thorough understanding of the administration of the church at both the local and national levels.

## **Financing the New Work**

*Self-supporting* is one of the terms used to describe a healthy church, whether on the national or the local level. No matter what kind of financial assistance or support that may be provided to the new assembly in the beginning, it must be clear to all concerned that eventually, the young church will be expected to stand on its own strength. The biblical context of extending one's hand is not that of receiving, but in giving!

The Lord had a perfect plan in mind when He introduced tithing. The tithes of ten working members can easily provide the necessary income of their pastor. Tithes beyond those first ten combined with various offerings will provide for the necessary expansion programs of the church, from that of hall rentals to the actual construction of their own facilities. Each local ministry within the congregation should also seek to become fully self-supporting. The local church, as part of the national church administrative policy, will certainly be expected to cooperate in giving as well.

Depending on the national policy, local churches may tithe of their income to the national work. In some cases, this will mean the pastor's tithe, along with the tithe of church offerings, will be forwarded to the national headquarters for its use in directing the national work. Whether we are considering the ability of a national church to give, or a local church's ability, the central issue is the individual saint's revelation of giving as part of the body of Christ. From the outset, each member should be taught and encouraged to participate in God's clearly defined financial plan within the local church.

David Womack's book *Breaking the Stained Glass Barrier* outlines three secrets to successful financial giving in the church:

- *Members must be taught responsible giving.* By this he means they must give regularly and sufficiently to provide for the needs of the assembly as it grows.
- *Contributions of the members must be put into worthwhile and strategically important projects.* In other words, members should be able to recognize that their giving is having a positive effect on the assembly's progress. They should be able to see the importance of their individual sacrifices.
- *All giving must be accurately recorded and accounted for in reports.* Womack goes on to say, "The effective and honest use of God's money will inspire confidence in the donors and cause a cumulative effect of one believer influencing another until the churches will have all the funds they need for their work."

Local congregations must learn to feel personally responsible for the financial well-being of the assembly. Each member should recognize his or her importance in sacrificial offerings and in tithing, thereby realizing the ultimate plan for the expansion and growth of the assembly lies in the hearts and minds of the membership. To deny this by not teaching and encouraging participation in the financial plan is to rob the members of their blessing in giving. Jesus knew it would always be "more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Members will take a certain spiritual "pride" in the growth of the church if they have individually contributed to that end.

Churches founded upon the giving of others will eventually learn to depend on others for future development. However, congregations that learn early on to give as the Spirit leads will develop sufficient faith that will carry them through to the completion of their God-given task of evangelism. Pastors of these kinds of churches will also be directed to minister to the needs of that congregation, rather than looking to a headquarters to supply their needs. As the new church grows and matures and becomes a "mother church," her daughters will doubtless become giving and self-supporting congregations as well. This is an important part of becoming a model church.

As Melvin Hodges, in his book *The Indigenous Church*, emphasizes the importance of promoting this mindset in new believers:

It is easier to teach a convert his financial obligations to the work of God during the first few weeks after his conversion, than it is to do so after he has been a member of the church for ten years.

He will see no reason why he should begin then, after he has enjoyed the privilege of salvation and membership for so long without it.

Tithes and faith are too closely connected to be neglected. Some pastors of new churches are afraid to emphasize tithing and offerings in the beginning of the work. To avoid this emphasis, however, means to deprive the membership of their important role in proper, biblical stewardship.

## **Effective Ministries**

One of the most important principles pastors can learn is that of “multiplying their ministries.” Without trained personnel to help, one man can pastor only a few people. In the beginning of a new church it may seem that the pastor can carry the entire load of visitation, praying for the sick, all of the teaching and preaching, etc. It soon becomes evident, however, that in order for the church to grow, he will need trained leaders to share the responsibility and authority of pastoring the assembly.

As we learned in lesson 9, need defines church ministries. Then the leadership required to carry out those ministries is targeted, and finally, training programs are instituted to provide the trained leadership necessary. Because the ministry is directed toward an actual need, and a leader has been adequately trained and sent, an “automatic” multiplication of the pastor’s effectiveness occurs. This is a great help in administering the work of the church.

The pastor of a growing church will recognize his need of spending most of his time working with the level of leadership directly below him in the authority structure of the local congregation. The home fellowship group ministry is one of the best examples of a pastor’s ministry touching his saints through the work of the fellowship leaders. By means of regular meetings held with his leaders, the pastor can direct the move of God through specific teaching and ministry in the fellowship groups, and thereby have more of a direct impact on the membership than ever before. He will be receiving feedback from each group through the leaders, and so communication also is better than ever.

It is paramount that a pastor identify those whom the Lord would use in church leadership, train them for specific ministry, and then delegate responsibility and authority to them. In this way, the church, no matter what size, will be more effectively fed and watched over. Equally important, the leadership will be more fulfilled as they see themselves in an active role in the body of Christ, and working with a pastor who knows where the church is going and how it must get there.

## The Pauline Perspective

As the apostle Paul prepared to leave Asia knowing he would never see the saints of Ephesus again, he called for the elders to meet him at Miletus. For three years he had labored abundantly there, building one of the greatest church works the world has ever known. He had recognized the potential there and done his best to see it come to fruition. When the elders gathered before Paul, he reminded them the Lord had warned him of bonds and afflictions that awaited him, and he was headed to Jerusalem, not knowing what might happen to him. Paul continued, “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24). Paul wanted only to finish the course God had laid out for him. He wanted to complete the ministry Jesus had given him by His grace. This is what drove Paul on, day by day, through all of the trials and difficulties. He wanted to do his part in overseeing the revival of the first century.

Perhaps in this passage in Acts 20:24 we see one of the most important elements of administration—burden. Paul cared. He had experienced a life-changing conversion on the road to Damascus in the ninth chapter of Acts, and would never be the same afterward. To Timothy he wrote, “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (II Timothy 4:6-8).

Paul took part in building the revival throughout the ancient world, but he did more than just build. He gave us a pattern for continued New Testament revival today. He reminded us that it is not enough to see results in evangelism. We must continue to train leaders, to pass the vision on to others that will continue after we have finished the course.

Jesus told His disciples in John 15:16, “I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.” Through properly administering the move of God, by being good stewards of the grace of God, we can ensure that our fruit remains.

Someone once said that there is no success without a successor. Barnabas trained Paul and gave him valuable experience. Paul trained Timothy and Titus and released them into God’s harvest. Are we training? Are we passing on the vision and the burden? Are we ensuring that the fruit



that Jesus is giving us now, and what he wants so desperately to give us tomorrow will remain?

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. Finish this sentence: “Every level of church administration serves . . .

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2. Paul exhorted Timothy to do what in II Timothy 2:2? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What happens with the lack of accountability? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Give one term describing a healthy church. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What are the three secrets to successful financial giving in the church?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

6. What two things are too closely connected to be neglected?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is meant by “multiplying their ministries”? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What is one of the most important elements of administration? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Missionary Spotlight: Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Reed

By Kenneth Reed

I grew up on a farm in Central Illinois. Our family was always very faithful in attending church. When I was thirteen, I received the Holy Ghost at the Illinois District campground in Murphysboro. I began to feel a call to the ministry, especially as a foreign missionary. When I finished high school, my pastor urged me to attend Apostolic Bible Institute in St. Paul, Minnesota. After graduation I worked for a few months in the St. Paul church and Bible school before returning to my home church to become the assistant pastor.



Shelba Pardue, who had lived with her missionary parents in Indonesia and had served as a “junior missionary” in that country, graduated with me from Bible school. Several months after graduation, we were married. For twenty-four years we pastored churches in Sullivan and Champaign, Illinois, and then in Sheridan, Wyoming. Over those years, we felt a concern and a burden for the work in Indonesia. We applied to go to Indonesia in 1979, but were not accepted. We applied again and received our missionary appointment at the Salt Lake City General Conference in 1988.

We began deputation in April 1989. In August 1989 the general director of Foreign Missions, Harry Scism, recommended we attend the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Pentecostal Church in Indonesia. It was an interesting time of adjustment for me. Everything seemed so strange. I was rather anxious for our safety and wellbeing and then Shelba got deathly sick because of something she ate.

At the end of our stay, missionary Rodger White took us to the airport for departure. We learned sadly I had misread the travel itinerary and that our scheduled Garuda flight had left the previous day. We had to buy completely new tickets and take a different route through Singapore to San Francisco and on to Cincinnati, Ohio.

This was an expense we had not anticipated, and our funds were depleted. We were too embarrassed to tell anyone when we arrived back in the States, or to ask Foreign Missions to cover our return trip. Brother Billy Cole met us at the airport. Even though we said nothing of our financial difficulty, he paid for our motel, filled our tank with gas, and treated us to a Japanese dinner. In the days that followed, money came to us from some other unexpected sources. This greatly helped us to continue deputation and taught us a lesson of faith. We were convinced that God was validating our call again through this unexpected financial help.

Toward the end of our deputation Shelba developed a serious health problem and had to have her left lung removed. Again our call was tested. Against her doctor's recommendation we felt God directing us to fulfill our call. In the twenty-two years since that surgery Shelba's right lung has served her well.

We finished deputation, but our visas to Indonesia still had not arrived although we had applied several months earlier. Brother Scism felt it would help us become better acclimated to living overseas if we would go to Manila, Philippines, while we waited. It was a great experience. We taught in the Bible school and in several seminars and conferences. After six months in the Philippines, nearly a year and a half after our original application, our Indonesian visas were approved, and we were on our way to the land of our calling.

Language school was located in Bandung, West Java. The Indonesian language had changed considerably since the time Shelba had lived there with her parents, so the language study was an update for her. For me, everything was rather difficult, but I gradually learned to speak the language pretty well. During that time we ministered in the church in Bandung and made trips to Jakarta by train to minister in the International Church.

After we finished our language study, we moved to Jakarta, bought a vehicle, and rented a house. We ministered in the International Church and started a Bible school. The second floor of the house had a very spacious, open room that was perfect for a Bible school classes.

We made several trips to teach seminars and attend planning meetings throughout the country. On one trip we visited many churches among the Batak tribe. They live in the mountainous parts of northern Sumatra. Although Indonesia is the world's largest Islamic nation, the Batak tribe is predominantly Christian. In 1953, Shelba's father brought the oneness message to them. The UPC is very strong in this area.

In the village of Tapan Nauli II, they had built their church high on a hill. The sight of the faithful, dressed in their Sunday's best and carrying lanterns up the winding road to the church was very picturesque. God moved mightily that night. The building could not hold the crowd.

Although the chief was of a different denomination, he sent word we should hold service in the village square so there would be room for everyone to attend. The next night the villagers came from every direction, wrapped in blankets because of the cool mountain air. There was plenty of seating, for the ground was covered with mats.

A cold drizzle of rain started just as I began to preach. We supposed that everyone would run for shelter, but no one moved. At the end of my message, it was still raining, but we called for prayer. They came forward to pray earnestly. After dismissal, although the rain had not let up, they stood in line for a very long time to shake our hands and express gratitude that we had come to minister to them. It was a humbling experience.

The next morning as we were leaving, a couple came to make a presentation. The wife was carrying a chicken that she gave to Shelba. She said they wanted to show their appreciation but had nothing else of value to give us. As the lady talked, tears flowed down her cheeks and her voice was broken by sobs. She said when she saw us at the square the night before, she realized we were the ones she had seen a few weeks previously in a dream.

They put the chicken into a sack and placed it under Shelba's seat in the van. At the next village the pastor's wife took charge of the chicken and we had chicken soup for the evening meal.

At the end of our third year in Indonesia, the government informed us that our visas would be extended for only one more year, so we started making plans to transfer to another field. We were sad to leave Indonesia but felt our work was finished there. God can even use immigration officers to give direction by denying a visa. We believe that we were able to strengthen the doctrinal stand of the UPC of Indonesia and to help to heal hurts that had existed for several years.



Shelba Reed telling a missionary story at the 2012 Veterans of Global Mission Retreat.

We transferred to Hamilton, New Zealand, where we started a church in a storefront building. While we renovated the building, we did prayer walks and distributed flyers in the neighborhood. We began with child evangelism and soon added services for adults. Missionaries Roscoe and Mary Seay followed us when we returned to the States for deputation. We were thrilled when the Seays told us that a family we had worked with for some time had been baptized, received the Holy Ghost, and got married. They had lived together fifteen years and had three wonderful sons. Years later, one son felt a call to the ministry and studied in Bible school. We were thankful that we were able to plant the seed of the gospel in that area.

The general director of Foreign Missions, Brother Harry Scism, asked us to go to Fiji. We had been in Fiji a few months when I became seriously ill. I was air lifted to New Zealand for surgery. When we returned to Fiji, the country had experienced a coup. We became accustomed to the curfews that were imposed on the country and adjusted to going through military check points when in the city of Suva.

When missionary superintendent Richard and Margaret Carver decided to relocate to Australia, we were left in charge of the work. During that time we mentored the national ministers and saw the work unified. We taught in the Bible school and ministered at many of the district conferences. It was a time of revival and miracles. Many people found the Lord, were baptized, and received the Holy Ghost.

We worked at finishing the Bible school building, a massive structure that had been under construction for years. The dedication of the facility was a momentous occasion. Out-of-country visitors were already en route when another coup occurred. The coup perpetrators permitted us to continue with the dedication and annual general conference. Our guests decided to brave the coup. We were so honored by the presence of our General Director of Global Missions Bruce and Dianne Howell, Regional Director Richard and Coral Denny, Area Coordinator Benny and Pat Blunt, and Lee Sherry, missionary superintendent of Vanuatu.

The dedication took place during Fiji's Thirty-first General Conference. Brother Howell and Brother Denny both ministered so powerfully. During the Sunday school program, Brother Lee Sherry ministered and fifteen children were filled with the Holy Ghost. During the conference thirty-nine souls were filled with the Holy Ghost and twenty-six were baptized.

For many years the Fijians desired to have their own leadership instead of a foreign superintendent. With the agreement of the Foreign Mission Division, we began mentoring national leaders and preparing them for the transition. At the 2008 Fiji General Conference, the ministers unanimously chose

Reverend Timoci Nadavo as national superintendent. The unity displayed throughout the conference was beautiful. The work is still strong, progressing, and seeing revival. The Bible school still graduates a class every year.

After twenty years in foreign missions, we decided to retire. We are making our home in Casper, Wyoming. We continue to pray for our missionaries. From time to time we minister in various churches and enjoy visiting our children and grandchildren. We have many great memories of our work in the countries of the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Fiji.