

DR DIRK H

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

**A
PRACTICAL
GUIDE TO
BECOMING
A WORLD
CHANGER**

**BOOK - 10
LEVEL
LEADER**

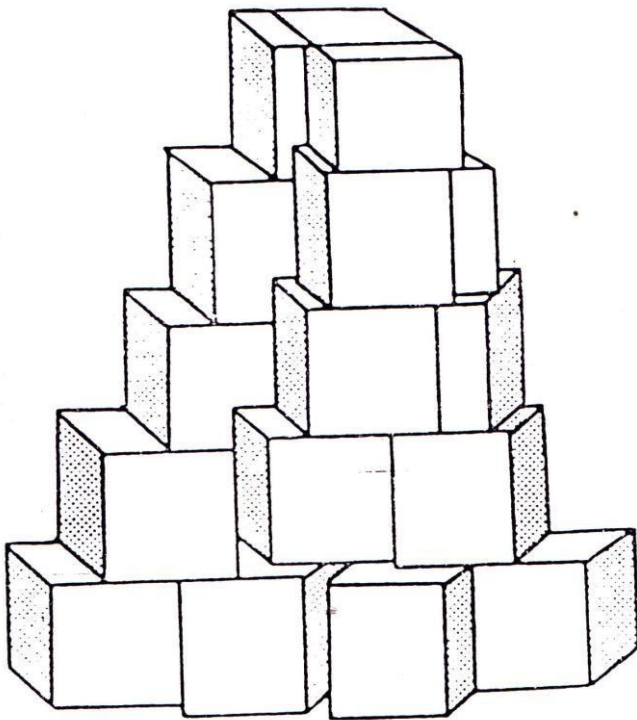
ENGLISH



Level:

LEADER

Study book no: 10



LEVELS:

5. Minister

4. **Leader**

3. Group or cell leader

2. Disciple

1. Beginner

Bible Study Course to grow to spiritual maturity making every believer in Christ a minister and to increase in effective and efficient ministry!!!

Easy to use for self-study as well as to teach others!!!

MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

PURPOSE:

TO KNOW HIM, THE ONLY TRUE GOD

(Growing / Maturing)

Josh. 1 : 8, "This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success."

II Pet. 3 : 18, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

II Tim. 1 : 15, "Study to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

Col. 1 : 27b - 28, "Christ in you, the hope of glory, Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ."

AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN TO OTHERS!

(Multiplying / Reproducing)

II Tim. 2 : 2, "And what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

II Tim. 3 : 16 - 17, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

Eph. 2 : 10, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

II Pet. 1 : 8, "For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

PRINCIPLE: "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things!" (Rom. 11 : 36)

(INCREASING IN KNOWLEDGE; MATURING IN CHARACTER; USING SPIRITUAL GIFTS)

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IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH PLANTING

Church planting begins with Evangelism:

Evangelism is central to Church planting and this is the Christian mission. True church planting has a three-fold responsibility:

- Evangelism,
- Social service,
- And social action.

Evangelism involves church planting and church growth based on human spiritual need. Social service involves relief and development activities based on human dignity. Social action involves political, social and economic activities based on human justice. These three responsibilities all make up God's mission and the heart of the Father as He worked through Jesus. "For the gospel is the root, of which both evangelism and social responsibility are the fruits."

Mission needs to be defined in the context of evangelism and social responsibility and can be described as: "Mission is our human response to the divine Commission. It is a whole Christian lifestyle, including both evangelism and social responsibility, dominated by the conviction that Christ sends us out into the world..."

Evangelism always must result in Church Planting:

The goal of evangelism as given by our Lord Jesus Christ is to make disciples of all nations as recorded in Matt. 28:18-20. The goal of evangelism is not just to preach the Gospel, but to persuade the hearers to follow Christ as disciples in the fellowship of a local church.

In making disciples we can trace at least five different stages in a person's life and they are:

- The initial decision to be a follower of Christ.
- Identification by water baptism (open confession and public witness).
- Joining in and commitment to a local church.
- Being discipled systematically.
- By becoming involved as a responsible member in witness and service to the local church and to the society at large.

Evangelism must result in Church growth:

The goal of evangelism is to win people to Christ and to make disciples of all nations according to His Great Commission. This results in the forming of worshipping groups or new congregations, so those new believers may interact with one another in worship, prayer, Bible study, and witnessing. As a result of this, not only do older congregations grow but they also form new congregations in other cities, towns and villages. Thus the churches grow and are multiplied through evangelism. It can be said, therefore, that all effective evangelism results in church planting – and in church growth.

The true definition of "Church growth" means not only:

- a growth in the number of believers and in the multiplication of churches,
- but also: - in the spiritual growth of believers,
- organizational growth of churches,
- and the church must become self sufficient in every way.

Any healthy church must have growth in these and other areas. Adequate attention should be equally given to all areas of g

Reasons as to why many churches do not get involved in church planting?

- Misunderstanding the true nature of Church Planting ministry.
- Misunderstanding the goals and effects of evangelism.

Misplaced priority in mission.

Misinterpreting the motives of receptive people and people groups.

Misgivings about bringing in a new move of the Holy Spirit into the Church.

Biblical basis for Church Planting

The Church Planting concept is part of God's plan for the world. It is part of the personal mission of our Lord "to seek and to save" for which God sent Jesus. It is based on direct statements of our Lord as well as His teachings through the parables.

It is based on the Biblical mission of the Father's heart.

'Mission' describes rather everything the church is sent into the world to do. "When the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son." (Gal. 4:4-6). God's revelation in Christ shows us that God Himself is a searching and a saving God; He wants men to be reconciled to Himself. Now the Son sends the Church as He Himself was sent by the Father, as we read in John 20:21. "As the Father has sent Me, even so send I you."

Our understanding of mission must be based on the understanding of the mission of God in Christ. Jesus was sent "to seek and to save" (Luke 19:10).

It is based on the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus used the illustration of a harvest field to emphasize the urgency of winning responsive people and bringing them to into the fold of the Church. He instructed His disciples to pray for more labourers to be sent to the harvest field (Matt. 9:37). When the harvest is ready, the grain should be cut, bound into sheaves and carried to the storehouse. In the same way when a group of people respond to the Gospel they have to be taught, baptized and brought into the fellowship of the local church.

The parables of the "lost sheep" and "lost coin" teach that it is not enough to search for the lost sheep or the lost coin; it is necessary that they be found and brought into the house or the fold. The task of evangelism is complete only when people are brought into the fold of the church (Luke 15:1-10). In the parable of the Great Banquet, when the invited people would not come, the master commanded the servant to "go out in the highways and byways and compel people to come in" (Luke 14:23). It is not enough to invite people, it is also important to see that they partake in the feast. When one group of people does not respond to the gospel's invitation, another group must be sought which does respond and can be brought to the spiritual feast. Thus Jesus' teachings are clear on the need for bringing people into the Christian fold and for planting churches.

It is based on the Great Commission.

The principles of church planting are based on the Great Commission as we read in Matt. 28:19-20. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you..." What did Jesus mean when He commissioned the disciples to go and make disciples of all nations? There are four important words found in the Great Commission. They are:

"go,"

"make disciples,"

"baptize" and

"teach"

It is generally assumed that the word "go" is an imperative verb and constitutes the last command of Christ. This is not correct in the original Greek language, "to make disciples" is the central imperative or action verb and not the word "go". All the other words are helping verbs. The word "go" is a participle which should be translated as "having gone" or "as you go" and, therefore, rather than a command, it is the method by which disciples are to be made. In the Greek only one word is used for "make disciples" and it should be translated "disciple" with reference to the nations. The act of making disciples was not confined to Israel or to Jerusalem, but was to extend to "all nations –i.e. – all people groups."

The Great Commission commands believers to bring men and women to Christ and to make them responsible and reproducing members of the local church. This is how to “make disciples of all nations.” The evangelistic task is incomplete unless it relates new believers to the local worship group. The Church Planting ministry reflects the believers’ faithfulness and obedience to the Great Commission of their Lord.

It is based on God’s plan for building the Church.

In Matthew 16:18, the Lord has promised that He will build His Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. He chose the apostle Peter to be part of the “foundation of apostles and prophets” because of his confession of faith in Jesus “the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” (Matt. 16:16). This confession was based on God’s revelation of Christ to the disciples. Peter also had his personal and first-hand knowledge and was an eyewitness of the risen Christ. In his sermon in the first chapter of Acts, Peter refers to this: “We are witnesses of these things.” Confession of faith and personal witness of Christ were the unique factors that made the apostles the “foundation,” upon which the Lord was building His Church.

In Ephesians 2:19-21, Paul says: “...but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the Chief Cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord.”

From the above two passages of Scripture it can be seen that, in the eternal plan of God for building the Church, He had chosen the “apostles” and “prophets” as the foundation. Through their confession of faith, witness and teaching gift, they fulfilled the unique function of planting new churches, thus building the Church of God. This is seen in the lives and ministry of Peter and Paul and the other apostles. Today God is building His Church through the “confessing disciples” of modern missionaries and evangelists. It is our privilege to be part of His plan in building His Church in the world.

It is based on the apostolic gift and function.

For the purpose of building the Church, the Holy Spirit has given gifts to its members. We read in 1 Cor. 12: 28, “And God has appointed in the Church first apostles. Second prophets, third teachers...” Thus we see the Holy Spirit has given the gift of apostle-ship to the Church. Their primary apostolic function is to go and proclaim the Gospel and plant churches on new ground. Peter and Paul are good examples. In 1 Corinthians 3:6, Paul clearly brings out his apostolic function of planting churches. He says: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.” This apostolic gift is something unique for the function of new churches. Paul was leading a church planting team, visiting different towns and establishing churches. After planting churches he appointed local leaders and moved on to new places. Thus the apostolic function was not to retain the responsibilities for and authority over the churches, but to deliver them to other local leadership and move on to plant new churches. Even today the Lord calls and separates certain people, giving them the apostolic gift for planting churches on new soil.

It is based on God’s initiative.

God causes the Church to grow, both numerically and spiritually. In 1 Corinthians 3: 5-8, Paul clearly brings out the truth that it is God who gives growth to the Church and that He uses people as His instruments for the fulfillment of His plan. “What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are equal, and each shall receive his wages according to his labor.”

It is truly God who gives the growth to the Church. This mystery is seen on the mission field, when certain groups respond to the Gospel and other groups do not. God, in His sovereign will and in His own time, leads certain groups to respond to the Gospel because it is He who initiates the growth of His Church. He uses ‘sent’ men as His instruments to fulfill His purpose. This is clear in the expansion of the Early Church in the Book of Acts. We read in Acts 2: 47, that, “The Lord

It is based on the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian mission of church planting is not a human enterprise, but it is a divine operation, directed and controlled by the Holy Spirit. The clearest example is found in the Acts 13, where the direction and control of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated in the Church at Antioch. "While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said: set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them...So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia ...to Cyprus." (Acts 13:2-4). These missionaries (apostles) were a first church planting team sent out by the Holy Spirit. Later on their missionary journey, the Holy Spirit used them to "make disciples" and to "plant churches" in different towns (Acts 13:52; 14:22). The direction and control of the Holy Spirit is clearly seen in the ministry of the evangelist Philip (Acts 8). The Holy Spirit was actively involved in the selection and sending of men and in using them for planting churches.

The missionary or the evangelist should live in conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit. No amount of study, training and experience would substitute for the power of the Holy Spirit.

Applied Principles for Church Planting

These are Biblical, because church planting is basically God's work; it is based on God's grace. All our human efforts will be futile if His grace is not operating. Therefore we have to follow the Biblical principles for effective church planting. However, there is another side to this truth. Even though church planting is basically God's work, yet it is man's response to God's saving grace. God uses human efforts; pastors, missionaries and evangelists are needed, we have to understand the local people and their cultural context; to study the anthropological factors and to follow certain methods of approach. Thus church planting is a joint effort of God and man, and so there is the need for studying Biblical as well as anthropological principles.

Make it a priority task to win Non-Christians

You must constantly keep in mind the primary task of winning non-Christians or unbelievers for Christ. There is always the temptation to engage in reviving the local church instead of evangelizing non-Christians. Such temptations should be carefully avoided. Certainly you have a responsibility towards the local church from which you are sent to evangelize the non-Christians. But that local church is not your primary responsibility. You must keep your contact with the local church for spiritual encouragement and fellowship and should contribute towards its spiritual edification. There are many important and urgent responsibilities to attract your attention on the mission field, e.g. adult literacy, social and development projects, educational and medical work. If a person has a call for a specialized ministry he should pursue such work because social concern is part of God's mission. But when a person comes with a specific call and burden for evangelism and church planting, his interest should not be diverted to other work.

Again even those who are involved in social and developmental work in church planting areas should have evangelism as part of their goal and their work should enhance the church growth. Another danger to be avoided is the tendency to become involved in supervision and administrative work to the neglect of spiritual nurture, training local leadership and all other ministries necessary for forming new congregations. The church planter must be released to plant churches. As part of his church planting ministry he must train people to be reproducing Christians who will work with him in planting new churches. In other words, missionaries engaged in church planting should not allow themselves to be sidetracked!

Seek and find the responsive people or people groups

God in His sovereign will has a definite time for each person, people group, tribe, community and nation to respond to His Gospel. The Lord exhorted the disciples to see how the fields were already "white for harvest" (John 4:35). Jesus was referring to the responsive hearts of the Samaritan people. Today the missionary must be on the look out for such responsive hearts which are "white for harvest." The Lord also said that, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44). This speaks of God's appointed time for each person to respond to His

call. A field survey of un-reached responsive people groups should be undertaken before beginning church planning efforts. Such a survey should include the culture, customs, language of the people as well as the different categories mentioned above.

Concentrate on the responsive

It is not enough to locate responsive people, but to concentrate your efforts to bringing them into the Christian faith. This is because we have no way of knowing how long their receptiveness will last. They are like fields that are “white for harvest” and we have to reap them before the grain spoils from being overripe. There is a tendency on the mission field for us to be involved in too many activities at the neglect of reaching the un-reached. Different activities may be necessary but they should complement the primary task of evangelism and church planting and not divert time, energy, talents and finances from it. Every effort should be made to bring responsive people into the Christian fold before it is too late.

The “hit-an-run” strategy will not help plant churches in rural areas of most nations. It requires a long-term plan and it must aim at reaching the whole community of people. Maybe God would call you to live among the people and identify with them in their everyday life. Living with the people will help you to win their confidence and the communication of the Gospel will be easier.

Concentrated effort is essential to a church planting ministry because it is not an easy job; it requires talented people who can learn new languages; who can make several adjustments to a new culture; who can work hard and are willing to walk, cycle, climb mountains, and who can maintain good health despite difficult conditions. Because all these qualities and abilities may not be found in one person, a team of workers is required. A church planting ministry may also require concentration of finance for adequate support for field personnel, equipment and field programs.

Maintain a witness among the resistant

Often missionaries and evangelists ask, “What shall we do with the resistant people? Shall we abandon them? Are we not responsible to preach the Gospel to them?” Yes, we are responsible for all un-reached people and therefore, there is no need for completely giving up and closing mission fields. Sometimes we may have to change the mission fields from one town to another town in the same district or among the same people group. But top priority must be given to the responsive areas while continuing sowing seed in the resistant one. Witness must be maintained in the resistant area hoping and expecting to see God’s time for them to respond to the Gospel as well. (Is. 55: 10-11).

Make an effort for family or group decisions

In some Eastern nations groups of people living in “joint families” and “extended families” is still quite common. “Group decisions” are part of their group process. Tribal and caste societies are traditionally family and group oriented. So when involved in church planting, the missionary or the evangelist must expect people as “families” and “joint families” and as “groups” and even as “villages” to collectively decide to accept Christ.

The Western pattern of individual decision-making is often not appropriate and effective in these countries, especially in country-sides dotted with villages and among the tribal people. However, this does not mean that we should neglect individuals when they respond to the Gospel. While accepting the individuals we have to encourage them to bring their relatives and friends along side of them as well.

Expect and aim at a balanced numerical church growth

Before anyone becomes involved in a church planting ministry, he must be sure that he believes in numerical church growth. It is God’s will as stated in 1 Timothy 2:3-4: “...God our Saviour who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. It is also the growth pattern of the church in the New Testament. You must believe and expect people to turn –as families, groups, as entire villages, or even as whole tribes – to the Christian faith at a time or over a period of time. You should not feel that the church would be weakened in its spirituality by gathering large number of people into it. For this is not true. Nor should you doubt the motives of the people

when they express their desire to embrace the Christian faith as a group. Jesus was not only interested in individuals who came to Him (like Nicodemus and the rich young ruler), but He was also concerned about the crowds of people. “When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd...the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.” Matt. 9:36-38). The Lord of the Harvest is interested in people turning in large number; in His sight they are not merely numbers but precious people for whom He died. The missionary should not be satisfied with a few individuals responding, but rather expect and try to bring the whole family, joint families, groups and communities to the Lord. This is how churches can be multiplied to enhance church growth.

Numerical growth is neither opposed to nor achieved at the expenses of spiritual growth. But it is the result and the proof of it. In fact, there cannot be spiritual growth without growth in numbers. Both are necessary for a healthy church. The church must grow both spiritually and numerically.

Begin immediate and effective discipling

An immediate and effective discipling is important. The aim of evangelism is not lukewarm Christians, but lively and reproducing believers. Regular and systematic Bible teaching according to the intellectual level of new believers should be given for six months to one year. In baptism, these new believers have made an initial commitment which should not be considered as the end but the beginning of Christian experience. They must be taught Biblical truths leading to a deeper commitment to the Lord. Proper pastoral care must be arranged for new believers to have regular worship, prayer. Bible study, retreats and conventions are sound investments towards a stable indigenous church.

Encourage new Believers to become part of a House Church and a Celebration Centre as soon as possible

There is so much taught about House-Churches these days, and no doubt house-churches have some of the strongest relationships with them. New believers will find strength and encouragement in these places. Sundays are good to get these new believers together and come under a local leadership.

Give top priority for training local leadership

There are two kinds of leadership to be trained and developed from local congregations. One is full-time and supported, and the other is part-time and voluntary leadership.

The local church should decide matters concerning its leadership, such as the number of leaders it needs, the levels of leadership and the leaders' qualifications (all according to Biblical guidelines). The leadership development must occur in and through the local church. The Church elders must be men of maturity both in handling the Word and in experience, and they must be accepted and recognized by the members of the local congregations. Preferably, they should be able to read and write, and if they are not literate, such elders can be included in the adult literacy classes. Systematic Bible teaching must become a norm in the local church.

A careful selection should be made before sending them for long-term Bible training. Before a final selection, they can be sent to some short-term Bible camps where the missionary can judge their standard of faith, commitment to serve the Lord, ability, and desire to learn and be trained. The leadership should train these new believers as God's servants through a close association with them both in life and in ministry. New leaders learn more from the life and ministry of the leadership than from books and the classroom.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH - ORGANIZATION AND PRACTICE

The New Testament Church had a Distinct Identity – (Acts 2:41; 1 Pet 2:9).

The New Testament Church was a covenanted community which had an identity distinct from the society in the midst of which it existed.

Those outside had to make a definite entrance into this Church community.

It was not merely some kind of social or religious club which one could join at will and leave at will.

One had to be truly converted and water baptized one could become part of this community.

Therefore, one belonged to this Church community, having been called out from the world were now joined to this “royal priesthood, the holy nation, and people belonging to God...”

The New Testament Church Devoted itself To The Apostles Doctrine – (Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:20).

Teachings were given to the new believers as soon as they joined the Church.

There was a definite basis for the truth that was taught as the “Apostle’s Doctrine”.

For us now the written, inspired Word of God, consisting of the prophetic writings (Old Testament) and apostolic records (New Testament) form the only reliable basis of truth.

The apostles personally taught them (God has appointed teaching ministries to instruct the Church in the ways of God).

The New Testament Experienced True Fellowship – (Acts 2:42, 44-46).

It was not only conscious of its relationship to the Lord, but was also aware of the fact that as the Body of Christ it shared the common life of the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual fellowship overlapped into very practical sharing of meals, homes and possessions.

The members met together as often as they could in order to encourage and build each other up.

The New Testament Church Functioned Under Delegated Spiritual Authority – (Eph. 4:11; Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:5).

There were different Offices – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Elders (Bishops), Deacons/Deaconesses.

The New Testament Church was A Worshipping Community – (Acts 13:2; Eph. 5:19-20; Heb. 13:16)

Worship and praise sprang up spontaneously as members experience the goodness of the Lord in their lives.

The New Testament Church Was A Praying Community – (Acts 2:42; 4:24-31).

The members met together for prayer regularly and they prayed about everything. They knew what it meant to pray without ceasing (1 Thes. 5:17). When they prayed, things happened (Acts 4:31; 12:12-14; 16:25-26).

The New Testament Church Regularly Experienced Demonstration Of The Spirit's Power – (Acts 2:43; 1 Cor. 2:4, 14, 24-25).

There was a constant evidence of the living Lord as He confirmed the ministry and word of the Church with miraculous signs following.

The New Testament Church Was A Witnessing and Growing Community – (Acts 2:47; 4:4).

It truly existed to “show forth praises” of the One who called it “out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9). Its witness always created an impact resulting in Church growth.

The New Testament Church Regulated ‘Church Practice’ And Exercised Discipline. (Matt. 18:17; Acts 15:22-29; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:13; 3 John 10)

The New Testament Church Had Regular Appointed Time For Service.

The “Lord's Day” became the day of the resurrection, the first day of the week, instead of the usual Jewish Sabbath day (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10).

The New Testament Church Raised Money For The Work Of The Lord – (Rom. 15:25-28; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 7-9).

The New Testament Church Had a Regular Program To Help The Needy – (Acts 2:25; 4:34-35; 6:1).

The New Testament Church Was A Community With A Missionary Vision – (Acts 8:4, 40; Acts Ch. 13 – 14; 15:36; 21:15).

The New Testament was committed to a Church-planting ministry that was to reach every part of the then known world within a few years.

LEARNING FROM PAUL’S MODEL OF CHURCH PLANTING

Paul, as the apostle of the Gentiles or Non-Jews (cf. Galatians 2:2), is our New Testament pattern to follow in terms of planting new churches. His missionary journeys and letters are excellent guidelines to follow in this respect. He basically follows the same pattern during each missionary journey.

Paul had a Base to work from – The Church at Antioch.

He leaves with a team of fellow-workers, and time and time again returns to the place where the Holy Spirit separated and sent Barnabas and him out – Antioch in Syria. (This is the place where the disciples were called Christians for the first time – and they were Gentiles and not Jews!) Antioch became Paul’s base, and it was there that he reported back to the local Christians the results of his missionary journey. He spent time building up and strengthening the disciples there. We must keep in mind that his journeys respectively lasted between two to three years! However, each missionary journey consisted of various outreaches.

Already during his first missionary journey Paul returned to the cities where he had made new believers and disciples (cf. Acts 14:21). It is clear that he instructed them in the Word of God shortly after their salvation.

Paul Followed Up Evangelism – Appointed Elders

Before his second visit to them we read in v.22 that Paul was “strengthening the disciples and urging them to remain true to the faith.” The Greek meaning of being spiritually strengthened is “to give something to lean on, to confirm or to strengthen.” After this, Paul appointed elders in each congregation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and after prayer and fasting committed them to the Lord (cf. Acts 14:23).

Paul returned to these areas during his second and third missionary journeys. “Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the Word of the Lord and see how they are doing.” (Acts 15:36). Thus he visited the Corinthians up to three times (cf. II Corinthians 12:14 and

Corinthians 13:1) and in between he sent his fellow-workers Timothy, Titus and others to carry on with the work. (Cf. I Corinthians 3:6; I Corinthians 4:16-17; II Corinthians 1:19; II Corinthians 12:17-18 and II Timothy 4:10-13). By this “...the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.” (Acts 16:5).

The time Paul spent in follow-up work in each place varied from a few days to three months and sometimes as long as 18 months. They stayed three years in Ephesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to teach the Word of God to the disciples and to preach it to the Gentiles in the surrounding areas.

Let us adapt Paul’s various methods and use them in our ministries!

SENT OUT FROM A BASE

The Holy Spirit sets you apart out of a fellowship or church and sends you to the mission field. Sometimes you are sent as an independent ministry and Christians from many churches will contribute towards your ministry as it grows. You go out from your base on outreaches to the places God has called and separated you to. The Holy Spirit will show you the timing and length of each outreach. “...and the wise in heart will know the proper time and procedure. For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter...” (Eccl. 8:5b- 6a).

FOLLOW UP / TEACH / MAKE DISCIPLES

After each outreach the new believers must be instructed in the Word of God and their faith strengthened and established. If the departure to the next area of evangelization has to take place immediately, a return visit to the new believers must be arranged shortly afterwards. Either you or some of your fellow-workers who are called by God to pastor can stay behind to feed and care for the new-born lambs: “As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow – worker among you.” (II Corinthians 8:23a). See also II Corinthians 12:17-18; I Thessalonians 3:1-2 and II Tim. 4:9-13.

Between outreaches you return to the base and report back to the local church that sent you out. If you are an independent ministry, you can inform the different believers and fellowships that support you “how the Gentiles have been concerted” and “report “everything God had done through you” (Acts 15:3- 4).

After this you must return to the places of outreach to set in order the churches you started. Be on the lookout for members with leadership qualities. In God’s timing and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, ordain elders in each church. This you do after prayer and fasting and with the laying on of hands – (cf. Acts 14:23). By this time the elders should have been recognized as leaders by most of the members. “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (II Tim. 2:2). Paul's way of life and teachings served as a basis for leaders and other disciples to follow: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.” (Acts 20:18 – 21).

We must teach our fellow-workers and potential leaders as Paul did – cf. II Timothy 2:2. “Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the Kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. . . . Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:25-27, 31). From v. 31 we can see that it was no easy task: lots of heartache and frustrations were involved in the training of spiritual leaders. And this is not all! In spite of the fact that the leaders were chosen and separated unto service under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Paul warns that savage wolves will come in amongst the flock – even some from among those very leaders (cf. 20:28-30)!

Jesus, our Chief Apostle, experienced this heartbreak also. He also had a Judas Iscariot among His apostles. And He carefully chose them after a night of separation unto prayer. So be prepared for disappointments in raising up leaders.

TWENTY-ONE APOSTOLIC PRINCIPLES FOR CHURCH PLANTING

“For I gave them the words You gave Me, and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from You, and they believed that You sent Me.” (John 17:8).

Patience and power are the signs of an apostle. Signs, wonders and miracles with patience (perseverance) were the evidence of apostolic ministry (II Corinthians 12:12). Watchman Nee, the great apostle of China, said, “When everyone else has fallen down because of opposition or discouragement, the apostle will still be standing.”

This is indispensable in church planting. Paul wrote, “I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done – by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way round to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the Gospel of Christ.” (Rom. 15:18- 19). This is furthermore confirmed in Acts 2:43; 5:12.

Making disciples through follow-up work is the Biblical method for the maintenance, safe-keeping, maturity and multiplication of the new believers from evangelism. To accomplish this and make the new believers true disciples of Jesus, there is a lot to teach them. It is your way of life as a follower of Jesus that will make the biggest impact on them. Therefore your way of life should be a demonstration of your teaching. “You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, suffering...” (II Tim. 3:10- 11a; I Cor. 4:16- 17). “Therefore I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.” (See Acts 20:18- 19 and I Corinthians 11:1).

Teach the new believers the meaning of baptism in water. Immediately after his conversion Paul was baptized in water (Acts 9:18). By doing this, he was following Peter's command in the first Gospel message after Jesus' ascension: "When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' "Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 2:37- 38). Paul explains the meaning of this baptism in Romans 6 and we in turn must teach the new believers the importance and meaning of water baptism.

From Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15- 16 it is clear that conversion and baptism in water is closely related. Water baptism symbolizes what happened at your salvation. Your old "sin-nature" was crucified when Jesus died on the cross for us. Baptism in water is a triumphant declaration to Satan and his authorities and powers that their grip has been broken over your life. With your conversion you died to your sins, and in baptism you bury your sinful nature by identification with Christ, and rise up in Christ's triumphant new life. Therefore Galatians 3:26- 27 is an instruction by Jesus to all the believers: "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

The Baptism in The Holy Spirit can be simultaneous with salvation (Acts 10:44-46) or should follow water baptism. To return to Acts 2:38- 39: "Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise (in Joel 2:28- 29) is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call." This is but one of the instances in the Bible where salvation, baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit are mentioned altogether.

Paul experienced that some phenomenon after he got saved. "Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord – Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here – has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit. "Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized..." (Acts 9:17- 18a). For this reason, when Paul met up with the group of disciples in Ephesus, he asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2a). This same principle is underlined in Acts 10:47- 48; John 3:5; Luke 3:21- 22; and Acts 8:14-17.

The purpose of God baptizing us into the Holy Spirit is to be equipped with power from on high. The book of Acts is full of references to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, flowing forth from baptism into the Holy Spirit. But, as important as the power is, we are first of all baptized in His Spirit to worship Him. "Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:23-24). This communion with the Lord is clear in 1 John 1:1,3; I Corinthians 1:9 and Philippians 2:1.

The new believers must therefore be encouraged to first of all, come into a love relationship with God. God is explicit about this in Revelation 2:1-7. He is not only interested in our work for Him, but is looking at our motive behind it all. "Yet I hold this against you, you have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first"- "the works flowing forth from your first love for God" (Rev 2: 4- 5a).

The new believers must be taught praise and worship choruses and songs (cf. I Corinthians 14:15; Colossians 3:16 and James 5:13b) AND to have communication with God their Father in prayer. They can also be taught (I Timothy 2:1-4) that prayer time is also thanksgiving time (cf. I Thessalonians 5:18), a time of confession of sin (cf. I John 1:6-10; Isaiah 59:1-2; Psalm 66:17-20), a time of supplication, intercession, travail (cf. Galatians

4:19) and spiritual warfare. At times fasting will also accompany prayer (cf. Matthew 6:17-18 and Isaiah 58:1-14).

The new disciples must also be taught to wait upon God: “In the morning O Lord, You hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before You and wait in expectation.” (Psalm 5:3). See also Proverbs 8:34-36. In times of waiting on God, teach them how to discern the voice of the Lord. “My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.” (John 10:27).

Teach them the importance of reading the Word to get their daily bread. One of the most important ways that God communicates with us is through His Word. “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.” (I Peter 2:2-3).

Teach them how to overcome temptation. Warn the new believer that even though he is now a new creature in Christ, and even though the old things have passed away (cf. II Corinthians 5:17), he will be tempted by the devil. One of the first things Satan will tell him is that he is not saved. Take him through Scriptures such as John 1:12 and Ephesians 1:5-6. Point out to him that Jesus Himself was tempted in this area, but He resisted Satan by speaking the Word to him (cf. Luke 4:1-13). Reassure him with I Corinthians 10:13, “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

Teach them to take up the cross and endure hardships for Christ. The new believer should learn, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Gal. 2:20). Teach him also II Corinthians 4:10-11; Romans 7 and Romans 8:1-18.

Paul shortly after he made disciples during his first missionary journey prepared them for hardships. “They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God,” they said.” (Acts 14:21-22).

Admonish them to live holy lives. “As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He Who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do: for it is written, “be holy, because I am holy.” (I Peter 1:14-16). See also II Corinthians 7:1; I Thessalonians 5:23 and Judges 1:1.

It is very important that the new Christian learns who he is in Christ and what his inheritance is now that he is a believer. “I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better, I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be Head over everything for the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him Who fills everything in every way.” (Eph. 1:17-23).

There are many Scriptures that can be taught to the disciples about their position in Christ, “...God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27). Let them confess it daily out loud and in faith.

Do not neglect to teach them their authority in Christ and the power that is in the Name of Jesus, “I have manifested Your Name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world.” (John 17:6a). “By faith in the Name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ Name and the faith that comes through Him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.” (Acts 3:16).

Encourage each new believer to find out what spiritual gifts God has given him. Also encourage them to let the gifts operate in love to edify the believers (cf. I Corinthians 12:1-11; Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 12:27-31 and I Corinthians 14:1). It is absolutely necessary that you set the example in this. “The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people.” (Acts 5:12).

Stress the unity of the Body (the Church) in respect to the working of spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12:12-31 and Rom. 12:4-21). The secret to the many signs and wonders that took place in the early church lies in the last part of Acts 5:12. “And all the believers used to meet together....”

Romans 12:4-21 also gives practical guidelines to enjoy the answer to Jesus’ prayer for unity in John 17:20- 21, 23. “I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me.”

Teach each one that they have a specific calling from God to answer and fulfill. There are special works that each one has been called to do in order for the Body to function properly and for the extension of God’s Kingdom. Proverbs 29:18a says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish...” In Greek the word “perish” means: “to walk around aimlessly.” It is imperative that the believers accept God’s vision for them as a congregation as well as individually. “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Eph. 2:10).

Give the new-born babes a vision for mission work and evangelism. “And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia – your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it.” (I Thes. 1:7- 8). It is every believer’s responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:19- 20 and Mark 16:16-18, 20).

Teach the believers to minister to one another with their fellowship, finance and prayers. “All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions were his own, but they shared everything they had...There was no needy person among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.” (Acts 4:32-35). Paul speaks in II Corinthians 8:1-15 and II Corinthians 9:1-15 of this “service to the saints.”

Also teach them that, “...if any among them refuse to work, neither should they eat” (II Thes. 3:10). Worthy widows, orphans or those unable to help themselves should be the only ones subsidized by the church offerings (I Tim 5:3-16).

Besides love offerings, the new believers must be taught to give at least 10 % (per cent) or their tithe to God as a minimum –cf. Malachi 3:8-12; Luke 18:12 and Hebrews 7:5-9.

Teach the new believers sound basic Bible doctrines. You yourself must “...give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (or teaching - I Tim 4:13). Follow Paul’s example in Acts 20:25-27, 31. “Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the Kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will

(or counsel) of God. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.” Acts 2:42 says, “They (the disciples) devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” The word “devoted” in Acts 2:42 implies that everything didn’t come about smoothly - in fact, that they had to persevere and work hard at it. Not everyone who is saved necessarily wants to become a disciple. Even with Jesus’ ministry on earth, most of His disciples left Him when the commitment and cost involved became too great. “On hearing it many of His disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it? ... From this time many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him.” (John 6: 60, 66). Therefore Jesus said in v. 44 (and also in v.65), “This is why I told you that no one can come to Me unless the Father has enabled him.”

In Acts 19:13-19 it is surprising that many of Paul’s converts only bore fruit after this incident! They were following Christ, but had not given up their previous sins (witchcraft). Paul struggled to bring the church at Galatia to maturity. “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you....” (Gal. 4: 19).

Accurate and pure teaching must be one of your priorities as an apostle. Any false teaching, misconception and imbalance must be corrected (cf. I Thessalonians 2:3- 4). If necessary, you must also confront the people concerned – even in front of the whole congregation (cf. Acts 15:1-31; Galatians 2:12, 14; I Timothy 4:7; I Timothy 6:3-5; II Timothy 2:14-26 and especially II Timothy 4:1-5a).

Many of the people whom you will reach and disciple will be illiterate. They will benefit if you or one of your fellow-workers can teach them to read and write.

There will be times when you, as spiritual leader, will have to apply discipline – both in the leadership (cf. I Timothy 5:19-21) and in the congregation (cf. Acts 5:1-11; I Corinthians 5 and II Corinthians 10:6). “We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.” (I Thes. 2:6).

Lastly, as responsible spiritual parents, we must imitate Jesus and Paul, and watch over the well being of our spiritual children. “Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.” (II Cor. 11:28). Paul states, “I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy.” (II Cor. 11:2a); “...our prayer is for your perfection” (II Cor. 13:9b). Pray Colossians 1:9-14 regularly for your spiritual children.

I close with Jesus prayer to the Father in regard to this. “While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that Name You gave Me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.” (John 17:12).

Paul’s co-worker, Epaphras, prayed for the churches while in prison. “Epaphras ...is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.” (Col. 4:12).

May we one day be able to say with Paul, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day...” (II Tim 4:7- 8).

G - 12, CELLS (OR CELL - CHURCHES) THAT MULTIPLY!

CHAPTER I - Introduction

This concept of this study is to take something that appears to be complex and to make it simple. It is written for everyone involved in the work of the ministry desiring growth and increase. It is for pastors, missionaries, and ministers of every type. Anyone interested in expanding the Kingdom of Heaven can benefit from information on G-12 cells.

In Genesis 1:22 God established His will by commanding Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply. It is important to establish right away that multiplication is God's divine plan for man. Jehovah Jireh, our Provider, is not the God that takes away! According to Luke 6:38, He is the God who adds to: - "pressed down, shaken together and running over!"

You see multiplication is not a choice – it is a command! To make sure there was no confusion about fruitfulness and multiplication, God repeated His command to Noah after the flood. (Genesis 9:1-7). The destruction by the flood did not change the will of God for man. He still intends for us to be fruitful and multiply.

When God spoke to Abraham, He said, "I will multiply your seed." The fruit of relationship with God is multiplication. In Leviticus 26:9 God once again reconfirmed His plan to Abraham's descendants stating, "I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you." Lest we be confused by the devil, the covenant of God means to be fruitful and multiply. Somehow 'small' or 'poor' has come to mean spiritual or holy. The idea that 'small is better' or that 'quality is more important than quantity' is not Biblical! If it's God, it's BIG!

Ministry growth is just like healing or prosperity. If you don't see it in the Word, you can't believe for it. I'm here to tell you that ministry growth is definitely in the Word. For those of you still stuck, look at this... "The Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude. The Lord God of your fathers makes you a thousand times so many more as you are, and bless you, as He has promised you." Deuteronomy 1:10-11. According to the promises of God, the plan for your church is BIG – a thousand times bigger.

Remember, we're not talking about money, bread or fish. We're talking about God multiplying men when they're in proper relationship with Him. For too long church leaders have been satisfied with the status quo instead of reaching out to the lost. Many times the pastors desire more evangelism, but growth is not in the heart of his people. As a matter of fact, "change" is almost a bad word in the church. The old saying, "we never did it that way before", has sent many a saint to heaven with less reward than what the Father had planned. Growth is change – consistent change! Steady consistent growth is one of the greatest of all challenges in the church. In a consistently growing church, everything is changing all the time. It is very important to remember, however, that a growing church is not perfect church. To be perfectly neat is to be dead. A corpse is perfectly neat, every hair in place, because it's not doing anything. It's not going anywhere. God is not looking for churches full of perfectly neat little people. He needs spiritual hospitals. Remember, an emergency room is only clean and neat when it's not in use.

Acts 6:1 tells us how God multiplied the disciples of Jesus. Looking back into the earlier chapters of Acts, we can see how the church grew by 3000 and 5000 people a day. This growth did cause some problems however. Just think, if you had 5000 extra people show up this Sunday at your worship gathering or church building, would you be prepared?

Instead of having all the saints lined up neatly in the pews, you would have folks in the aisles, on the podiums, and around the walls. It wouldn't be pretty, but it sure would be wonderful! You must remember that there will be kinds of loose ends in revival so get ready for change. The end time harvest is coming; if you aren't ready, it's going to blow right by your church.

We must change the way we have conducted church. Don't you want everybody to go to Heaven? Don't you want everybody to enjoy the peace that passes all understanding, here and now? The bottom line is, if we really love what God loves, we will love people. So then the questions

arises.... how can we receive the masses into the family of God? More importantly, how can we bring people into a relationship with God if we are not willing to enter into a relationship with them?

Have you ever wondered why there were only a 120 people waiting in the upper room to receive the power of the Holy Spirit? What happened to all of those that had received healing miracles? How about the thousands that had received food? How about the 500 that saw Him ascend into heaven? Why only 120? There was no room for more relationships, because they were following the pattern of 12 set by Jesus. The upper room was not too small. They were restricted by the number of relationships. If each apostle operated with the same anointing as Jesus, each one would have had eleven true disciples. Guess what eleven times eleven equals? One hundred and twenty one. It is easy to see that of all the thousands that were effected by Jesus' ministry, when it got right down to it, growth was limited to personal relationships. Almost anybody with enough money can draw massive crowds. The mark of true anointing is how many people are still left in the upper room after the big crusade is gone!

The church today is not restricted by buildings. On the contrary, many churches have huge buildings that are filled to capacity, let alone overflowing. Churches today are restricted in relationships. Churches stop growing when they run out of relationships. That's why the vast majority of the world's churches operate with less than one hundred and twenty people. They revolve around a clan. A clan that includes the pastor, his family and a few close friends.

After Pentecost, however, the church began to grow and expand by the thousands. This was not because of massive crusades or because of giant buildings. It was because there was enough room in relationship to absorb more people. The disciples had spent over three years in training on how to operate in small groups. It was that training that prepared the early church to grow like it did. Each new disciple was trained like Jesus' disciples. It doesn't take much maths to figure out how fast twelve grows. Twelve times twelve is 144, 144 times 12 is 1,728. That is over seventeen hundred people in the second generation.

Acts 2:46 and 5:42 says that they were daily in the church (temple) and in every house. If we stick with the Bible, we'll be okay. It says they were in the church and in the houses. Church is a great place to meet, but the home is where you develop relationships! The early church could grow because there was room spiritually and emotionally for the people.

The G-12 structure is the answer. G-12, as will be explained later in greater detail, is a cell system based on the principle of twelve. The principle of twelve meaning twelve people grouped together with a leader. Each of the 'twelve' being leaders of their own group of twelve. The G-12 uses similar techniques that Jesus used while He was on earth. What greater pattern could we have? The G-12 will change your concept of the traditional church and even traditional cells. It works because it is so simple. What it does so perfectly is constantly expanding relationships without burning people out.

Dr. Billy Graham was once asked during a television interview if he would change anything if he could do it all over again. "Yes", he replied, "I would find twelve men and pour myself into them and ask them do the same." He went on to say, "The infinite wisdom of Christ's example should have been an example for us all. The twelve Jesus poured His life into have multiplied themselves into more than a billion." What the renowned evangelist Billy Graham recognized was the need to reorganize the church as well as re-evaluate the way we think about evangelism.

The goal of this study is to help you discover the simple plan God has for His church. The G-12 cell system is the example Jesus gave to the church. It is God's plan for the local church – divine multiplication and a governing system that works. This book is dedicated to every pastor, missionary or traveling minister who desires to 'make room' for the multitudes ordained by God to come into the Kingdom in these last days. If you have ever asked God how to grow your ministry, this study is for you.

Note:

Let me ask you something. Do you really think you are going to have different results by doing the same thing? A true definition of insanity is when someone continues monotonous routine

expecting something different to happen. If you want different results, you must do something different!

CHAPTER II - Concept and History of Cells

It is important to understand that the G-12 concept is a hybrid of all known cell systems. The G-12 has consolidated the strongest points of several different systems into one.

Scientists tell us that cells are the basic building blocks of all living things. The cell concept referred to in this study, however, is not about biology. It is about relationship. Many people find it hard to think in terms of cell division, multiplication and reproduction when we are talking about people. If the church is simply a matter of biology, it would be thing of science. It would be something that could be reproduced over and over again with exactly the same results. We are not dealing with biology. We are dealing with supernatural spirit-beings called humans! We must now leave the realm of science and enter into the world of art. Art is different than science because it is subject to interpretation. That is why church growth is not a formula. That is why every pastor and every church, and every minister can do it differently and still be successful. G-12 is not a scientific formula for success. It is an art form. G-12 lends itself to be sculptured and changed to fit any situation. It will help you become a better artisan knowing how small groups have effected the history of mankind. Cells, or family units, have always been at the foundation of human society. Different cultures have different names such as a clan, troop, tribe or family, but they all mean one thing – a small group with a single interest.

The cell concept certainly isn't a new concept; it was used during Biblical times as by God's own people. When Jethro saw Moses keeping a massive group of people waiting, he rebuked him. Read Exodus 18:13-27.

The concept of cells as a governing system for a church or ministry has steadily been gaining momentum for years. Nineteen of the world's twenty largest churches use different variations of the cell principle. Currently, the fastest growing church in the world uses a cell structure called the G-12. G-12, you remember, means a group of twelve. The tremendous success of this church enables them by the grace of God to double their congregation every year. After a time of prayer and fasting, the Lord gave their pastor His plan for divine multiplication, using the pattern Jesus established while ministering on earth. That plan was a group of twelve men who duplicated their leader's efforts. The result being millions of souls today that profess Jesus Christ as their Lord.

If you are tired of seeing almost as many people leave the church as come into it, then it's time that you discover the 'plan of salvation' Jesus used to establish His Kingdom on earth. God has never told us to do anything without telling us how to do it! Jesus showed us how to do it. We, however, have failed to follow His example. His divine plan of salvation worked great during His earthly ministry; imagine what it can do we for you!

CHAPTER III - Why Cells?

Jesus' pattern for successful ministry did not make Him famous. What it did do was establish His kingdom on earth. During the first few centuries of that kingdom, the gospel was preached to every house in Asia, the Middle East, parts of Africa and Europe. The original disciples and Paul almost completed the Great Commission by themselves by using a principle of small groups.

Pastors, if you want to close the back door of your church, you need cells. If you are growing weary of well doing because six months after a 100 new members join your church you only have a handful left, you are ready for cells. As a pastor, my greatest disappointment is seeing almost as many leave as come in. Cells have changed all of that in our church. The back door still exists, but it is a lot smaller!

As pastors we spend often much money getting people into our churches and fellowships. Then after they're born-again we turn them back out again. Follow-up in most churches is little more than a house visit or nothing at all. The cell church, on the other hand, nurtures and cares for the new believers while they are developing. It helps defend them from those first barges of offences that send them back into the world!

Pastors, you need cells to do what you can not do, Be THERE! You know that after your church is larger than 20 to 50 families there is just not enough time and energy to go around. That's why most churches never grown beyond 120 members! The whole structure is leaning on one person – the pastor. Some pastors are the sole ambassador of heaven in their church. They feel like they need to speak into the lives of every family and member. But if you are to grow, authority must be given to others. Cells are a proven way to grow your church!

Even the Body of Christ in general may ask: Why do we need cells? Cells reduce the pressure of the ministry by providing additional help. We need to accomplish what God has called us to do and we can't do it by ourselves. The beauty of the G-12 structure is that it is a win-win situation for everyone. Everyone is both a learner and a leader. It's not broken down into ministers and laity. The G-12 is the same management system that Jesus used. Everyone has a destiny in Christ and the G-12 is an excellent way of managing that destiny in a local church.

CHAPTER IV - Why Some Say Cells Don't Work

The number one reason why cells don't work is lack of vision as prescribed in Proverbs 29:18. "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but He that keeps the law, happy is he." Most people think small. Large thinking is just too big for most people. Cells can never work if you don't use them. People say, "Cells don't work with our people" or "That doesn't work here." They say it but they have never tried it. The only way to find out if cells work is to try them!

Another reason for opposition to cells groups is fear of division. Many church leaders and pastors are afraid that cells breed division. A properly organized cell church, however, is the best defense against a church split or church division. Remember the story of Absalom? Absalom was a direct result of David's failure to restore relationships. David cried so grievously at Absalom's death because he was mourning his own failure as a father. The cell church is all about relationships...maintaining and restoring spiritual sons so that they will not need to revolt. If a wolf does get in, all he can take with him is a single small group – not the whole church! Because your church is organized into small cell groups it is protected against a split.

The pastor's fear, however, fuels the very thing he is hoping to prevent. What's worse? Losing 90% of the church people through the back door or 10% through a split? The bottom line is people are leaving because they're unhappy and unsatisfied. What is the difference if it is all at once or a few every week? Their needs are not being met. Starting cells might be perceived as a risk by some...the truth is, the church is losing more through neglect than through rebellion.

Unfortunately their fear of division and/or church splits, is the major reason pastors don't like cells. Let's delve into this point a little more closely. The church can be broken down into two groups: the ones that want to minister and the ones that want to be ministered to. Both groups have real needs. The first group leaves because they're frustrated, not being able to use the gifts God gave them. The second group leaves because they are not being ministered to; they need more attention. What G-12 does so very effectively is put these two groups to work with each other instead of against the church and the pastor.⁷

The potential Absaloms never appear in an environment where the needs of the people are being met. Cells properly managed are the church's best insurance against anyone leaving through the back door or a split because their needs are being met. The tension in the church caused by these two groups is released through the cell ministry. One person can minister while another is ministered to. They no longer need to wait three weeks to speak with the pastor about a problem; they can take it directly to their cell group and/or leader. The cell leader, consequently, gets insight

into the pastors' burdens. Instead of criticizing the pastor because he doesn't return phone calls the same day or doesn't shake everyone's hand at the service, the cell leader is faced with exactly the same situations. Dealing with people becomes his concern and thus the pastor gains a brother who understands him, instead of an Absalom criticizing him or trying to take his pulpit.

Cells don't work because they are never given a chance to work. Many times cells are just another program of the church, competing against all the other programs for resources, time and people. In order for cells to work, they must become the focal point of the church! In other words, a cell church is not a church with cells. Let me clarify this statement. In a cell church all the other ministries grow out of relationships in the cells. The cells are the government of the church. Everything works through the cells. It is a radical change from the 'good old boy' political system so often used in churches today. Cells have a way of showing who has the goods and who doesn't.

Moving from a church with cells to a cell radically changed the church I pastor. In the switch, most of the church's leadership changed. Leaders I thought were strong were only taLuke When it got down to who would multiply themselves through a cell group, some couldn't do it. The question is if a person in a leadership position could not hold a small group together and multiply, why were they in leadership? That is why cells usually don't succeed in well established churches. Their political systems are too well entrenched. The cell system promotes those that serve. It uncovers the true gifts and callings of a person. It separates the talkers from the doers.

Many fear the cell because it reveals the true ability and character of each pastor, staff member, deacon, elder or other church leader. Fear of exposure, keeps many from entering the cell concept. Some also feel that familiarity, found in a small group would breed contempt. That's said statement. The better we get to know Jesus, the more we want to know Him. Why shouldn't it be that way for the ministry. Shouldn't we want people to know us better?

We preach family unity and restoration, knowing that if the family is strong, the church and the nation will be strong. Why then do we fail to realize the value of strong inter-personal relationships? We don't fear rebellion if moms and dads get along. Why would we fear rebellion if moms and dads get along with other moms and dads? After reading this study you will be convinced, as I am, that the G-12 cell concept is what we need in the church to prepare for the End Time Revival. I invite you to take the plunge. It might not be easy, but it will be worth it.

Some say cells don't work in America. The fact is, cells are already working in North, Central, and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia! For many Americans, a small group encounter is simply too intense.

CHAPTER V - The Traditional Open Cell

The 5 X 5 or open cell structure was developed much earlier and based on a multi-level marketing plan. The dividing cell system is often referred to as the 5 x 5 structure, because of the supervision employed. In the 5 x 5 structure, the cell divides when it matures. It's called 5 x 5 because for every five cell groups you need a cell supervisor, a position with many different labels. For every five cell supervisors you need a supervisor. It grows on and on building a pyramid with the executive officers on top. In the case of the church this is the senior pastor.

This management system has some inherent problems. One such problem is that for all the supervisors, there is actually little supervision. This system also requires a lot of paper work. Another problem (one that has drawn justified criticism) is that the cell group is forced to keep the meeting at "milk" level. Why is this? Because the meetings are open and people are motivated to invite friends. Thus, the needs of all incoming baby Christians keeps and hinders the group from maturing. At the time the group starts to grow into maturity, it divides. This division process is repeated over and over. Continuous division in the 5 x 5 cells hinders a deeper growth in each individual involved. Even though we love everybody in Christ, we don't always like everybody. You don't chose your friends necessarily based on your neighborhood. (The 5 x 5 system is based on geography not vision.)

Let's talk about the division of a cell for a minute. Cell division can be both painful and joyful. How can it be both? Sometimes a split is like a life-saving boat leaving the mother ship; the cell group splitting off feels abandoned or even angry. Some take offence and end up leaving altogether. On the other hand a cell group of people that don't get along are happy to get away from each other. You can understand this. An unrelated group of people gathering together with little or nothing in common except their neighborhood location is not happy. In a case like this, a split can be a relief. On the opposite side of cell division, however, is unchecked cell growth; a cell that should divide but doesn't. It just keeps growing bigger and bigger. The problem here is the inability of those involved to communicate according to 1 Corinthians 14:16. "How is it then, brethren? When you come together, every one of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." Here, the group loses its effectiveness and turns into a Bible study or a church plant. Neither of which is fruitful.

Cells of any kind are not a Bible Study! Let me repeat this for absolute clarity: cells of any kind are not a Bible study. In the case of Bible study, listeners are developed – not participants! If we need more teaching, why not just have another church service. No! **Fellowship with God and with our fellow man is the goal of a cell.** A cell helps people in their growth toward God and toward others.

It takes a common vision to hold a cell group together – not a common neighborhood! Obviously, it is just as important to select your own cell members as it is your own friends. The G-12 allows you to do both! This creates stronger bonds and lasting relationships.

CHAPTER VI - The G-12 Cell Structure and Why it Works

The vision of the G-12 cell structure is simple. Collect twelve people of the same sex around you and pour yourself into them. Next, teach each one of them to do the same. The church grows by the thousands as each G-12 builds another generation.

To understand why the G-12 structure works, we must first look at who are in Christ, our spiritual self. There is more to us than flesh and blood. We are the image of the living God. A human being is a four dimensional creature in the image of a being with far more than four dimensions. Although we are limited in our current physical state to four dimensions, we are still in the image of multi – dimensional God. To fully understand and appreciate why the G-12 cell system works so well we must, understand who we are in Christ.

As Paul said, In Christ we move beyond living as brute beasts, chasing after the lusts of the flesh into the image of God. Leaving the animal kingdom and entering into the Kingdom God is the greatest of all miracles. Being born again is what gives us faith for all the other changes we must endure as we move into the 'image' of Christ our Lord. All miracles are a jump in dimensions from our abilities into His ability.

The G-12, like no other cell structure, acknowledges that we are spiritual beings – not just flesh and bone. That is why the G-12 cell concept is so successful. It deals with the whole man; it gratifies the spirit and comforts the flesh and mind.

The G-12 stands for group of Twelve, each being a single individual and all of the same sex. The G-12 system is patterned after the New Testament example Jesus set while He ministered on earth.

The following chapters are vitally important if you are to be successful in implementing a successful G-12 cell strategy.

How G-12 Works

A G-12 grows out of a traditional open cell group as described in chapter five. It is extremely important that all members of the G-12 understand this, especially the leader and the assistant. In the beginning, anybody and everybody is invited to attend the cell meeting. People are asked to come in faith for salvation, healing and to minister to the needs of the people. As the group grows, instead of preparing for a split, the leader starts consolidating his group by selecting his disciples. ...

This is the same thing Jesus did. He didn't casually walk down the beach of the Sea of Galilee and pick the first twelve men He saw! He observed their working habits, watching them and discerning their hearts. After He prayed and knew the Father's will Jesus commanded them to follow Him. We must also look at what Jesus didn't do. He didn't tell the group to divide after they reached a certain size. Jesus told them to multiply, adding onto themselves and that is exactly what happened in Acts 6:1-7; 7:17; 9:31 and 12:24. "And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied."

Careful selection of your cell group is an absolute key to the long term success of the G-12. The G-12 is not a traditional cell group that is destined to divide or die. The G-12 starts out as an open cell meeting and moves slowly into consolidation. The G-12 never divides. The leader and assistant, although open to all visitors, are careful to always be working to the day when the group will be completely closed and consolidate into G-12 unit.

There are two objectives as a cell grows from a traditional cell into a G-12. Both of these objectives are performed by the groups cell leader. The first is absolute evangelism; receiving people from any creed, race, social level, married or unmarried, young or old. That means receiving people from all walks of life whether they are people off the street or coming with friends. The leadership does all it can to stabilize and mainstream all visitors into the Body of Christ.

The second requires the leader to observe the members in his cell, discerning those with whom he believes he can train into leadership. Not only is the leader concerned with people whose character works well with his, but he is also looking for personalities that will balance and compliment each other. This is just what Jesus did when He selected His twelve.

This is where vision for the cell comes in. Every G-12 cell must have a vision or focal point. Vision in this case means something that homogenizes, or brings together the group. The G-12 cell must have a vision or they will fail. The G-12 cell is not based on geography, but on common interest. Common interest can mean just about anything that is not contrary to sound Bible doctrine. The G-12 concept automatically incorporates a vision into each group.

Examples of some cell visions might be a cell of professionals, a computer club, an outreach group, intercession, mission, sports, crafts, hospital or prison visitation groups. There are hundreds of ideas. The G-12 cells are grouped by like interest. The group then develops around the vision. The group activities must lend themselves to a Christian lifestyle and at the same time promote fellowship and evangelism. The vision does not necessarily rule out having a zip code or common neighbourhood as a cell vision. In some cases the later is enough to draw people together.

It is also important that the cell vision in no way is in conflict with the church's vision. It is important to note that the church's vision and the pastor's cell group do not have the same vision. His group, just like all the rest, needs a homogenizing vision. Usually the vision of the senior pastor's cell group is church administration or pastoral preparation. Each disciple in his cell group would be responsible for a different area of ministry for example. Some ideas would be: cells, youth, children, finances or publications depending on the needs of the church and the pastor. Pastors must be careful whom they put in their cells as they are making a long-term commitment.

The leader of the G-12, whoever he or she is, needs to establish the vision for the cell at the beginning. Each disciple needs to be faithful to the leader's vision. When a disciple starts his own G-12 group, he can then choose his own vision while remaining faithful to his leader's vision. The key is to keep it simple and straight forward. In other words, make the vision something people can identify with.

As the G-12 group grows and the leader gains experience with the members, emotional bonds or relational ties will begin to develop. As trust develops it will be very easy to see whom you want to work with and whom you don't want to work with. As these ties begin to develop in the cell people are selected as disciples by the leader, until he fills out his group of twelve, i.e. G-12. This, above all other aspects of the G-12 model, is what sets it apart. Not only does the G-12 deal with the soul and body, but it also successfully deals with the spirit and our desire for eternal fellowship. We are

made to commune forever in the presence of our Father, God. Just imagine, your family and friends here on each are your eternal friends.

Understand that this process is not like up lining up a bunch of little boys in front of a fence and picking out a team – leaving the unselected feeling unworthy and rejected. Selecting your ministry team is one of the biggest challenges of the G-12. Brotherly love and fellowship are extremely critical here. It moves us into our eternal destiny as brothers in Christ. Remember, your G-12 is a fraternal group. When you invite someone to be a part of your G-12 group, you are making a long-term commitment. Once again, Jesus is the example. As your disciples grow, their interactions can be studied so that future disciple selections can be based on the knowledge gained from the accumulated wisdom of past selections.

The spiritual fulfillment that accompanies the G-12 is why it is so very successful. It isn't only a burden or an ordeal – it's fun! It's not suffering for Christ's sake; it's joy to experience. Just as in earlier times when families needed to pack together or form covenants for survival, the G-12 forms a clan. This type of cell structure recognizes the spirit and its needs. It also works to build life long friendships.

Now, once someone is consolidated into a G-12, it will be a tough decision to leave. It would be basically as emotionally divisive as a divorce. That is why once a G-12 forms it is so successful at building the church. It forms eternal bonds.

Selecting G-12 Disciples

Scientists, as well as psychologists, tell us that although a single man can supervise thousands, he can only direct four or five. This is another important key to the success of G-12. Your primary goal is to develop relations with three or four individuals. And in turn fostering their relations with the others in the group. The dynamics are symmetrical. The leader has three or four close friends and each one of them has three or four friends.

Let us look once again at Jesus' example. He had Peter, James, John and sometimes Andrew in his inner circle. Michael Angelo beautifully captured this concept in this painting of the Last Supper. After careful observation of that painting we can see he has grouped the twelve into four groups of three standing around Jesus. The head of each group is in Jesus' inner circle. The others followed behind those in different degrees. That is the way it will be in any healthy G-12 group. A good cell leader will be careful to look for and develop these leading personalities.

When Jesus went to raise the little girl from the dead, did He take all his disciples? No, He took only those closest to Him. Just as Jesus demonstrated on many occasions, true discipleship is not done in groups. It is done on a one-on-one basis.

Time can also another limiting factor. There are a lot of great people out there, but we only have time to develop meaningful relationships with just a few. Moses lead over three million people, but he had close relationship only with his wife, Hur, Joshua and Aaron. He moved a nation. How? He had his inner circle of 4 and his outer circle of 70 according to Exodus 24:1-9. Do you see a pattern here? Jesus had 70 in his outer circle as well. That is exactly how the G-12 cell structure works. The senior pastor moves his group and they in turn move their groups. Upon closer observation we can see that the three or four leaders of the group move the twelve that move the three or four leaders in their groups that move their groups of twelve until the whole Body is moved. It worked for Moses and it worked for Jesus. Do we need still more proof that the G-12 cell structure works? But how do you know whom to put in your inside circle? What happens to those that are not selected for this circle? And, how do you keep folks from being offended? Let me take these questions one at a time.

Offence is one of the major causes of stunted growth when it comes to the Body of Christ. Many have left churches and stayed away due to being offended. Jesus Himself said offence will come. His disciples were offended at times. How do you handle potential offence? Let's look at how Jesus handled it. When James and John's mother asked Jesus about them being number one and two, sitting on His right and left hand, this offended the other disciples. Jesus used great wisdom in His answer to the mother so as to further offend the other disciples. He said, that the best positions

are reserved for those that serve the most. According to His words, the Father will determine the intents of the heart and will reward those who served with great honor and position.

When selecting your disciples find out who is willing to serve more than the others. It can even become a kind of Holy Spirit competition in servitude. Competition is not negative if it based on serving and not getting. Servitude will determine who's in a group and where they fit in. Selection and promotion based on servitude eliminates most of the complaining. If you want to be promoted to the inner circle: serve! To desire advancement in the Kingdom of God is not wrong. Indeed, Jesus did not rebuke His disciples for desiring a promotion when they were arguing about whom would be greatest; He simply told them how to do it – by serving.

True Christian leadership does not hope to advance through politics. Leadership is promoted by service. Any godly individual wishing to be promoted by God needs only to look for positions to serve. Jesus was God, yet He came serving even until death on the cross. Jesus gave it all in servitude; how much less can we expect from ourselves.

I hope you can see more clearly now that which might have seemed complicated earlier. You will be happy to know that the selection of the disciples and the stratification – each disciple finding their position in the group – are all naturally occurring. As you are faithful to serve your pastor and doing all you can to serve his vision, God will send men to serve your vision. If the leadership is faithful to track down first time visitors, follow up on absentees and motivate and encourage those around them to do the same, their cells will grow. People congregate where the love of God exists... place of godly fellowship and communion will draw people. As the leadership demonstrates the love of God in their lives, building a cell system will be easy. The challenge is: developing the character of God, loving people into the Kingdom of God.

As your group starts to grow, you will begin selecting disciples. At the same time you will be recognizing those really don't want to work with you. You can transfer these people to your disciples. This process is vital to the success of the G-12 cell; however, it is a bit delicate. It is vitally important that those being moved into other groups, either vertically (in the same generation), or downwardly (into the next generation), not be made to feel unwanted. It is very important to be sensitive. Even so, for those being moved to another cell, you mustn't just dump them off. You must believe God that they will match successfully with either one of your disciples or another cell leader, then you must help them make the transition to that cell. Consequently, by the time a leader has eight or nine disciples in his cell, many of his disciples will already have people in their cells. As you can see, you don't need to wait until you have considered the cell for your disciples to start their own cell groups.

Every cell group or cell church, before it consolidates, has only three kinds of people: disciples, developing disciples or those waiting to be transferred. The people waiting to be transferred are really waiting to hook up with a disciple who's starting a new group, in which the vision is something they can embrace. There is a place for everybody. Our challenge is to find it. If someone gets upset or offended about not being selected by a certain leader, they are free to go to any group they choose. Many times being asked to transfer to another group becomes a character check for that person. People have ended up maturing wonderfully in the process.

By allowing leadership to select the people for their G-12 cell group, extremely strong bonds are formed. People working together on a vision that they themselves developed is what's called in modern management 'ownership.' It feeds creativity and enthusiasm. You never hear, "those people you sent me just don't work" or "nobody is getting the vision." They are selecting the people and it is their vision. If it is not working, guess what? It is not someone else's fault. There are no excuses for things not progressing.

These cell groups, or clans, form a rock solid foundation on which the church grows. As you make disciples through your cell church ministry, Jesus will build His Church! So start today!

The Judas Syndrome

Let's address the issue of unfaithfulness in the church or the cell. The Judas syndrome, sometimes referred to as the Absalom spirit, is an element of the cell that worries pastors the most. After all,

Jesus had one go bad on Him; how can we do better? Several leaders have suggested having groups of eleven instead of twelve. I believe we can learn some things from this. For one, not everybody the leader picks as a disciple will work out. It will not be the end of the world if, after doing your best, someone asks to be transferred to another G-12.

A personal note – I have a rule I've used successfully for years – confront rebellion and carry weakness. Confrontation is not bad if it is a solution to a problem. Too many times by avoiding confrontation we end up fueling the problem. If and when rebellion comes, confront it no matter.

Completing G-12

Once your G-12 is complete, it becomes a management team. It shifts into administration; its disciples working their groups into consolidation. **In the G-12 cell system, each person is a disciple first and then a cell leader. (First a Learner, and second a Leader).** This brings us to a point that for many seems to be a weak point of the G-12. The cells require two meetings a week, especially when the first generation disciples are working to complete their groups. This is a must! Once the leader's disciples, the first generation, have all completed their G-12's, their weekly meeting can then be relaxed somewhat. They can start meeting on a more casual basis, less frequently but never less than once a month. By the time a G-12 operating as a ministerial management team has worked to help others establish their own G-12, they will have grown together quite a bit. Through this process long lasting bonds will be established. The G-12 grows and grows. It never breaks up or divides relationships. It grows, nourishes and multiplies itself. Once a church is firmly established in the G-12 cell system, it will become an awesome force in the community.

The reason why the G-12 explodes church growth is because the groups are released to train leaders instead of constantly receiving new believers. Every G-12 is potentially a massive growth center. But don't get into a ditch. No group is above soul winning or helping new believers. All the G-12 does is keep the groups from wearing themselves out having to constantly work with new comers. A major responsibility of the primary group is to help bear the burden its disciples are bearing with their new believers. Every single member of G-12 structure has the ability to become the center of an immense organization. It is only a question of servitude.

The tremendous thing about the G-12 cell structure is that the more it grows, the further away each cell gets away from crisis management. This crisis atmosphere is where most burn out comes from dealing with new baby Christians. There must be a balancing factor. As the organization grows, working people cannot continue to give more and more time to its success. The G-12 system, on the other hand, has two meetings a week during the first two generations and less later on. The time spent on the phone counseling, after services or after cell meetings is less because the leadership is involved less in crisis management. What happens is that the two weekly meetings in many ways saves time instead of costing time. In other words, the G-12 utilizes scheduled time to work on counseling, etc., instead of taking time away from the church. In short, in the G-12 the time commitment actually stays about the same even when the church grows.

Once a group closes to new believers, maturity can begin. Instead of dealing with the problems new believers have, the group grows in friendship helping to mentor each other into maturity.

G-12 Leadership

In a G-12 system, this is built into the system. If we examine the G-12 closely, we can see that because it automatically incorporates leadership meetings and consolidates mature Christians, it is separating people into the ministry. It streamlines paper work and expands evangelism passing it into even more hands. As the G-12 system grows it can actually use less time.

Only those in leadership are required to attend the two meetings a week. If you attend a cell meeting and are not a disciple starting your own group, you only need to attend one meeting a week. In my experience two meetings a week does strain some, but the overall advantages outweigh the disadvantages. A cell in many ways is just like a church. As a church grows, a pastor takes on staff to help him. Likewise, as a cell grows it needs help too. The cell leader deserves the same reward as a successful pastor, i.e. a break! A cell church leader's labor is rewarded by

forming a close knit and loving group around him and his family. From this position, he can then help his disciples their won groups of disciples. He becomes a kind of father figure in their lives, helping them work out their callings. Instead of burning out, G-12 cell leaders flame on for Jesus! The G-12 structure allows the leaders, who have successfully completed their group, to work through their disciples. The beauty of the G-12 structure is that it preserves leadership by guarding them against burnout. The G-12 system has a built-in reward system. It rewards successful leaders by allowing them the ability to stay active in the vision of the church with less direct input –but with ever increasing results. The greatest reward, however, is success. Witnessing yourself being reproduced through your disciples and eventually your disciples’ disciples, is extremely satisfying.

Overview of the G-12 structure:

The G-12 always starts off as an open cell. That means anybody from anywhere may attend.

Although the G-12 starts as an open cell, it should still have a focus or vision from the beginning. It is important to have a common goal to help establish and maintain lasting relationships.

As the group grows, the leader begins to select his disciples.

People who do not ‘flow’ or connect with the leader or who are not faithful to the cell vision are passed along to other groups. (Horizontal or vertical, but with sensitivity and care).

Once an open cell closes into a G-12, it then becomes a management team helping its disciples grow and consolidate their groups.

The G-12 cell process multiplies itself twelve times every time it consolidates. Each multiplication is known as a “generation.” or “level”.

Chapter VII - How to Select Your Team

Jesus did not walk along the beach calling out to everyone, “Hey who wants to learn how to do miracles?” He carefully observed the labors of the men He selected as disciples. He knew them, calling them by name to follow Him. Jesus selected his disciples. The leader of the G-12 selects his disciples. That is major key to the success of the G-12.

The open cell gives the leader a chance to observe the members of his group. Actually working with someone is a much better way to getting to know them. The open cell gives the leader experience with the people so that he knows whom to choose. You pursue the people who pursue you. Disciples participate in your cell group because they want to. Look how Jesus talked to his disciples. He told Peter he was full of the devil. He told them on several occasions they were full of doubt. Jesus asked God how long He was going to have to be with this bunch of unbelievers. Can you imagine telling that to a church member! They would surely be offended and try to take of all their friends with them. Working with a disciple is another story. Jesus could talk to them directly because they wanted to be with Him. It was their desire and choice to follow Him.

The opportunity of the leader to select the people he can best work with is what separates the G-12 cell structure from all the other cell structures. He chooses the ones that chose to follow him. This aspect of the G-12 cannot be overlooked. Simply assigning people to a leader or group by geographic divisions or for any other reason does not work as well. Geographic divisions bring about politics, compromise and negotiations – all of these Jesus called leaven!

The power of G-12 comes from the fact that a person has a vision for a group and then selects people with that same vision. The ‘have to’ or the ‘must’ does not work in the long haul. When people are divided by geographic location there is a big chance of them feeling “stuck” in a particular cell. When that happens motivation suffers.

In any given church most of the congregation should basically have the same beliefs but not necessarily the same interest. **A group built around a common interest has more sticking power** than a group that only meets at the same place every week. This more than any single factor is what makes the G-12, the cell group or cell church model of choice.

At first, the attraction to join a group might be less than spiritual...like a man and woman meeting for the first time. Their appearance might have caused the original attraction. However, a successful long term relationship is based on the spirit – not on the flesh. People attend the cell because they might be interested in meeting other people, or need comfort after a loss or some other tragedy. Whatever the original motivation, people attend a cell group faithfully not only because it's fun and edifying, but also because it feeds their spirit. It gives them a chance to operate in the spiritual things of God in a conducive environment.

When Jesus called Peter, He got his attention in the flesh by showing him the power of God to catch fish. What better way to catch a fisherman? Nathaniel was an intellectual. Jesus persuaded him by appealing to his intellect. You catch people by appealing to something they are already doing. That is one reason that a cell is never a Bible study. Non-believers never do Bible studies. They do however gather with friends for a dinner for instance. Who doesn't like to come to one of those? Appealing to the stomach works. In the dinner fellowship and interactions walls start to come down and friendships start to form. The next thing you know you have a cell group.

Once Jesus got the attention of his disciples in the natural He began showing them His vision. We call it the Great Commission. He used the gifts of the Spirit to attract them. Then He started pointing them to the vision. Since Jesus was sinless. He surely represents the only perfect example of how to build disciples. How did He do it? With small groups.

Once you start selecting your disciples you must point them toward Jesus – just as Jesus pointed His disciples to the Father. Never attract attention to yourself. Your glory is not what men seek.

When it actually starts to cost people something, is the time you'll find out who is with you and who's not. Jesus said in Mathew 10:39: "he that finds his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life for my sake will find it." You must have a cause to both live and die for in your life. Every person must have something in their life beside themselves, to bring them fulfillment. If you are not willing to lose your life for some cause you will never find true fulfillment.

Matthew 6:24 tells us that there are two great causes in life, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise and be against the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions or whatever is trusted in)." Christ is the only cause big enough to fulfill that true desire in us to give up our lives. The other cause in life is money. What happens after you get it? What are you going to do then? Is your cause a giant church? After the construction, then what? For some it's a little simpler. They go shopping hoping a new car or dress will make them happy. After the dress is hanging in their closet and the new car is parked in their garage, then what? More debts if we are not careful! We will hop from toy to toy getting into more debt in an effort to find satisfaction. However, it never comes!

That is one reason why the early church grew so fast. There was price to pay. Many times as pastors we want to make it as easy as possible so that every body can come to church and be fed the Word. I fall in that trap all the time. Of course you have to push babies in a stroller to get them to church. But we are not talking about babies, we are talking about making disciples.

When an offence does start splitting a church, who are always the biggest tongue wagers? Those uncommitted babies. The ones that are going along for the ride. The opportunist. Those looking for something other than Jesus.

The anointing comes with a price. You know you have a real disciple when it has cost him something. The first time I went to a cell meeting I walked two hours to get there. It was a small price to pay, and I became one of the most faithful of the group.

A part of disciplining is making demands. When I say, "make demands" I mean asking someone to be responsible for something i.e. taking care of the children that week; visiting a member of the group; coming early to help set up; doing the music; or even leading the discussion.

The old excuse, “I don’t have time” doesn’t fly after you have established the fact that you would die for the Gospel. If you are willing to give your life, giving your time becomes a small thing. Your time is given over to God, and you become a willing servant. It all starts with the decision to give your life to God. This is what discipleship is: discipline. Learning to die to self so that Christ might be glorified in our lives. The cell group puts that in context by supplying a support team.

In Summary:

The selection process has four steps:

Plowing: Observation through Cooperation.

Planting: Selection.

Cultivating: Point to Christ.

Pruning: The Cost.

Each step is vital in the selection process. The last step however is the most important. No one is worthy of leadership that is not willing to put down for the desires of our Heavenly Father.

CHAPTER VII - How to Conduct a G-12 Meeting

Like church services, cell meetings also have an order. This order, as in a church service, is subject to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Any order then is actually a stand-by agenda ready to be implemented if there is nothing different or unique the Holy Spirit wants to do. It is very important to understand that all things should be subject to the Holy Spirit and any ‘pattern’ established by man is always in subjection to His leading. Every church has its own personality, motivations, and gifting which all need to go into the cell meeting or cell church formula. It should be understood that the following cell pattern is one that has proven successful by years of experience. Caution should be exercised, therefore, before deviating too far from its principles. Remember – all cell church meetings are conducted basically the same way no matter which governing system it is operating under. The following are the basic issues that need to be covered each time the group meets.

The Time:

The time for the cell meeting is best set by the cell members. For most meetings this seems to be after work. For others, the needs are best met at noon or early in the morning. It is important than the time preferred by the people in that group is being satisfied.

After determining the time of the day, you need to consider what day. Any day is fine if there is not a regularly scheduled church event at the same time. For example, Sunday morning is not the time for a cell meeting of any kind as it interferes with the Body as a whole and disrupts unity. Likewise, no cell meeting is appropriate if it conflicts with other scheduled events of the church. If the programs of the church compete against the cell meetings, the cell will always lose out. Cells by their nature are subordinate to the church. Church sponsored activities generally take precedent over the cell activities. You must remember that the cell and the church are not in competition. This is where many have failed in implementing a cell government. They have pitted the church against itself by trying to run church programs and cells at the same time. If the church is not careful, it will choke out the very thing that is strengthening and consolidating the church.

In order to eliminate any competition many churches have canceled mid-week and even Sunday night services in favor of the cell meetings. For many pastors canceling a well-attended midweek service is painful. But we must not forget that the goal is to make disciples of all nations – not just have church services. If cells do a better job at making disciples than a church service, a decision to cancel a service in favor of cells could be more profitable in the long run. It has been my experience that it is important not to restrict cell meetings to any particular day or time. Let the leaders decide what works best for them and their people.

The Location:

Location and setting are important to the success of any meeting – especially a cell meeting. When and where a meeting takes place is of vital importance, especially before the cell consolidates into a G-12. The meeting place must lend itself to the new visitor, making it as accessible as possible. For many reasons, it is almost always better to have the meeting in the home of someone other than the leader. This principle guarantees that at least individuals of two families will be involved. It is also a way of sharing responsibilities.

The beauty of the cell church is that it happens outside the church building, and there where the people are. Church buildings tend to intimidate people. What sinner wants to come to God's house and be faced with all that guilt and condemnation? Getting a person to a church service can be a monumental task due to the spiritual significance of the church setting and his personal guilt. A cell church, on the other hand, is much less intimidating and threatening. It's not seen as God's house. It's the neighbor's house, or a place of employment. The bottom line is that it is more "user friendly," less intimidating and easier to escape from if necessary.

With new people attempting to attend, changing locations every week leads to confusion and missed opportunities. Until the cell consolidates into the fraternal group of twelve, it seems best to commit to having the meeting at a fixed time and place every week. Once the meeting closes or consolidates into a G-12, it can then become a more flexible meeting when and where it best suits the needs of the group. This is another little reward of the G-12. It reduces the stress that builds after having a meeting in the same home week after week.

Meeting Place Dynamics

The single most important factor in the meeting place dynamics is the position of the chairs. I know it sounds elementary, but it has a major effect in the success or failure of a meeting. For this very reason many times before official political negotiations start, the size of the room, the shape of the table, and the positioning of the chairs must be determined. Where and how people sit has a lot to do with how they relate to the others in the group. The sitting arrangements should always be as close as possible to a circle – not oblong or elliptical if at all possible. The seats should never all be facing a speaker like in a classroom or church service. Yet, not in all cultures may chairs be appropriate. According to local customs mats or blankets or benches can serve the purpose of gathering together better.

The idea is that all seats should point to the middle, facing each other, not toward the speaker. Remember, it is not teaching session, nor is it a classroom environment. It is Holy Spirit huddle - a clan meeting. The leader is not sitting at the head or in front but in the same ring with the others. The minimum goal is a seating arrangement in which each person feels comfortable speaking. The idea being that the leader is more of a coordinator or facilitator than a coach. They are all in the cell process together. Each individual participates in the success of the whole. Success means each member is being formed into the image of Christ. Each member helps the others in the group.

Room Environment:

Lighting is important. Each person should have enough light to read the Bible if necessary. It is not a good idea to have people read in rounds or out loud. Many people were traumatized in school by having to read out loud; consequently, as adults it can often times be very stressful. Learn who likes to read and use them in turns if necessary.

In regards to temperature, it is always nice to have a comfortable temperature when the situation allows. A little on the cool side will help keep working folks awake during the meeting.

Even though optimum situations are desirable, they are not always possible. If the space is too small for the chairs to form a perfect circle, the house/work site is not climate controlled, or if the lighting is poor, don't get too worried. It is the love of God shining through us that draws in the people. Love is what spells success, not the chairs or the lighting. If we continue to lift Jesus higher, men will be drawn unto Him. Our jobs as under-shepherds is to eliminate obstacles in the way of the sheep coming to Christ.

Meeting order:

Next we'll look at the meeting order, which includes the ice-breaker, time of worship, prayer, and the Word. It is very important that everyone strives to be on time for the meeting. A visitor coming an hour early can catch a housewife off guard and unprepared. It can also cause a very uncomfortable situation if the visitor happens to be a single male arriving before the husband gets home, or the other guests arrive. The reverse can also happen and is just as undesirable. One solution is to have a few chairs outside just in case. To help train everyone to be on time, it is important to start on time, no matter how many people are there at the predetermined starting time. If you wait until everyone shows up, you will find the meetings getting pushed back later and later. Furthermore, you as a leader, should try to be there always well before time to welcome the people.

Ice Breaker:

During the ice breaker, it is nice to serve something to drink or even a light snack. Neither are necessary, but having something light to drink and eat does add to the fellowship. It stimulates social contacts and especially helps relax the visitors, reducing tensions and anxieties. Food and drink helps an outsider 'blend in'. It also gives them something to do which keeps them from being too self-conscious.

During this 'ice breaking' time, the host should be prepared with some questions or interesting topics to share. This helps move people into comfortable and relaxed atmosphere crucial to a successful meeting. The question or discussions during the opening few moments should be kept light and unobtrusive. The questions should stimulate conversation and help people relax. It is very important that everyone attending feels welcome. This is not the time to put a visitor through the third degree. Don't pry, or let others pry (be overly inquisitive) into the private lives of first time visitors.

Time or Worship:

The time and location of the meeting will influence the type of worship that is appropriate. Also the length of the meeting is a determining factor. A typical worship session should last 15 to 20 minutes for a normal meeting of an hour and a half. If however, if you only have an hour, 45 minutes of worship will not leave you much time to do other things necessary to have a successful meeting. Thus limit it to about a quarter of the time, say around fifteen minutes.

A gifted guitar player can usher a small group into the throne room of God and be a tremendous blessing. Even a novice can help harmonize a group, leading them in worship. If you can't sing well, you can always sing along with a cassette player or CD. Don't be intimidated to go acappella, without any musical guidance. If hearts are sincere, it is always beautiful to God. Another major key for entering into the presence of God corporately as a cell church is the individual prayer lives of each member. If the only time members of the group pray or worship is during the cell meeting or in a church service, their attempt to enter into the presence of God will be little dry. The group should do all it can to encourage the members to pray and worship at home daily as well as in the cell meetings.

If you are meeting in a public place, like a restaurant or job site, you might not have the boldness or liberty to sing out too loud. Worshiping God can be defined as any act that brings you into His presence. Without the presence of God in your meetings you will have nothing more than a social gathering. If the worship is off, it will be very difficult to get into unity during the rest of the meeting. The least you should expect from a time of worship is unity. Singing or worshipping together brings the group together. Your goal in worship should therefore always be unity with God with your fellow cell church members.

Prayer:

After worship, while the group is still in that wonderful atmosphere of praise, is a great time to pray. Allowing anyone who desires to step right on in to make their request known to God. In some circles everybody prays at the same time, while others prefer taking turns to pray. It really doesn't matter how you do it. What does matter is that there is a relaxed and anointed atmosphere

as they pray to their Heavenly Father. Prayer that follows worship can be the most special time of the week. When prayer flows, it can be tremendously anointed. The presence of God is what keeps men and women coming back week after week.

The Word:

This seems to be the area that is most misunderstood. This part of the meeting is what most pastors fear and it intimidates most potential cell leaders. Let me repeat, a cell meeting is not a teaching session. It is a time of sharing personal life experience based on the Word. The reason why some pastors don't like cells and choose not to participate is the fear that a charismatic or gifted teacher will begin to draw people to himself and thus away from the pastor. The reason most potential cell leaders are intimidated is that they feel unprepared to deal with tough questions or difficult situations.

The solution to both of the situations requires a little preparation on the part of the pastor. A simple outline given to the cell leaders will give that gifted or charismatic teacher some parameters. It will also help preserve the vision of the church, because it keeps the topic of discussion under the pastor's control. I have found it very helpful to publish the cell topic in the bulletin or announce it from the pulpit in order to help insure that the targeted topic will be the only one used by the leaders. Having such an outline also provides help in preparing and thus gives confidence to an inexperienced leader.

The G-12 structure stands superior to the other models in that each disciple hears the week's topic discussed before they present it to their disciples. The senior pastor meets first with his group. Then his disciples meet with their groups. The information is passed along a chain of command from one group to another. This leaves little room for error or intimidation.

If you are using a G-12 format, the weekly topic for the cell does not necessarily need to be the same as the Sunday sermon or message. It can be a parallel message or completely different. It all depends on the pastor. In the G-12 system, the delivery system is a highly effective, interactive communication system – a system just like Jesus used. The G-12 system is so efficient that it can stand on its own. It doesn't need the Sunday message to support it. The G-12 is much more capable of disciplining people than a lecture. It helps move them into their destiny as ambassadors for Christ. Instead of the sit and soak system that has been in place for so many years, the G-12 gets people off the pew and into the ministry. Every member of the body of Christ is called into the ministry reconciliation. Through the G-12 approach of making disciples every member will be turned into a minister and thus fulfill their destiny in Christ Jesus!

To help you better understand how the G-12 system works, let's take a sensitive topic like tithing. Money is reported to be the number one cause for offence in the church. When a message on giving comes forth from the pastor, even with love and anointing, it can be perceived as self-serving. On the other hand, in a cell meeting the topic can be discussed in a way that eliminates objections and builds confidence in the pastor's vision. The 'Why' we give, has a chance to stand on the Word of God, reinforced by one's peers. A discussion among a small group has an opportunity to find out why certain members of the group don't like to tithe. It digs out the problem, uncovering hidden fears, doubt and unbelief in the promises of God. The fires of rebellion and criticism are put out in love and healed many times in the same meeting without the fires spilling out into the church as a whole.

During the time devoted to the Word, all should be encouraged to participate. A good leader will not only help orchestrate the conversation over the Word of God, but help introverts speak out as well. Sometimes an even greater challenge is controlling the extroverts – keeping them silent long enough for the others to get a chance to speak. The skill is to get people to talk about how a certain passage of Scripture affects their lives and not interrupt it. If the leader happens to be a Greek scholar, that's great. He can always use his talents as a teacher in a Bible-school or college. The cell meeting is not necessarily the time to dig out heavy revelations from the Word. It is a time for sharing our lives with one another and holding each other accountable in brotherly love. This does

not mean condemning or judging. It is a chance to share one another's joys, sorrows, necessities and burdens.

Once the open cell consolidates and closes for new members, the format shifts. The closed G-12 will continue using the provided topics for discussion, but their application will be somewhat different. Helping the saints to mature in their walk takes precedence. Before a cell closes, the leader will deal with things like abuse, and addictions – basically helping people out of the muck of the world. After the cell is consolidated, it changes from crisis management to character development. More time is spent on the gifts and fruit of the Spirit. The members of the G-12 will be running their race, laying aside those weights that so easily beset them, maturing in Christ.

Once consolidated, the cell shifts into a management team, helping the members of the group to administrate the disciples of the next generation. This transition is why it stays fun. Instead of dealing with the same old problems week after week, the group moves up into administration.

Another very positive aspect about the G-12 as governing system for your church is the small amount of paper work required to make it work. Very little paper work is required for G-12 cell structure. In the G-12, all data is passed onto the management team above it. Together with the disciple they monitor absentees, helping to bring them back into fold. Once a cell closes in the G-12 system, it moves from evangelism to discipleship. In the process it become much easier to monitor. Evangelism is not, however, it is multiplied twelve times!

The Close of the Meeting:

It is always a good idea to close any session in prayer; to pray over any needs that have been exposed or discussed that time. Because of time restrictions, it is usually better for one individual to pray. The meeting should always close with the vision, the vision of the church as well as the vision of the cell. All G-12 cells have a vision. Closing with the vision helps end the meeting upbeat. As part of the vision, any announcements about future activities can also be given. This gives those attending the information they need to plan accordingly for both cell and church activities.

Summary of a Successful G-12 Cell Meeting:

It is never a Bible Study! It is a study of people using the Bible.

Every leader starts with a vision. This vision never conflicts with the vision of the church.

The G-12 always starts as an open cell. It slowly consolidates as the leader chooses his twelve disciples.

Time and location are generally fixed until a group of twelve is selected by the leader. It can then become more flexible.

It is important to have the physical room setting arranged to facilitate active involvement from all attending.

Try to encourage shy, quiet people to speak up while at the same time encouraging more aggressive people to listen more and talk less.

Every meeting has an order unless the Holy Spirit changes that order. A typical meeting should be planned to last 90 minutes.

Meeting Order Segmentation (Total time 90 minutes):

- A. Ice Breaker – 10 minutes.
- B. Worship – 20 minutes.
- C. Prayer – 5 minutes.
- D. Fellowship around the Word – 40 minutes.
- E. Prayer – 10 minutes
- F. Impartation of vision and announcements – 5 minutes.

CHAPTER IX - Children and How They Fit

The prophecy in Luke 1:17 (also in Malachi 4: 5-6) is vital for us if we want to participate in the last day revival. “And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Every Christian needs to be family oriented. Our children are part of the Body of Christ, and we need to treat them that way. Just like Jesus instructed us in Matthew 19:14: “Allow little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” That’s why I emphasize the participation of children in cell church approach and strategy. Please understand what I mean by participation. I don’t mean dialog with the adults as much as I mean involvement in growing up in the Lord and reaching out to and discipling other children.

Any activity that does not allow children to participate is a respecter of persons and against the Word of God. “Children not allowed” is the sign the abortionist hang out. “All children welcome” should be the sign hanging on any Christian activity.

A famous healing evangelist, Smith Wigglesworth who raised more than fourteen people back to life, once said, I just prayed with 3½ people to get saved. The man he was talking to responded, three adults and a child. “No Sir” he said, “Three children and an adult.” He went on to reason that the three children still had their whole lives in front of them and the adult only had half of his life left to serve the Lord.

Ministry to children is one of the most overlooked areas of ministry. McDonalds, keying in on children has produced the largest food chain in history. When they started directing their advertising at children the critics said it would never work. They said children have no money and no way to get to the restaurants. Having sold seventy zillion hamburgers later who was right? Marketing directed at children works! As a pastor I do all I can to promote children’s ministry because I know it reinforces the entire family. It builds the church, the Body of Christ.

In Romans 12:2 it says: “And be not conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” I know there are different interpretation for this verse but let’s go with the interpretation that there are lesser and greater degrees of perfection in our walk with God. “Good” being the least and “perfect” being the best, leaves “acceptable” somewhere” between the two.

“**Good**” is having a separate room for the children were they can be entertained either by themselves or with a babysitter. This is better than leaving them at home because it allows them to participate even if it is only by being there. If you are dealing with the minimum of experience and commitment, backyard games under supervision is fun for children, and it keeps them away from the parents so they can minister each to another.

“**Perfect**” is the rotation of the group members (each one taking part) in a scheduled Bible study with the children. The “good, acceptable, and perfect” many times has to do more than with experience in ministry than with desire. I might add “perfect” in theory because only Jesus is perfect in practice. “Perfect” is used in the Bible to translate the Greek word, “mature.” So we might say this last method is the most mature way, the least selfish, and the most fulfilling. “Perfect” is always the goal, but it is not always obtainable.

The perfect system evolves one in the group, including the leaders, teaching the children. After a time together in praise and worship, there is a fully developed curriculum used which incorporates a systematic study of the Bible giving the children exciting and fun things to do in order to cultivate their interest in God and His Word. A rotation of teachers assures that all the adults participate in the care and ministry of the children. This increases their experience, and they also get to know each other’s children and practice their gifts and talents.

You might be surprised how much a brief conversation with a child could reveal about what goes on in the home. Parents not wanting to bring their children to the cell meeting could

reveal that they might be hiding something. This offers opportunity to minister to the children as well as the parents.

“**Acceptable**” is somewhere in between these two options. It could be a person in the group that ‘watches’ the children every week. It might be coloring pictures from a Christian coloring book. “Good” is a lot better than nothing, but “acceptable” is one step closer to “perfect.” “Acceptable” is when there is more than just baby-sitting but has yet to develop into a full blown curriculum. “Acceptable” is when the group pays a person (like a teenager) or accepts a volunteer to not only care for the children, but to also minister to them in some way.

The difficulty of this all is that there is many times a diverse group of children to minister to. What has worked well for me is to let the children care for themselves by letting the older children play with the younger ones. The adult can then read Bible stories to the children as they color pictures. Then you can minister to a wide range of ages.

There are several ministries that offer great children’s materials. Your beliefs and doctrines in Christ will determine where you go for your material. Standard Sunday school material will work fine. Remember, if your cell meeting follows the pattern established in this study, the children are only away from the parents for 60 to 90 minutes and no matter where you are in your children’s cell ministry, the children can always participate in the praise and worship. A normal five years old can stand or sit and participate in praise and worship with the adults.

I have found the cell group to be a great place to discover who is and isn’t disciplining their children. I know as a pastor that there are those untouchable areas. Money and children are two of the most guarded. If the babies are running the house, that home is not in order. If the children are ‘out of control’ so is the house. It amazes me to see powerful men and women of God ordered around by their four to six years old children.

The “not acceptable” is leaving the children at home, because then the children are left out. The cell is a community of believers, and the children are part of that community. I have sometimes heard that the children are the church of tomorrow. That is wrong! Realize they are the church of today! For a cell to accomplish all it must do, provision must be made for the children. Leaving them at home is not the solution.

Another reason is you don’t want to leave out the baby sitters. He or she could possible be taking care of everyone’s children in the “good” or the “acceptable” scenario I have described. That means that only one “bay sitter” is left out of the group discussion, and the entire group benefits from their presence. Then all the other sitters can participate in the cell meeting. Sometimes a teenager that has her own cell group can work in this manner for another group. This works especially well in a new cell group where attendance is still small, and nobody wants to miss out by being with the children.

Chapter X - Youth Cells

The entire cell concept seems to have been created for youth. They have the time and the desire to be with friends. They don’t have a lot of baggage slowing them down. In the church I pastor, and most other churches I know using the G-12 system, more than half of the participants are young people. If you have been looking for a youth program, you just found it!

G-12 uses “gang philosophy” in a positive way. It puts the youth in controllable groups that can be supervised. Positive peer pressure works tremendously in the group to reinforce Biblical standards of living and solid Christian morals. There are always exceptions, but youth on youth really keeps the iron sharpening iron.

What they have lots of is time! Instead of getting into mischief with all the extra time, they put it to work for God. Several hours a week in meetings is a turn off for adults but its fun for the youth!

The love it! G-12 is the ticket for youth. But remember, there are two keys – all youth groups, and a vision for each youth group.

CHAPTER XI - Evangelism through cells

The Great Commission as set forth by Christ was to make disciples of all nations. The goal of evangelism is salvation of the lost. Evangelism is not an end, but a means to that end. It is a step in the process to fulfilling Jesus' last command. The most effective evangelism is always one-on-one. The massive evangelistic campaigns, television, radio and print all sow the Word, but it is a conversation with a trusted friend that will perform the miraculous. This doesn't in anyway insinuate that a prayer for salvation is any less real if it prayed in a campaign or as a result of some form of mass media. I simply mean to say that when a person passes from spiritual death to spiritual life, it sure is nice to have someone to go through it with you. The greatest miracle of all is when a lifeless spiritual being, through faith, becomes a new creature.

Cell evangelism is so effective for this very reason; it organizes personal evangelism. The G-12 cell structure facilitates the organization of personal evangelism because provides common interest or a contact point from which to talk to people who don't know Jesus. Since every G-12 has a theme or vision, it helps rally people together. According to information I have been exposed to, and from my personal experience, I would say that only one out of every hundred people will attend a church service after responding to an altar call in a campaign or some form of Christian mass media. Why such a low number? Because they don't have any people they know in the church or fellowship. Have you noticed that if a person doesn't make a friend within the first few visits to a church group, they usually don't return. Church is all about relationships. The more relationships a person has with people in a church, the greater likelihood that they will stay in that fellowship. The cell fosters and develops relationships so people feel comfortable about being discipled and thus are more likely to remain in church. A G-12 cell works from two direction – personal contacts and similar interests. Let's take a look at both of these.

Evangelization through Personal Contacts

Personal contacts are people that you have relationships with through family and work – people that you already have contact with on a regular basis. These people are always the easiest to reach because they are people that have a relationship with you. They already know you and trust you. Every time someone comes to Jesus there is a whole little community that is affected by that salvation. The testimony of one sinner coming to Jesus has the potential of affecting several hundred people.

According to funeral homes and restaurants, one person has the ability to affect a very large number of people. The Restaurant Association says that one bad meal can affect as many as 2500 patrons! Why? The patron who received the bad meal will tell someone, who in turn will tell someone else until the story has reached out into the community. Word of mouth has always been the best, or in some cases the worst, advertisement. Indeed, it has been known to either make or break a new business. I hope you can begin to see how powerful the cell concept is in terms of affecting large numbers of people.

If word of mouth can work that way in offense, it can work that way for good! Imagine this.... a man through a friend is invited to a cell group meeting. While at this meeting he receives Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Within a few weeks that man's life starts to make some major changes. He feels the need to be more sensitive to the needs of his wife and children. Selfish habits start to fade away in favor of acts on behalf of others. Vices or carnal desires start to give way to a greater need to attend church services and get to know God better. He begins to get control over undesirable things in his life. As a result of all of this, those close to the man want to know what is going in his life. Indeed, they begin to wonder if they be changed for the better like him. Every time a person receives Jesus through this man's testimony, the process starts all over again.

Witnessing becomes the starting point for evangelism. We are living epistles or living testimonies of Christ. People start asking us what we have because they see something in us they need and want. Evangelism is not knocking someone in the head with the Bible! On the contrary, it is sharing with a person who is asking you how they can also be changed. It's natural easy and fun! Once a person gets experience testifying to those around him, they usually become confident enough to begin witnessing to others in their life.

While it is true that this witnessing process goes on in regular, non-cell churches, it is also true that gaining entry into these churches is tougher. Why? Because the traditional church has a hard outer shell which makes a penetration into the church community and fellowship often more difficult. No, it is not actually more difficult to walk into a traditional church building, but it is more difficult to find your place in the "society" of the church. Weaving through the maze of special interest groups and little clicks can be quite a chore. That's why so few are actually added to Body of Christ after all the evangelistic events, special outreach programs, and advertising. After a giant gospel campaign at huge expense, a new couple attends the church service for the first time...only to drop out a month later because they didn't make any friends. So you see, the size of the church is not really the issue; it's the openness and friendliness that counts. Unfortunately, the friendliest church in the world cannot achieve its goals if the handshake at the front door is not followed up by an invitation to a home.

A cell church, on the other hand, has an easy entry threshold. The soft spot is the home meetings; a house environment is much less intimidating than a church environment. Remember, the number one reason new people drop out of church is because they don't find relationships there. I cannot stress the importance of relationships enough. They are imperative not only to new growth but to continuing church attendance and participation. Without relationships, the new comer grows cold and eventually drops out, leaving the church on a negative note. Now instead of that couple reaching their community for Christ, they become a dropout.

I conducted a little survey on our first time visitors in the Sunday morning worship services. Ten percent said that they attended the church for the first time because of what they had seen on television. Five percent attributed it to other things such as radio, billboards and direct mail. An overwhelming 85% said it was because someone had asked them to attend. Where would you invest your time and money? In the 10% return, the 5% return, or the 85% return?

People and relationships are where the emphasis should be. This is why the cell church is superior in retaining and multiplying. The cell church puts the most emphasis on building relationships. These positive relationships in turn spawn more positive relationships as the cell church grows.

Evangelization Through Like Interest:

Every G-12 cell has central point of interest for various reasons – for direction, motivation and evangelization. The G-12 cell is a tremendous aid to evangelism because it has the potential of attracting people completely outside the Christian circle – people who's family and friends have no acquaintance with Christ or church. Cell vision has the ability to draw in the non-churched that would never be reached in any other way.

Reaching people outside your circle of friends or work acquaintances is a little different than reaching people through like interest. All like interest really does is provide a platform for friendship. Talking to a stranger about a common interest develops an interest in one another, which in turn develops into friendship. It all gets down to fellowship and personal relationships.

Follow-up

The goal of all follow-up is the same – discipleship. Evangelism involves bringing a lost person to Christ. Follow-up involves bringing them to the believers fellowship. Discipleship involves training that person to be successful at evangelism and follow-up. Evangelism is the process to get a person to attend the cell or church service for the first time – then the follow-up process begins. It doesn't necessarily involve praying a prayer of salvation with a person. If you can get them to church, the Word of God will bring them to a decision

Even though the follow-up process can begin in different locations, it needs to begin with the same information. It doesn't, however, have to be something requiring huge bureaucratic maneuvers. Once a person makes a single visit to either a church or a cell, information should be gathered on them. A simple card requesting sufficient information so that the person may be contacted, preferably at home, will do quiet nicely. This "information card" should be given to the cell leaders still developing their groups into consolidation. If the first visit is to a cell group, however, this step need not happen. Once the information card is in the hand of the cell leader, an intense follow-up should be set in motion. It is critical to contact the person or family that visited as soon as possible after their visit. Many choose to call the same or following day by sending a personal letter thanking them and inviting them to return. The challenge is letting that person know that he or she is special to God and your church without pestering or annoying them. Because of self-condemnation, guilt and fear, a kind letter of invitation or a friendly call can be perceived as pushy. The real key to follow-up is knowing just how hard to push. That is why a cell group encounter has a greater advantage than a church service because it gives leadership greater insight into the character and personality of the person being followed up.

Follow-up or tracking new believers is a little different for friends and family than it is for following up people that come in because of common interest. When our friends or acquaintances are drawn into the church, follow-up is natural. We are already in regular communication with friends and after all, that is all follow-up is – communication, motivation, and encouragement. Follow-up with a new acquaintance based on a common interest, however, involves more dedication and energy. The wonderful excuse is the common interest. The Jesus connection, especially for the un-churched, is many times too intense for most people. A conversation about computers or children followed by a gentle reminder about this week's meeting is much more comfortable for most people.

Another delicate contact is when a person commits to attending a meeting, especially a cell meeting and doesn't show up. That almost always requires a personal visit. A definite 'no-no' is to ask where they were. That is a very confrontational question. If someone committed to attend meeting then he or she knows why you are paying them a visit, you don't need to compound the guilt or condemnation by asking hard questions. So what do you do in a situation like this. Initiate a light conversation, one in which you casually bring up how the meeting went and what it did for you personally; this will go much further than condemnation. A personal visit will go a long way in establishing trust and friendship to a person on the 'outside' of the Christian faith. Anybody not in Christ is hurting and needs help. Many are so lost they don't know where to start. A new Christian friend is an entrance to a new world of hope. Fears and anxieties keep people from fulfilling their commitments. Reinforcing hope and love will do more to establish someone in discipleship than condemnation. That is the very reason they never went to church in the first place.

Once the follow-up process is started, it is very important that it be followed through to its completion. Completion of the follow-up process means that the person is in discipleship in the cell or regularly attending church services. Until one of these two things occur follow-up should be continued. Following up on someone for more than two months without any success usually means "don't bother me any more." Follow-up on those from cults could go on longer while those from other churches much shorter. The goal is not to shift sheep but to save the lost.

CHAPTER XII - How to Develop Successful Relationships within the Cell

Relationships are the essence of the quality of our lives. Whether we are single, married, widowed, or somewhere in between, our relationships and friendships form the backbone which gives meaning to our lives. Moms, dads, brothers, sisters, friends, co-workers, teachers, students, bosses, roommates, employees, teammates – all are people with whom we have relationships. In every

case, problems are their middle name. There has never been, nor ever will be, a relationship free of challenges.

How do we cope with relationship problems? Volumes have been written on this subject. Since the days of Adam and Eve, human beings have been trying to gain some insight into how we can improve our relationships. And since Adam and Eve, we've definitely had a tough time of it. If you are married, have children, or work you have relational challenges.

Troubled relationships are not limited to those between human beings. After they sinned in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had great difficulty in their relationship with God. In Genesis 3:9, God's first question to man was, "Adam, why are you hiding?" When God asked Adam the critical question about whether he had eaten forbidden fruit from the tree, Adam admitted that he had but put the blame on Eve. Eve also made excuses for eating the fruit. Since that day, relationships between people, as well as between people and God, have been troubled.

Why all the trouble in relationships? Part of the problem is that we humans are so wonderfully complex. Not only do we have trillions of cells fusing into a biochemical matrix called flesh, we are also spiritual beings formed in to the likeness of an enormously complex God. No saint has ever had a neat little life. The apostles Peter and Paul had relationship problems and so did many other people in the Bible. Everybody needs to have better relationships.

In this chapter I want to examine the basics when it comes to relations within a cell group setting.

Here are four simple ideas to consider when wrestling with relational problems within the call.

First, most of us spend much of our time responding or reacting to problems in a relationship rather than finding out what the problem really is so that we can creatively work toward some resolution.

Another way we handle problems is to talk about them or gossip and complain instead of working in love to solve the problem.

Second, when describing a relationship problem, think of that problem in the form of verbs rather than nouns. In other words, don't just say that he or she is weird; that only labels the person and makes problem solving more difficult. Instead, define the actions of that person, exactly what it is, that bothers you.

Third, beware of "either/or" categories. Saying, so and so is either stupid or a fool does no one any good. We want to be 'right' so badly that we lose the ability to solve the problem. A win/lose situation usually means that both parties will eventually lose.

Fourth, each of us is 100 percent responsible for all of our relationship difficulties. This may seem like a shocking to say; nevertheless, it's true. I found this principle shocking myself the first time I heard it.

Too often we think our relationships are percentages such as 50/50 or 60/40 or even 70/30. In reality however, the mathematics of relationships are really 100/100. Going halfway has never been God's solution for a relationship. Each of us is totally responsible for the relationship because the only person that you can ever change is yourself. If you want to help your spouse, child, friend, or whomever, than work on the problems rather than the symptoms. Recognize again and again that the only person you have the real power to change is yourself. Nothing is a greater obstacle to being in good relationships with others than being ill at ease with yourself. When you want more passion and zest in your life then put more into yourself and your relationship with God. If you rely solely on others to provide your passion, you'll usually end up frustrated.

Self-love is a concept too often confused with vanity and pride. We think it's selfish to love ourselves, when in reality it is selfish not to. When we don't love ourselves we take from others in order to fill our own emptiness. It is important to realize that the better you feel about yourself, the better you'll feel about your relationships. All of our relationships with people begin with our relationship with God. Christ has shown Himself among us. God has made His dwelling place with us. And this is what sets us free to love each other. Unfortunately, we often expect the world or others to provide us with the kind of peace, security and love that only comes from the Kingdom of God dwelling within us.

Realize the Importance of Relationships

In the Chinese language, whole words are written with a symbol. Often two completely different symbols put together have a meaning quite different than either of their two separate components. For example, the symbols for “man” and for “woman” when combined mean “good.” Likewise, when you take the symbol for “trouble” and “gathering crisis” and put them together, they mean “opportunity.” As the answers to life always lie in the questions, so the opportunities of life lie in our problems.

Some people have strong, loving relationships with people around them who support and enhance their lives. They are excited to discover more about relational situations to further enhance the relationships they already have. Others are in situations where their lines of communication may have broken down in some of the most important relationships of their lives, such as their families. I must confess that at times I have been totally overwhelmed with relational problems. If we’re honest, we probably all have been. While relationships add great richness to our lives, they can also add great pain. Within relationships exist some of life’s most complex and most painful problems.

We were made to be with each other, to grow with each other, to discover each other, and to love each other. However, it’s not quite as simple as that. We must forge our relationships together. It takes great effort and care to enjoy good relations. In order to have these good relations, we must be good at solving our problems with each other. In this light, I would like to offer a few suggestions.

Don’t blame

The only person I cannot help is one who blames others. When we blame others, we make it difficult, if not impossible, to solve our problems. When problems invade our lives, and they inevitably do, we must resist the temptation to accuse others, as well as to blame ourselves or to blame God. Focus on the problem, not the person. Figure out the problem. If these have been failures, we have to confess them in ourselves and forgive them in others. Put the problem in perspective and get on with problem solving.

Protect or learn

Conflict doesn’t cause problems in relationships, instead problems evolve from how we respond to conflict. When faced with conflict, we can choose to respond in two ways, either protect or learn. We must ask ourselves if we’re trying to defend and protect ourselves, or if we’re trying to learn from our experiences. Seeing conflict as opportunity rather than calamity put it into a new light.

You may think this sound ridiculous, if not impossible, but we must face emotional pain willingly. Yes, this does make sense. If we stop putting the blame on others and assume responsibility for our own lives, change becomes possible. Our relational problem solving will always be unsuccessful as long as our primary interest is protective. Problems will be solved and we will be changed if we commit ourselves to openness and learning.

Deal with real issues

The western world has been programmed very narrowly. Define problems, seek solutions, set goals, make decisions, fix things. Fix your spouse, children, or yourself. When we see something we don’t like, we judge it and we want to change it rather than to understand it. We look for immediate solutions instead of seeking to understand how and why the problem arose.

It is because of this that most problems never really get solved; they are never accepted. Although hiding from problems is easier than facing them, avoidance never solved anything. There is no such thing as an “appropriate” time in relational problems. Deal with your problem now – don’t wait. The Bible says not to let the sun go down on your anger. (Eph. 4: 26). We must recognize when we have a problem and find the first available moment to ‘discuss it while it is still in its proper proportion’. Leftover problems, not only grow stale but also begin to mold. The best technique I know for solving and stopping problems before they get blown out of proportion, is to spend time with the person(s) involved....talking about your feelings and the current issues.

Listen

Love is a four letter word spelled t-i-m-e. The way you show someone you care for them is to spend time with them and listen intently to them. One of the best ways to demonstrate God's love is to listen to people. Listening is the key to quality cell leadership. People feel good when someone listens to them. I promise that everyone that feels like they got "heard" will feel satisfied after the meeting and they will look forward to coming to the cell meeting again the following week. That is exactly why a cell group meeting is not a Bible study; it is not a time for the leader to speak, but to listen. A good leader encourages others to speak so that they might feel satisfied and fulfilled.

Communication is the key to success. The word "communication" comes from the Latin root "*communus*," meaning: to have something in common. Communication breaks down most often as a result of our inability to listen. According to some research studies, the single biggest reason couples split up is the "inability to talk honestly with each other, to bare their souls, and to treat each other as their best friend."

Listening, surprisingly, is the most important aspect of communication. A well-know professor claims that couples chat with each other for seventy minutes a day in their first year of marriage, dropping to thirty minutes in the fourth. His research shows that by the eight year, a husband and wife share hardly any small talk at all and become nearly silent. Shocking? Not really, when you consider the findings of other scholars. Studies show that in some nations couples talk with each other for only 28 minutes a week. That's a daily ration of less than four minutes a day!

Communication, however, involves much more than words. One authority said that only 7% of our communication involves spoken words, another 38% is conveyed by body language including gestures and facial expressions, and 55% by the tone of our voice.

Listening is perhaps the most profound way you demonstrate to others that you love them. Strangely enough, listening is perhaps the most potent way we can affect another life. It is impossible to overemphasize the immense need humans have to be really listened to, to be taken seriously, to be understood. No one can develop freely in this world and have a fulfilling life without feeling understood by at least one person. Listen to all conversations of our world, between nations as well as between couples. They are for the most part dialogues of the deaf!

The most important thing we can do to solve problems is to understand it. Unfortunately, we never listen long enough to understand what the problem really is, so we in turn are never able to solve it. Instead of listening, we simply take turns talking. To listen effectively, postpone your desire to react, defend, talk back or respond. The purpose of listening is to allow both of you to understand the situation more fully. Listening attentively makes people feel special.

The people I work with find it extremely helpful to get firm, concrete answers from their partners to these three questions:

- What does it mean to you to be loved?
- What does it take for you to feel loved?
- What are you asking of me?

This then reveals seven levels of needs that people to have in order to be loved:

- Feeling safe
- Feeling defended
- Feeling supported
- Belonging
- Feeling cared about
- Feeling accepted
- Feeling special

If it works with your spouse, it will work in a cell setting too. Everybody wants to be loved. I believe that nothing makes people feel supported, cared about, accepted, and special as much as listening to them. Active listening is responsive, attentive, and considerate. It means listening with your eyes as well as your ears. When someone really listens to us, it gives us the freedom to

continue to explore, at deeper levels, who we are and what the problems is. Love is best demonstrated by attentive listening.

Design Creative Questions

We can cultivate our listening ability by designing and asking appropriate questions. For example:

What dreams have you thrown away, or kept secret, because no one encouraged you to try it or you feared you would fail?

If you could do anything in the world and be certain of success, what would you do?

In what three specific ways could we improve our everyday communication? Where are we strong in communicating? Where do we hit targets?

In the cell group these types of questions are called ice breakers. Questions that stimulate people to start talking and others to start listening. The list of good questions is endless. All we need to ask are questions that deepen our relationships. Really good questions are those in which both people discover something about themselves.

Seven Steps to Overcoming Relational Problems:

Accept ownership of the problem. Even if you believe that the other person is at fault, if you care about the relationship, it is still your problem. Once you accept ownership of the problem you will be willing to commit your time and energies to solving it.

Analyze the problem. Take the problem apart and identify its various components. Often this means untangling numerous problems so that you can focus on them one at a time. This is a good time to ask “dumb questions” to challenge your assumptions, to keep a broad prospective, and to avoid getting emotionally hooked.

Define the problem in the best terms you know. Develop a workable definition that all parties can agree to and write it down. It is critical here to separate the symptoms from the real cause of the problem. Remember: the flip side of criticism is idealism. If somebody is struggling with being too cynical, that’s the symptom, they need to wrestle with the problem, which is their hidden idealism. In other words, you don’t try to help the person become less cynical, but help him to be more realistic. That is working on the core of the problem. Likewise, anger and apathy are expressions of frustration. Frustration begets anger, anger begets apathy. Instead of reacting to anger or apathy, listen to his or her frustration.

Brainstorm. What are all the possible solutions that could be employed at this time? Any time you can “make it fun”, you will improve not only the quantity of ideas, but the quantity as well. Take this opportunity to listen intently to others. Sometimes we have to take a risk and suggest outrageous ideas. If you want change, you must be willing to think sideways, backwards, around corners, and upside down. Limiting yourself to your regular patterns of thinking restricts you to seeing what you’ve always seen before with little chance for change or improvement in your problem solving.

Select a course of action to which everybody involved can commit. It is important to be able to articulate clearly why you believe this is the best selection. If you know why this is the best plan, you will be much less likely to abandon it when the way becomes difficult.

Implement. You’ve planned your work, now work you plan. Work lovingly, there is great joy in a well-built relationship. Remember to tap the resources of the Master. To do this, bathe your work in prayer.

Evaluate. This is another chance to learn from your problem, even if you weren’t successful in solving it. What you learn and how you learn it will allow you to move into deeper levels of mutual understanding and appreciation.

Relational problems are process oriented. We will always be in process, but I hope that some of those techniques will enable you to gain greater definition of your problem and to find healthy, loving solutions. Not all of these techniques are recommended, however, for the cell group setting.

Some of the processes given here for problem solving are best done privately between parties involved, remembering of course that singles of different sexes need to bring a friend along.

In the heat of conflict, it is easy to forget the goals of your relationships. Wanting to be right is easier than wanting to be understood or wanting to understand. These principles of relational problem solving won't help you build defenses, but they will help you to attack the problem and not the person. You cannot afford to neglect the incredible power of love. Remember that God is love and that he who dwells in love, dwells in God and God in him. This love makes us fearless, and where there is no fear, there is true understanding.

The power of God's love will never be contained nor understood. It is available to all and can literally produce miracles in relationships. Love is by far the most important of all. It casts out fear. It covers a multitude of sin. Love is absolutely invincible. There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; no disease that enough love cannot heal; no door that enough love will not open; no gulf that enough love will not bridge, no wall that enough love will not throw down, no sin that enough love will not redeem. It makes no difference how deep the trouble, or how helpless the outlook; or how muddled the tangle, or how great the mistake; sufficient love will dissolve it all! I believe that when we put God, who is Love, in the center of our relationships, He can transform them. He empowers us to influence each other's lives.

The reason for the cell church, after all, is to better express the love of God, not to have a bigger church as first priority. A cell setting expresses the love of God better than a church service setting because it provides an opportunity for people to be heard instead of only listening to someone else. The key to any great relationship is attentive listening.

CHAPTER XIII - HOW TO START A G-12 APPROACH IN YOUR CHURCH

The pastors of larger churches, both currently in cells and not in cells, will most probably have a group of successful cell leaders or supervisors / staff whom they can start working with right away. In the case of the smaller or newer churches, the pastor will need to be more careful whom he pulls into his group. Remember all G-12 cells start out as an open cell. Don't make hasty decisions based on perceived needs. Wait on God to assist you in selecting the people in your cell church.

Waiting and watching a person's performance and anointing for an extra few weeks or months could save you untold problems and challenges down the road. Every person has a position but it might not be in your group.

As the pastor's group slowly materializes, he can start consolidating his group of disciples. His disciples can then begin to duplicate the pastor's efforts by growing their own cells. All disciples need official permission before starting a cell. It helps to eliminate any confusion. Just because someone is a disciple doesn't mean that they are automatically a cell group leader.

The G-12 will slowly, at first, begin to take over the church. Any pulpit announcements or coaching will be acknowledging what is happening, not making it happen. The pulpit will be the place for edification and exhortation, not condemnation for not participating.

The Lord has admonished us not to despise small beginnings. Whether you are pasturing 5000 or 5, the process is exactly the same. Assemble your 12 just like Jesus. Pour you life into them, holding nothing back. As they are ready, release them to do the same thing while still maintaining their relationship with you. Isn't this what Jesus did? He sent them out, and they returned full of thanksgiving and praise for all that the Lord had done through them!

It is very important to understand that it will take time. In some cases a long time. The best case scenario is a young church. In a new setting the cells will take off quickly. In an old established traditional church it can take years for the new system to be accepted. The old guard will usually fight it all the way. If you don't get discouraged and stay with it, the cells will truly bless the church in many ways. The least of which will be a leadership that understands the challenges of the ministry and a mutual respect within the church among the leadership.

Brief Overview of Cell Church or G-12 Concept Strategy

In response to Jesus' command to go and make disciples, the cell church strategy has enormous potential for success, multiplication growth and true discipleship in a friendship and relationship based setting and context. Some of its dynamics are briefly highlighted below, trusting the Holy Spirit's guidance in filling in the nitty-gritty details of the same.

Some of the main keys are: (1) true discipleship, (2) careful selection of your cell group, (3) through training new leaders multiply, and (4) heavy emphasis and dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

Starting your cell

Start evangelising and reaching out to people whom you would like to be saved and become part of your cell. Welcome all who want to follow Christ and grow your cell to about 15 to 20 people maximum.

Secondly, observe, discern, and pray for those who you believe you can train for leadership and in whom you see the potential to start and lead a new cell.

This is why each cell must have a vision or focal point (within the church vision), a common interest, that which homogenizes, what brings the group together! Group activities like: fellowship, evangelism, sharing Christian life, etc. Thus establish your vision at the beginning of your cell, this will enable people to identify! It's important to note that a cell is not a Bible study, but its goal is to fellowship with God and with each other. Helping people grow towards God and others! This will enable them to lead others and multiply.

Summed up in: WIN -- CONSOLIDATE -- DISCIPLE -- SEND ("Ladder of success") **The**

hallmarks of a cell

Hallmarks of a genuine cell are four: worship, nurture, fellowship and outreach.

In worship believers will seek to be Christ-centered, coming under His authority.

They will nurture each other from the Word of God, seeking to apply its teaching to their every day lives, and being transformed in thinking by renewal of their mind.

In fellowship they will seek to fulfil Christ's command to love one another and build up each other, and share life in true and loyal friendships and relationships.

Looking beyond considering their own needs and being moved by a strong desire to fulfil Christ's call upon every believer to win the lost and make disciples, they will win the lost and multiply into new cells.

A short note on cell dynamics

As your cell grows and the leader gets to know the members by interaction, developing a rapport with each one and interpersonal sharing, friendship bonds will naturally begin to develop, leading to growing trust, deeper sharing and further transparency. Thus a person's friendships will be on two levels:

- (i) with the members of the cell in which you are a member too (horizontal level). Here you will have your deepest friendships, and develop bonds for life.
- (ii) with the persons of the cell which you lead (vertical level). Here you are in the situation comparable with that of a parent or elder brother or sister, and the members of your cell will tend to look up to you.

Remember: # your cell church is the one where you are a member!

as a growing and trained disciple you will also lead a cell church! Here you are the cell leader!

In the cell church vision each person is: FIRST a disciple, and THEN a cell leader!

This call for two weekly meetings: With your cell church, and with the cell you lead!

Growing from an open cell to a G-12 (or closed cell) church

As you start your cell new people will keep joining as you serve people by keeping in touch with them (phoning and visiting), praying for them and their needs, taking interest in them, their lives,

problems, situations, etc. (learn to listen and remember what was shared, yet being confident and discreet), helping in practical situations when required, answering their questions, explaining the Word of God to them and through all this demonstrating the love of God, people will surely congregate! Every place where godly character, fellowship and communion is experienced will draw people!

Once you grow your cell to some 15 to 20 people, you as leader choose the 12 you want to train as leaders, and whom you want to retain in your cell! These 12 will then be trained to become leaders, after which they will start and open their cells. After each of these 12 have opened their own cells, you now close your cell church to new comers, and only meet with these 12 leaders. Based on invitation and mutual willingness the open cell becomes now a closed cell church or G-12. Those who stay in the G-12 make a long-term commitment to their cell-leader to stay in the cell which is based on (in principle) life long friendships.

Within the G-12 cell, just like Jesus with His disciples, you may have one very close friend, 3 - 4 close friends, and good friendship with all. Each of your 3 to 4 close friends may relate more closely to two or three within your cell.

As you make the transition from an open cell to a closed cell church, special sensitivity is required in relating to those who are being transferred to another cell. This transfer is necessary because: (i) they haven't grown much spiritually, or (ii) they have very limited leadership potential to lead a new cell. Utmost care should be taken that those members do not get hurt in the transfer. A leader may transfer those extra members to another leader (horizontal transfer) or to members who are starting their new cells (vertical transfer).

(Note: disciples in your cell church can already start their own cell churches before you consolidate into a G-12. Rather, they have to in order to be confirmed in the G-12)

Overview of the G-12 structure:

The G-12 always starts as an open cell. This means anybody from anywhere may attend. The meeting place can be anywhere at anytime for about one hour and a half. Although the G-12 starts as an open cell, it should have a focus or vision from the beginning. It's important to have a common goal to help establish and maintain lasting relationships.

As the cell grows, the leader begins to select his disciples (those who will ultimately become permanent, committed and loyal members based on friendship relationships. People who do not "grow or flow" or connect to the leader or who are not faithful to the cell vision are passed on to other cells (either horizontally or vertically).

Once an open cell church closes into a G-12 (or closed cell church), it then becomes a management team helping it's disciples grow and consolidate their cell.

As the G-12 consolidates the G-12 cell process multiplies itself twelve times.

Each multiplication is known as a "generation" or "level".

Suggested meeting order segmentation (about 90 minutes):

Introduction/ ice breaker/ welcome: 10 min.

Worship: 20 min.

Fellowship around the Word: 30 min.

Prayer/ intercession: 25 min.

Impartation of vision/ announcements: 5 min.

P.S. - Make every effort to stick to exact starting time and proper ending time.

Remember: "The least one shall become a clan, and the smallest one a mighty nation; I am the Lord; in its time I will hasten it." (Is. 60: 22)

The practical application and potential:

			No Of cells	Cell mem- bers	Total Number of Persons
Level 1:	O	O	2	1 x 12 =	24
Level 2:	O O O O O O O O O O O O O O	O O O O O O O O O O O O O O	2x2	12 x 12 =	288
Level 3:	...O O O...O O O.....O O O...O O O.....	2x144	x12 =	3,456
Level 4:	...O O O...O O O.....O O O...O O O.....	2x1,728	x 12=	41,472
Level 5:	etc.		2x20,736	x 12=	500,000

A further note on "The Ladder of success"

Within the cell church strategy, the process can be summed up, as mentioned above, in the four terms of: WIN -- CONSOLIDATE -- DISCIPLE -- SEND

These four verbs, indicating different phases of growth as a cell, stand briefly for:

WIN - winning persons to Christ during the open cell church phase by both the leader and members of the cell.

CONSOLIDATE - new believers are consolidated during a short retreat with basic Bible study, prayer, and ministry. Subjects covered are: repentance, forgiveness, breaking of curses, deliverance, inner healing, sharing on water baptism, Holy Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues, sharing of cell church vision.

DISCIPLE - training the believer to enable him to become a leader of a new cell, and during this training process the disciple opens already his own cell. He becomes part of the G-12 cell church and his own cell starts multiplying.

SEND - the new leader now multiplies the G-12 strategy on his own.

THE G - 12 OR CELL – CHURCH STRATEGY APPLIED

Chapter 1 - WHAT IS A CELL?

Our bodies consist of millions and millions of cells working in unison. We cannot live without them. Each cell carries within itself the DNA, the genetic coding, or blueprint of life. Through our bodies we can reach out and touch the world around us. Otherwise we would be disembodied spirits, unable to influence and impact our world. By nature cells will seek to multiply themselves, reproducing after their own kind, or transitioning to fulfil different functions according to hormonal influences. What is true of the physical body is true of the Body of Christ, the Church. After all, truth is parallel.

Spiritual DNA

We see that the origins of the Church began with Jesus calling the twelve to Him. His master plan was to create a small intimate fellowship of disciples around Him, pouring His life – His ‘DNA’ into them. It was in this small ‘cell’ gathering that Jesus built relationship with them, taught and trained them, imparted authority and power, and sent them out to minister and witness.

“Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach and to have power to heal sickness and cast out demons.” (Mark 3:14-15). Later, the Holy Spirit would reproduce the same kind of ministry in the lives of subsequent believers. After Pentecost, we see that the life and vigour of the Early Church are maintained by their large, corporate gatherings in the Temple, and are complemented with their much smaller fellowship meetings in believers homes (Acts 2:41 - 47).

The apostles had a cell vision

A vital church grows in Jerusalem. It is a church endued with supernatural power (Acts 2:43). The DNA of Jesus has been successfully reproduced from Christ’s twelve to this burgeoning new church in Acts (Acts 4:13). They know how to construct their lives upon the Word of God. They know how to create close fellowship with each other so that no one in need. They know how to reach out in revival power to the lost, restoring damaged lives. They know how to draw the attention of both God and man (Acts 2:47). Integral to the Holy Spirit finding a welcome place in the life of the early church was the place of the ‘cell’ gatherings.

After the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, the Church grew rapidly and spread throughout the entire known world of that time. They erected no church buildings of their own. How, then, did they achieve such explosive growth? They continued to meet in each other’s homes as cell churches.

Throughout the history of the Church, whenever the Holy Spirit needed to move in revival power, the phenomena of cells was used as the structure to convey His restorative works. A prime example is the ministry of John Wesley and his ‘classes’ for believers. In more recent history, over the last thirty years, we see those churches throughout the world that are experiencing explosive growth are Cell Churches.

The hallmarks of a cell

What are the hallmarks of genuine cell? There are four: worship, nurture, fellowship and outreach. In worship believers will seek to be Christ-centered, coming under His authority. They will nurture each other from the Word of God, seeking to apply its teaching to their everyday lives. They will seek to fulfil to Christ’s command to love one another and build up each other in fellowship. However, they will go beyond considering their own needs. They will be motivated to fulfil Christ’s call upon every believer: win the lost and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). It is this last component that singles out a true cell from a mere Bible study or prayer group.

Without worship, the group would be dry. Without the Word, they would become sub-Christian. Without fellowship, they would become cold. And without outreach, a cell would become introspective and self – absorbed. As someone once said: “A Church that lives for itself dies by itself!” The Church is the only institution that exists for the benefit of its non-members.

We finish where we started. Like the biological cell, a cell of believers will be the basic building block of the Body of Christ. They will transmit the DNA of Christ. They will seek to multiply themselves, reproducing after their own kind, via the Ladder of Success. And where necessary existing groups will need to transition to different functions in order to fulfil the four – fold agenda of cell ministry.

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise”. (Proverbs 11:30).

Chapter 2 - A CELL CHURCH OR A CHURCH WITH CELLS?

Many churches around the globe have a place for small groups. Some see them as a vital part of their life and vision while others have virtually no place for them at all. It is time to re-think how we do “church.” Many churches and movements are looking for an effective model for cell ministry. But the starting point must be an understanding of cells as central to church life. Biblically speaking, cells are not just one of the programs of the church. Rather, they are the fundamental means by which ‘church’ happens. That is, they are the way of nurturing, training and mobilizing the members of Christ’s body. And for that reason they are the principal component of a truly New Testament Church.

A New Testament approach to church

The apostles of the New Testament could never have achieved what they did without a cell church vision. For example, in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, 3,000 people were added to the church. They were baptized in water, and they all continued steadfast in the faith. They were all taught in the apostles’ doctrine. They were all faithful in prayer, witness and were all a committed part of the fellowship. This is a far cry from today’s situation where up to 93% of those who make a commitment to Christ fall away from it and only 30% of those who get as far as some form of church involvement actually persist.

There are many reasons for the success of the early church but without a doubt one of the most significant of these in the Jerusalem church was their cell emphasis. “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart...” (Acts 2:46). As well as the large meetings in the Temple courts, they met regularly in one another’s homes. These were not just house meetings or home fellowship groups as found in the traditional approach to small groups today. They were cells – that is, micro churches or cell churches - doing everything that a church should do. They witnessed, they evangelized, they fellowshiped, they prayed, they nurtured and they cared for the poor – all in the cells. Nothing else adequately explains their effectiveness in making disciples and their experience of explosive growth.

The church in miniature

This concept of the cell group or cell church has little in common with the traditional approach to house groups in many churches today. Home fellowship groups, prayer groups, special interest groups, Bible study groups may all have something to offer, but they are not cell groups. What is cell group then? Cells are “the organizing of the body of believers in small groups for the purpose of worship, experiencing God, ministering to one another and ministering to and evangelizing the community.” In short, cells do everything that the ‘church’ does – only in miniature. This means that the cell is the primary unit of ‘church’ where the real work of the church goes on.

Cell church or traditional church?

This leads to a number of significant differences between a cell church and a traditional church. A traditional church is programme centered, but a cell church is people centered. A traditional church is built on the strength of its magnificent programmes. If you have bigger and better programmes then you have a bigger and better church! But the church is not just about programmes; it is about people. This people centered approach can only be consistently sustained in a church where the

central thrust of its ministry is reaching people who primarily relate in the small group setting and not just in the big services.

A traditional church is building centered. Usually, this is where it all happens. The size, location and architecture of the church building then determine the activity of the church. People assume that once the meeting is over and the building is vacated, then church is over for another week. But in a cell church that cannot happen. The cell church is community centered, not building centered because the members in their cells undertake the main work of the church. The central services then become a celebration of what God has done throughout the week and a preparation for more of the same in the coming week.

The traditional church sends the signal to one and all, "Come!" But the cell church's message is, "Go!" The traditional church's model of ministry calls for a passive response, "Listen!", while the cell church's clarion call is, "Do!" This is an active model of ministry. The people are empowered to do the ministry of Christ.

All this implies a radical change of thinking on the part of many church leaders today. We must learn the power of cell life in the body of Christ. The G-12 Vision cannot work without a cell church vision. This is the only way we can successfully mobilize the membership of our churches to do the work of Christ and truly function as part of His body.

Chapter 3 - The Values of the G-12 Vision

Every pastor wants to know how to make their church grow. But growth is more than strategy. Every vision from God comes with certain values which sustain it. The G-12 is more than a strategy for growth. It is a fully developed vision for discipleship, nurture and mission. It sets a pattern for church life in this new century.

For some years many churches have placed a high value on intercession, spiritual gifts, spiritual warfare, church growth, evangelism, missions, care for the poor, training and mobilization. All these things are central to the G-12 vision. And they can only be effectively expressed through cells. This is because the dynamic life of the church takes place in the cells.

The vision of many pastors is for mobilisation. This is all about winning, equipping and releasing the body of Christ into the ministry. The church is called to the service of Jesus – not just full-time ministers! A church's size is secondary to this goal of effective mobilisation, but there can be no doubt that those who move forward in this vision are set for explosive growth.

The key to the success of the G-12 is not just the strategy but the values that uphold the Vision. We cannot think that we will be successful simply by adopting the strategy. We must rise to the challenge spiritually, take on new levels of the anointing and above all, embrace all the values that lie beneath the surface.

The G-12 Vision is about discipleship

Jesus said, "Make disciples" (See Matthew 28:19-20). He did not just tell us to evangelise or to get decisions. People who accept the gospel and believe must be disciplined. They must be taught, shaped and formed into the image and character of Jesus. The church often falls short of full obedience in this respect. Many people who make decisions to become Christians are never truly disciplined in the paths of Christ. This must change, and we must all place full obedience to Jesus' command on the highest level of our agenda as people and as churches. (John 14: 15, 21).

The G-12 Vision is for cells

Cells are small groups of people who meet together weekly in order to disciple each other and reach out to those who do not know Christ. We must learn to love the cells. They are where the blessing of growth takes place. Cells are the only way of fulfilling the New Testament mandate we have as believers to be disciples and to disciple others. That is

where you receive the personal ministry you need and where you find and fulfill your ministry in the body of Christ.

The G-12 Vision is for leadership

The name 'G-12' stands for 'the Government of 12' which emphasizes the leadership development aspect of the vision. Every Christian is a potential leader. We are all called to serve Jesus and to lead others to Him. Those who are leading cells are disciplined in groups of 12 (like the 12 disciples of Jesus). Therefore everyone who ministers is also ministered to in this vision. That means there is proper accountability in all things.

The G-12 Vision is for multiplication

This is one of the most exciting aspects of the vision. Jesus' purpose for you is fruitfulness. He wants you to be successful in your life. (John 15: 8). He calls you 'to be fruitful and multiply.' The growth that comes through the G-12 Vision is not through transferring members from the other churches. It comes through the cells as the members reach out to their family, neighbours and friends. This means everyone must develop a passion for the lost and reach them uncompromisingly for Christ.

The G-12 Vision is for the glory of God

Something wonderful happens when God's people are mobilized. The 'super-star syndrome' disappears and the work is done by all. The real heroes in this vision are the members of the church, not a handful of its super-anointed leaders. That way God can really get the glory. Signs, wonders, miracles and mighty deeds happen throughout the whole church and everyone has a part to play.

As you can see the vision is a comprehensive one, and it takes time for a church to implement it. It will bring unrecognizable transformation to the way we think about church fellowship and to the way we do things. The cost will be high. But the rewards will be worth it.

Chapter 4 - The Heart of the Vision

The G-12 model facilitates the multiplication of cell churches, the training of new leaders and the discipleship of every member of the body. The aim of the model is that everybody is involved in reaching out to the lost through an open cell, and that everybody becomes a leader; and in time, runs their own open cell. **Everyone is ministered to and everyone becomes a minister.**

The cell groups do not divide – instead they multiply. When a person becomes part of a cell they start to pray and fast for three non-Christians. One by one they are led to Christ and become part of the cell. When the cell has grown to some size the multiplication takes place. Each person in the cell then starts to build a new cell. They continue to receive help, mentoring and encouragement from the original cell, but they also start their own cell. When all the members of the original cell have started their own new cell, the original cell becomes a G-12 group. The G-12 group is made up of leaders who have their own cells and meet for leadership training, to share about their progress, and for encouragement and support.

Chapter 5 - The ladder of success

Success is a very positive word in today's world. Everyone is seeking success. But what does it really mean for a believer? What is success in the eyes of Jesus? As far as Jesus is concerned, there is only one criterion by which we may judge success. All that He has told us to do can be summarized by His final words to the disciples: "Go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to do everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:18-20).

Your life will be judged as successful only in so far as you have fulfilled this commission of Jesus. It means making and maturing disciples into the character and image of Jesus. The G-12 vision is a practical means by which we can all obey the call of our Master and be a success.

Success must mean that your vision, goals and purpose in life are fulfilled. But personal fulfillment depends on your fulfilling the call of God on your life – making, maturing and mobilizing disciples of Jesus Christ. Success means fulfilling the Creation Mandate – “Fill the earth and subdue it.” And this comes with the blessing of God as it says: “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Genesis 1:28).

Success also means stepping into the blessing of Abraham, God says: “I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be blessing....And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12:2-3).

When you obey the Great Commission of Jesus to disciple the nations you step into the blessing of Abraham and he was blessed in all things!

There are four stages in obeying the Great Commission. Each one is necessary for full obedience. They are to: Win, Consolidate, Disciple and Send.

WIN

New believers are added to the church through personal friendship evangelism, the celebrations and the other meetings. At the end of each of the services, the leader takes the whole congregation through the sinners’ prayer and invites those who have made a first time commitment to come to the front. The counseling team, which is made up of cell group leaders, joins the new believers. The new believers are then taken to a separate room and the process of consolidation begins.

CONSOLIDATE

At this point personal details are recorded and the gospel is shared again to ensure that the person understands what has happened to them. The person is then told that someone will call them within two days to find out how they are. The responsibility of the cell leader is to ensure that the new believer is called within 48 hours and receives a personal visit within a week.

The consolidation process continues through a series of one-to-one Bible studies and a special encounter weekend. This encounter retreat focuses upon giving the new believer an experience of Jesus. The weekend covers such areas as: assurance of salvation, inner healing, deliverance, being filled with the Spirit, and the vision of the church. Once the consolidation process is completed the new believer is ready to enter the next stage of development.

DISCIPLE

The aim is to enable every new believer to become a leader of a new cell. Therefore when each disciple has completed the consolidation process they enter the School of Leaders for further training and equipping. The School of Leaders involves training one night a week for about 9 months. About half way through the School of Leaders the students start to open their own cell groups.

Each person on the School of Leaders launches a new cell church. The leader of the new cell continues to receive support, help and instruction from their original cell. As each of the members of the original cell starts their cells the original cell becomes a G-12 group. The G-12 is therefore a leadership cell. Multiplication occurs! The 12 grows to 144 leaders each with their own cell.

SEND

When each of the original leader’s 12 have grown their 12 the next step is for these to begin to form teams to lead Encounter weekends and for them to develop their own School of Leaders. As the multiplication takes place more people are needed to teach in the School of Leaders. Therefore the School of Teachers, or ‘T-track’, shows people how to teach the material and how to see the teaching applied to people’s lives.

Pray, take every opportunity to learn and experience this strategy and start to implement it by climbing the ladder of success.

Ladder of Success Summary:

WIN

New believers are won by personal evangelism, through the cells and through the celebration meetings.

CONSOLIDATE

The new believer is consolidated through the Pre-encounter Bible Studies, the weekend residential Encounter sessions and the Post-encounter Bible studies.

DISCIPLE

The disciple is then trained in the School of Leaders and by being part of a cell church. The disciple then launches a new cell group and becomes part of a G-12 group. Then the leader 12 grow their 12 totaling 144 people. When the cell structure is in place the church is divided into strategic groups or 'nets.'

The nets are made up of the men's cells, the women's cells, the youth cells and the children's cells. The nets meet weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

SEND

The leader then forms teams to run their own Encounters and starts their own School of Leaders. In this way they are released to continue to grow more cells in the church or are sent out into the world to plant cells and churches. The target is particularly the un-evangelised areas of the world.

Chapter 6 - Encounters with Jesus

The G 12 Vision is simple and straightforward. However, there are many parts to it. One of the most important of these is the Encounter Weekend.

The consolidation process is central to the success of the G-12 Strategy. All believers should go through the consolidation process, at the heart of which lies the Encounter experience. There are three parts to the Consolidation process. They are the Pre-Encounter, the Encounter and the Post-Encounter. What are the Encounter Weekends? What is their importance? Does everyone really need to go? What actually happens at these Encounters?

In the Pre-Encounter sessions, the new believer will study basic themes related to his or her new life in Jesus. Someone from the cell group personally takes the new believer through several Bible studies. These cover topics such as: the certainty of salvation, the power of prayer, the power of the Word and principles of deliverance. The aim of the Pre-Encounter is to prepare the believer for the Encounter.

Spiritual preparation

Then comes the Encounter, which usually takes place over a weekend at a residential conference or retreat center. Before every Encounter, the new believer's cell group is encouraged to prepare itself with much prayer, fasting and spiritual warfare, for those participating. Before the Encounter starts, the battle should first have been won in the spiritual realm through spiritual warfare. This way, the cell member will surely have a remarkable encounter with God.

The Encounter is much more than just a two to three day retreat, in a setting away from the normal distractions of life. It should be a time in the life of the believer which he or she will look back to many times and remember their encounter with Jesus!

Meeting with God

In both the Old and New Testaments, the Bible shows men and women experiencing great, life changing encounters with the living God. Abraham had his before he began his journey to be a great nation (Genesis 12) and Moses before he had his before leading the people of Israel into the Promised Land (Joshua 5:13-15) and Isaiah before becoming a prophet of the Most High (Isaiah 6:1-8). Jesus had his before starting his public ministry (Matthew 3:13-16; Luke 4:1a) and Paul

after his conversion and before becoming the master of the theology of the New Testament (Acts 9:3-7). One can find many other examples of contemporary church leaders and their personal encounters with God before they entered into the full ministry that God had prepared for them.

Total transformation

The aim of the Encounter is total transformation that will give birth to the character of Christ in the believer. We need a genuine encounter with God in order to bring about this transformation. It is also an encounter with yourself, when you look inside your life to see the changes that God wants you to make. Finally, the encounter will take you into the depth of the cell vision, making you reflect on the actual situation of the world and its desperate need of the Saviour.

The Encounter deals with the following subjects and issues in depth:

- Repentance
- Forgiveness
- Breaking of Curses
- Deliverance
- Inner Healing
- Baptism with Water
- Baptism with the Holy Spirit
- The G-12 Vision.

Another goal of the Encounter is for you to see the Lord face to face, so that you are released from everything that hinders you in your ministry. The G-12 vision regards everyone as a potential leader and the Encounter is a preparation for the training that takes place at the School of Leaders.

After the Encounter the new believers go through another series of one-to-one Bible studies, which take them deeper into the Word and further consolidates their commitment to Christ. During these teaching session the new believer learns about spiritual warfare, the armour of God, how to resist and overcome temptation, and how to deal with the attacks of the evil one.

Encounters for all

Does this mean that the Encounters are only for new believers? No. They are for everybody. Often believers today have never been truly consolidated in their faith as experienced in the G-12 structure. This means many issues dealt with at the Encounter are still unresolved in their lives. Sadly, they carry pain, bondage and demonic curses for many years and still need to be set free in some areas of their lives.

In the G-12 vision we are all called to lead others to Jesus, see them set free and disciple them into the image of Christ. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul made it clear to Timothy that he should entrust the teaching an instructions that he had learned from Paul to reliable and faithful people. They in turn would then be competent and qualified to teach others. No one can teach and talk about what they have not experienced or received.

In a church transition into the G-12 vision, it is essential that every member goes through the whole process, so they can effectively carry the vision without any distortion. This is like taking up the spiritual DNA of the vision and being ready to pass it on in the discipleship process. The Encounters are not just for your personal benefit. The life-changing, refreshing and empowering experience which the Encounters give are in order for you to go out and impact that live of others through the vision.

Chapter 7 - Schools of Significance

“What shall we do we that we might work the works of God?” (John 6:28). Pick up the call to “make, mature and mobilize disciples” and be thoroughly equipped to rise to a level of significance. Have you ever considered how much God appreciates you? One thing we can be absolutely sure of is that we have eternal significance in God’s eyes. He sees us full of potential and He wants to use us to the full. No matter what our background, education or social standing, we are very valuable to Him. “You are precious and honoured in My sight, because I love you” (Isaiah 43:4).

When Jesus came to save us He did not save us only from our past. He came to save us for a purposeful and productive life. We were not saved simply to drift through life. God knows what He has put in us. He sees us full of significance. “You are the salt of the earth...the light of the world” (Matthew 5:13-14). The world may not have time for us but God does. There is no such thing as unemployment in the kingdom of God. We were made and redeemed of God to be divine appointments. “I chose and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.” (John 15:16). Before Michelangelo sculpted his masterpiece, ‘David’, he saw the potential in the stone. God does the same with each one of us. As the Apostle Paul declared, “We are God’s workmanship (literally “God’s work of art”) created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:10).

Everything we are and all that we have, Christ wants to employ in building His church on earth. Surely, there can be no greater cause to spend our lives on and deserving of our best endeavours. Discipleship is an investment which lasts for eternity and yields incredible rewards (Luke 22:28-30; Mark 10:30).

Partnering with Jesus

How are we to partner with Christ as He is building his Church and seeing the kingdom of God take over the world?

Jesus said, “Go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:19). Every believer shares a common call to reproduce in others that which they have so freely received from Jesus. He said, “Freely you have received, freely give.” (Matthew 10:8). Those who have been discipled should disciple others. This is the evidence of the fruitful life Jesus spoke about in John 15. In similar vein, this is what 1 John 2, Verses 12 – 14 alludes to when believers are described as “fathers or spiritual parents”. The nature of a parent is to reproduce after his or her own kind. The enemy’s work is to alienate parents from their children (Matthew 10:21), but the work of the Spirit of God in the last days is to “turn the hearts of the fathers to the children...” (Malachi 4:6). Spiritual parenting is essentially the work of making disciples. “Feed my lambs....tend my sheep” (John 21:15 – 16).

Feeding and tending new disciples will mean: integrating them into the life of God’s family. This is achieved most effectively through cell ministry. In the cell, the new disciple is built up by close fellowship and trained to become a disciple-maker. The goal of the G-12 Vision is for us to “make mature and mobilise disciples” by starting a cell of our own with people we win to Christ.

“The people are willing in the Lord’s day of power.” We may be willing, saying with Isaiah “Here am I Lord”, but we may not feel equipped or able. In the Bible, not everyone called of God felt ready or able at the outset, yet God resources those He calls. That is why He set apostolic teachers and trainers in the Body of Christ, to “prepare and equip God’s people for works of service, so that the Body of Christ may be built up.” (Ephesians 4:12).

Enabled to serve well

The School of Leaders prepares cell members to fulfill Christ’s call upon their lives. These schools will thoroughly prepare them for disciple making and cell church leading. The topics include: foundational Christian doctrine as well as training in personal development, Christian life skills and cell leadership. Along with the Encounters, the School of Leaders gives comprehensive and effective training in disciple making. Natural ability alone can take us only so far, but with training we can rise above that level to a place of excellence. “The people who know their God shall be strong and do great exploits.” (Daniel 11: 32).

Chapter 8 - The Power of Homogeneous Groups

The G-12 vision works through homogeneous cell groups. This means the cells are organized into several different nets; the men’s network, the women’s network, youth and children’s networks. There are a number of keys to understanding **how and why homogenous groups work so well.**

Key # 1. The vision is often presented as running the cells along the homogeneous principle. But we must understand that to mean we are running these ministries (men's, women's, youth, children and couples) through the cell principle. Three facts help us grasp the importance of homogeneous groups:

The church is a family.

Each member has special interests, needs and concerns.

Each group is best equipped to reach and disciple others like themselves.

This means that men are best equipped to reach out and disciple men, women best reach women, and so on. Often growth naturally occurs along kinship lines and many small groups are naturally organized that way. But here is always the need for the corporate expression of the body.

We see aspects of culture redeemed and glorified in heaven! But these distinctions are not barriers between people. Rather, they form the diversity that enhances the unity. We are the richer together when we receive one another and the diversity this brings. "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands." (Revelation 7:9).

Key # 2. We are one body, one family and one church. But our unity does not mean we always must do the same thing, at the same time, in the same way in the same place!

A family must regularly come together as a family, but there will be times when the children are doing one thing, the teens are doing something else and the mother is engaged in yet something else, and so on. We must always remember that our primary cell is our family. We should first be disciplined in our own families. And then we can move out into our homogeneous cells. The G-12 cell vision is all about building families up –not splitting them up! But we must also understand the power of homogeneous groups.

The dynamic of homogeneous groups

Homogeneous groups allow people to learn and grow in the company of like-minded people who have the same needs, face the same challenges and share the same interests, identity and language. The gospel (evangelism and discipleship) travels fastest along these kinship or homogenous lines.

This principle is well established today in youth ministry. Young people have special interest that enable them to identify with one another. Their music, their style and their mindset all relate to their time of life. We can best address their questions, pressures, and temptations in the context of youth ministry.

The same applies to women. Many women's ministries are being raised up today. These recognise the special dynamic that operates when women come together to minister to each other. The same is true of men's ministry. Men open up better in the company of other men who share the same needs, desires and pressures.

Key # 3. Discipleship is about role models and teaching by example. Only so much can be achieved by cross gender role models. A man cannot model to a woman how to be a godly wife. A woman cannot demonstrate to a man how to be a Bible pattern husband.

The principle is 'like disciples like'. When you disciple others, you reproduce yourself. Jesus' 12 disciples were male, although He had many women followers. In fact, they were often the most faithful, loyal and supportive. Women backed his ministry in practical provision. He elevated them and gave them a very high place in His ministry, teaching and mission. But His close disciples (His were men. Even when you take the culture of the day into account (theirs was a patriarchal society in which men and women were separated in most public gatherings) you can still see how this sensibly applies today. Paul gave the older women a clear directive to teach the younger women and to disciple them. Titus 2:3-5, "...the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behaviour, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things, that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed."

Key # 4. The homogeneous principle does not mean the sexes or the age groups are divided and separated. It means that they are disciplined as men, women, youth and children to take up their place as disciples in their families and in the wider church body. They become better husbands, wives, fathers, mothers or children.

And remember, the celebrations and church services include everybody. The church is a family and the family must come together.

Three practical points

The homogeneous principle can and does work as it evident from fruit bearing reports from around the world.

During the time of transition into the model of 12, it is important to start where you are. Churches should introduce whatever homogeneous cell structure they can with their men, women, youth and children. Then they should let the others develop over time.

There is power in corporate strategy. Churches should be united in their adoption of the homogenous principle. It should not be a point of contention. But that may mean us laying down some traditional ideas that prevent us from adopting the G-12 Vision intact.

OTHER DYNAMIC PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

Chapter 1 - THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH WAS A GROWING CHURCH

The immediate, explosive and continuing growth of the early church emphasizes several important truths.

GOD INTENDS HIS CHURCH TO GROW.

Everything which God plants is destined to grow. He is the author of growth and His skills are evident in all of nature. The Church is the true vine and God is the vinedresser. (John 15:1). He has ordained His Church to bear fruit in all the earth.

As soon as the New Testament church was planted, it began to grow.

One the first day, 3,000 souls were added to the church. (Acts. 2:41). Following a dynamic power encounter a further 5,000 men, (with how many women and children?) were added to the church. (Acts. 4:4).

“And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women.” (Acts. 5:14)

“Now in those days, the number of disciples was multiplying.” (Acts. 6:1)

“And the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem.” (Acts. 6:7)

“And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip.” (Acts.

8:6) “And many believed on the Lord.” (Acts. 9:42)

The history of the primitive early church is a record of consistent phenomenal growth, setting a pattern for the church throughout the ages.

IF JESUS TRULY BUILDS HIS CHURCH, IT WILL GROW.

Jesus said, “I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16:18).

There are many opposing factors that would seek to hinder the growth and expansion of the Church, but when Jesus Himself builds it, not even the all the wisdom of hell and strategies of Satan can prevent the victory of the church.

Jesus must be the One who is building the Church.

It must be built according to His Divine pattern.

- Demons oppose its growth.
- Religious principalities resist it.
- Political ideologies try to prevent it.
- Intellectualism tries to block its path.
- Skepticism and philosophy endeavour to undermine it.
- Socially influential persons try to hinder its progress.
- Devotees of false religions attempt to block its onward march.

EVEN THE VERY GATES, (WISDOM, STRENGTH, AND POWER) OF HELL CAN NEVER PREVENT THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH!

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH IS A MODEL FOR ALL TIME.

The history of the early church, recorded in Acts, and the Epistles, is not merely a historic record of a unique phase of the Church’s history, it is intended to be a pattern and a blue print for the Church throughout the ages.

FIRST CENTURY PRINCIPLES FOR A 21st CENTURY CHURCH.

Obviously the style and methodology of the early church was especially appropriate for that time and location. There are definitely many cultural and contemporary features indicated in the account of its first years. However, there are also many timeless principles which may be adjusted and applied effectively at any time and in any place. We shall be looking at

some of these aspects later in this study. God's principles are changeless but His methods are not. We need to be "anchored to the Rock but geared to the times."

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.

One thing should be obvious to all but the most biased observer, and that it is that the Holy Spirit was obviously the life empowerment factor of the early church. He was the catalyst who stirred the early church. He was the gentle breeze which spread the seed of God's Word far and wide.

He was the dynamic empowerment who motivated the first apostles.

His was the vital power which changed multitudes of lives.

The areas of the Church today that are presently experiencing the most dynamic and explosive growth, are those churches that honour the Holy Spirit and allow Him room and the right to exercise His sovereign will. Unfortunately many Christians have labeled this stream, giving it various names such as "Pentecostal", or "Charismatic". This has tended to polarize the Universal Church into charismatic and non-charismatic grouping, creating distinct segments and causing some non-charismatic groups to deny the Spirit any room or opportunity to express His authority. We must willingly acknowledge, whatever our doctrinal persuasion, that **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE DYNAMIC LIFE OF THE CHURCH** and without His manifest presence the Church is like a graveyard. We must all allow God the Holy Spirit to take His rightful place in the Church.

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD OF HIS CHURCH.

The powerful emphasis of the first message ever proclaimed in the "Christian Church" was, "God has made this same Jesus both LORD and Messiah." (Acts 2:36) This powerful proclamation was the launching pad for the Church age and remains the dominant emphasis of the true Church. To experience real success in church growth we must both acknowledge and proclaim the intrinsic truth of this. **We must allow Jesus the right to actually be the Lord of His Church and we must sublimate everything to His rule.** He is building HIS OWN Church:

- The Church which faithfully proclaims Him.
- The Church which fearlessly exalts Him.
- The Church which boldly acknowledges that HE is LORD!

THE BIBLE IS THE AUTHENTIC PATTERN.

The modern church must get back to the Word of God and base its beliefs and practices on the Word alone. Too many seminaries and Bible colleges teach a denominational position instead of the whole counsel of God. Too many modernistic seminaries teach a diluted version of the true Gospel. They endeavour to explain away the miraculous and teach a spurious version of the Gospel which will not offend the intellectual pride of man. The early church was unashamedly Bible based. It proclaimed the unadulterated Word of God. It practiced the truths of the Bible. It was Biblically oriented in all its proclamations and practices and if were to emulate the growth which they experienced, we must take the same position.

THE END TIMES ARE HARVEST TIMES.

The Bible prophets have always predicted the final triumph of the Kingdom of God. They have prophesied the Coming of Messiah to earth to establish His righteous rule over the nations. They have also clearly indicated that before this happens there will be a world wide harvest of unprecedented proportion. A time prior to the Second Coming when the Spirit will be poured out all over the earth and upon ALL flesh.

This tremendous "End Time Harvest", which will impact the whole world, will be accomplished through the means of Church planting. God is presently preparing a great army of Church planters across the earth who will preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and establish new local churches amongst all the ethnic groups of earth.

In Genesis 12:1-3. God promised Abram that, “through his descendants He would bless every ethnic group on earth.” The Church is a part of Abram’s seed and the time for the fulfillment of this promise is almost upon us. We are privileged to be a small part of the end time harvesters who will reap the rewards. Here are a few of the scriptures which support this prospect:-

Rom. 4:13. Abraham is called, “heir to the world.”

Jer. 32: 27. “I am the Lord God of ALL flesh.”

Ps. 24:1. “The earth is the Lord’s, and all those that dwell on it.”

Joel 2: 28; Acts 2:17. “Spirit poured out on ALL flesh.”

Is. 66: 16. “Lord will plead with ALL flesh.”

Is. 40: 5. “ALL flesh shall see the glory of God.”

Is. 66: 23. “ALL flesh shall come and worship before Me.”

Ps.145: 21. “Let ALL flesh bless His Holy Name.”

Ps. 2:8. “Heathen for His inheritance, uttermost earth for His possession.”

Rev. 5:9. “Out of EVERY kindred, tongue, people and nation.”

Rev. 7:9. “Innumerable company, every people, kindred and tongue.”

Rev. 11:15. “Kingdoms of this world become Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ.”

JESUS IS COMING FOR A GLORIOUS CHURCH.

“That He might present her to Himself, a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” (Eph. 5:27).

The Church for which Christ returns will not be a carnal, fleshly, backslidden imitation of the true Church. It will not be a modernistic, social emphasis, powerless Church with the marks of carnality upon it. Rather it will be a glorious Church, filled with life and power, experiencing growth and triumph to the four corners of the earth. It will be a Church moving in power and authority across the earth, proclaiming the Good News of God’s Kingdom and establishing new groups of believers everywhere.

IT WILL EVEN WORK FOR YOU!

As we further investigate and discuss the glorious prospects of Church growth in these exciting days, a thought may occur to you. Something within you may say, “These things may be true, and they may happen in many parts of the world, but I am sure that they will not happen here in the work in which I am involved.” This is a tactic which Satan frequently tries to use, that it can happen to anyone but YOU. God is no respecter of persons! He is going to visit every nation despite any contrary indications. This great revival and harvest of the nations will happen all over the world and YOU can be a part of it!

Chapter 2 - GROWTH FACTORS IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The three main factors in Church growth were:

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP.

EDIFICATION OF THE BODY.

EVANGELISTIC OUTREACH.

Let us: - A. Observe these in the early Church.

B. Relate them to the modern Church.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP.

APPOINTED BY GOD.

There is a mistaken idea in many denominations that ministers must be seminary trained. Actually the evidence would indicate that the longer one is student in seminary, the less

likely he is to plant churches or pastor a dynamically increasing congregation. Theologians do not generally pioneer churches, not do they usually see dynamic growth in their churches.

The important thing for truly effective leaders is that they are chosen and appointed by God. Such giftings should always be recognized, appreciated and joyfully accepted.

APOSTOLIC GIFTINGS.

The ministry gifts recognized in Apostolic times were Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers. Eph 4:11.

ANOINTED.

Jesus commanded His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they became empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Luke 24:49 – “Wait...until...”

Acts 1:8 – “You shall receive power...”

Acts 2:4 – “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit...” Acts

4:31 – “They spoke the Word of God with boldness.” Acts

10:38 – “God anointed Jesus ...with the Holy Spirit...” Acts

13:9 – “Then Paul, ..filled with the Holy Spirit...”

Eph. 5:18 – “Be not drunk with wine...but be filled with the Spirit.”

UNITED.

The leadership of the early church was a team leadership which was united in heart, mind and spirit. They prayed together, fellowshiped together, and waited on God together, so that a deep spiritual unity developed amongst them. Thus when “Peter stood with the eleven”, (Acts 2:14) it was as though they all spoke with one voice. Ministry teams in the church today must value, appreciate, and strive for such unity. Acts 2:1 – “All with one accord, in one place..”

Acts 2:42 – “Continued steadfastly in...KOINONIA(Fellowship).”

Acts 2:44 – “All who believed were ‘together’ and had all things common.” Acts 2:46 – “continuing daily with one accord.”

Acts 4:32 – “the multitude...who believed...were of one heart and one soul.”

Acts 4:24 – “they raised their voice to God with one accord.” The unity of the ministry team.

Acts 2:14 – “But Peter, standing up with the eleven..”

THEY WERE PRAYERFUL.

The unity about which we have just spoken, carried over into the prayer life of the early church. It is this unity and harmony which makes congregational prayer so powerfully effective. Without it congregational prayer is dull and powerless. It is when a congregation **LIFTS UP ITS VOICE WITH ONE ACCORD** that miraculous answers are received to those prayers.

Acts 1:14 – “These all continued in prayer with one accord.” Acts 2:42 – “Continued steadfastly in prayer.”

Acts 4:24 – “They raised their voice to God with one accord...”

Acts 4:31 – “And when they had prayed...the place was shaken.”

Acts 13:3 – “And having fasted and prayed....”

Acts 14:3 – “...appointed elders...and prayed with fasting...”

THEY GAVE POWERFUL PROCLAMATION.

Acts 2:14 – “Peter...raised his voice and said..”

Biblical – Joel 2; Psalm 16:8-11; Psalm 68:18; 110:1.

THEY EXERCISED BOLDNESS IN PROCLAMATION.

Some definitions of boldness: Bravery, confidently, assertively, adventurously, and

authoritatively. – (Please consider the significance of each of these words in respect to your preaching.)

Acts 4:13 – “when they saw the boldness of Peter and John...”

Acts 4:29 – “that with all boldness they may speak your Word.”

Acts 4:31 – “they spoke the Word of God with boldness.” Acts

9:27 – “...how he had preached boldly at Damascus..” Acts 9:29 –

“and he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord...” Acts 14:3 –

“they stayed there....speaking boldly in the Lord.”

Acts 18:26 – “Apollos...began to speak boldly in the

synagogue.” Acts 19:8 – “he spoke boldly for three months.”

2 Cor. 7:4 – “great is my boldness of speech before you..”

Boldness and authority in preaching come from:

Preaching the Word of God. Acts 4:29.

Speaking from personal experience. Acts 4:20 – “For we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.”

THEY WERE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Acts 4:8 – “Peter,...filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them.” Being “filled with the Spirit”, is a daily experience, an ongoing, continuous requirement. We must maintain the fullness of the Spirit. The tense of Eph. 5:18. indicates, “Be constantly being filled with the Spirit.”

I. THEY EXPERIENCED POWER ENCOUNTERS. a)

When the Power of God is clearly manifested.

b) When the Power of God confronts opposing forces.

c) When God’s power directly confronts that of Satan and demons.

Acts 2:14-39 – This was a ‘power encounter’ – power preaching!

Acts 2:34b – “many signs and wonders were done by the Apostles.”

Acts 3:1-10 – Power ministry through Peter and John.

Acts 3:11-26 – In Solomon’s porch.

Acts 5:1-11 – Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 5:12-16 – Many signs and wonders done amongst the people.

Acts 6:8 – “Stephen, full of faith, did great wonders and signs.”

Acts 8:5-6 – “Philip...preached Christ to them...and the multitudes...hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.”

Acts 9:36 – Peter and Dorcas.

Acts 9:42 – Many believed on the Lord.

Acts 10:34 – House of Cornelius verses 44-48 – “while he yet spoke.”

Acts 11:21 – “and the hand of the Lord was with them.”

Acts 13:8-12 – Paul and Elymas.

Acts 14:9 – Paul at Lystra, “stand up straight on your feet”.

Acts 16:16-19 – Paul delivers the servant girl.

Acts 16:25-34 – In the Philippian jail.

Acts 19:11 – “and the Lord worked mighty miracles by the hand of Paul.”

Acts 19:14-16 – Sons of Sceva (warning).

Acts 26:13-44; 21-26 – Paul’s word of knowledge.

Acts 28:3-5 – Paul and the viper (Mark 16).

EDIFICATION OF THE BODY.

THE EMHASIS OF PETER’S MESSAGE AND INSTRUCTIONS.

The powerful effect of Peter’s message upon the crowd, and his clear emphasis on THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST, laid the foundation for the all that followed. It clarified the requirements of the Gospel and prepared the new believers for the indoctrination with the truth and establishing which followed.

Acts. 2:37 – “When they heard this, they were cut to the heart.” (The Word cut through their mind, objections, pre-conceived notions, to the heart.)

Acts 2:37 – “they cried out to Peter, “what shall we do?”

PETER’S EXPLICIT COMMAND – Acts 2:38-39.

REPENT. – Turn from your old life.

BE BAPTISED. - Bury the old life.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT. - Receive the new life.

Acts 2:40 – “Save yourselves from this wicked generation.”

Our “salvation from sin, its power and its penalty”, is accomplished when we repent and receive Christ as our Lord. Our salvation “from this wicked (perverse, rebellious, mutinous) generation,” transpires through obedience and practice of the kind of teaching and indoctrination which the Apostles gave them.

Acts 2:41 – “but those who gladly received the Word were

baptised.” Acts 2:42 – “they continued steadfastly in the faith.”

Acts 2:42 tells us that they continued steadfastly in four things:

APOSTLES DOCTRINE.

“Doctrine”, in this context, had little to do with systematic theology or the systematising of their religious beliefs. It had to do with the practical issues of living their new lives effectively to the glory of God. The Apostle’s doctrine was the manner of life which they had learned and imbibed from living in close proximity to Jesus for some three years. He had indoctrinated them with the Kingdom style of living. He had taught them by precept, example, and practice, the life style that befitted the Kingdom of God. Now they were passing on this new life style to the new believers.

In the context of the New Testament “doctrine” is almost inevitably linked with the practicalities of right behaviour and good relationships within the Body of Christ. After exhorting Timothy to “give heed to his doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:16) Paul proceeds to remind him of how the various members of the Body should relate to each other. (1 Tim. 5:1 – 16). Likewise in Titus 2:1 – 10.

KOINONIA or FELLOWSHIP.

The Greek word for “fellowship” is “*koinonia*” which has a much deeper meaning than is generally understood in the Church today. It was used of strong partnerships and solemn relationships. In the New Testament setting it obviously refers to the NEW COVENANT RELATIONSHIP in which we are now related to God through Christ, and by which we are related to one another in the deep bonds of covenant relationship.

BREAKING OF BREAD.

“Breaking bread from house to house”, infers much more than sharing the common meal together. It also has connotations of covenant relationship and also of the genuine hospitality which was lovingly shared by the partners of the New Covenant *koinonia*.

PRAYERS.

The fact that “prayers” comes after the previous three factors is not by chance. The quality of the united prayers which came from this company are only possible when the company is strongly and inseparably united as they were. The quality of their mutual commitment, plus the other features of their new redeemed life style, had a profound and powerful effect on their intercession.

FOUNDATIONAL TEACHING.

Acts. 2:40 – “With many other words he testified and exhorted them”. Their learning was not in a class room context, academic and isolated from the realities of life. Nor was it

theological in the modern concept of the word. It was Scriptural, spiritual, and practical. E.g. Acts 1:1 – “All that Jesus began to do and teach.”

MENTORING.

“The influence of a mature and trusted advisor upon a younger apprentice.”

This teaching style of the Apostles was “be followers of me, even as I am a follower of Christ.” 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2 Thess. 3:7,9.

COMRADESHIP.

Acts 4:23 – “being let go they went to their own companions.”

Acts 4:32 – “multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and one soul.”

Acts 4:33 – “And with great power the Apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all.”

The fellowship of believers within a church should never be allowed to degenerate to a “club style”, of membership which is formal and structured. The members need to be friends and companions, with a spiritual sense of comradeship and brotherhood which is living and enduring.

THEY HAD ALL THINGS COMMON. – Acts 4:32b.

It was this style of relationship to which I have just referred which enabled them to gladly share their lives and goods together. There was a deep sense of loving concern which caused them to live for each other, sharing their victories, burdens, and experiences, in a spirit of mutual brotherhood.

THEIR GENEROUS AND SACRIFICIAL GIVING – Acts 4:34 – 37.

From the very commencement of the early church the members accepted responsibility for the financial support of their various activities and thus become self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating, all of which is necessary for a truly New Testament pattern church. In some countries there is a tendency to look overseas for financial support for Church planting and Church growth. This is a mistake. It may be more difficult, and it will certainly be more challenging, to undertake ones own financial support, but in the long run it is much better and the church becomes much stronger. Some one has made the observation, and I believe it to be largely true, that any church, or organisation which is commenced with imported finances will be in danger of dying for the lack of them.

THEY REJOICED IN SUFFERING SHAME. - Acts 5:41.

The early church encountered much opposition, discrimination and persecution, but instead of discouraging or hindering its growth, the winds of persecution served only to fan the flames of revival. I have personally frequently observed that “ the stronger the opposition, the stronger the believers and the church.”

At times when I have felt that it is so difficult and hard for the people who make commitment to Christ that it will probably discourage anyone from making a commitment, the reverse has been true. People have still come to Christ and the strength and quality of their commitment has been all the more remarkable.

ADEQUATE ADMINISTRATION - ORGANISATION. Acts 6:1-7.

OVERCOMING GROWING PAINS. Anyone who has been personally involved in church growth knows that growth usually progresses in phases. After a period exciting upward growth we frequently reach a plateau. The temporary pause is often caused by some problem which when dealt with will lead on to even greater growth. This was clearly the case in Acts 6:1-7. The solution lay in the appointment of more workers and the introduction of DELEGATION. (to entrust and commit a task to another, and to confer such authority to them as is necessary to fully accomplish the task.)

THE PROBLEM:

MULTIPLICATION frequently brings its own problems, often referred to as “growing pains.” However, the solving of such problems usually leads to an even greater growth.

MURMURING caused dissension and disunity amongst the believers.

INADEQUATE ORGANISATION. The organizational procedures did not keep pace with the rapid growth which was occurring. This incident introduces the realization that good and proper organization and administration is essential to church growth. This is a reality with which many churches have had to come to terms in the past few years. Prior to this, organizational procedures were seldom seen in church circles. But with the recent dramatic growth rates in many churches this aspect has been seen to be crucial.

RACIAL DISHARMONY. Inadequate organization caused some racial discrimination and tension furthering the disunity and creating unwanted tensions. The problems we face may take many different guises but most of them can be overcome with improved organizational procedures.

THE SOLUTION:

ESTABLISH RIGHT PRIORITIES. What to delegate – what not to delegate. The Apostles determined that it was not appropriate for them to neglect their spiritual tasks of “the Word of God, prayer and the ministry of the Word” (Vs. 2, 4) in order to supervise the more practical tasks of feeding the widows, etc. Therefore it was determined that suitable persons be recruited to whom these tasks would be delegated.

DELEGATION. The process of delegation is a thoroughly Biblical one, often referred to as “The Jethro Principle.” - Ex. 18:13-27. Please note the basic principles:

Select suitable people. V. 21. (God fearing men; men of truth; hating covetousness.)

Teach them their tasks. Verse 20.

Appoint them to their ministries. Verse 21b.

Give them adequate authority. Verse 22. (“Let them bear the burden with you.”)

It will be easier for the leader. – Verse 22b.

It will be better for the people. Ex. 18:18.

THE APOSTLES ALSO ADOPTED THESE PRINCIPLES:

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PEOPLE. Verse 3.

Good reputation.

Full of the Holy Spirit.

Full of wisdom

Full of faith – Verse 5 – Stephen.

DELEGATING THE RIGHT TASKS.

Define the task.

Communicate it clearly - preferably in writing.

Pray over them (Verse 6b).

Commission them – authority. (responsibility before authority).

Give them proper recognition.

DISCIPLING THE “APPRENTICES.”

Through a process of:

: Instruction.

: Demonstration.

: Involvement.

: Evaluation.

THE PLEASING RESULTS. Acts 6:7.

a: The word of God spread.

The number of “disciples” increased greatly.

A great many priests became “obedient to the Faith”.

(Possibly the reason why “a great many priests became obedient to the Faith”, was because the Apostles now had more time to ‘wait on their ministries’, and improve their preaching and teaching effectiveness.)

* Deacons like Stephen and Philip graduated to Apostolic ministry.

EVANGELISTIC ACTIVITIES

A. CONSPICUOUS PUBLIC PROCLAMATION.

Acts 26:26 – “This thing (Christ’s death and resurrection) was not done in a corner.”

Public proclamation was a powerful feature of early Church growth. The Apostles took their message to the places of public gathering and fearlessly proclaimed the Gospel.

Unfortunately the modern Church has largely retreated into its “ivory towers”, and the most profound and powerful proclamation is made before a captive, already convinced and committed audience. If the public is coming into a church in convincing numbers then evangelism within the church may be justified, but if this is not the case then the church must find ways and means of going public and proclaiming their message to the people who really need to hear it! Please read the following incidents and note the public exposure: Acts 2:14 – 39. Peter’s great Pentecostal message.

Acts 3:1 – 10. Peter and John at the Temple.

Acts 3:11-26. The multitudes in Solomon’s Porch.

Acts 8:4-25. Philip in Samaria.

MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

Following the scattering of the Church (Acts 8:1-4) they finally got the message that God wanted them to reach out from Jerusalem into Judea, Samaria, and from there to the uttermost parts of the earth. (Acts 1:8). The church soon became a powerful missionary sending church, viz.:

Acts 13:1-3.

Acts 13:4 - Cyprus.

Acts 13 – Antioch.

Acts 14:1 – Iconium, etc.

POWER ENCOUNTERS.

Power encounters remained an integral and vital tool for evangelism. Wherever the Apostles and disciples preached the Word of God, signs and wonders followed as Jesus had promised. Mark 16:15-20.

Paul declared that he had, “fully preached the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum, with mighty signs and wonders by the Spirit of God.” – Rom. 15:9. Such evidences are still current today and wherever the Gospel is confirmed in this manner the greatest progress and growth is to be seen.

LAY MINISTERS’ ACTIVITIES. (Harnessing the Body).

The early church revival was one in which “laymen” played a significant role. On the scattering of the Church (Acts 8:1-4) the Apostles were the only ones who remained in Jerusalem. The rest of the church was “scattered abroad” through persecution and it was these “refugees” who spread the Gospel wherever they went. Their ministry was not one of formal preaching but one in which they talked (Greek: “laleo”) about Jesus wherever they went.

I am personally convinced that the great revival and harvest of the Last Days is also one in which non-ordained ministers will feature strongly. (I refer to ordination in the technical sense in which the ordinee is seen to be a seminary trained graduate with an academic degree.) Probably the greatest harvest presently taking place is in the People’s Republic of China and is a classic example of this. Amongst the many thousands of effective leaders, a

very small percentage have had any seminary training and an even smaller number are officially ordained by any denomination.

HOLY SPIRIT BOLDNESS.

In the face of discrimination, threats and persecution, the early church certainly needed extraordinary boldness to fulfill their task. The incident in Acts 4:18 – 31, is a fine illustration of their tenuous position and their bold response to the threats of the authorities.

Acts 4:18 – Threatened and forbidden to preach Jesus.

Acts 4:29 – Prayed for boldness.

Acts 4:31 – “And they spoke the Word of God with boldness.”

Such boldness is still a prime requirement for those who will effectively proclaim the Gospel. Even without such discrimination and threats, it still requires great courage and boldness to proclaim the Gospel fearlessly and effectively. This kind of proclamation is essential to the dynamic growth of the Church.

THEY HAD “BEEN WITH JESUS” (Acts 4:13).

It was very evident, even to the unsaved community, that the disciples had spent quality time with Jesus. The effects of the intimate communion which the disciples enjoyed with Christ was evident to all.

DAILY ACTIVITY.

“Daily in the Temple and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that Jesus was the Messiah.” (Acts 5:42). The church’s witness and proclamation became a feature of their every day lives.

Chapter 3 - CHURCH GROWTH FOR SMALL CHURCHES

For those who have recently planted a new congregation or whose congregations may be small; those who probably do not own a “church” building. And even if you may have limited access to personnel, finances, and facilities, yet **YOUR CHURCH CAN STILL GROW!!**

SEE YOUR CHURCH AS JESUS SAW IT.

In Matt. 18:20 I believe we have an exquisite brief definition of a church in its simplest form. Jesus, speaking in the context of a serious discussion on church function, says, “For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, I am there in the midst of them.”

So a church, in its simplest form is:

A minimum of two or three people.

Gathered together in the Name (authority) of Jesus.

With Jesus “in the midst of them.”

There is no mention of:

A church building.

Any specified liturgy or order of service.

Ordained clergy or seminary graduates.

Constitution.

It is interesting to note that in the four gospels, which record the earthly ministry of Jesus, there are only three mentions of the word “church” and there are 80 references to Kingdom. But those three references teach us some important lessons as to how Jesus “perceived” the church.

Matt. 16:16-18, “Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth, will have been loosed in heaven.”

Notice:

It is Jesus who builds the church.
The foundation, the revelation and confession of who Christ is.
Only God can give that revelation.
God gives the “keys” of His Kingdom to men of apostolic gift.
Commissioned to open what has been opened in heaven.
They can close (bind) what God has already bound in heaven.

Matt. 18:15 – 20, “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church, but if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen or a tax collector. Assuredly I say to you that whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven. And whatsoever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. Again I say to you that if two or three of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Notice:

The church is a brotherhood (Greek: “*Koinonia*”) of believers.
God wants the brothers to actively pursue unity and harmony.
The church is an assembly or gathering of people.
Whatever they ask in agreement, will be granted by God.
Wherever even two or three gather together in Christ’s Name, He will be amongst them.

THINK “FELLOWSHIP”, RATHER THAN “CHURCH”.

The word church has collected a lot of connotations and associations over the years which are non-biblical. Therefore if we think in terms of “church”, our mind tends to focus on an extra-biblical image. One of the words most frequently employed to describe the structure and nature of a church, is Fellowship. The Greek word translated thus is “*Koinonia*”, and is probably the best to describe what a church is meant to be.

Koinonia, or Fellowship, is used to describe the deepest, richest, strongest, most intimate, and binding type of partnership that exists. It is used in this manner to describe:

Our relationship with God.

Our relationships with one another in the Body of Christ.

In the view of Jesus, each local church was a *Koinonia*. A living, vibrant, dynamic, committed partnership of believers. Their commitment being firstly to God, and secondly to each other. The basic meaning of *koinonia* is “partnership.” The partnership of marriage, as exemplified in the Bible, is perhaps an ideal model of this. The members are equal partners in the relationship. They participate fully in its activities, sharing equally in its responsibilities and privileges. Some of the words which illustrate the nature of this relationship are: sharer, participator, associate, companion, partaker. I believe that the most attractively compelling feature of the early church was the nature of this relationship. It was one which touched every facet of the lives of those who became participants. It was both challenging, and fulfilling. An attractive element which drew multitudes into its orbit. I further believe that this kind of relationship still has enormous attraction today and that any church fellowship that features this quality of relationship will experience dynamic purpose and growth.

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

In Luke 9:1-6 and Luke 10:1-12 we see the commissioning by Jesus of the first evangelists who were ever sent out. There are numerous interesting points here, one of which is that they were to use private homes for their accommodation and as the base for their activities. This evidently began a long tradition of using private houses as evangelistic bases and also places in which to conduct the activities of the new congregations which came into being.

Much of the activity of the early church took place in the homes of new believers. So in the view of Jesus and of the Apostles, a church which was conducted in a house was a perfectly legitimate church and did not need a consecrated building or formal liturgy to validate it. (The early church evidently did not possess consecrated buildings for at least three centuries.) So, if your church consists of just a few believers and you meet in a house, do not be ashamed or embarrassed, you are consistent with the early church model and many great churches began in this manner.

IMPORTANT FACTORS IN SMALL CHURCH EFFECTIVENESS.

A: BE A SHEPHERD TO THE FLOCK.

The analogy of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and believers as His flock is a good one. Pastors are to be faithful under-shepherds, caring for the flock in Christ's behalf.

Psalm 23 is interesting in this respect. According to Jewish tradition this psalm represents a day and a night in the life of a sheep. The sheep is recounting its blessing in having so wonderful a shepherd as the Lord.

Notice some of those things for which the sheep is grateful:

The Lord is a SHEPHERD.

He gives the sheep assurance of adequate provision. (PROVIDER)

He is a LEADER, going before the sheep and leading in the right direction.

He makes me to lie down. (SECURITY)

He provides green pastures, tender shoots, for food. (FEEDER)

His ministry is refreshing and restorative. (RESTORER)

He sets an example of righteousness for the sheep to follow. (EXAMPLE)

Through the valley of the shadow, the Shepherd's rod and staff are a constant source of encouragement. (COMFORT)

He provides a safe sheep-fold, where wolves and hyenas are unable to enter. (PROTECTION)

He anoints the head. (ANOINTING)

He inspires optimism of life-long goodness and mercy. (OPTIMIST)

The sheep will be a life long subject in the house of its shepherd. (INSPIRES HOPE FOR FUTURE)

B: DEVELOP YOUR MINISTRY.

“Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.” (Col. 4:17)

“Give attention to reading, to exhortation, teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy, with the laying on of hands by the eldership. Meditate on these things, give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those that hear you. (1 Tim 3:13 – 16).

God can never grow a church bigger than its leadership! As you allow Him to develop you in your spiritual life and ministry, the church will grow with you, benefiting from the growing maturity of your life and ministry. The early Apostles gave a high priority to the development of their ministries (Acts 6:4) concentrating on prayer, the study of God's Word, and the ministry of that Word.

C: PRACTICE THE BASIC PRINCIPLES.

The three basic principles of growth irrespective of the size of that church are:

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP.

EDIFYING THE BODY.

EVANGELISTIC ACTIVITIES.

(These principles were discussed in the previous Chapter. Please study them carefully and practice them faithfully; they are as essential and as effective in a small church as in a much larger one).

DON'T BREAK THE “OIKOS” TIES. One of the many benefits of a small new congregation is that generally the majority of the people are new believers. There are many advantages in this, namely that:

New believers are still in the warm passion of their first love.

They are enthusiastic and enterprising.

They find it easier to share their testimony with others.

They still have many contacts amongst their non-Christian friends.

It is important that you encourage them to maintain contact with such friends for they are a prospective mission field. The Bible calls such family members and personal friends one's "*oikos*". (people in your sphere of contact and interaction). Witnessing to them and winning them to Christ is an especially fruit full means of evangelism.

E: SPECIAL FEATURES OF A SMALL CHURCH.

There are some aspects of Church Growth strategy which seem easier for large churches to engage in, but here are some features in which any congregation, no matter how small may engage:

A STRONG EMPHASIS ON PRAYER. Prayer was the birthing environment of the early church and is an indispensable feature of church growth today. Prayer for revival, healthy development, and dynamic growth must be encouraged at all levels, corporately, in all kinds of groups, and individually. Prayer is essential at every stage of growth. It will help birth, sustain and increase healthy growth.

HOLY SPIRIT ATMOSPHERE. Two things are essential for a genuine Holy Spirit atmosphere and environment. Firstly, the unhindered presence of the Holy Spirit. Secondly the free participation of Spirit-filled people. The fruit and gifts of the Spirit need to be manifestly evident in a spontaneous yet orderly manner. Nothing is more attractive or exciting than the liberating presence of the Holy Spirit. His presence makes the difference!

WARM PERSONALISED FELLOWSHIP. There are some very special benefits available in the gatherings of smaller congregations and one of them is the warm, informal, friendly and caring atmosphere which frequently characterizes such churches. People are able to get to know each other on a personal basis. The friendships and relationships formed are personalized and fulfilling.

PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS. In the smaller congregation, the full time staff is usually very small and all kinds of voluntary assistance is urgently needed and greatly appreciated. Everyone is valued and needed. This kind of situation makes it feasible for members of the congregation to function in their priestly capacity. Shepherding, nurturing and discipling can be undertaken in a very natural fashion in this type of setting.

EXCITING PRAISE AND WORSHIP. Large numbers can tend to formalize the worship environment of a big church, but smaller ones frequently maintain an informality that is conducive to a joyful spirit of freedom in worship. A spirit of joyful spontaneity, freedom, and joyful exuberance often characterizes a smaller church, in contrast to the restrained formality of larger churches. People often feel much freer to participate and enter into joyful worship in this less formal kind of environment.

RELEVANT AND PRACTICAL PREACHING. The same principles in respect of freedom and informality, hold true for preaching too. The pulpit of a large church often seems to paralyze the preacher and induce a formal style of preaching. The preaching aspect of a service is undoubtedly a highlight and an extremely influential feature. I believe that people today are wanting to hear simple, relevant, and practical messages. The day for a formal, theological, treatise is gone. People want to know how to cope with the practical issues and problems of life. They want to hear something that will help them go into another workaday week with hope and inspiration.

SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES. Smaller groups lend themselves admirably to the enjoyment of fellowship and this should be experienced in a social dimension of relaxation as well as the more spiritual areas of activity. Don't neglect opportunities to enjoy life together. Make opportunities to relax and enjoy diversions together. Organise some outings, picnics, fellowship meals together. The members are able to get to know each other much better during these occasions

F: WHAT ABOUT A BUILDING?

Obviously there are some real advantages in owning a building suitable and congenial for church activities. However, one of the mistakes which some small congregations frequently make is to over-estimate the advantages, and try to erect or purchase a building too soon. In today's world, land and buildings are very expensive items, and once a fellowship gets involved in obtaining them they frequently have no finances for anything else.

There are obviously things that are more important than a building and these should be established first. The main priority is the forming of a strong ministry team and the support base that this will require. Always try to form your ministry team with a prophetic eye to the future. Get a team capable of carrying you far beyond the immediate growth levels of the church. For instances, if you have 50 people in your congregations, endeavour to form a team capable of taking you to, and beyond the 250 mark. This kind of planning shows evidence of obedience management rather than crisis management.

Also a young church should be coached into becoming a mission church, on both the home and abroad fronts, before it ties up all its available finances in real estate. There are usually many types of buildings and facilities which churches can lease or rent until their congregations grows to a point where purchase seems much more feasible or economical. School halls and facilities are the most obvious and frequently the most suitable. Many churches are also leasing ware-houses and finding this cost-effective and manageable. My counsel, to a young, growing congregation would be to avoid purchasing or building until the fellowship has grown to the size and financial income where it can afford to do so without severely straining the budget. Obtaining a suitable property will always be a big demand on the budget but try to avoid to being so severe that it will restrict all other activities.

THE TRANSITION TO A BIGGER CHURCH. As you concentrate prayerfully on "growing your small church", remember that most big churches started off like yours is today. It is a most rewarding and fulfilling experience to break through the growth barriers and be part of what once was a small and perhaps insignificant church, becoming a much larger, stronger, more influential and growing church. The ministry of Church Planting and Church Growth is a challenging one which demands dedication, commitment and hard work. But nothing can be more rewarding than the joy of seeing people brought into God's Kingdom and growing up into Him in all things.

Chapter Four - YOUR CHURCH CAN GROW

Over the past twenty years, the 'CHURCH GROWTH CONCEPT' has exploded upon the Christian world. All over the earth there are evidences that is far more than a humanly contrived strategy. It is obviously part of a Divine, prophetic purpose. It is an indicator that the universal, end time harvest predicted by the major and minor prophets, is arriving in this our day.

This tremendous phenomena is most dramatically obvious in the developing nations of our world. Whilst the materialistic Western world is largely devoid of true spiritual revival, many of the nations in other continents are experiencing dynamic, sweeping revival which is birthing millions of new believers and thousands of new congregations. In many nations thousands of new congregations come into being every year and many of the established congregations are dramatically increasing in size. The most remarkable example of this is the Church in one of the Asian nations which now has upwards of 800,000 members. But there are thousands of others, less spectacular yet impressive examples of churches increasing rapidly in membership and influence. I firmly believe that in the next few decades Church Planting and Church Growth throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America will accelerate enormously. I further believe that the churches in these areas will launch great missionary endeavors into the Western world nations which will precipitate a world wide spiritual harvest of unprecedented proportions.

THE CHURCH GROWTH PHENOMENA IS HERE TO STAY.

Because Almighty God is the author of it.

Because it is now the prophetic time for it.

Because as the number of churches around the world increases they will sponsor more Church Planting and more Church Growth everywhere.

Because the Bible predicts a world -wide harvest to herald the return of Christ to reign.

As we commence our study of Church Growth, let us ask ourselves again this basic question, what is a CHURCH?

We have already noted, in our study earlier that: a Church is NOT a building; is NOT a religious institution; is NOT a denomination; is NOT religious activities center.

A Church is not comprised of bricks and mortar, nor timber and iron. It is comprised of PEOPLE! The Church is: A "CALLED OUT" PEOPLE. (Greek: "Ecclesia" = Called out ones) "Who has called you out of darkness." (Col. 1:13), and A CALLED "INTO" PEOPLE. "Into the Kingdom of the Son of His love." (Col. 1:13); "Who are called according to (into) His purposes." (Rom. 12:28) In Church Planting and Church Growth our primary purpose is to call people out of their darkness and into God's glorious Kingdom of light!

THE CHURCH IS:

A redeemed people. Luke 1:68; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:18; Rev. 5:9.

A redemptive people. Matt. 5:13-16. (salt and light to the world)

An active, Spirit empowered people. Acts 8:4.

A people destined to evangelise the world. Acts 1:8b; Ps. 2:8.

OUR CALLING IS:

A HEAVENLY CALLING. Heb. 3:1, "partakers of the Heavenly calling."

A HIGH CALLING. Phil. 3:14, "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

A HOLY CALLING. 2 Tim. 1:9, "has called us with a holy calling."

WE ARE CALLED INTO FELLOWSHIP. (Koinonia) With Christ and His people (1 John 1:3)

WE ARE CALLED TO DISCIPLESHIP. Matt. 28:19- 20.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE WITNESSES. (Acts 1:8.)

WE ARE CALLED TO BE MINISTERS. (Gal. 1:5)

SOME PRE-REQUISITES FOR CHURCH GROWTH:

VISION.

"Without a clear vision, the project flounders."

DESIRE.

The church must WANT to grow. You may say, "Doesn't every church want to grow?" Sadly the answer is NO! Some have a REMNANT MENTALITY. Believing that the end time church will become a tiny remnant in a godless world. They tend to believe that if a church is growing rapidly, it must be compromising some spiritual truth or quality. Some have an idea that we cannot have QUANTITY AND QUALITY, and they opt for what they believe is quality, claiming that smaller is always better quality. Many churches have never been properly faced with the challenge of Church Growth. Many Churches do not know how to proceed towards Church Growth. Some have tried to see their church grow and feel it has not worked. Unfortunately, many churches are just not willing to pay the price required. Some are unwilling to move out of their comfort zone.

MANY CHURCHES ARE FEARFUL TO ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE. Afraid of failure and the possibility that "It may not work." Afraid to accept the responsibilities of growth:

The extra work load created.

The additional finances required.

Responsibility for enlarging their premises

The pastoral leadership must embrace the vision.
They must impart it to the people.
They must provide adequate training.
They must lead by example.
They must challenge and motivate the believers
They must prayerfully maintain the momentum.

DIRECTION.

“When you do not know where you are going, any road will get you there.” Every church needs a VISION, and GOALS i.e.: To know where you are going, and how you will get there.

THE VISION MUST BE RECEIVED FROM GOD.

It is not wise to wishfully imagine or fantasize, using your imagination to create a mental picture of what your church might grow into.

You must pray fervently about it.
You must empty your mind of pre-conceived ideas.
You must learn to “tune in” to God’s Spirit.
You must share the vision with trusted fellow workers.
You should seek for the “unity of the Spirit” as a confirmation.
Pray positively about it - bring it into focus.
Let the vision live within your spirit.
Commit it to writing with all specific details.
Talk positively about it, to yourself and your team members.
The VISION is spiritual. The GOALS are practical.
Clarify the vision, make sure it is: inspired, specific, measurable, realistic, achievable.

OUTLINING YOUR GOALS. (How you will attain your vision.)

A: HOW?

How will we realistically achieve this growth? God does not have only one growth program, it may differ from one church to another. Find His purpose for YOUR situation.

B. WHEN?

When are we to commence this emphasis? Establishing a time frame. Short and long term goals.

C: WITH WHOM?

Personnel. Who will be part of this program? Who will lead the various phases?

D: WHAT?

What equipment will be needed? What expenses will be incurred? Budget requirements?

E: DETERMINATION.

Church Growth is not a simple, undemanding task. There will probably be obstacles, discouragement’s, hindrances. You will undoubtedly need determination to carry you through.

F: REVIEW AND ADJUSTMENT.

The program must be subject to consistent, periodic review with necessary adjustments and corrections for “fine tuning.”

Chapter Five - THE MINISTRY OF EVANGELISM

“Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry.” (2 Tim. 4:5). These words, spoken by Paul to Timothy, are also applicable to every minister and every church. Unless each local church does the work of evangelism, it is not using its ministry potential properly nor fully.

Every Pastor and congregation should honestly and prayerfully assess their situation to see if they are fulfilling this injunction or whether they are failing God, themselves, and their community in this important matter.

EMPHASISING EVANGELISM.

Evangelism is the sharing, proclaiming, and declaring of good news, particularly the good news, particularly the good news of Christ's salvation. Evangelism is "reaping the harvest" for Christ and His Kingdom, and Church Growth cannot happen without it. It is the "bottom line" of Church Growth.

Some growth may occur in a church through biological increase - (children born to your members) or transfer membership - Christians transferring their membership to your congregation) but genuine Church Growth cannot occur without real evangelism taking place. Only the conversion and conserving of new believers will make it happen, so you must:

- EMPHASISE EVANGELISM

Witnessing to people and winning them to Christ is the one aspect of our ministry that we can only perform on this side of eternity. Once we reach God's presence we can praise and worship Him throughout eternity but we will not be able to win people to Him then. So if we are going to do it, we must **DO IT NOW!**

- WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

The root meaning of the word is to share, proclaim, preach, announce and declare the Good News of Christ's salvation.

- WHY SHOULD WE EMPHASISE EVANGELISM?

Because God's salvation, procured through Christ's death and resurrection, is the underlying theme of the whole Bible. The thick red line of redemption runs through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Evangelism, the spreading of the Good News, is therefore the most important task that any human may undertake. Evangelism is the very heart beat of God. It was the sole reason for Christ's coming to this earth. He came to purchase our redemption through His death and resurrection. He came to "seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10.) He came to find and rescue the sheep which was lost. (Luke 15:4.)

We should emphasise evangelism because: (1) The Bible emphasizes it; (2) Jesus emphasizes it; and (3) Every church which is growing and winning people to Christ emphasize it.

We need to make our church members evangelism conscious: By preaching on evangelism. By teaching on evangelism. By demonstrating evangelism. By training the people in evangelism.

- EVANGELISM – INSIDE AND OUT.

Evangelism must occur both inside and outside our church.

INSIDE THE CHURCH WALLS.

EVANGELISTIC SERVICES.

Many churches have replaced their evangelistic service with celebrations, or praise and worship services and have retreated from the cutting edge of evangelism. They have opted for "deeper" type of meetings rather than a fervent evangelistic meeting. Many reasons (or excuses?) have been given for this kind of move, but I feel that the real reason is usually that non-Christians are not present in those churches in sufficient numbers to warrant a weekly evangelistic meeting. Pastors have realized that there is no point to preaching the simple Gospel to the saints every week and that it might be better to use that time to feed the saints.

The real solution would be for the members to become so active in witnessing that they would be bringing unbelievers into the church every week, thus filling the pool with fish. Pastor, why not think about using the Sunday evening service to train, or re-train your people in witnessing and evangelism? Then motivate them to actively bring people to Christ and to church. Turn your Sunday night meeting back into a powerful Gospel meeting and believe to see God save many souls.

*** "USER FRIENDLY" EVANGELISTIC MEETINGS.**

"User friendly" is a phrase which arrived with the computer age to describe computers and programs which are easy to use and easy to get along with. It could also be a good way to describe effective evangelistic meetings, make them also "user friendly", appealing to non-believers and

pre-Christians. User friendly meetings must have a warm atmosphere, and be joyful and positive. New comers should feel immediately welcome and this feeling should increase as the meeting proceeds. Some of the features which help to create such a meeting are:

Happy, joyful, lively music.

A dynamic, Holy Spirit atmosphere where people sense the presence of God.

Relevant, easy to understand preaching.

Powerful altar calls where people are urged to commit themselves to Christ.

Friendly, helpful counselors to pray with them.

A sound "follow up system" to establish new believers in their Faith.

* SEEKER SERVICES.

Some churches have recently specialized in "Seeker Services." These are meetings specifically tailored for non-believers. They are deliberately non-religious in character. They are not worship services, and the people are seen as an audience, rather than a congregation. The meetings feature a great deal of drama presentation where the Gospel is dramatically presented in various formats. This kind of presentation is not easy to do in any church which is not already large and has the right kind of facilities. However, the idea of "seeker oriented services" is one which every church might seriously consider. Beginning with serious consideration of "How user friendly are our services?" And, "How can we make our meetings more attractive to non-believers without compromising spiritual standards?"

* SOUL WINNERS SEMINARS.

One obvious way to make the people soul winning conscious is to conduct some seminars, work shops, and training programs on the subject. Advertise them well. Urge the people to attend. Make it as easy as possible for them to come. Aim to get whole families involved in the program. Why not take them through a manual on soul winning? Train the people in altar work and counseling. Train them in the art of personal witness. Set an example for them by being a faithful witness and bringing others to Christ. Remember that the shepherd not only cares for the ninety and nine. Having ensured their safety, He goes out into the night to seek for the one sheep which is lost. (Luke 15:4).

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH PROPERTY

EVANGELISM THROUGH THE CELL GROUPS.

Once again we strongly advocate the formation of cell groups within the local church. These dynamic small groups provide an excellent environment for nurturing and discipling new believers. However, they also provide an excellent base for evangelism too. Many people will come to a house meeting who would not enter a church. The cell group is usually much closer to them than the church. The atmosphere is less religious than that of a church. The numbers are smaller, - less threatening. The atmosphere is more informal. Enjoyable evenings, meals, parties, videos, can be enjoyed.

Instead of using the cell group simply as a pastoral, or caring medium, insist on it being an evangelistic outreach. Keep the emphasis on reaching and winning people. Encourage the members to keep this uppermost in their minds.

* COMMUNITY SERVICES

Many communities have public services where needy and lonely people are often to be found. I refer to hospitals, aged person's homes, orphanages, prisons, handicapped persons homes or schools, etc. Most of these places are usually needing volunteer workers in some capacity and provide a wonderful opportunity for Christians to serve their less fortunate brethren. Friendship evangelism can often be accomplished in these situations but it needs to be done with tact and discretion. Some over zealous Christians can become more of a problem than a blessing. But look at your community and prayerfully consider which aspects of it may hold potential as a mission field for evangelism. There are also services like 'meals on wheels' and other community service programs in which some Christians may assist and at the same time find opportunity for wise and tactful ways to spread the Good News.

*** EVERY CHURCH A SOUL WINNING CENTRE.**

There is really no Biblical reason why every church, no matter how small or large, should not be a Soul Winning Centre. The responsibility for this lies largely with the pastor and this team. A local church usually follows the lead and example of the pastor. His responsibility before God is to provide the lead and direction for that church.

MAKE A THOROUGH AND HONEST APPRAISAL.

“Where are we, and where do we go from here? Before we can begin to make positive and productive changes we must thoroughly evaluate our present condition. We may sub-consciously or innately realize that our church is not making great progress or achieving remarkable growth, but before we can remedy this we need to conduct a thorough and specific examination. Examination precedes diagnosis, and diagnosis precedes prognosis or cure. We need to examine the vital life signs.

In the course of a medical examination the doctor will examine the pulse, blood pressures, respiration, etc. These are the vital signs of life.

What might be the vital life signs of a church? Here are some suggestions:

LIFE (Animation, vigor, vitality, spirit, energy.)

ACTIVITY (Useful, fruitful, productive activities.)

STRENGTH (Spiritual strength of the believers.)

GROWTH (Growing up into Christ and spiritual maturity.)

REPRODUCTION (Producing after one’s kind. Gen. 1:11- 12.)

Healthy growth is always multi-directional. For example a plant or tree grows: (1) UPWARD, Reaching towards the sun. (2) DOWNWARD, reaching down into the soil. (3) OUTWARD, in developing maturity and fruitfulness. If it only grew upwards, without thrusting its root system into the ground at a commensurate rate, it could not stand for long. Growth which is not “balanced” is likely to collapse.

Jesus also exhibited multi-directional growth. Luke 2:52. “and Jesus grew in Wisdom, (Mental and intellectual development) and Stature, (Physical, bodily growth) and in Favour with God, (Spiritual growth and development) and Favour with man.” (Social, inter- personal development).

Church Growth is NOT simply a matter of increasing numbers or church attendance figures. It is not only a matter of QUANTITY, but also of QUALITY.

So the church should be growing and developing in several directions simultaneously:

In spiritual maturity. Eph. 4:15.

In fellowship. Acts 2:41-47; Eph. 4:1-6, 15.

In ministries. Rom. 12:3-8.

In the exercise of spiritual gifts. 1 Cor. 12 –14.

In witnessing and preaching. Acts 1:8. Mark 16: 15-20.

In making disciples. 2 Tim. 2:1-2.

In Church Planting in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, uttermost ends of earth. Acts 1: 8.

In missionary activity. Matt. 28:19- 20.

SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS.

How do we measure up to the vital life signs?

Apart from biological and transfer growth, at what % rate are we growing?

Is our true growth rate exciting and satisfactory? Yes/No?

A DETERMINED RESPONSE

God want this church to grow in every way. We want to discover His ways, cooperate with Him, and see it grow. We will prayerfully discover and on His vision for our church and community. By His grace, and with His help, this church is headed for dynamic growth.

COMMITTED TO THE VISION.

In a cooperative effort, such as Church Growth demands, everyone involved must be fully committed to the vision. That is:

Fully believe in it.

See it as God's purpose for their Fellowship.

Feel that they are an integral and important part of it.

Commit themselves to whole hearted involvement in it.

Be available to play whatever role the vision requires.

Pray regularly for it.

Be willing to invest finances, tithes, and offering into it.

It is not sufficient to recognize it as "The Pastor's vision", or "The Church's vision". They must acknowledge it as – "OUR VISION."

To achieve such a vision the following things must happen:

= THE PASTOR(S)

Must wholly believe that God wants their church to grow.

Must gain a vision of what their church can become in God's purpose.

Must formulate realistic goals as to how this can happen.

Must have the love, respect, and confidence of the members.

Must clearly communicate the vision to them and win their involvement.

= THE MEMBERSHIP

Must love and respect their leaders and be eager to work with them.

Must be excited about their church and believe in its future.

Must be convinced that Christ is the answer to all life's problems.

Must open their hearts and their pockets to fulfill the vision.

Must become wholly involved in whatever capacity is appropriate.

THE VISION MUST BE:

INSPIRED, Bearing indications of Divine inspiration.

DEFINED, And carefully thought through.

CLARIFIED, and clearly communicated.

EXCITING AND CHALLENGING.

REALISTIC AND ACHIEVABLE.

CAPABLE OF INVOLVING AND USING ALL AVAILABLE PERSONNEL.

THE LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERS SHOULD FACE THE FOLLOWING:

Do we truly want the church to grow?

Are we willing to pay the price, whatever that might be?

Do we truly have a vision for the growth of our church?

Do we have a program of goals which will make it happen?

Are we open to the changes which are inevitable?

What are some of the things which would result in growth activity?

What can I personally do to be effectively involved?

What changes need to occur in our services to make them more attractive to strangers?

Are we willing to allow the Holy Spirit to be Lord of our church?

Will we be willing to attribute all the honour and praise to God alone?

Have the whole leadership and membership go through this list together. Challenge every person to make their personal response to it. Present it in some form of document so that each person can sign and retain it as a covenant of commitment. ENTITLE IT, "OUR COMMITMENT TO CHANGE AND GROWTH."

WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

Preaching and teaching will be required on the theme of evangelism to set the stage for new emphasis on reaching and retaining people for Christ.

Here are some simple definitions on what evangelism is. Evangelism is:

Sharing the Good News about Jesus with others who do not know Him.

Presenting the Good News to as many people as possible to bring them to a saving knowledge of Him.

Evangelism is bringing Christ to others, and others to Christ.

SOME OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (GREEK) WORDS RELATING TO EVANGELISM:

EVANGELISE: (“*evangelizo*”) Acts 8:4, “Therefore, the believers which were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the message.”

WITNESSES: (“*martureo*” =martyrs) Acts 1:8, “And you shall be witnesses unto Me, in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.”

PROCLAIM: (“*kerusso*”) Acts 8:5, “Philip went down to Samaria and proclaimed Christ to them.”

ANNOUNCE: (“*katangelo*”) Acts 17:3, “This Jesus whom I announce unto you, is the Christ.”

REASON: (“*dialagomi*”) Acts 17:2, “Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.”

PERSUADE: (“*peitho*”) Acts. 18:4, “And Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.”

MAKE DISCIPLES: (“*matheteusate*”) Matt. 28:19, “Go you therefore and make disciples of all nations.”

THE PROCESSES OF EVANGELISM HAVE BEEN PERCEIVED IN THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE:-

* PRESENCE.

The presence of a Christian is in itself, an evangelizing factor. Through the life of a believer (witness), the pre-Christian has opportunity to see the Gospel lived out. We may be the only epistle that some people will ever read. (II Cor. 3: 2).

* PRE-EVANGELISM.

Is the preparatory work which must be done before the Gospel can be persuasive presented. This may involve friendship evangelism, where the believers genuinely befriend non-believers. It involves earning credibility for the Gospel by your life, love, interest and compassion. In agricultural term it is the clearing, ploughing and preparing of the ground before the work of sowing can begin.

* PROCLAMATION. (or Presentation)

This is the actual presentation of the Gospel when the person or target group is brought face to face with the Gospel of Christ. It is the presentation of the Gospel message in the clearest possible manner so that the hearers are fully informed of the truth and implications of the Good News about Jesus.

* PERSUASION.

The aspect of presentation in which the person is actively persuaded to make a positive decision and response to the message. The Holy Spirit is actively involved and is the main factor in the persuasion process. Without His influence the persuasion is powerless. However, we the witness, must also be personally involved. The Holy Spirit will work through us. We therefore persuade men, on Christ’s behalf, to be reconciled to God. (II Cor. 5: 20).

* INTEGRATION.

This involves the various steps necessary to get the new believers integrated in to a local fellowship. The Holy Spirit inducts them into the Body of Christ spiritually. But we must also encourage them into the Body practically. In many ways catching the fish is the easiest part. Keeping it and cleaning it is often the aspect requiring more patience, prayer and sacrifice.

Particularly in the local church, real effort must be made to welcome the new believers, make room for them, involve them, place them in fellowship groups, follow up their commitment, and begin to build on their newly laid foundation.

*** REPRODUCTION.**

The process of evangelism is not really complete until the new believer begins to “reproduce after their kind.” New believers must immediately be made aware of their responsibility and privilege to share their testimony and faith with others. They must be encouraged and motivated to bring others to Christ. This cannot begin too soon. In fact the longer it is left, the harder it may become. Jesus told a new the longer it is left, the harder it may become. Jesus told a new believer: “Go home and tell what great things the Lord has done for you.” New believers usually make the best soul winners.

There is an infectious enthusiasm in their new love relationship.

They still have vital contact with their unsaved friends.

The process of evangelism as they experienced it, is still fresh in their mind.

They are much more aware of non-church culture, language, expectations.

They relate much more easily to the pre-Christian community.

IS YOUR CHURCH INTROVERT OR EXTROVERT?

The reason why many churches fail to see growth is that they have become introvert in their attitudes and programs. The meaning of introvert is: “being primarily concerned with one’s own thoughts and interests.” Sadly, many churches have become like this. They have become little “Bless me clubs”. Their programs, activities and plans are all primarily for the benefit of their members. Most of them are not consciously aware of this. They did not plan to become this way and are usually oblivious to the fact that they have become detached from the real life of their world. They unwittingly bear the marks of a recluse (or hermit) who has led involvement in the real world to find isolation in a make believe one. They have created a “religious comfort zone”, in which splendid isolation they faithfully practice their religious activities. They become inbred and unfruitful, making all kinds of “spiritual excuses” for their lack of outreach activity and growth.

In contrast, one of the definitions of extrovert is: “mainly concerned with external (outside) things.” This is the meaning with which I am concerned rather than the meaning frequently applied in which an extrovert is an “outrageously outgoing person.”

The Church of Jesus Christ was never intended to be isolated and insulated from the world. It was intended to be a “Church without walls.” Remember that the true Church is not a building, it is a redeemed and redemptive people. A pro-active people who got out into their world to assert the influence of the Kingdom. To conquer the enemy of mankind, and rescue men and women from the grip of their adversary.

We must certainly be dedicated to making our churches “user friendly”. Creating an atmosphere and environment of open friendliness which makes new people feel abundantly welcome, at ease, and keen to return. Try to see your church through the eyes of a pre-Christian stranger! How do they see you, your activities and programs? Can they interpret and understand the religious ritual and tradition in which you may be involved. Can they understand the religious language which is frequently used in many churches? Is your message relevant and meaningful to their real needs. Is your Gospel truly GOOD NEWS to them in the situations of their life?

REMOVING THE INERITA FACTORS.

Many churches appear to have imposed inertia (inactivity) factors which slow down, hinder, or even totally prevent any outgoing activity. Trying to get some churches moving is like driving a car with the hand brake firmly on. The average congregation has been conditioned to “sit down, keep quiet, and be good listeners.”

Even the traditional structure of most church buildings, with platform, pulpit and pews, suggests that this is the main function of a church. The people have become content to attend church faithfully week by week to listen to sermons. This never was, and never will be what God intended for His Church. It is in complete contrast to the Church which the Holy Spirit commissioned on the

Day of Pentecost. We must shake off this apathy and inactivity, arouse ourselves and do the work of evangelism - Telling the lost that Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life. If all the Christian congregations around the world would become active in evangelism, the world could be won in a short time. Unfortunately the Army of the Lord is sleeping soundly in the barracks. We must sound the awake call.

Three most prevalent inertia factors are:

FEAR OR TIMIDITY

IGNORANCE. Not knowing how to go about evangelizing.

INEXPERIENCE. Not having done it sufficiently to gain confidence.

How can we shake off this inertia? By:

POWERFULLY CHALLENGING THE PEOPLE.

BEING AN INSPIRING EXAMPLE TO THEM.

PROVIDING TRAINING AND MOTIVATION.

ORGANISING OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.

MAKING THE CHURCH "USER FRIENDLY."

KEEPING THE GROWTH EMPHASIS BEFORE TH PEOPLE.

ENCOURAGING THE FRIENDSHIP FACTOR.

One of the sad features of assimilation of new believers into the Christian community is the manner in which their previous relationships with family and friends are frequently discarded and their new life involves only contract with fellow Christians. Now I realize that there has to come a "separation from the world, unto Christ", but I do not believe that this necessarily means that the new believers have to sever contact or disassociate themselves from their former social structure. If possible it is better for them to maintain meaningful contact and association in order to impact their acquaintances with the Gospel.

This is frequently called, "OIKOS EVANGELISM." The Greek word "oikos" is translated – family, kindred, household, (including servants) or own. Many who came to Christ in the New Testament were the oikos of a new believer. So "oikos" evangelism happens when a new convert reaches his family, associates and friends with the Gospel to bring them to Christ. This happened to Andrew. (John. 1:40-41.) "One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah.'"

Many modern surveys on Church Growth have revealed that this method of evangelism is still the most fruitful style. A typical survey revealed the following about how people first came to church.

REASONS WHY PEOPLE FIRST CAME TO CHURCH:

In response to advertising	2%
Because of the pastor	6%
Through organized evangelistic outreach	6%
Influence of friends and relatives	86%

This kind of response seems to be reasonably consistent world wide.

MENDING YOUR NETS.

Eph. 4:12 says that the primary work of the ministers is the "equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry." The Greek word translated "equipping" ("katatismos"), is interpreted several different ways in other parts of Scripture. One analogy is the setting of a broken bone, carefully joining the bone together again to restore its usefulness, strength, and effectiveness. Another idea conveyed is that of "mending nets", to make them effective to their true purpose. Many churches need to either mend or change their nets to make them effective for catching fish. (men, women, boys and girls.) Let us look briefly at some of these nets:

WELCOMING NEW PEOPLE.

How effectively, or otherwise, does your church welcome new people? Do you have people specially appointed to do this and who can function effectively? New comers should be warmly

welcomed even outside the church. They must be welcomed again at the door upon entering. Someone should graciously help them to find a seat where they feel comfortable. Others might have a ministry of sitting with new comers quietly helping them to understand and enjoy the service. They should also be welcomed from the pulpit and perhaps presented with some souvenir of their visit. Try to discreetly obtain their name and address for further contact. Plan and structure your services so that pre-Christians will feel part of them.

WORSHIP.

The “worship”, in many churches is very somber and serious. The liturgy, (order of service) is extremely complicated, making people feel outsiders. Such traditional, religious activities are often very uninspiring and depressive. The church ought to be the happiest place in town. Worship can be reverent without being slow, heavy, and tedious. Avoid those solemn, slow, religious kind of hymns. Include music which is joyful, uplifting, and inspiring. Have the kind of celebrations to which people cannot wait to come back.

PREACHING AND TEACHING.

There is a mistaken idea in many church circles that good preaching and teaching has to be a serious, heavy duty activity. I feel certain that the ministry of Jesus was not like that. Nor was the fiery preaching of John the Baptist, or of Paul, Peter and other Bible preachers. Their preaching was relevant, dynamic and contemporary. It was said of Jesus that the “common (average) people heard Him gladly.” In other words they found his teaching to be gripping and enthralling. He addressed the real, felt needs in their lives and presented ways in which their burdens could be lightened and they could experience rest and peace.

Good, effective Gospel preaching should never be negative and condemnatory. Even preaching the need for repentance can be done in a positive manner. People today are saddled with many and varied problems. They need to hear positive, constructive and helpful messages which will help them to find peace with God, with themselves and with their neighbour. Certainly good preaching should never be boring, something which people must endure. Spice your messages with graphic illustrations. Speak about things with which people can readily identify. Never use religious jargon, phrases and words which no one but the initiated can understand. Aim to use very day language which the average person can readily understand and identify with.

MAKING AN ALTAR CALL. – (Inviting people to receive Christ.)

Part of the success of an effective Gospel preacher is the ability to motivate people to a decision at the end of his message. Here are some of the factors of which you need to be conscious:

TIME FACTOR. Timing is critical. Be sensitive about when to conclude your message and begin the appeal.

ENERGY FACTOR. Don't exhaust yourself, or your listeners.

SMOOTHNESS FACTOR. Carry through smoothly from your message, into the appeal. Plan your appeal as you plan your message. How much time do you spend preparing your message? Do you spend even half as much time preparing the appeal?

SPIRITUAL FACTOR. Be led of the Spirit. Generally the one who has preached should also give the appeal.

EMOTIONAL FACTOR. Don't be afraid of applying this and the music which can touch the emotions. People are emotive beings and most decisions have some legitimate emotional factor.

FAITH FACTOR. Believe for results, envision them, expect them and get them.

VARIETY FACTOR. Be flexible, not predictable. Use your sanctified imagination as you ask God to show you how to influence people towards Him.

EVANGELISM.

Paul encouraged Timothy to make the greatest use of his pastoral ministry by “doing the work of an evangelist.” (2 Tim. 4:5.) Every preacher, irrespective of his particular gifting, should introduce some evangelistic emphasis into his ministry. Every service can hold the potential of an evangelistic outcome if the preacher slants his messages in that direction and concludes every

meeting by giving pre-Christians a chance to confess Christ as Saviour and Lord. Once your congregation becomes aware of this emphasis they will feel more confident to invite friends and associates to join them in church regardless of what type of meeting it is planned to be.

There are many other effective ways in which evangelistic emphasis can be introduced into your church and program. Be creative about it. Ask God to show you new and different ways in which people can be reached and won. Unless you make this special kind of emphasis, your church is never likely to grow and you will miss the thrill and fulfillment of seeing what God can accomplish among you.

SPECIALISED GROUPS.

There are numerous categories of human need which can be ministered to by giving opportunity for people to with other believers who face similar problems, eg. “single mothers”, “single persons”, “deaf ministries”, senior citizens”, etc. Other specialists groups which would require more attention, facilities and specialized workers are ministries to drug dependent people, care groups for persons who have experienced nervous breakdowns and similar ministries of compassion and care.

CELL CHURCH GROUPS.

Cell groups are ideal settings for accomplishing various aspects of ministry which cannot be properly catered for in the larger celebration type of gathering. This style of structure will be very much in evidence in the churches of the future and we will study this later on.

YOUTH MINISTRIES.

The needs of young people today are much more complex than previously. All over the world the youth of our nations are facing greater challenges and temptations than ever before. This requires a different approach, and emphasis than the more general church activities. It is essential and urgent that the church reaches and wins the youth of our nations. Many have said that they are “the church of tomorrow”, but that is not true. They are THE CHURCH OF TODAY. It could well be said that, “WHO WINS THE YOUTH OF TODAY, WINS THE WORLD OF TOMORROW.” Every church needs to be acutely conscious of this great challenge and especially determined to take all necessary steps to ensure an effective program for young people.

CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES.

What we have just said about the youth applies even more so the children of our world . This is one of the most neglected mission fields in the world today. Yet this is surely a most strategic and highly important field. It is an area of mission into which I strongly believe every church should pour effort and passion. There are several good reasons why this is to:

Our world today has a very high percentage of children.

They are faced with all manner of temptations and challenges.

In many ways, children are much easier to win for Christ.

“Save an adult and you save a soul. Save a child and you save a life.”

For some strange reason children’s ministries are usually the most neglected of all yet it is really the easiest to conduct and in many ways the most fruitful and fulfilling. You should prayerfully determine that this will be different in your church. Believe for some qualified and dedicate children’s ministry workers and make every effort to make this the biggest department in your church.

BUILDING A CHURCH GROWTH “POWER-HOUSE”.

The most effective church that ever existed began in a prayer meeting. (Acts 1 and 2). The churches experiencing dynamic growth today emphasise prayer.

“More things are accomplished by prayer than this world dreams of!”

I believe that the most powerfully strategic thing that any church that longs to grow can do initially is to start a prayer group dedicated to pray for growth and increase.

It need not be a large group to begin with.

The leader must be the right person, possibly the pastor himself.

It must be SPECIFICALLY praying for growth and increase.

It must be a **DEDICATED** group, taking this role seriously.
The members must be in right **RELATIONSHIP**.
It should be an **INFORMED** group, knowledgeable about the church's program.
It must be a group with the **VISION** firmly before them.
Make sure it consists of people of **FAITH** who really believe God.
People of genuine **HUMILITY**, who will give honour to the Lord.

USING ALL YOUR RESOURCES.

The greatest resource in any church is its members. The least utilized resource in any church is its members! Many pastors talk and teach a great deal about the "many membered body", but few of them demonstrate a genuine belief and confidence in those members. This is confirmed by the fact that they rarely ever use them to their fullest advantage. The church has an army, which is virtually "confined to barracks." There are people in almost every congregation who have skills and abilities which could be advantageously employed for the advancement of the Kingdom if the pastors would recruit, train and motivate them. The greatest single thing which any pastor can do is to get his members into harness and working in their various capacities for the extensions of God's Kingdom. **THE CHURCH WHICH PLANS TO GROW MUST FULLY UTILISE ITS GREATEST RESOURCE - ITS MEMBERS.**

Began a series of teachings on the importance of **BODY MINISTRIES**.
Actively search for potential leaders in your congregation.
Begin to encourage, disciple, and mentor them.
Begin to use them in relatively small ways.
As they develop and mature, try to use them increasingly.
Encourage the congregation to respect and honour these ministries.

Once you have your greatest resource - your members - trained, there are many other resources you can develop:

START A VISITATION PROGRAM using your newly trained leaders to do the visitation. Give them specific training on the ministry of visitation. Assign some to:

PASTORAL VISITATION. Visiting various members in need, sickness, problems, etc.

NEW BELIEVERS VISITATION. Following up new believers in their homes.

EVANGELISTIC VISITATION. Visiting homes of prospects with a view to leading them to Christ.

HOUSE CHURCH PROGRAMS.

Organise outreach meetings in the various suburbs of your town or city, using the houses of your leaders for the venues. Let your newly trained leaders assume the oversight of them encouraging them to make these gatherings "Recruiting Centres" for the Kingdom.

The senior pastor(s) must retain the overall oversight of these outreaches, the local leader being an "under shepherd." Let the local leader realize that he or she, is a part of your pastoral team. Foster and encourage a strong "team spirit" amongst all the leadership. Encourage authority, submission, and respect of leadership amongst them.

SPECIAL "GUEST SERVICES."

Plan to have a monthly guest services in the main church congregation or celebration.
Encourage every member to bring a "guest".
Precede the meeting with the informal meal where everyone can meet and mingle.
Try to have a "guest speaker."
Bring in a guest singer, or some guest to give a dynamic testimony.
Make the service a dynamic evangelistic emphasis service.
Conclude with a strong call for salvation.

REPRODUCING AFTER YOUR KIND.

Determine to be an outreach church which plants “daughter” churches. One of the clearest signs of healthy maturity is that of reproduction. God designed the human race to reproduce but it requires healthy development and a measure of maturity to achieve the reproduction stage. Write into your church vision, at the earliest opportunity that your fellowship is a Church Planting fellowship.

Chapter Six - STRATEGISING FOR CHURCH GROWTH

The very word strategy seems to intimidate some pastors. They seem to feel it implies reliance upon human effort rather than upon God. The fact is that God Himself is a strategist and if we are to help fulfill His purposes, we too will need to become strategists.

1: WHAT IS STRATEGY?

Here are some simple, brief definitions:

“To determine a long term plan or policy.”

“The policy chosen in order to accomplish a specific task.”

“The methods employed to achieve a particular purpose.”

Here are some words that the dictionary offers to describe strategy: PLAN, SCHEME, SYSTEM, TACTICS, METHODS, PROCEDURE. Strategy is a word that is frequently used in terms of tactics of war. It is the art of deploying troops, ships, aircraft, etc, into favourable positions from which to inflict defeat upon the enemy.

A Strategy is a well conceived, long term plan designed to achieve a consistent and lasting result.

So strategizing involves:

Examining the situation.

Prescribing solutions.

Determining tactics.

Employing procedures.

Monitoring effectiveness.

Adjusting the methods.

Achieving the goals.

WHY DO WE NEED TO STRATEGISE FOR CHURCH GROWTH?

The idealist may say, “If God wants the church to grow it will do so without our plans and efforts.” The plain fact is that God Himself is a strategist. He formed a strategy for the redemption of mankind. The Bible tells us that this was formulated. “Before the foundation of the world.” “Christ was indeed foreordained before the foundation of the world.” 1 Pet. 1:20. “The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Rev. 13:8. “God chose us in Christ, before the foundations of the world.” Eph. 1:4. “The Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matt. 25:34.

GOD FORMED A PLAN BEFORE THE EARTH WAS CREATED. Eph. 1:4.

JESUS WAS ORDAINED TO HIS REDEMPTIVE TASK. Rev. 13:8.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE STRATEGY OF REDEMPTION.

The Holy Spirit is the agent of redemption who empowers and energises those ordained by God to build and extend the Church.

THE STRATEGY OF THE CHURCH WAS FORE-ORDAINED IN ETERNITY.

The whole history of the Church, from its inception to conclusion was planned in minute detail even before the world began. In the prophetic purposes of God it will fulfill every aspect of God’s eternal purpose. It is a sobering thought to contemplate that God will fulfill His purpose, with or without, our cooperation. The aspect which our cooperation and faith will determine is what role we may be privileged to play in His purposes.

JESUS GAVE THE CHURCH A CLEAR STRATEGY. Acts. 1:8.
THE OBJECTIVE: Reaching the entire world with the Gospel.
THE STRATEGY: His disciples would accomplish the task.
THE METHOD: The disciples would proclaim the Gospel.
THEIR AUTHORITY: Look I am with you always.
SHORT TERM GOAL: In Jerusalem.
MEDIUM RANGE GOAL: Judea, and Samaria.
LONG TERM GOAL: Uttermost parts of the earth.
TIME FRAME: Even to the end of the Ages.

THE CHURCH IS DESTINED TO GROW AND INHERIT THE KINGDOM.

Jesus said, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give to you the Kingdom." Luke 12:32. The Church, as a vital part of the "seed of Abraham", is destined to inherit the Kingdom and be blessing to all nations of earth.

TEN STEPS TO ACHIEVING AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY.

Step 1: REALISTIC ASSESSMENT. This first step requires absolute objective honesty. It is essential to analyse your past and present situation. To ask, and answer, some very pertinent questions about your church's progress, or lack of. E.g.

- How long has your church been in existence?
- What is the size of the present active membership?
- Divide B by A = Growth per year of existence.
- Portray this trend on graph. How does it look?
- What immediate action should be taken?

Step 2: FORWARD PROJECTION. If the present trend continues, where will your church be in 10 years? If the growth factor is minimal, particularly in terms of young people added, the church may not be here in ten years from now. If the growth rate is anything less than exciting and satisfactory, you need to urgently formulate a new strategy.

Step 3: DEFINITE DECISIONS. The church leadership must prayerfully decide to find a new, effective, productive strategy. Some hard, definitive decisions need to be made NOW. Someone needs to "bite the bullet." Acknowledging that present trends are far from satisfactory and a new and vital strategy is urgently requires is the first step towards a solution.

Step 4: ANALYSE THE OBJECTIVES. Serious positive, prayerful consideration must be given to the real objectives of the church. A fresh analysis of "Why are we here? What are we supposed to be achieving? Are we succeeding? If not, why not?" A new statement of purpose needs to be formulated. Probably a time of repentance is needed in which we acknowledge before God that we have not been fulfilling His mandate as we should. Then let's clarify the objectives again. List them, hold them before God in prayer. Cry out for His help to achieve them. Understand right now that no human strategy is going to meet the need or accomplish the task. We need God given objectives and a God given strategy. We need God given objectives and a God given strategy. We need to aim for His objectives, and the fulfillment of His purposes.

Step 5: DESCRIBE THE SOLUTION. The objectives are, "Where are we heading for?" The solution is, "How shall we get there?" So we need some specifics in our solution. It is not sufficient to make vague statements like, "We are going to grow." We need to find out from God just how He will cause us to grow. We need to wait upon Him until some specifics start to come into focus. If we are sincere and honest, God will start to share some specifics with us. As we whole-heartedly follow through on these, the Holy Spirit will pave the way for growth and development. Quite often He will begin with a time of cleansing and pruning. Sometimes, when God begins to work in a congregation, some will rise up against what He is doing. Some will

become unhappy. Some may actually leave the church. Unfortunately that is often necessary before God can begin to bring growth to that church.

Step 6: EXAMINE THE MOTIVES. At this point the issue of motive is often brought into focus. It is foundational to revival and growth that the motives be honest and righteous. There are sometimes many carnal reasons why a pastor or leadership may want their church to grow. It may be out of a carnal sense of ego, or religious pride. It may be a desire to achieve something, to be admired or envied. Obviously these are all unworthy motives which God will never bless and no amount of strategizing or planning will make anything worth-while happen in these conditions.

Step 7: DEFINE THE STRATEGY. Remember that strategy is “Forward planning.” Looking into the future. Determining the possibilities in God. Formulating a strategy, plan, tactics, which will cause growth to occur. Such a strategy must not be abstract. **IT MUST INVOLVE SPECIFICS.** Your God ordained future, and that of your Church, **IS FILLED WITH SPECIFICS.** How your Church can grow. The methods which can bring about such growth. When the growth may begin. Who should be involved. The specifics will refer to: **HOW? WHEN? WHAT? WITH WHOM?** The specifics will include, numbers, size, dates, costs, etc. It will include short term goals, long term goals and specify the time element in which these should happen.

Step 8: EVALUATE THE RESULTS. Your strategy should include some principles and ways for consistent evaluations to be made. This will require statistics to be kept, including attendance at all meetings and events. Number of persons making a commitment to Christ. Numbers of persons baptized in water, and in the Holy Spirit. All these facts will be part of the vision for growth and must be faithfully recorded and regularly evaluated. E.g. your first year goal of seeing 250 brought to Christ can be monitored each month because it will mean an average of 5 persons per week, or 20 persons per months must be making commitments if your goal is to be realized.

Step 9: RE-ALIGN THE PROGRAM. According to the results which are being achieved, or may not be realized, adjustments can be made in the program. New personnel may be brought in, new methods employed, adjustments made there, and a fine tuning of the strategy effected. These adjustments are like “in-flight corrections”, they can only be made once the program is moving and you have opportunity to monitor its real effectiveness. These kind of adjustments cannot be made in your initial forward planning strategy. They only become evident when the program is actually in use.

Step 10: REWARD THE WORKERS. As the new strategy goes forward and some desired results achieved, the “team spirit” of the leadership needs to be kept in good condition. This kind of growth can only be realized and sustained by a team and one which is working in good harmony together. For this reason it is essential that the workers are able to share in the rewards and the “spoils of victory”. Each member should be recognized and due appreciation afforded. The achievements and advances can only be made when each member is effectively fulfilling their role.

DISTINCT BENEFITS OF A SOUND STRATEGY

- You know where you are going.
- You church knows where it is going.
- You can foster a good team spirit.
- You can utilize more workers.
- You can share the work-load more effectively.
- You can multiply efficiency through delegation.
- You can require more effective accountability.
- You can make monitor results more accurately.
- You can make correction and adjustments en-route.
- You know when you have achieved your goal.

5: ARE STATISTICS REALLY NECESSARY?

Some pastors and churches have an aversion to numbers and statistics claiming that “counting is carnal”, and they sometimes quote God’s judgement on Israel when King David numbered the nation. (1 Chron. 1:21). But it was David’s motive which God judged, not his action, for God had actually commanded Moses to number the nation in Numbers 1:12. So beware of using numbers for purposes of pride or self gratification, but realize also that statistics can be legitimate and helpful. The history of the early church (Acts) is replete with numbers and documented statistics.

Numbers and statistics are: (1) Measurable. (2) Universally understandable. (3) Accurate and reliable. (4) Indicators of progress. (or otherwise).

They make possible: (a) Accurate accountability. (b) Effective stewardship. (c) Effectual accomplishment.

6: THE POWER OF GOAL SETTING.

Once again, as with our comments on statistics, there are many pastors who have an aversion to goal setting. (This aversion to statistics and goal setting is frequently amongst those who need to give serious consideration to both. It often covers an unwillingness to face up to the realities of an unsatisfactory performance record.) The proven fact is that without the use of goal projections and forward planning, few things of value would ever be accomplished. Here are some basic comments to consider.

- GOAL SETTING IS BIBLICAL.

Paul frequently uses sporting analogies to depict the manner in which he pursued his spiritual life. He speaks about running the race with patience and determination. No runner can do this unless his goal is clear, to reach the finishing line ahead of his competitors. In all the disciplines required of a serious athlete, the setting of goals is essential to success.

- GOAL SETTING IS POSITIVE AND PRODUCTIVE.

The human being is structured in such a way that we can only perform and achieve effectively if we have a clear sense of direction and purpose. So realistic and achievable goals are beneficial and inspirational. They have a positive and anabolic effect on us which brings out the best and enables us to perform to our highest potential.

- GOAL SETTING IS ESSENTIAL TO GOOD PERFORMANCE.

In whatever areas of life we consider, whether business, sporting activities, achievements of every kind, wherever good performance is required. It is essential to set your goals and dedicate yourself to their fulfillment. Everyone needs some goals in life, for without them life becomes without direction or purpose. We wander aimlessly through life without direction or fulfillment if we do not define and set our goals and then make realistic plans to fulfill them.

- GOAL SETTING CAN BE GOD GLORIFYING.

As Paul neared the end of his life he rejoiced that he was prepared to meet his Lord. He had “fought a good fight, finished the race, kept the faith.” This kind of fulfillment could only be possible for one who had set himself those goals and striven towards them with dedicated purpose. If we do not set ourselves a similar goal now, we may never be able to share those kind of rejoicing with Paul.

- LITTLE IS ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT GOAL SETTINGS.

This is true in any sphere of life and it is true in respect of spiritual achievements. If you do not set a goal before you church little progress or growth will be experienced. The secret is to set the goals in cooperation with the Lord. Let His goal become your goals. Unless you set some goals your vision will always lack shape and dimension. It will be abstract and cloudy and you will never know whether or not you have accomplished your purpose.

BE PREPARED FOR CHANGES.

One of the most difficult things for many churches to cope with is change. A favourite phrase seems to be, “we don’t do things that way in this church.” Well the fact that must be faced is that

doing things the way you have always done them has possibly not produced any great measure of growth, and if you continue to do things that way you can only expect more of the same. If things are going to improve, grow, and develop, there will have to be some radical changes. So everyone involved, from the leadership to the membership, will have to accept some changes. Initially this may not be easy.

Some people are more entrenched in their traditions and ways than you or they ever realized. Some may resent the changes to the degree that they leave your church. Sad as it is to lose members it is often inevitable and frequently necessary for such people to go. It is often their subtle influences which have unobtrusively stifled growth and until those influences are either forsaken or taken away, the changes which will bring new life and growth cannot happen. Others may stay and resist the changes and such resistance will have to be recognised and dealt with because unity of purpose is essential to the successful implement of a strategy which will cause effective growth.

Chapter Seven - ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CHURCH GROWTH

Some aspects and ingredients of a successful Church Growth program may vary from place to place depending on unique local circumstances. But there are other aspects, most of them Biblically authenticated, which seem to be common and integral to effective church growth wherever it occurs. Let us look briefly at some of these factors.

1: DEDICATED AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP.

Firstly, please note that a leader may be genuinely dedicated without necessarily being effective (i.e. producing the intended result.) Such leaders may be dedicated, devoted, sincere, hard working, yet not effective. They do not get the job done! Effectiveness basically means: “efficient at getting the job done.” No matter what areas he may excel in, if the task is not accomplished successfully, then the leader is NOT effective.

What are some of those things which make a leader effective?

- HE MUST KNOW WHERE HE IS GOING.

The effective leader is primarily a visionary. He sees into the future, discerns what God wants to accomplish, and dedicates himself to being part of its fulfillment.

- HE CAN PERSUADE PEOPLE TO BE PART OF THE VISION.

Probably the main indication of a good leader is that people follow him. If nobody is following you, then you are NOT an effective leader.

- HE CAN COMMUNICATE THE VISION CLEARLY.

The effective leader is not a visionary in the sense that his objectives are vague and cloudy. He is able to define and detail the vision and communicate it powerfully in an easily understandable form. He is able to impart the vision to others so that they become part of it.

- HE IS A CHALLENGING MOTIVATOR.

Not only does he discern and define the direction of the church, he is able to powerfully motivate the members to become a dedicated part of the fulfillment of its vision for growth and reproduction.

- HE IS AN INSPIRING ROLE MODEL.

An effective leader, leads his people by going ahead of them and thus showing the way and modeling how to proceed.

- HE IS A PERSON OF FAITH.

Fulfilling God's purpose is impossible without faith. (Heb. 11:6.) The leader must be a “Possibility Thinker.” He must think and talk creative faith thoughts. But more than this he must also be able to “put legs on those ideas” and make them work by faith.

- HE HAS CONSISTENT CHARACTER CREDIBILITY.

Every Church seems to possess its own character and personality. Ideally this should mirror the character of God. But it also reflects the character of the leadership too. Someone has said that

“God cannot build His Church any bigger than He can build its leaders.” The principle which God has built into nature of every seed producing after its own kind remains true in churches too. What a grave responsibility and a tremendous challenge to church leaders!

2: A DEDICATED, ACTIVE, AND ORGANISED MEMBERSHIP.

The main task of a pastor is to train and prepare his members to “do the work of the ministry.” Eph. 4:11- 12. Therefore the members are to a large degree, what he has made or not made them. There are certain characteristics desirable in church members of which we should always be conscious and which we should seek with all our abilities to inculcate.

A PEOPLE WHO “KNOW THEIR GOD.”

“The people that know their God, shall be strong and do exploits.” Dan. 11:32.

Christianity is not a message, a philosophy or a theology. It is a Person. Paul’s overwhelming ambition was to know that Person, “in the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His sufferings and conformity to His death.” Phil. 3:10. Our task, our redemptive purpose, is to introduce people to that Person. In order to do this we ourselves must truly know Him. The better we know Him, the more effective we will be for Him.

- A PEOPLE OF PRAYER.

Prayer is essentially communion with God. Spending time with Him, getting to know Him better, and being changed into His likeness. The intimacy of prayer is the atmosphere in which God shapes and moulds His people, preparing them for every good work.

- A PEOPLE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT.

This dynamic experience has been described in various terms and a great deal of controversy has developed over various interpretations. Whatever our particular view or conviction may be, God has commanded each one of us to be “filled with the Spirit”, and irrespective of what our theology or definition may be we are under orders to be filled with God’s Spirit. We need the power, authority and ability which only He can give.

- COMMITTED TO KINGDOM GROWTH.

Although our subject is Church Growth our mentality and vision should be Kingdom Growth, for this is the wider view and the one which God delights to honour. If we “tunnel” vision, and are only concerned with the growth of “our church”, we may well be imprisoned by a selfish view which God cannot really bless. We must rise above the “my church, or my denomination” view, and see the greater picture of God’s Kingdom. This is a much healthier and more fruitful concept.

- OPEN TO NECESSARY CHANGES.

One of the most prevalent obstacles to growth is an unwillingness to see the status quo changed. Religious tradition clings to the past and to what has always been. But growth will demand change and unless we are willing to accommodate it we shall never experience growth. For many this requires a real deliverance from religious tradition.

- ACTIVATED AND ORGANISED.

The picture of the early church is of a divinely activated Body, organized for efficiency and effectiveness and this formula works today too! Show me a church where the members have been inspired, challenged and activated, and those members have been trained and organized into effective service, and I will show you a church which cannot help but grow. Body evangelism is the surest way to growth and development.

- UNITED AND LOYAL.

David says, “Behold how good and how pleasant it is for God’s people to dwell in unity,....for THERE the Lord has commanded His Blessing.” Ps. 133. In Genesis 11:6 we are reminded that when a people are united in their purpose, nothing which they conceive will be withheld from them. If this is true of the ungodly, how much more it is true of God’s people? A true unity makes God’s people invincible. In order to achieve such a unity there is an essential requirement for loyalty, without which unity can never be maintained. This includes loyalty to God, His Church, the leadership and program of the church.

A PROGRAM WHICH SERVICES THE NEEDS OF THE CONGREGATION.

Everyone has certain basic areas in their lives which need to be ministered to. These needs relate to their personal, domestic, family, and business life. Pastors should always remember that their members live out there in a hostile environment with very real problems which confront and challenge them every day. They need encouragement, direction, real fellowship, and practical teaching which will help them maintain victory and fulfillment in their every-day lives. In order to fill these real needs the church must minister at three basic levels:

CELEBRATION. When the whole fellowship meets corporately to rejoice and worship God together.

CONGREGATION. This includes the congregation of special interest groups, e.g. youth, young couples, senior citizens, music teams, solo parents, children's church, new believers class, etc. (some of these groups may number 40 to 50 persons.)

CELL GROUP. (sometimes called Home Care Fellowship.) Small, committed groups of caring people, ministering to each other and reaching into their community.

Let's take a closer look at each of these.

CELEBRATION

This is the large, public gathering of the whole local fellowship to worship God together, to hear God's Word expounded, and to preach the Gospel to any pre-Christians who may be present. This usually occurs or twice weekly. E.g. Sunday morning and evening.

Notice the emphasis on CELEBRATION. Most Churches need to learn how to celebrate. Many Church gatherings are like funerals instead of weddings. We need to remember that God commanded His people to rejoice as they kept the great Fests together. God's people need opportunity to express their joyful praises with other like minded people. Music should be expressed and be joyful. Everyone needs to experience times of joy and rejoicing. It edifies and strengthens the life. One of the most attractive features of a growing church is usually the music, singing, praise and worship and joyful atmosphere. Obviously this can be tailored to some degree to suit the particular type of people who constitute the fellowship, but the main ingredients of praise, worship, joyful expression, and emotional release should be common to every fellowship gathering. I have a simple saying, which I believe every pastor needs to believe. "It's O.K. to be happy!!! Preach and practice it.

This is also an good time for RELEVANT AND DYNAMIC PREACHING.

The dynamic preaching of Jesus attracted multitudes of people wherever He went. The average persons were enthralled by His teaching. Our preaching too can be an attractive and compelling feature of our celebrations. Preaching should never be boring. Some motivators recommend the "AIDA" principle for effective communication:

Attention getting – Grab the people's interest, and hold it throughout.

I Informative – Give your listeners something of substance.

D Decision oriented. Preach for decisive results.

A Action. Follow through to inspire positive action.

Pastor, major on developing your preaching and platform skills and abilities.

"It pleased God, through the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believed." 1 Cor. 1:21.

PREACH JESUS. PREACH THE BIBLE. PREACH UNDER THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. PREACH TO HEAL PEOPLE'S HURTS. BE REAL, NOT RELIGIOUS. BE INTERESTING AND HELPFUL. BE PRACTICAL. PREACH FOR RESULTS.

CONGREGATIONAL PARTICIPATION.

Your congregation needs to sense and feel that they are actually an integral part of the celebration and not merely spectators or listeners. This can be accomplished initially through praise and worship into which the people are willingly drawn. Being one with a worshipping body of people is an inspiring and edifying experience that is extremely therapeutic and rewarding.

You can also make your congregation part of the experience by relating to them realistically. Establish a spiritual rapport or relationship with the people. Never see the congregation as an

audience who are there to witness your “performance”. Rather see yourself as a “High priest” whose privilege it is to lead the people into the throne room of God.

Have the people join together in prayer with you for the various needs that are represented. Some churches effectively encourage the people to form “prayer circles” at some time during the service. Each circle is then encouraged to pray for specific needs within that circle.

OPPORTUNITY FOR MINISTRY AND PRAYER.

In every service there are people who are hurting and need encouragement and prayer. It is not sufficient to preach to them, you must also give them opportunity to receive personal ministry and prayer. This can often be accomplished most rapidly by calling the people forward at the close of the service in an “altar call.” You should also invite people to wait behind afterwards and make help available to them through yourself, or one of your appointed counselors.

CONGREGATION

This involves the formation of special interest groups in which people can meet. It enables the church to minister more specifically than in the general atmosphere of the celebration. Some churches choose to have an evening when all these electives are available in the church facility. For example, the whole family may go to church together but when they arrive Dad goes to Men’s fellowship. Mum to the women’s Fellowship, teens to the Youth, or Music group practice. This style of gathering helps people to congregate with their peers with whom they share special common interests. It also enables various departments e.g. Music group, Worship team, Drama group, Soul Winner’s Fellowship, to develop their various ministries.

Each “congregation” functions under competent appointed leadership which is answerable to, and under the covering of some member of the Pastoral Team.

CELL GROUPS

This ministry appears under a variety of names and varies slightly in its style and function from church to church. But the basic idea is that of small groups which meet regularly for fellowship, instruction, activities and evangelism. The fact is that there are certain ministries which Jesus told us to perform for one another which cannot occur effectively in the large, impersonal setting of celebration, or congregation. They require the smaller, less formal, more intimate environment of a small group.

There are probably two major ways in which cell groups operate in church life.

The church which meets primarily in celebration and congregation, but also has cell groups.

The church which functions in cell groups but also meets from time to time in celebration and congregation.

I believe that both models are legitimate, but of the two the second model is probably more Biblical, (closer to the New Testament model) and I believe that is also the model of the future. Around the world, sometimes by choice, and sometimes by pressure, this model is emerging as the pattern of the future church.

Both models have merit and a great deal in common. Both of them:

- Meet in small groups, say 8 – 15 persons.
- Usually meet in a private home.
- Are informal in character.
- Meet for mutual edification.
- Endeavour to meet felt needs of cell members.
- Are overseen by “lay leaders.”
- Under the overall authority of the local church.

The first model is the better known and most widely practiced of the two, but I will concentrate my remaining remarks on the second, the cell group church.

The cell group church is a net-work of reproducing cells which meet locally during the week for fellowship and activities, and gather together periodically for celebration and congregation. Each cell is comprised of a small group of believers, usually between 8 –15 persons. Each has a leader, and deputy leader. Their agenda is usually comprised of 4 types of activity:

a: LOVING.

The loving care and nurturing of each other. Here is an opportune venue for building relationships, between individuals, couples, families, relationships in which a family may “adopt” a single person, etc. The informal atmosphere of a cell group setting enables people to relax and be themselves. They are better able to get to know other people in a more realistic manner than is possible in larger, formal gatherings. Here a person can experience acceptance, interest, fellowship, and caring. The cell group gatherings should NOT take the form of another church service. The activities should be quite different. It should be far more informal and relaxed than are church services. Some of the legitimate activities include eating together, informal conversation, mutual sharing of experiences, problems, hopes and aspirations. Some of the evening’s activities might include: barbecues, pound party (where each one brings along one dish for a collective meal), games, testimonies, singing songs. Other events could include weekends away together, special holiday outings, picnics and outdoor games.

b: LEARNING.

The Bible becomes the work book from which the ethics and principles of life are shared and learned together. The teaching mode should not be that preaching or lecturing, but rather of mutual study and sharing. Everyone should have a chance to participate. Major emphasis should be given to subjects which cover the every day issues and problems of life, including, marriage, family life, financial management, coping with stress, overcoming guilt and similar subjects. Opportunity must be made for questions, discussions, personal testimonies, and the like. The subjects should not be taught in all intellectual or academic manner only. Effort must be made to ensure that people truly understand and are able to practice the truths they have learned.

c: DECISION MAKING.

Although each cell has a designated leader, the whole group should share in determining what the program and activities of the group might consist of. Times of mutual sharing, planning and making decisions about activities and projects should be shared regularly. These decisions should not only cover the various programs for forthcoming meetings, they should also include planning of projects mission trips, etc. Here are some decision which might be made:

Where to meet, how often, and when?

The teaching emphasis for the next three months.

What goals to set for the coming year.

How to encourage the attendance of pre-Christians.

How to best assimilate new members.

What is the Holy Spirit saying to the group?

What are we going to do about it?

ACTION TAKING.

Each cell should have some special tasks or missions which gives them a focus outside of themselves. It should also aim to undertake some practical projects in which all can participate, for the good of some member. Some of these activities might include:

-Services to the elderly

-Gardening, house painting, cleaning, washing, transport when needed. etc.

-Services to single parents.

-Baby sitting, hospitality, house repairs.

-Ministry to children.

-Run children’s clubs, children’s adventure club.

-Ministry to Youth.

-Friendship to lonely youths. Weekend camping expeditions, fishing etc.

-Ministry in the Community.

-Senior citizen’s home visitation, hospital, or prison visitation.

-Reach-out to your neighbourhood.

-Barbecues, or family fun nights, video evening, etc.

- World Mission project.
- Tradesmen to work on a building project overseas.
- Evangelism.
- Sponsor various evangelistic outreaches and events.

SOME BENEFITS OF THIS STYLE OF STRUCTURE:

- IT INVOLVES MORE LEADERS. (Shepherds)
Spreads the work load of shepherding more evenly making more shepherding skills available.
- PROVIDES MORE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW LEADERSHIP.
On the job training is readily available to greater numbers.
- BETTER ENVIRONMENT FOR LIFE TRANSFORMATION TO HAPPEN. Discipleship and life transformation cannot happen too effectively in the celebration style environment.
The inter-personal relationship style of cell groups is much more appropriate.
- MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO CARE FOR THE MEMBERS.
More practical attention and care can be made available through this style.
- CAN READILY MULTIPLY BY REPRODUCTION.
As potential leaders become experienced in this type of program the opportunities for forming more groups increases and leadership is already prepared and ready to assume leadership responsibilities.
- PROVIDES EFFECTIVE BASES FOR EVANGELISM.
Cell group meetings provide excellent locations and environments for reaching into the surrounding community through evangelistic activities. They also provide an excellent venue for assimilating new believers.
- CAN EASILY BE ADAPTED TO LOCAL CHURCH.
The cell group system can easily be adapted to the local church. Whatever particular style is adopted it is a relatively easy matter to adapt it to the local situation. (Model # 1 is somewhat easier to adapt than is model # 2).

4: REACHING OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY.

No church will see effective growth until it shifts its vision from internal to the external. Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest." This is the very first step towards effective evangelism and church growth. Lifting up your gaze from the local, parochial, church matters, and allowing your attention to fix on the harvest fields around you. No farmer will ever reap a harvest by staying home at the farm. He must shift his attention to the fields and then get out there and begin to prepare for a harvest. The eternal, never changing laws of the harvest decree that the seed must be sown, watered, fertilized, weeded and cared for before a harvest can ever be reaped. The church without a viable outreach into the local community is the church that will ultimately wither and die. But that church which lifts its vision, focuses its attention on the fields, and then gets out there prepared to work and labour will surely see a harvest. For, "Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy, and he who continually goes forth weeping bearing seed for sowing, shall undoubtedly com again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." (Ps.126: 5-6.)

5: CONSERVING THE HARVEST.

I have observed, and proven personally, that the real challenge is not only to bring people to a decision for Christ, but an even greater challenge is to establish and disciple those new believers. Many churches that have a dynamic evangelistic program do not grow at the rate they should because they do not sufficiently emphasise the need to conserve the results. The ministry of conservation is one of which it is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance. It is frequently perceived to be less glamorous than evangelism but is in fact more important. Unless the gains are conserved, all the previous effort has been wasted. So, the church which is committed to growth must treat this matter of conservation very seriously. Dedicated personnel must be thoroughly trained and prepared. Suitable literature must be obtained. New believers' classes should be held.

Visitation must be undertaken. No effort should be spared, and every effort must be made, to ensure that the new believers are integrated into the Body and effectively disciplined.

Chapter Eight - THE MECHANICS OF CHURCH GROWTH

I am using the word “mechanics” in the sense of the principles, or functional aspects which make something work.

SEE THE LONG TERM OBJECTIVE.

Sometimes we use the word “vision”, but some understand a vision to be the Biblical, supernatural type of vision, whereas what we are speaking about is the idea, concept, or picture of what God wants to accomplish in and through our church. We are endeavouring to see into the future and obtain an image of the long-term purpose that God wants to accomplish.

This is something we want to see with the eyes of our spirit. A picture we want God to burn into our heart and mind. Something which will be with us day and night, waking or sleeping. An ever present awareness of what God desires for the future life and ministry of our church. The more we think and pray about it the clearer this picture should become. It is the objective towards which our life and ministry is taking us.

To ensure that this objective is not a vague hazy dream we need to wait on God in our spirit for clearer, better-defined understanding of the vision. We need to pray for more specific details of how this church will be. God will cause the vision to be multi-dimensional. We will see it, feel it, hear it. In our spirits we will be transported into it and get the prophetic sense and feel of it. It will become more real to us than is the present reality of what our church currently is.

Then we need to commit all this to writing. Patiently write down every detail you see in the vision which God is imparting to you. Make it as specific and realistic as possible. (Habakkuk 2:2).

DETERMINE THE ROUTE.

Determining the way or course to be taken to get us from one place to another, i.e. from where we are, to where God wants to take us. This is sometimes referred to as “establishing the goals or steps we must take to get to where we want to go.”

Let me suggest a simple exercise to illustrate the basic idea of this. Supposing you heard about a Leadership Seminar to be held next year abroad. You know something of the main speaker’s reputation as a church builder and you have a strong desire to attend this seminar. **THE OBJECTIVE** is to attend that seminar.

THE ROUTE consists of the steps you must take to achieve that objective.

So, let’s consider the steps you would need to take. Sit down and think about it. Write down systematically all the steps you must take. Find out all about it.

- WHEN will it be held?
- WHERE will it be held?
- WHO will the speakers be?
- WHAT will their subjects be?
- HOW MUCH will it cost to attend? Registration, - accommodation?
- Send off your application. Make sure you are eligible and can gain acceptance.
- Inquire about possible flights to your destination. Phone all the airlines. Ask about routes.
- Inquire about prices.
- Passport. Do you have a valid one?
- Visas. What type of visa will you need?
- Can you get leave from your job or church?
- Who may look after your church whilst you are absent?
- Arrange for your family’s welfare in your absence. -
- Put this into your diary and schedule for next years. -
- Book your air tickets.

-Plan your departure.

This is a simple idea of the various steps you would need to take to fulfill the objective of attending a Seminar abroad. Now, envisage where God wants your church to go, and plot the route of how you will get there.

SELECT AND PREPARE THE PERSONNEL.

Choosing the right people to help you fulfill the vision is absolutely vital. It is good to build your team as early as possible though restricted finances in the earlier stages may make this difficult.

Look for these qualities:

- QUALIFIED AND CAPABLE.

If the person is not already trained and qualified, make sure they have the potential to accomplish the work for which they are chosen.

- WILLING TO WORK.

Not everyone who is qualified will actually work hard. Make sure that your co-workers are willing to work hard to fulfill the vision.

- TEACHABLE SPIRIT.

Humility and a teachable spirit are essentials.

- COMPATIBLE.

Able and willing to get along well with others as a team.

LOYALTY

Your ministry team set the example for the whole church and it is essential that they are seen to be loyal to your leadership, the team, the program and the church.

Here are some further considerations:-

- . Always staff to complement your ministry, not to compete with it.
- . Choose some persons who will do the things which are not your greatest strengths.
- . Aim to have a balanced staff to cover a wide range of duties.
- . Administrative gifts are equally important.

DELEGATE THE RESPONSIBILITIES. Delegation includes:

DEFINING THE TASKS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

DESCRIBING THOSE TASKS. (Ideally on paper.)

DELEGATING THE TASKS (Entrusting them to another.)

N.B. The Responsibility should be assigned, and then the authority. Always look for those who are seeking responsibility, not authority! Never forget to hold them also accountable and from time to time inspect their work. Remember: it matters what you inspect, not necessarily what you expect!

E. OVERSEE THE PROGRESS.

Once the program of church Growth is launched it must be monitored frequently, regularly, and consistently. The best way to do this is by holding regular staff meeting at which all members must be present and present a report of their departments. A good time to do this is often on Tuesday morning. The weekend can then be constructively reviewed, observations can be made, various reports given, and the future prayerfully discussed. In this way the whole team can keep abreast of current developments.

F. RECTIFY AND ADJUST THE PROGRAM.

Some problems do not manifest themselves until the program is under way. However they should be recognized as early as possible and immediate steps taken to solve problems and make necessary adjustments to any aspect of the program which is not working well.

If there are problems with individual team members these should not be dealt with in the staff meetings. Appointments must be made privately with such members so that their performance can be discussed confidentially between you and them.

G. REJOICE AND RE-DEDICATE.

As evidences of growth and development are observed let the whole team rejoice together in the victories which God is giving. Avoid any tendency towards complacency or a feeling that “we have made it!” Keep the sharp edge of your ministries well honed. As you celebrate achievements, remember also to have frequent times of re-dedication when the whole team acknowledges its total dependence on God and makes a fresh commitment to love and serve Him in His Body.

Chapter Nine - SMALL CAN BE BEAUTIFUL TOO

With all our emphasis on Church Growth and its relevant statistics, it might be easy to gain the impression that only big is beautiful and this is certainly not the case. Obviously larger churches claim our attention and sometimes become the criteria towards which we aim in projecting the concept of Church Growth. We may even feel guilty that our church is so much smaller, but actually large churches are the exception rather than the rule. A reliable source has furnished the following figures concerning the average size of churches world wide:

Only 5% of churches have more than 350 members.

95% of churches have less than 350 members.

50% of churches have less than 75 members.

So if you have 76 members you are slightly above the world wide average.

BABIES ARE BEAUTIFUL.

Everyone loves a little baby - their attractiveness is universal. Little babies are really cute, but if they do not develop in a manner commensurate with their age there is real cause for concern. Growth and development are indications of normal health and well being. If normal development is not evident at the appropriate time, investigation should be made into the reasons.

There are several circumstances in which small is normal and legitimate:

In an infant church during its early stages.

Every baby is small at birth. This is normal, acceptable, and understood. However, as the weeks and months go by there are usually many exciting indications of growth and development and it is precisely these signs that thrill the parents. If they are not evident there is cause for concern, and the longer this persists the greater the concern.

In villages or small communities.

It is obvious that a church in a village is probably not going to become a mega-church, particularly if that village is somewhat isolated and without transport facilities from surrounding areas. If the size of this church is compared with the population of the area, the percentage of the population attending even an apparently small church may be quite impressive.

In hostile environments.

Obviously there are some places where Church Growth is much harder to obtain due to the resistance and hostility of the local population. This may stem from political or religious prejudice. In such places even one convert won is almost priceless and even the smallest percentage growth rate is great cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving. I feel certain that the “Lord of the Harvest” takes great delight in seeing one soul won in this context.

In reproducing churches.

Where a church has chosen to reproduce itself and its membership is found in several smaller congregations rather than one large one.

However, there are some other exceptions to these observations, and circumstances in which a smaller congregation may be healthy and normal and perfectly Biblical and legitimate:

GOD IS A GOD OF VARIETY.

The universe and all of nature reveal God's love of variety. Jesus spoke of His Father's love for the tiniest sparrow and in doing so reveals His love for those things which are small and sometimes despised by man. In the bold emphasis of Church Growth it is too easy to assume that there is necessarily something abnormal and tragic about a small church. I am sure that there are millions of "small churches" in which God takes great delight. Their numerical size may not be impressive, but their spiritual development may nevertheless be well pleasing to God. I am sure that there are some legitimate and acceptable reasons why some healthy churches have not experienced dramatic growth. (But I also believe that many such churches can experience greater growth through making some minor adjustments.)

NOT ALL MINISTRIES ARE THE SAME.

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are various kinds of operations, but it is the same God that works in them all." (1 Cor. 12:4-6.) Since God has given various, different types of ministry gifts it is reasonable to assume that the operations and functions of these diverse giftings will produce a variety of results. Therefore let us not expect that every church will be alike, or the results and accomplishments the same. Nor let us presume that one "result" is greater or better than another.

NOT ALL PEOPLE ARE THE SAME.

God has created an enormous variety in the human race. In all the world's vast population, no two people are exactly the same. This is not only true of their appearance but also of their character, nature, personality, and disposition. It is also true of their needs and aspirations. In order to meet this variety of human needs it seems feasible that a variety of ministries and various kinds of churches will be required.

NOT ALL CHURCHES ARE THE SAME.

This is obvious from reading the Epistles in the New Testament. The approach may be similar but the heart of the message differs in each case. Because the nature, and constituency of each church is different. The Epistles are applicable to all, but some of those letters were even more applicable to certain of the churches. The same principles holds true today and the fact is that the specific needs of some people are more appropriately and effectively met in the environment of a smaller church. There are particular features of a smaller church community which are more appropriate and conducive to meeting certain needs.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT CAN TAKE DIFFERENT FORMS.

Because a particular church does not have huge numbers of people attending, it does not necessarily mean that this church is sick or deformed. Its growth and vitality can be manifest in more ways than one. I have been privileged to visit and minister in numerous congregations which were not large numerically yet were making a vital contribution to their community and meeting many real needs.

SOME FEATURES AND ADVANTAGES OF A SMALLER CHURCH.

= PERSONAL RATHER THAN IMPERSONAL.

In the larger church it is not always easy to maintain the personal touch. Sometimes the sheer weight of numbers attending a church can make the atmosphere somewhat impersonal. Certain types of people find this less than satisfying. Their particular nature needs the assurance and security of a closer knit group.

= A FAMILY ATMOSPHERE.

Some smaller fellowships, particularly where the pastor has a "father heart" for his people, develop a sense of family amongst the members which is not always easy to duplicate in the context of a large church.

= OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT.

It is sometimes felt that a smaller church needs voluntary helpers more than a large church does. Particularly a certain type of person who seems to function better in a smaller crowd. Some people find great fulfillment assisting in such situations, and certain people flourish in the situations which require this kind of assistance.

Some smaller churches find the fulfillment of their tasks more difficult because of: (1) Limited available personnel. (2) Limited financial resources. (3) Limited facilities.

As we look at some of these reasons, and examine the situations of our own church family, we need to make sure that they are **reasons**, and not **excuses**.

BAISC PRINCIPLES REMAIN CONSTANT.

Irrespective of the size of a church, some basic principles for the effective functioning of that church remain the same. To enjoy spiritual health and to fulfill purpose and calling of god, every church needs:

Effective leadership

Edification of the Body.

Evangelistic activities.

Every church needs a vision, a purpose for being, a clear sense of direction, and some criteria in order to know that the purpose is being fulfilled. That vision needs to be specific with defined goals and objectives. The church needs to know where it is heading and whether it is making progress towards its goal.

SOME VITAL INGREDIENTS TO MAKE SMALL CHURCHES GROW.

LIFE.

Jesus said, "I am come that you might have LIFE, and that you might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10), but to look at some churches you would never realize it. Everything is neat and orderly, but it as neat as the local cemetery.

The life of God is a most dynamic, powerful, and invigorating element. It is positively addictive. Once you have experienced it you cannot live without it. Once people feel and recognise it they will want to possess it in its fullness. Every church should determine, through prayer, faith, praise, and rejoicing, to experience the manifest presence of God and His life.

TRUTH.

Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32. God's Truth is not a static, formal, lifeless commodity. It is vibrant, thrilling, and exciting. It is LIVING TRUTH, and Jesus is the embodiment of Truth. So when God's truth is a present reality in a church it does not introduce formalism, ritual and deadness. The opposite is true. His Truth is the most liberating, releasing force in the world. Don't stifle that life. Don't bury it under loads of religious ceremony and ritual. Don't diminish it with conservatism. Let the living truth of God prevail and let His earthly church be radiant with it.

PURPOSE.

Too many people have decided that the church is irrelevant and purposeless. This is their persuasion after some cursory contact with it. The fact is that God's redemptive purposes, currently being worked out in His church, but soon to be manifest in the earth for all to see, is the most relevant and meaningful purpose on earth. Every church needs to thoroughly awaken to God's redemptive purpose and begin to pursue it with all their being. Once a church becomes vitally involved in the working through and fulfillment of God's highest purpose, it is a cause which is irresistible.

ACTIVITY.

I am not referring to the activity of programs, and the endless activities of "playing church", but to the activities of God's life amongst His people. The dynamic activities of the Holy Spirit. These activities can only be experienced when we allow the Holy Spirit to truly be in charge of His Church. They will bring healing, deliverance, release to the captives, and joy unspeakable and full of glory. Wherever there is healthy life, there is ACTIVITY.

FRIENDLINESS.

One of the features in which smaller churches can excel is that of friendliness. It is possible in a smallish group to foster a real sense of belonging. However this does not happen automatically simply because the group is small. It has to be fostered and sustained, because it is also true that small groups can easily become introvert and cliquish. This danger must be avoided at all cost.

HOPE.

Hope is positive and optimistic expectation and this is something for which so many millions in our world are eagerly longing. The Kingdom of God is the only message which can offer this kind of hope. The Kingdom is both present, and yet to be revealed. Present in the Kingdom realities which are potentially available in the church today. The righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 14:17) Future, in that God's glorious earthly rule is soon to be established and "the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Messiah, and He shall reign forever and forever." (Rev. 11:15).

ATMOSPHERE.

Atmosphere is a very important and critical aspect of an effective church. Yet it is extremely difficult to define or describe. I think if there is one thing which impresses new-comers above all else, it is the atmosphere which is experienced in the presence of God and His people. Even when we consider all the various elements that may constitute this special atmosphere, we still cannot fully explain what if it is that impresses people so powerfully and so profoundly. There are undoubtedly numerous definable factors such a music, freedom, joy, praise and worship, yet beyond all this there is also something mystical, and it is the indefinable Presence of God by the Holy Spirit. This atmosphere is something we should highly esteem and covet. It is a priceless thing of inestimable value.

CONCLUSION.

Having shared these comments about churches which may not, for some legitimate reasons, be experiencing healthy growth, let me conclude by emphasizing that these cases should be the exception and not the rule.

The general principle is that whatever has life is meant to develop and grow.

But this will not happen if the living entity is not healthy. In the case of a church it will not happen unless that church anticipates and reaches for that growth.

Development, growth, and expansion should be welcomed and sought after features of every church. However, unless the leadership encourages faith and expectancy for it, then it will not happen.

Chapter Ten - LET'S SUMMARISE

In this final chapter I shall try to summarise the case for Church Growth, reiterating many of those things we have already shared, and introducing some final thoughts on this important subject.

GROWTH IS A NATURAL PROCESS OF LIFE.

Every living thing that God has created has the process of growth and development inherent within it. This is a fundamental fact of nature and a principle which is evident in all creation. The exceptions to this rule are usually the result of genetic deformities and are considered abnormal. Other reasons may be the presence of some disease which inhibits development and healthy growth. The Church of Jesus Christ is essentially and primarily, a living organism and as such is no exception to those divinely ordained principles. It has inbuilt features which if properly cared for will produced healthy growth. This is true, even under the most difficult circumstances. However, the Church must be free from genetic deformities and inherited diseases.

Genetic deformities usually occur during the pre-natal, or birthing process. They are flaws and lapses introduced into the church during the process of birthing. They may be in the form of wrong

doctrine, carnal behaviour, or unscriptural foundations, and they inhibit growth because God's blessing will not be bestowed on such a church.

Inherited diseases are usually manifest in sinful situations which are allowed to go unchecked. Fortunately there are Biblical remedies of confession, repentance, restitution, and restoration. When such remedies are faithfully applied the result will usually be spiritual renewal and revival. Healthy growth is always multi-directional and balanced. Achieving that balance is frequently the key to healthy and sustained growth.

The Church is primarily a spiritual organism, but it is also a human organisation. It is a combination of the divine and the human. The spiritual, and the natural, and it is this delicate balance which need to be kept in tension. Some of the aspects of development, in their order of priority, which need to be held in balance to ensure sustained growth are:

Spiritual life.

Numerical increase.

Organisational skills and efficiency.

These are the three main aspects of church life, development, and increase and none of them can be ignored or neglected. In fact, for sustained and healthy growth, each factor must be developed at a commensurate rate.

SOME BASIC, INDISPENSABLE REALITIES.

There are several realities which must be faced and accepted if any church is to experience a time of sustained growth.

The church must want to grow. This is more than willingness to grow, it is the Will to grow. A desire and a commitment to see growth happen.

The church must be willing to pay the price of growth. Let's face it right here, there certainly is a price to be paid and sometimes it is quite high. The price must be made in effort, man hours, money, sacrifices. Jesus reminds us that it is the labourers who bring in the harvest. There will be inconveniences, disappointments, and set backs. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning.

The church will need to observe certain principles. No two churches are the same. Every congregation has a character of its own. But there are certain principles of harvest and increase which have to be observed if increase is to be experienced. Every harvest is preceded by ploughing, sowing, watering and sunshine. The principles are unchanging and unavoidable. They must be observed.

LET'S MAKE AN HONEST ASSESSMENT.

"Honesty is the best policy", is a well known maxim, but in terms of initiating Church Growth, it is the ONLY policy. Until we honestly admit our true situation, we will never seriously seek a remedy. There are reliable methods of determining the health of a church and we must be brave and honest enough to apply them.

We must honestly examine and assess the situation in the three vital areas:

a: Spiritual Life and witness.

What is the quality of spiritual life in our fellowship? (Express it on a scale of 1 – 10, between dead, and dynamic.) How effective is our impact on the local community?

(Express it on a scale of 1-10, between non-existent, and powerful.)

It is relatively easy to assess the health of any church. Simply ask a couple of questions next Sunday.

How many are actively involved in the work of the church? More than 50% = Healthy.

Less than 30% = Sick.

Less than 20% = Dead.

How many were Born-Again this year?

More than 10% = Healthy.
Less than 5% = Sick.
None = Dead.

b: Numerical increase.

Numerical increases is NOT the only indicator of spiritual health, but it is an important one. The following chart has been compiled by a church growth analyst. It is based on decadal rate. (10 year period)

25% = Poor
50% = Fair.
100% = Good.
200% = Excellent.
300% = Marvellous.

c: Organisational effectiveness.

The early church moved into top gear when the Apostles got on top of their administration problems, expanded their ministry team, priorities their tasks, and delegated some of the administrative ones.

Obviously the spiritual aspects of Church Growth are the most important but good organization and administration are also extremely important. The larger the church grows, the more important these issues become.

WHAT IS OUR REAL PURPOSE?

The real health of a church can only be deduced in relation to the fulfillment or otherwise, of its true purpose. Is it really fulfilling its real mission, and how effectively? So we need to ask ourselves afresh:

- What is the church really here to accomplish in the world?
- What is our church specifically meant to accomplish?
- Are we on target?
- Are we truly fulfilling our mission and purpose to God's satisfaction?

The primary purposes of the church of Jesus Christ is to:

- Proclaim the Gospel of salvation through Christ.
- Win people to Christ.
- Integrate them into His Body.
- Disciple them.
- Activate them. (to win others)
- Prepare them for the Kingdom rule of Jesus.

We need to be absolutely honest in our assessment. If we find ourselves wanting, we must heed the words of Jesus, "Remember from where you have fallen, and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent."(Rev. 2:5)

ESTABLISHING RIGHT PRIORITIES.

To prioritise is: to recognize those things which are most important and give them first consideration. One of the tragedies of many churches is that they major in things of minor importance, and minor in things of major importance. Consequently there is lots of activity and expenditure of time, effort and finance on things that are inconsequential, whilst those things of real importance are frequently neglected.

What is our real "reason for being?" Are we accomplishing the God given objectives of the church? There are the basics, the foundations, the first works. Let us make sure we are doing them or else repent. (Rev. 2:5).

STRATEGISING FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

We have seen that strategizing is simply: “Making responsible plans for the future.” Without such deliberations and plans we will never accomplish our real purpose, so let’s do it.

Effective Strategy must include:

Clarity of purpose. (What do we really want to accomplish?)

Deep desire. (Are our hearts really in this?)

Ability to recognize future realities and requirements.

Examine all the aspects.

Predict the solutions. (long term and short term)

Include all requirements. (personnel, equipment, budget)

Put it all together. (a complete package.)

THE RIGHT KIND OF PROGRAMS.

Strategizing is looking ahead, then thinking and planning in the light of that forward look. Programming, is putting the strategy to work. Every strategy has to become a program. Every idea has to be given legs. The program is how the ideas and plans are actually worked out in reality.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP.

Leadership is the ultimate key to effectiveness. It has the ultimate power to lead forward into success and fulfillment, or hold back and stifle any progress. Choosing and appointing the right leaders is of critical importance.

MAKING DISCIPLES.

The difference between stagnation and growth is the difference between members and disciples. The discipling of the believers is of supreme importance. It should take precedence over most other responsibilities. An essential and indispensable part of the Great Commission is to “make disciples of all nations.” (Matt. 28:19- 20).

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS.

This is the primary task of all the Apostolic ministries, (Eph. 4:11-12) to train, equip and prepare all the saints, enabling them to minister to the Body, the Church. The minister must never try to do all the ministry himself. He must make it his priority to train others to do it with him.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CELL GROUPS.

The cell group structure and its implications have been part of the Body of Christ since its very inception. There are many aspects of our ministries one to another which cannot be performed except in the context of small group situations. This environment is as important to the Church today as ever it was. Its importance will be even greater in the future as the events which transpire in the world make it imperative for Christians to relate in the context of small groups of caring believers.

EVANGELISM, THE ULTIMATE KEY.

Evangelism, telling forth the Good News of Jesus, must always remain our number one priority!! It must pervade the atmosphere in every area of the church. It must be the objective in all our plans and programs. The believers must live and breathe evangelism.

HOW TO PREPARE A SERMON OR BIBLE STUDY

CHAPTER ONE – HOMILETICS

Preaching the word of God is among the greatest privileges entrusted to man. It is also one of his greatest responsibilities. Through the “foolishness” of preaching (1 Cor 1:21) God has chosen to reveal Himself to men. This knowledge of God is able to lead men to eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is also able to transform them into the image and likeness of God. (2 Cor. 3:18). And adequate preaching and teaching ministry is essential to the growth and spiritual development of a congregation.

A. WHAT IS HOMILETICS?

The art of preaching is called “HOMILETICS,” derived from the Greek words “*homileo*” and “*homilia*”, which mean “to be in company with”, i.e., to converse, and communicate.

Acts 20:11 is based on “homileo”. Note how it is translated in the Living Bible: “They all went back upstairs and ate the Lord’s Supper together, then Paul preached (homileo) another long sermon – so it was dawn when he finally left them!”

Homiletics involves the study of everything related to the art of preaching sermons and messages. Good sermons (communication) are birthed out of good communion (companionship) and fellowship.

There are two distinct aspects involved in preaching: Firstly, the divine; secondly, the human. Homiletics is the study of the human aspect!

HOW TO BE EFFECTIVE IN PREACHING?

Preaching is the art of communicating divine truth through human personality. A preacher is essentially a communicator. He receives truth from God and communicates it effectively to men. God gives the revelation; man provides the presentation.

In order to do this effectively, he must learn to do several things well.

Waiting on God.

Firstly, he must learn how to wait on God. The preacher must learn how to be still in the presence of God and to discern the voice of the Lord speaking within his own spirit.

Every worthwhile sermon begins in the heart and mind of God who is the source of all truth. He is the fountain of all knowledge. The effective preacher’s first task is to learn to receive the thoughts of God. Rarely will he ever hear the audible voice of God.

Divine truth will distil quietly in his spirit like the morning dew. The prospective preacher must wait patiently in the presence of God. There he will receive the precious thoughts and truths that God is always willing to share with those who seek Him diligently. It is good to make a habit of spending time in God’s presence. Set aside some portion of every day to enter the presence of God and wait patiently on Him. You will soon learn how to perceive the voice of God speaking quietly in your spirit.

We should not enter God’s presence with the sole idea of “getting a sermon”. We need to enter God’s presence firstly to expose ourselves regularly to the scrutiny and counsel of God. Rushing into His presence with an urgency which “needs a sermon for tomorrow” is certainly not an attitude of heart that can receive the wonderful truths of God. We should allow truth an opportunity to have its effect on us before we endeavour to share it with others.

Study The Bible

Ideally, the preacher should come before God with his Bible in hand. Make time to sit quietly and patiently before God in this way. Ask for illumination and inspiration on His Word. Prayerfully seek out the counsel, wisdom and instructions of the Lord in His Word. Spread out the Bible before you and read it in His presence.

Sometimes it is good to follow a regular pattern of reading, beginning where you left off the previous day. This helps you to go consistently through the Bible, instead of reading here and there

and neglecting large portions of the Scriptures. At other times, you may seek some prompting of the Spirit as to where you should read. In this way, you do not get into a rut.

Keep A Notebook.

A notebook in which to record the thoughts and ideas that come to your mind in these times of quiet waiting is essential. It is amazing how quickly one may forget the most wonderful truth if the thought is not recorded while it is fresh in your mind. Practice writing down every significant thought which comes to your mind as you prayerfully read the Scriptures. If a theme suggests itself to you, follow it through as far as you can, and jot down everything you can on the subject. In this way you will soon develop a good source of sermon material.

Read through the notebook every once in a while. The thoughts will begin to expand in your heart. You will find that some will occupy your mind for weeks, expanding continually as you meditate on them. Get into the habit of talking to the Lord about His Word. When there are things you do not understand, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the meaning to you. Ask for the spirit of revelation. (Eph. 1:17).

Then learn to wait quietly and patiently before God as He gently directs the answers into your spirit. Record them as they come to you. Get the truth down in your notebook. Don't trust them merely to memory. Even the best memory is strengthened by writing things down.

Be Cleansed By The Word.

Try to avoid the attitude that seeks a word from God so that you can preach about it on Sunday morning. Do not always be looking for spiritual bullets that you can fire at someone. Recognise the primary need of your own heart. Let God deal with your heart through His Word and by His Spirit. Let the Word wash and cleanse you first.

Sharing what God has spoken to you about the way of cleansing and correction is some of the best preaching there is. It is important for you to feed your own soul. One of the traps that preachers can fall into is this: they are so intent on finding food for their congregation that their own spiritual welfare is neglected. This is one of the hazards of the ministry. The thought is expressed this way in the Song of Solomon 1:6, "...they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept."

Sometimes a pastor may be so involved in looking after the spiritual welfare of his flock that he sadly neglects his own spiritual well-being. This is one of the prime reasons that ministers fail. A minister cannot afford to neglect his own spiritual life. Let the Word of God take root in your own heart and spirit. (Col. 3: 16a). Let it grow strong in your personal life and experience. Then, when you preach, you will minister out of experience. You will not be speaking as one with a theory but rather, sharing things which you yourself fully comprehend and have experienced.

The following verse teaches us this, "the hard-working farmer must be first to partake of the crops" (2 Tim 2:6). What you plant and harvest (in a spiritual sense)- you must first partake of (experience) before feeding it to others. You should never feed others what you have not first eaten. You should not try to guide others on paths and trails you have not first walked yourself.

As the Word of God becomes incarnate (that is, indwells you), you will then become a message from God. You will not be one who merely recites sermons, but one whose very life and lifestyle ministers life, blessing and strength to those who know and hear you.

SOME FALSE IDEAS ABOUT HOMILETICSS.

There are at least four common mistakes which people tend to make in regard to homiletics.

"Preparation Unnecessary"

The first mistaken idea is that preparation is unnecessary and indicates a lack of faith. People who take this view tend to feel that real faith disdains any attempt to prepare the mind, and merely stands before the people – believing that God will then supply the words to speak. A favourite Scripture of such people is Psalm 81:10, "...open your mouth and I will fill it." The context of the Psalm reveals that this verse has nothing to do with preaching! This tendency to ignore the Biblical context of a Scripture is rather typical of this kind of person. It betrays an irresponsible and naïve attitude. This type of person is often known to speak nonsense. We would not wish to blame God

for this person's words. There undoubtedly is a place for inspiration, but there is also a valid place for preparation.

“Human Ability is Sufficient.”

The second mistake goes almost to the other extreme. In this instance, a complete confidence is placed in human ability. There is little or no dependence on the Holy Spirit, but a self-confidence which is the result of training and the development of natural ability.

Such training can certainly produce a very interesting and convincing message. However, it is only the anointing of the Spirit on the messages that can minister the life of God to the people.

The truth is that an effective ministry needs both the divine and the human aspects. God can certainly bless and anoint thoughts which have been diligently prayed over and carefully considered. Let your preparation consist of thoughtful preparation with earnest prayer. Determine to be the very best you can, but make sure your confidence is in God and not yourself. Always trust Him for His essential anointing and blessing on your preaching.

“That homiletics provide ready made sermons.”

Some preachers have the idea that once they understand the principles of homiletics this will take all the work out of study and they will always be able to quickly prepare effective messages and sermons. However, homiletics is not a quick and simple method of obtaining messages, nor does it take away the need for diligent study and preparation. It merely simplifies the actual concept of the message and ensures that it is developed in a manner that will be easier for you listeners to follow and understand.

“That a sound knowledge of homiletics is all that is required.”

A sermon or message may be well thought through and well prepared and yet lack the vital qualities that will make it effective and productive. Homiletics is the human side of sermon preparation, but we need the Divine aspect too. In fact, without this our sermons will be humanistic and powerless. The more clever we become at speaking, the less we may depend on God's help and anointing and this will reduce our ministry to the level of human influence.

SOME FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE SERMON PREPARATION. -

Who will you be speaking to?

-What is the objective of the gathering?

-Who is likely to be there?

-Are there special features and requirements?

SIX CATEGORIES OF SERMONS.

Evangelistic, emphasizing salvation and healing.

Devotional, inspiring people in their love for God.

Pastoral, dealing with issues related to the welfare of their souls.

Doctrinal, establishing believers in their faith.

Ethical, emphasizing the principles and ethics of Christian living.

Special occasions, for weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc.

FOUR AREAS OF HOMILETICS.

There are four major areas with which homiletics is concerned.

Concept

This has to do with obtaining the original theme for the message. It is the art of knowing how to receive a message from God. It deals with how to get the initial idea and theme for a sermon. Frequently, seed-thought is sown in the mind, and many remain there for months before it develops to the size and proportion suitable to be shared with others. Through experience, one is able to develop the ability to recognize a line of truth suitable for sharing with God's people.

As you meditate on the Word, there comes an inner quickening of a particular aspect. Something suddenly lights up for you. It almost seems to leap from the pages. A sense of excitement is

aroused within you. It is as though you have discovered a large gold nugget! You can scarcely wait to break it open and investigate its value!

Composition

Having received inspiration on a particular truth. You must now begin to analyse it to discover all which that truth contains. Your notebook is important right here! As you prayerfully meditate, write down carefully every thought that comes to mind.

At this stage, you may simply make a list of every idea that your subject suggests to you. Stay with it until you feel you have exhausted the theme and uncovered every possible area of truth contained in your subject. Don't worry about the neatness and order at this stage. You frequently need to write very quickly to keep abreast of the flow of inspiration you are getting. Just make sure you get everything down on paper. You can sort it all out later.

Construction.

Having exhaustively analysed your subject material and listed every aspect of truth you can find within it, you must now begin to assemble those thoughts in an orderly fashion. This is essential so that you can give further prayerful consideration to the subject.

Getting the material into some proper sequence and progression will help you enormously in this regard. It will also assist you greatly in your presentation of the subject to others. Sharing a developing progression of thought helps others to understand and follow your line of reasoning. If your presentation is all jumbled up, it makes it very difficult for people to absorb your message. Sermon construction aims to make it as simple as possible for your listeners to grasp. This is the essence of sermon construction. It is very important for every preacher to develop this.

Communication.

Finally, we come to the presentation of the message.

The clear and effective communication of the truth.

How to present your subject in a manner which will captivate the minds and hearts of your hearers.

How to develop your thoughts in such an orderly manner that your audience can easily follow the line of truth you are seeking to convey.

How to motivate your listeners to appropriate actions, "for we are to be doers of the word and not hearers only." (Jas. 1:22)

These concepts comprise the essential aspects of sermon preparation. We will be dealing with each of them more fully later in this study.

THREE TYPES OF SERMON PREPARATION

The Written Sermon.

This is the method which demands a great deal of time in preparation. It involves very copious notes. Sometimes the whole message is written out beforehand. The preacher knows exactly what he wishes to say and how he wants to say it. Every thought is written out in full. This often involves several pages of notes. It gives attention to great detail, the construction of a sentence and the correct word to use. Every aspect of the proposed sermon is considered in meticulous detail.

The method has advantages and disadvantages. An advantage is that the whole sermon has been the subject of very careful attention to detail. Thus, there should be an adequate coverage of every important area of relevant truth. Nothing has been left to chance. This style should ensure a complete and comprehensive treatment of every subject.

The disadvantage in the presentation of this type of sermon is that it often come across as uninteresting and does not capture the listener's attention. This style of presentation can easily become extremely boring.

"Skeleton-type" Notes

This is the most commonly used method, and the one which I feel is the most effective. Notes are kept to a minimum, affording sufficient outline of the message to prompt the memory.

The brief notes form the “skeleton” of the message. They are the bones which give shape and structure to what the preacher desires to say. As he speaks, he puts “flesh” on the bones and a “body” to his sermon. He amplifies the thoughts that his brief notes have stimulated.

This method allows the preacher much more flexibility. He is not tied to his notes so much. He is more open to the inspiration that will often come to him while he is actually preaching. His delivery is more spontaneous and interesting, but the framework of his message keeps his mind on the track. He is able to give an adequate, well thought-out coverage of his subject, but his presentation is not hard to listen to.

The Inspirational Sermon

This style of preaching is spontaneous and usually presented without notes at the time of delivery. The subject is often given a good deal of careful thought beforehand, and the mind and heart are filled with the vital aspects of the message.

This style is often used to deliver the more inspirational type of sermon. Evangelistic messages can be presented very effectively in this way. The sermon flows from the heart and often carries a strong emotional involvement. This kind of preaching can be exciting and stimulating when presented by a capable and experienced preacher. It stirs the emotions as well as informing the mind.

There are two potential weaknesses in this style. The first is that it often lacks meaningful content, and the spirits and minds of the hearer are not edified. The second is that the delivery may become over-emotional, and become irrational and unconvincing.

Summary

I would suggest that the use of skeleton-type notes combines the better features of both the other styles. The notes are not so heavy that the preacher tends to get bogged down in them. He has room to be flexible, and his mind remains open to fresh inspiration even while he is preaching.

On the other hand, he does have an orderly format of thought before him. He does not stand before his audience and talk randomly about disconnected concepts.

Skeleton-type notes are suitable for both teaching and preaching. The teaching mode usually requires a fuller treatment of the subject, so some form of notes is most essential. It is difficult for a teacher to adequately cover his subject without the aid of some notes. I would, therefore, encourage you to concentrate mostly on mastering the skeleton-type notes approach. Use this method in your study times. As you meditate on the Bible, practice making short, cryptic notes on the inspiration and revelation you receive. This will help you also when you come to the construction of your message. Familiarity with this style of note-making will help you immensely when you stand to preach. It helps train your mind in orderly patterns of thought. This also makes you more articulate and easier to listen to.

SEVEN KINDS OF SERMONS.

I want to introduce you now to seven different kinds of sermons. I will try to explain briefly the idea behind each kind, and how you can use it. A pastor should become familiar with each type. This will give added variety to his ministry, and make it much more interesting for a congregation who may be listening to him week after week. Over a period of time, it will help him present a much wider coverage of Bible truths. The ministry of any preacher is enriched by versatility.

1. TEXTUAL

This style is usually based on one relatively short portion of Scripture. In fact, as the name suggests, it usually concentrates on one Scripture “text.” It involves choosing an appropriate statement of Scripture. Then you investigate it, analyse it and discover all the truth it contains. You then present that truth in an orderly and progressive manner that is easy for the hearers to assimilate.

2. TOPICAL

Here the preacher aims to present a specific topic to his congregation. For example, he may take the subject of “justification.” His aim would be, firstly to discover everything the Bible has to say on

this enthralling subject. He would then arrange all the Scripture references and thoughts he gets into an orderly format. He then develops his theme as fully and faithfully as possible. His objective is to tell his audience everything they should know on this important subject.

Of course, he may not be able to do this in one teaching session, so he will then prepare a series of messages or teachings on that same subject. This ensures a much fuller treatment of the topic. Any Topical Concordance is of value when preparing such a message. There, one can quickly find some Scripture references relating to the topic concerned. A good reference Bible is also helpful. This will also enable you to follow a given theme throughout the Scriptures.

TYPICAL

This is the art of uncovering and communicating truth which is hidden beneath the surface of the various “types” in the Bible. A “type” is a person, object or event which is prophetically symbolic of someone or something yet to come. It is similar to, and characteristic of that person or event. In its Biblical application, it often refers to a Bible character or event which foreshadows some future one. For example, the Passover Lamb in Exodus is a type of Christ. Every detail of the paschal lamb spoke prophetically of the redemptive role Christ would fulfill as the “Lamb of God” (John 1:29). Every prophetic symbol was fulfilled when Christ died for the sins of the world.

Biblical types are often referred to as “shadows of things to come” (Heb. 8:5; 10:1). Such persons and events are like a person walking with the sun behind him. His body casts a shadow into the future, before him, portraying the shape of things to come.

The Law of God was a shadow of the good things to come. It represented, and was a shadow of, the better things which were to come in Christ (Heb. 10:1). The “holy days” of the Old Covenant were also shadows of things to come (Col. 2:17). Those holy days were not complete in themselves. Part of the purpose of their fulfillment was to project a prophetic picture of things which were yet to come.

The interpretation and exposition of Bible types is a rather specialized task; it deserves the skill of those who are mature and knowledgeable in Biblical subjects. Novices (beginning preachers) should avoid attempting to preach from the more profound types, since unskilled interpretations can lead into all kinds of unfortunate error.

A deep and thorough knowledge of the whole Bible is essential to those who seek to expound the meaning of the types. Such teachings should be substantiated and under girded by the whole Bible. Principle for use. When you first attempt to teach from Biblical types, please try to keep the following principles in mind:

Use Simpler Types. Begin with the simpler types, in which the implication is very obvious.

Keep To Broader interpretation. Never try to interpret every tiny detail of the type. Keep to the broader outline of the truth.

Don't Be Dogmatic. Avoid being dogmatic as to what the type teaches.

Illustrate Doctrine. Never base your doctrinal position on the teaching of types. Types should illustrate doctrine, not initiate it.

Be Open To Correction. Remain open to correction from those of greater maturity than yourself.

4. EXPOSITORY

By this method, we endeavour to expound the meaning and truth contained in a particular passage of Scripture. We seek to bring out the truth which is often hidden beneath the words on the page. This is an excellent method of teaching the whole counsel of God. (Acts. 20:27).

You may take a book of the Bible and explain the meaning of it chapter by chapter. Perhaps you may take one chapter each week – and go through it verse by verse, explaining the significance and truth as you go. This may develop into a series of Bible studies that may take weeks or months to complete. Thus, over a period of years, your congregation will become familiar with every part of the Bible, and be exposed to all the truth God wants to convey to them for their enrichment and spiritual equipping.

BIOGRAPHICAL

A biography is a story of a person. Therefore, this method involves the study of the lives of the many characters we encounter in the Bible. Every biography recorded in the Bible holds important significance for us. Every life has something to teach us. The study of Bible characters is very enthralling and absorbing. Choose a particular person. Read every reference to that person that occurs in the Bible. Make notes of every thought that comes to mind.

Begin to assemble those thoughts into chronological order –the order in which they occurred.

Study the birth of the person.

Consider the circumstances of his/her upbringing.

Focus upon the dealings of God in his life.

How did he react to God's dealing?

What did he learn from it?

If he were a success in life, what made him successful?

If his life ended in failure, where did he go wrong?

What can we learn from his life?

These are all interesting and informative things we can learn from the rich lives of the men and women we meet in the Bible.

6. ANALYTICAL

This type of sermon relates to the detailed analyzing of a subject in order to extract the greatest amount of truth from it. From this truth you can then teach the underlying principles involved.

ALLEGORICAL (to reason from a similar or parallel case)

Much of the teaching of Jesus was in the form of allegories or parables. He taught truth from a parallel case. The writers of the Bible often use a natural subject from which to teach a spiritual truth. It involves the comparison of similar functions, and the process of reasoning from parallel cases. The allegorical sermon endeavours to communicate truth contained in a parable.

Chapter 2 - The Textual Sermon

Let's examine more closely the preparation of a textual type of sermon. I have previously defined this method as an analysis and exposition of a brief portion of Scripture, usually a single verse or a brief statement.

ADVANTAGES OF HAVING A TEXT

It Captures Interest

The announcement of an interesting text immediately captures the interest of your audience, thus giving you an attentive congregation. They are intrigued to see how you will deal with it. They want to know what thoughts and implications you will bring forth out of your text. The minds of your listeners are stimulated and alerted, affording you an interested congregation.

Prevents Wandering

A specific text helps to prevent the preacher from wandering from his subject. It is difficult for an audience to retain active interest in a speaker who wanders too much in his presentation. Having a particular text – and a context from which you have taken your subject – helps to avoid such wanderings and to retain the active interest of your hearers.

Keeps Sermon Biblical

Centring your talk on a specific portion of Scripture helps to keep you (the preacher) Biblical. Having presented a text directly from the Bible, your message is obviously Biblically-based. The tendency is then to substantiate your theme from other relevant parts of the Bible.

Conversely, if your announced topic is other than a Biblical one – whether it be psychological, social, cultural, etc. – then the substantiation for your theme will generally be obtained from a similar source. That is not good. We are commanded to “Preach the Word!” (2 Tim. 4:2).

Increases Boldness

Preaching directly from the Bible increases the boldness and authority of the proclamation. When you specifically preach the Word of God, there is a special anointing of the Spirit upon it. God anoints His Word. Statements taken directly from the Bible can be presented with great feeling and conviction. This is because you are not presenting your own ideas: you are telling the people what God has to say on the matter. It carries enormous weight and authority when you declare. “The Bible says!” and then read or share the verse and give the meaning. It was when the disciples went forth “preaching the Word” that God worked with them, confirming the Word with signs following. The Lord “worked with the Word.” (Mark 16:20).

Aids Recall Of Message

A good text helps to fix the message in the minds of your listeners. They will remember it long afterwards. When they recall your message, it will frequently be the Scripture on which you based your talk which will be remembered most vividly.

CHOOSING A TEXT

Read The Bible Regularly

If you wish to become a capable and effective preacher, you must read your Bible regularly. Determine to develop good habits in respect to Bible reading. Have a special time each day to read the Bible. Carry a small Bible with you so that, if you have spare moments, you can spend them profitably in reading the Scriptures.

Study The Bible

Do not merely read it superficially. Dig beneath the surface. Meditate diligently on the things that you read. Toss them around in your mind. Look at them from every point of view. Practice analyzing what you study. Take it apart in your mind and put it together again.

Learn to “ruminate,” which means to “chew the cud.” When a cow feeds, it chews the grass, swallows it, and then brings it back from the stomach to the mouth to chew on again. So when you ruminate in your mind, you keep bringing the thought back to think about them again. Meditate on them. Ponder over them. Keep bringing them back to mind for further and deeper consideration.

The more your mind is filled with the Word of God and Biblical meditations, the more you will have to draw upon when you stand to minister. “The Holy Spirit will bring all things to your remembrance” (John 14:26), but you must have them in your mind for Him to do so.

Always Have a Notebook With You

Whenever you read your Bible, get into the habit of having pen and paper with you. Form the good habit of making brief notes of every bit of inspiration you receive. Try to avoid doing this on loose pieces of paper, as you will tend to lose these. If you use a notebook, it will become like a spiritual diary. Months afterwards you will be able to go back over your notes and draw fresh inspiration from them. The more you meditate on them, the more revelation you will receive. This will also create a file of thoughts on numerous subjects, from which you will be able to prepare many fine sermons and messages at the appropriate time.

Maintain A Prayerful Attitude

This does not mean that you must be on your knees all the time. It is the attitude of heart to which I refer, not the posture of your body. Ideally, prayer is a spiritual conversation with God. It is a two-way conversation. You speak to God, but He will also speak to you. As you learn to discern His voice, you will discover a continuing flow of inspiration.

Seek The Holy Spirit’s Illumination

Place a high value and priority on the illumination the Spirit can bring upon the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is a sensitive Person Who can be grieved and driven away. You must cultivate the quiet,

humble, sensitive spirit with which He loves to associate. As your fellowship with the Holy Spirit develops, He will introduce you to many wonderful new truths which will enrich your life and ministry.

Your Text Should Be:

Biblically Authoritative. It should harmonise with what the consensus of the Bible teaches. It is possible to take a verse out of its context, and teach from it something which the Bible does not substantiate. It has been said that “a text without a context is merely a pretext.”

Always study your text in the light of its context. Never try to make your text say anything which is not confirmed by the verses which precede and follow it. Always endeavour to interpret your text in the light of what the whole Bible teaches on the subject.

Complete. Your text should always form a complete statement of truth. Some preachers merely take a phrase from a verse and use it, regardless of context. This is dishonest! It is called “handling the word of God deceitfully” (2 Cor. 4:2). This must be avoided at all costs. It will lead a dishonest and unbiblical treatment of your subject. In consequence, you will be misled and will mislead your hearers.

Reasonably Brief. A textual sermon should be founded on a reasonable, brief statement of Scripture.

Comprehensive. Although brief, your text should also be comprehensive. It should be a brief but adequate summary of what you wish to share. When you read your text to the congregation, they should then gain a reasonable idea of the area of truth you are going to present. You should then seek to remain within the boundaries of what your text announces.

YOUR APPROACH TO THE TEXT

Thoroughly Digest its Words

Read the text over many times. Ponder it in your heart. Meditate on it. Memorise it. Speak it out to yourself. Become thoroughly familiar with it.

Determine its Language.

It is to be taken literally, or is it intended to be figurative? Does the writer mean what he says in a literal sense, or are his words to be taken as a figure of speech?

Analyse Its Message

It will help you greatly to dissect the verse. Separate it into three or four main parts. Discover exactly how much this verse contains and what it has to teach.

Investigate The Words.

Try to discover what the words were originally meant to convey. If you are fortunate enough to have a Greek or Hebrew lexicon, look up the word in the original language of Hebrew or Greek. Is there some special significance attached to it? Did the writer have a special reason for using THAT word? This study will help you understand any special application the writer may have wished to convey.

Discover its Development.

What line of truth was the writer seeking to develop? What was he ultimately trying to convey? How does he accomplish this? Try to follow his lead and develop it in a similar fashion.

Consider Its Context

Biblical Context. What do the preceding and following verses say? Consider the verse in relation to the whole chapter from which it comes. Consider it in the light of the whole Gospel or Epistle in which you find it.

Make sure your understanding of its faithful to the overall truth conveyed in the book. To do this, you must study the basic theme and premises of the book.

Cultural Context. Did the culture of that time influence what was written? Would the people to whom the words were originally written gain a different view of what was said than we would in our situation? If so, what would be the equivalent significance now?

Historic Context. When was this statement written? Did what was transpiring at that time influence what was written? Do events at the time of writing have specific bearing on what was said?

Geographic Context. Where was the writer when he wrote these words? Where were the people to whom he wrote? Does their geographical location have any bearing on what was said?

Total Biblical Context. “All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16). Each part must be faithfully interpreted to agree with the whole. No Scripture should be removed from its context; it must be interpreted by what the whole revelation of the entire Scriptures teaches. Scripture must interpret Scripture, and our exposition of one text should always agree with what the Bible as a whole teaches.

ARRANGING YOUR MATERIAL

The orderly arrangement of material is a distinct advantage, both to the preacher and to those who will hear him. For the preacher, it affords the clearest grasp of his subject. His thoughts are not muddled or confused. It also helps him to ensure the most adequate treatment of the subject. As for his audience, it will obviously assist them generally in their grasp and comprehension of the sermon.

What An Outline Does For You.

A good outline is the best and simplest way to organize your material.

It makes you carefully analyse your subject and the material you have gathered. In doing this, you ultimately select only the best of your material.

It reveals any weak areas in your treatment of the subject and the development of your presentation.

It enables you to get the most out of the material, because you reduce it to its most relevant and essential substance.

It makes it easier for you to remember all you want to say, and to present it in a progressive and orderly fashion, with the least obvious dependence on your written notes.

It makes it easier for your listeners to follow the development of your presentation, because it is communicated in the most orderly and logical fashion.

Concerning Your Notes

Keep Them Brief. Train yourself to use the “skeleton-type” notes which you can take in at a glance.

Make Them Orderly. You need to be able to follow them easily at all times.

Let Them Be Comprehensive. Endeavour to cover every aspect on which you intend to speak.

Concentrate On Ideas. Condense your thoughts into brief sentences. Learn to crystallize your thoughts and express them in simple sentences. Practice reducing and expressing a concept in one sentence.

Make Condensed Notes. Remember that the notes are there to prod your memory. Even one significant word can remind you of some instance you wish to recall and share with your audience.

Make Them Easy To Read. If you possess a typewriter or computer with printer, you may find typed notes easier to read. If not, then print your notes as clearly and legibly as possible. Never scribble out your notes so that you need to ponder over them in the pulpit in order to decipher what you have written!

THE STRUCTURE OF A TEXTUAL SERMON

The outline of your sermon will usually contain three major elements:

The Introduction.

The Main Statement Of Truth

The Conclusion And Application

Let us examine these in greater detail below.

Introduction.

Your introduction may well be the most important part of your message, for if you do not win your listener's attention in this initial period, they may pay little attention to the remainder of your sermon. The introduction often takes the form of a condensed version of your subject. You tell the listeners briefly what you plan to speak about and the area you intend to cover. You may also explain just how you plan to treat this subject. In this manner, you endeavour to whet their appetites and make them keen to hear more.

What Your Introduction Should Accomplish:

Capture Interest. It should immediately capture the interest and imagination of your hearers.

Establish Rapport. It should establish a rapport between you and your audience.

Afford Acceptance. It should afford you an acceptance from them. You need to win their interest, confidence and esteem.

Inform. It should inform them of what your subject is and how you intend to deal with it.

Convince. It should convince them of the importance of your topic, and win their careful attention to the remainder of your talk.

Never open your introduction with an apology. Never say: "Unfortunately, I have not had sufficient time to prepare my sermon and I am afraid that it will not be a very good one!" If that is the case, the unfortunate people will find out soon enough. They will not need to be told! Such an apology will only lessen your own confidence in your abilities, and it will certainly not increase the people's confidence in yours!

Characteristics of A Good Introduction:

It Does Not Promise More Than You Can Deliver! Sometimes a preacher may take a most dramatic introduction to his sermon. He excites his audience for what is to come. He promises them a wonderful and enlightening position. If the message does not then reach the level he promised, it will be an anti-climax. His audience will be disappointed. They will also lose confidence in him.

It Should Not Be Too Sensational. Do not set a pace which is impossible for you to maintain. Rather, let your introduction be modest, and then your audience will be pleasantly surprised when they discover the sermon to be much more interesting than they anticipated.

It Should Not Be Too Long. Remember, this is only your introduction, not the sermon.

It Should Bear Obvious Relationship To Your Theme. The introduction should lead into your theme, so it must always be vitally related to your subject. It may be a condensed version of the subject matter you intend to share. It may be a story which illustrates the truth what you plan to share.

It Should Be Carefully Prepared. Since your introduction is vitally important in winning the attention of your hearers, it surely deserves careful thought and preparation. Try to put yourself in the place of your audience. Ask yourself: What would successfully gain my attention? Of all that I propose to say, which particular aspect would really capture my interest? By using your imagination in the manner, you can determine the best style your introduction should take.

It Should Provide A Natural Transition Into Your Theme. When properly presented, it should not be obvious to your listeners just where the introduction concludes and the sermon begins.

This is applicable to all your messages. It should not be in several distinct sections or points. All points should relate to the central theme or text.

The Main Body Of Your Message.

I would suggest that you divide the main part of your subject matter into three major sections. These sections need not all be the same length. There should be a natural, logical and smooth progression from one point to the next.

These divisions do not have to be obvious when you present them. Try to avoid saying, "Now, my third point is..." Perhaps the sections might take from like this:

STATE THE TRUTH

Declare It.
Explain It.
Clarify It.

AMPLIFY THE TRUTH

Develop It.
Substantiate It.
Prove It.

CLIMAX

Present Your Conclusion.
What May We Learn From This?
How May We Practically Apply It?

CONCLUSION.

Appeal to the mind. Summarise your taLuke Restate it briefly. Appeal to the will. Seek to persuade. Appeal to the emotions. Try to motivate.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR SERMON

Prepare A Rough Plan First

An outline affords the most effective means of properly organizing your material. Once you master the art of producing a good outline, you will find it much easier and more convenient to organize your taLuke

As you begin to examine and evaluate your subject material, write down every thought on a large piece of paper. Don't worry at this stage about getting things into their correct sequence. Simply write down every valid thought that occurs to you as you consider the subject.

Select Your Main Thoughts.

What are the three most important statements you have written on that large sheet of paper? Get them into a natural sequence.

Which statement should come first?

What is the foundation statement which needs to be laid?

Make it your number one heading. WRITE IT OUT IN CAPITAL LETTERS AND UNDERLINE IT!

Now ask yourself: "Which statement naturally follows on from the first? Make that main heading number two. Now you are left with one more main thought which should be a conclusion of the matter. This will now be main heading number three. Set them out of paper like this:

MAIN HEADING NUMBER ONE

Minor heading.
Minor heading.
Minor heading.

MAIN HEADING NUMBER TWO

Minor heading.
Minor heading.
Minor heading.

MAIN HEADING NUMBER THREE

Minor heading.
Minor heading.
Minor heading.

Now begin to go through the rest of your material on your ROUGH PLAN. Get those thoughts into order under the particular headings you have designated. Let each of these be placed under the appropriate main heading: 1,2, 3. Each thought then becomes a "minor heading." Designate them

a, b, c etc. All your thoughts and material are now coming into an orderly arrangement. This makes it easier for you to study the subject further.

SERMON EXAMPLES

Example 1. Allow me to illustrate this method from one of the best known verses in the Bible, John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

INTRODUCTION

The world has known many people who are said to be great lovers. But I want to speak about the One Who is, without doubt, THE greatest lover of all. It is God Himself! He loves the greatest number of people, with the highest quality of love, which prompted Him to make the greatest possible sacrifice.

GOD’S GREAT LOVE FOR THE WHOLE WORLD.

He created the world and all mankind.

He loves every person in the world equally.

He wants every one of them to live in His Kingdom eternally.

LOVE CAUSED HIM TO GIVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON.

How precious the Son is to God the Father. No earthly father ever loved his son so much.

How great was God’s sacrifice!

God gave Jesus freely for whosoever (everyone in the world)

He gave Him to die to pay the penalty for our sin and guilt.

WHOEVER RECEIVES CHRIST NEED NOT PERISH.

This wonderful offer is available to all.

God loves even the worst of men.

Salvation is free gift through faith in Jesus.

CONCLUSION.

God now offers you the greatest possible gift...eternal life in Christ! How foolish you would be to reject or neglect so wonderful a gift. Accept Christ now without delay!

Example 2. Now, let us consider a simple narrative from the Gospels. In Luke 8:41-48, we find the story of a woman who, after twelve years of chronic suffering came to Christ and was immediately healed. She went away healed and with a deep peace in her heart and mind. Our text could be a phrase from verse 48: “GO IN PEACE.” (This could also be the title of your message!)

INTRODUCTION.

Surely every person desires to possess inner peace and security. There are many factors in life which may rob us of such peace. One of these is sickness. It is difficult to maintain inner peace when one is plagued by serious illness. The mind is filled with uncertainty and despair.

Here is a story of just such a person. She has been sick for twelve years. Though she had visited many doctors, none had been able to help her. In fact she even became worse. Then one glorious day, she met Jesus Christ. Through this wonderful encounter, she was instantly healed of her long-standing sickness. She was also blessed with a deep sense of inner peace.

This same Jesus can also bless your life today. Let us look into this story, and discover how she received her healing – and how too can be healed!

THIS WOMAN HAD NO PEACE

She had been constantly ill for twelve years.

She had spent all her money. Now she was penniless!

She was disappointed and frustrated.

She was tempted to despair. It seemed that none could help her. How typical she is of so many today who are lonely, frustrated and insecure.

HOW SHE CAME TO CHRIST

- a. She heard what He had done for someone else.
- b. She determined that she, too, would seek His healing.
- c. She encouraged herself in faith. She said within herself: “If I can but touch the border of His garment, I shall be healed” (Mark 5:28).
- d. She overcame many obstacles.
She came to Christ.
She touched Him by faith.
His life flowed into her. Immediately she was made whole!

Her SALVATION.

The disciples could not help her. They did not even know her need. There are times when no human being can help us. Only God is able to meet our deepest needs.

Christ required her confession. “Who touched me?” He already knew who had touched Him, but He wanted her public confession. Romans 10:10 says: “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Christ called her “daughter.” He accepted her as a member of God’s family.

He told her to “Go in peace.” From that moment, she knew real peace. Uncertainty and anxiety were banished, and the peace of God filled her heart and mind.

It was her faith which made her whole (Luke 8:48). God desires everyone to be whole: perfectly sound in spirit, soul and body.

CONCLUSION.

She went away a transformed person. You too can be transformed if you come to Christ in faith!

SUMMARY

Practice dissecting and analyzing such incidents from the Bible. Try to discover the three main thoughts or section of the story. Once you have determined the three main thoughts, begin to analyse each of them separately and break them down into their component parts. There may be four or five smaller truths within each main statement. Analyse the various parts. Get them into sequence and order. Then, arrange them progressively. This is excellent practice for you. It may not come easily at first, but persevere. Determine to master it. After a while, it will become easier for you.

I often liken the construction of a sermon to the building of a house:

The introduction is like a path leading up to the house. It takes you from the front gate to the door by which you may enter. Each main heading is like a room in the house. The minor headings are the furnishings in each room. Illustrations are windows built into each room to throw light on the furnishings in that room. (Illustrations are simple examples which help us to understand profound truths.) Keep this analogy in mind when you are preparing your sermons.

Chapter 3 - Expository Preaching

Here we deal with the art of expounding a passage of Scripture. To expound means: to interpret and explain; to set forth a matter in detail. For example, you may decide to go through the Gospel of John, chapter by chapter. Commencing with the first chapter, you would seek to interpret and explain the meaning and significance of it, verse by verse. You might deal with one chapter each week – and thus, over a period of weeks, finally go through the whole book.

ADVANTAGES OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING

This is an excellent method of teaching the Bible. It has many distinct advantages, and is a good style to cultivate. Here are some of the obvious advantages of this method:

It Is A Biblical Method.

Jesus Himself frequently used this method. He would take a portion of the Old Testament Scripture and interpret the meaning of it to His hearers.

Peter also used this method on the Day of Pentecost. He took some of the Old Testament Scriptures referring to King David, and explained the true meaning of them to the crowd. He carefully showed the prophetic implications of those Scriptures and how they pointed to Christ, and proved Him to be the Messiah.

Again, we find Stephen using this method of expository preaching in Acts 7. The Bible filled with fine examples of expository preaching.

It Produces Bible Preachers And Bible-Oriented Congregations.

Expounding the Scriptures ensures that there is plenty of Bible content in your ministry. As you proceed through a chapter, verse by verse, your congregation is being filled with the Word of God.

It Invites Holy Spirit Reinforcement.

The Spirit of God always agrees with the Word of God (1 John 5:7). Therefore, the more Bible content we preach, the more of the Spirit's anointing there will be upon the proclamation. The Holy Spirit delights to confirm the Word of God. He does so many times with signs and wonders. (Mark 16:20).

It Encourages Deeper Interest In The Bible.

The more of the Bible you share with people, the more hungry they become for it. They will soon begin to study it for themselves at deeper levels. Their lives will be transformed. They will be strengthened and reinforced by the Word. You will have a Bible-oriented church.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

Carefully Choose An Appropriate Passage Of Scripture

Make sure the passage is one which minister life and strength to your hearers. Do not choose a subject merely because it interests or intrigues you. Never select a subject which may introduce dispute, division and strife.

You are seeking to be channel for God, that He might speak His Word to His people through you. You are therefore responsible to get the mind of God for the people over whom He has given you responsibility. This ministry is one of the greatest privileges given to mortal man. It is also one of the most awesome responsibilities!

Seek A Theme Relevant To The People's Present Situation

God always has "present truth" that He wants to speak to His people (2 Pet. 1:12). There is constant progression and development of God's purposes among His people. He has a specific purpose for each body of believers.

Every congregation should be moving forward in the particular purpose of God that He has defined for them. In order to accomplish this, it is essential that His specific word of truth is ministered to them consistently. It is sometimes a useful exercise to ask yourself: "If this were to be my last chance to speak to this people, what is the most important thing they need to hear?" Preaching with this kind of thought in mind helps you. It will ensure that your topics are relevant and vital to the development and maturing of the people in the purposes that God has for them.

Study The Passage Carefully From Every Angle

Read it through several times until you begin to become very familiar with it. Then study it carefully, verse by verse. Whenever there is an obvious link with some other passage of Scripture read that portion as well.

If you have access to any reference books, then by all means read them. But above all, keep your mind open and alert to the Holy Spirit, to glean whatever thoughts He may share with you.

Endeavour To Thoroughly Understand Your Theme

Always seek to discover the underlying theme of the passage. What was the Holy Spirit seeking to convey when He inspired this passage? What is at the very heart of this teaching? What is it that God would say to His people through this?

Have A Definite Objective In Mind

Your objective should be in complete harmony with God's objective. Having discovered what you sense He is wanting to communicate through this Scripture, your task is to be as faithful to that as possible. So, you need to soak yourself in this message. It is not sufficient to mentally comprehend what God is saying. You need to feel what He is feeling. He wants to communicate His heart as well as His mind. So His Word must flow through your heart and well as your mind. You are to be God's instrument to convincingly relay His message to His people. You are His mouthpiece! You are not called to share YOUR mind with the people. You are called to share HIS mind with them. This awareness should be your motivating factor. It should be the compelling reason for your preaching.

Speak From Your Own Experience.

In order for you to effectively communicate truth, it should be something which God has worked out in your own life first. Many preachers present theories. They preach platitudes which sometimes have no practical relevance. No man can convincingly preach a "born-again experience" unless he has experienced it himself!

You must know the experience as a reality in your own life before you can effectively share it with others. The preacher is called to be a living epistle. He is not only required to preach the truth, he is also required to practice and demonstrate. He is to be a living example of all he preaches.

Make It Meaningful.

Exegesis means: "to bring out the true meaning." You are responsible to ensure, to the best of your ability, that the true meaning and significance of the Scriptures becomes clear to your listeners. Always endeavour to make your subject simple. This is obviously what Jesus did. This was an important reason why His ministry was so powerful and effective. He took profound issues and made them so simple.

Many modern preaches do the very opposite. They take the simplest subjects and make them so profound and complicated that their audience understands little of what they hear. Remember this: the simpler, the better!

Make It Practical.

Always try to clearly show the practical applications your message may have for the people. A grave danger among Christians is often "too much knowledge, too little practice." Many Christians have listened to sermons for years. Yet there is little change in their lives or practical expression of the teaching.

Do not be content to merely speak to people. Make your conclusions abundantly clear. Endeavour to make practical suggestions as to how the people may meaningfully respond to God. Follow up your messages with practical programs in which people may become involved in order to be doers of the Word and not hearers only!

GATHERING RELEVANT MATERIAL.

In addition to studying the passage of Scripture, how do we collect additional relevant material? Here are a few questions to ask yourself:

What Have I Ever Heard Or Read On This Subject?

Begin to stir up your memory. Perhaps you once read a good book on this subject. What was the book? What did it say on this matter? Push your memory until the thoughts come back to your conscious mind.

Perhaps you once heard someone preach on this subject. What was said? How was it presented? Frequently something that was said will become a seed-thought in your mind. From this, a whole train of new thoughts will come.

What Has The Holy Spirit Ever Shown Me On This Subject?

This is where the benefit of keeping a notebook is realized. Sometimes months or even years previously. God had given you some interesting thoughts and insights on this very theme. If you did not write down those thoughts, you may have a problem recalling them again.

But if you have a notebook in which your devotional thoughts are recorded, you can go back to it again to familiarise your mind with what the Spirit showed you then. If you have not been keeping such a book, get away somewhere quietly so your mind can dwell on the subject without interruptions. Meditation will help you recall those things you were taught by the Spirit.

What Have I Ever Observed Which Relates To This Theme?

Frequently, we have observed things which throw light on the subject we are considering. We may recall incidents from our experience which illustrate some aspect of truth we are now considering. Sometimes it is a thing we have observed in nature which confirms a principle we are studying in the Word of God. Illustrations from nature often bring tremendous light to a Scripture. The God of nature is also the God of the Bible!

What Thoughts Have I Ever Had On This Subject?

Many of our previous thoughts on a given subject are now buried in the sub-conscious mind. They need to be brought to the surface again. This can often be accomplished in a time of deep meditation.

As we sit quietly, focusing our minds on the Bible, buried thoughts will float to the surface again. I often tell my students: "Push your memory: make it work. You will not damage it by making it work for you. You can only improve it." Never be afraid to do this. Sit and concentrate. Will to remember what your thoughts were. Refresh your mind with them again.

Who Or What Can I Consult On This Subject?

Discussing a Biblical topic with a fellow preacher is always a stimulating and valuable experience. If you have opportunity to do this, then seize that chance! It will be edifying and enlightening for all concerned. This kind of exercise should take place every time preachers are together. Engaging in discussion on edifying Bible subjects would do a tremendous amount of good and foster true fellowship and unity.

Share your knowledge and experience with each other. Pool your Bible knowledge through good discussion and frequent conversation. Don't waste those golden opportunities when you come together.

PREPARATION OF YOUR MATERIAL.

Having found a suitable, relevant passage, deal with it as follows:

Be Open Minded About it.

Put aside your pre-conceived ideas on the subject. Let your mind be open and unbiased to receive and learn something new. Someone has said that if we really want to grow spiritually, then we must read all those parts of the Bible which we have NEVER underlined.

Frequently, we have firmly established concepts; and we tend to see only those things which confirm what we already believe. We must approach God's Word with openness and honesty. Don't nullify or make of "no effect" the Word of God because your religious tradition has shut off your mind to anything other than what you presently believe (see Mark 7:13). You certainly do not have the sum total of all the knowledge God wants to impart to you. Be ready to learn whatever new truth God may have to share with you.

Investigate It Thoroughly.

Analyse the passage. Interrogate it! Take it apart and examine it thoroughly. Do this with your mind open to the Holy Spirit. Anticipate fresh thought and revelation from God. Expect to discern truth which you have never noticed before.

The Word of God is like a mineshaft. The deeper you go, the more precious the deposits you find. Many people are content to dig around the surface. Their conclusions are always superficial. They are able to share only what others already know.

A secret of effective teaching is to investigate those areas of truth which have not previously occurred to people. In this way, you can share fresh and refreshing truth with them.

Do Some Original Thinking About it.

Do not let your mind stay in the ruts you have created. Trust the Holy Spirit to illuminate your mind. I am sure He will share something with you that you have never known before. Check it out with the rest of the Bible. No “truth” ever contradicts the whole body of truth revealed in the Scriptures. Check it too, with a fellow preacher – one who knows more about the Bible than you do, and not one that you know will always agree with you!

Do not be afraid to have some original thought. Let the wind of the Spirit blow the cobwebs from your mind!

Appropriate It Creatively.

God is a Creator. His Word is a creative Word. Everything that God made He created by His Word! The Word of God should not be bound. It is still a creative and powerful Word. When released into redeemed hearts, it will create and transform.

Always be aware of the creative potential of God’s Word. Handle it with an attitude of faith and expectancy. Always be mindful that it is filled with creative ability. It has far more energy and ability than you will ever understand. It is always capable of producing far more than you could comprehend.

Remember, it is a miracle Word. God is in His Word. His creative genes are in it. Your ministry should be aimed at releasing this creative ability into the lives of your hearers.

Treat It Constructively.

Remember that you are a labourer together with God. (II Cor. 6: 1). You are involved in CONSTRUCTING something, not destroying it. Your task, under God, is to build up the Body of Christ. Therefore your messages should be constructive, not destructive. Sometimes your emphasis may be very searching. The Word you deliver may bring your listeners to heart-searching and repentance. Their reaction may be brokenness and tears, but they should not be left like that! Consider Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 8:5-12). God had delivered a very heavy word to the returned exiles. As they listened to the exposition of the Law, they realized how far they had gotten away from it during their years of exile. This caused them to weep, bowing their faces to the ground in repentance. The prophets allowed them to do this for a while. They then interrupted their weeping and mourning and got the people on their feet again. They said: “...go ...eat ...and drink...neither be you sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” (verse 10).

Do not constantly bring the people under condemnation. Your ultimate goal is to see them built up, strengthened and edified. To accomplish this, you must minister constructively.

Study It Comparatively.

Scripture must be compared with Scripture. It must always be interpreted within the total context of the Bible. This demands a maturity of understanding of the whole Bible. You must study the Bible consistently, ‘to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly ‘applying’ the word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2:15- paraphrased).

Conclude It Practically

An effective Bible preaching and teaching must have a practical conclusion and application. Ministry is not merely to inform the mind, bur rather to form the life. You should always have a practical conclusion to make. Suggest to your audience some meaningful response. People need to respond to the word you have brought.

DELIVERING THE EXPOSITORY MESSAGE.

Turn To passage.

Have your congregation turn to the appropriate passage in the Bible.

Read the Passage Aloud

If you plan to expound a particular chapter, read it out to the people. Perhaps the congregation may share the reading with you, each one reading out a verse or two.

Introduce Your Theme

Explain how you intend to deal with it. Explain your purpose and intention, so that the people may cooperate with you. They then will understand where you are heading and will be able to follow along with you.

Read the Passage Aloud Again

You may then decide to read the chapter through again, one verse at a time, making a suitable commentary on each verse.

SEVEN PRINCIPLES.

At this point, I would like to introduce to you seven vital principles which are extremely important, particularly in expository preaching. Remember them, and seek to cover them whenever you expound the Word of God.

Clarify

Make sure that your commentary is easily understood. Do not try to be too profound or mysterious. The aim of effective expository preaching is to make the relevant passages as easy to understand as possible. Do not try to be clever or to display your knowledge. Try to break the Bread of Life in such a way that your entire audience is able to easily follow the emphasis you are making.

Consistency

Keep your comments consistent with the theme you are expounding. Avoid the temptation to wander off down various devious pathways which may occur to you. By keeping faithful to your subject, you reinforce it in the minds of your audience.

Do not be afraid of some repetition. A certain amount of it is necessary in order to fix a truth into the hearts of the people.

Coherence

To “cohere” means: to hold together. So be sure your thoughts have a clear unity. A person speaking incoherently is one whose speech is lacking in unity. It is often impossible to connect to the point he is trying to make.

Let the expression of your thoughts have obvious unity. Do not wander from thought to thought. Be clear and concise. Make sure your thoughts have cohesion and hold together well, each supporting and complementing the other.

Continuity

There should also be a clear progression of thought. Your statements should be continually moving your audience towards the proposed objective. Each point should follow clearly the previous one. Your comments should flow freely one to the next, with unity and clear development and progression. Keep moving forward smoothly to your ultimate goal.

Concise

Aim to be brief. It is far better to have your audience wishing that you would continue, than to have them wishing you had finished twenty minutes previously. Avoid the temptation to speak for the sake of speaking. Don't get into the habit of rambling on. It only confuses your audience. A good piece of advice: STAND UP! SPEAK UP! SHUT UP!

Comprehensive

This point may seem to contradict the previous one in which I advised brevity. To be comprehensive means: to cover the subject as fully as possible. But there is no contradiction. It is certainly possible and desirable to cover a subject comprehensively and yet as briefly as possible. Being comprehensive does not necessitate speaking at so great a length that your audience becomes tired of the sound of your voice. Try to balance the two!

Conclusive

Here is the most important point. What is the conclusion of all you have said? What is the end result? What will your words achieve?

The desired conclusion should dominate your mind from the commencement. You should be moving relentlessly towards it. Minister in faith, expecting God to bring to pass His desired objective.

Remember that it is not your responsibility to achieve the desired result. That is God's task. You must keep looking to God, not to the people. Confidently expect Him to give the increase.

Chapter 4 - The Biographical Sermon

ADVANTAGES OF THE BIOGRAPHICAL SERMON

This type of sermon relates primarily to teaching from the lives and examples of Bible characters. It entails the detailed study of such characters in order to learn as much as possible from their lives. An interesting feature of the Bible is the manner in which the men and women who from the narrative are presented just as they are. There is no attempt to cover up their weaknesses and reveal only their strengths and virtues.

Many of the great heroes of the Bible have their human flaws. We are very much aware that they are flesh and blood as we are. They faced temptations common to all men; frequently, their response was little different from that of the average Christian today.

In all the narrative of Bible history there is only one truly perfect man – the man Christ Jesus! Even the great heroes of faith are manifestly human. This certainly helps us identify with them. The art of expounding truths learned from studying the lives of these men and women is an extremely valuable one. It is a style of preaching which may be used to great effect by a pastor.

It Deals With Realities Of Life.

It deals with the realities of human life, with its strengths and weaknesses. We can frequently learn so much from the struggles, triumphs and failures of those who have gone before us. # They Are Examples To Learn From.

They are examples for our benefit – that we might learn from them, rather than from our own painful experience. (I Cor. 10: 11).

HOW TO BEGIN

* Choose Characters From The Bible

You could begin this style of preaching by studying some of the great characters of the Bible such as Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Paul and Peter.

These are men whose deeds illuminate the history of God's dealings with mankind. There is SO MUCH to learn from their lives. There are many great women in the Bible too, whose lives have a special message to convey.

* Study Their Lives

Begin by reading the narrative which tells of the birth of the person. Find out the meaning of his or her name for most Bible names have tremendous significance. Study the circumstances of his or her upbringing. Pay special attention to the purpose of God in his or her life.

What did God want to accomplish through him (or her)?

How did He make His purpose known?

What was the reaction of the person?

What can we learn from the dealings of God in his (or her) life?

Are there some dangers we should be aware of?

What was the secret of his (or her) success?

What was the conclusion of his (or her) life?

EXAMPLE OF A BIOGRAPHICAL SERMON.

There are so many lessons we can learn from these great characters.

The Life Of David

Let us look briefly into the life of David to give simple example of a biographical sermon.

TITLE: "DAVID, A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART (Acts 13:22).

INTRODUCTION.

His name means "Beloved of God." He is called a man after God's heart. Why did God call him this? What was it that appealed to God's heart? There is obviously much we can learn from this man!

A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART

David had a special place in God's heart.

It is wonderful that God finds such delight in a human being.

WAS NOT A PERFECT MAN

His weakness became known to all. Yet this did not alter God's feeling about him.

We too are from perfect, yet God can find delight in us.

WAS A VERY 'HUMAN' PERSON

Typical mixture of strengths and weaknesses.

Longed to please God, yet so often grieved Him.

Longed for God's rule in his life, yet frequently did his own thing.

Ascended to great heights...descended to sad depths.

David was not a superman. He was truly human as we are!

CHOSEN FOR SPECIAL TASK

God chose him from among his older, outwardly more impressive brothers. Man is impressed with outward appearance but God looks on the heart. Some of God's finest servants are not outwardly impressive.

HE HAD TO BE TESTED

Every person called of God must be tested and proven.

Jesus was tested in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11).

"Don't think it strange when you are tested" (1 Peter 4:12)

"After you have suffered a while, God will make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." (1 Peter 5:10)

DAVID TESTED THROUGH BATHSHEBA (2 Sam 11)

He was spiritually 'off guard'....

Was now fifty years old...Had been king for 20 years. How easy to drop one's guard!

Was overly self-confident. Never trust the arm of flesh!

Idle moments led to his downfall. Should have been at the battle-front. Satan takes advantage of idle time.

Material prosperity bred sensuousness. Paul disciplined his flesh to ensure he was not disapproved. (1 Cor. 9:27).

Failed to overcome temptation while it was still in his mind. All temptation begins in thoughts. This is the easiest place to defeat it. Cast down thoughts and imaginations (2 Cor. 10:5). Failure to do so may lead to disaster. (Jas. 1: 14-15).

HIS REPENTANCE (Psalm 51:1-10).

It was David's sincerity in repentance which endeared him to God.

He acknowledged his transgressions. Did not try to blame someone else

Repented thoroughly of this iniquity.

Sincerely sought forgiveness.

Cried out for cleansing.

Sought a clean heart and right spirit.

HIS SUFFERING (PSALM 32:3-4; 77:2-6).

Heavy conviction day and night.

Tears of remorse.

Bones waxed old.

WHAT GOD SOUGHT TO ACCOMPLISH (Psalm 51:6, 10, 17).

Truth in the inward parts.
Clean heart and right spirit.
Broken spirit and contrite heart.
THAT HIS SERVANT MIGHT BE
A meet and humble soul.
A truly joyful person.
Sustained by God's free spirit.
A man after God's own heart.

This is a brief and simple example of a biographical sermon. Determine to spend some time studying some of the great characters of the Bible so that you can teach important truths from their lives.

There are many things in the life of David that parallel our own lives. As we allow God to develop and equip us for the task to which He has called us there may be numerous things in the life of David and other Bible characters from which we may all learn vital lessons. It is always a good thing if we are able to learn such lessons from the lives and mistakes of others. This may save us from having to experience similar testings in our own life.

Chapter 5 - The Preacher

Effective preaching is largely the product of two factors, one divine and the other human. Both are necessary – for “without man, God will not, and without God, man cannot.” It is the human aspect with which we are dealing primarily in these studies.

A. PERSONALITY GUIDELINES

An elderly preacher was one asked by a group of young ministers: “With regard to the human aspect of preaching, what is the most important factor?” His immediate reply was, “Personality!” “But tell us,” they persisted, “what is personality?” “Ah,” he said, “If only I knew!” Preaching involves communicating divine truth through human personality. So the development and proper use of personality is important.

Someone has analyzed effective public speaking (I refer to public speaking as distinct from preaching) in this manner:

An effective speech is composed of:

- Subject matter
- Psychology of approach and conclusion
- Effective delivery
- Personality

Yet, that 10 percent of personality contribution “leavens” the whole speech! It can make the difference between or boring talk and a fascinating speech. I have, therefore, felt it desirable to devote some space to the matter of preacher's personality. The following are some simple guidelines.

By Yourself

Be relaxed, natural and unaffected. One of the most important aids to effective speaking is to be relaxed. Tension creates nervousness. Under tension, the memory does not function well. Speech does not flow fluently. Your nervousness will be communicated to the audience, and they too will feel tense. The best way to relax is to commit your message to God. Do the best you can and leave the results to God.

Do Not Copy Others

God chose YOU because He wants to use You! You have some special features peculiar to you alone, and God has a purpose for them. It is a great mistake to try to copy any other preacher. No

matter how effective that person may be, it will not enhance your ministry to try to copy him. To do so would be like David trying to wear Saul's armor. It just did not fit him, and would have been more of a hindrance than a help (see 1 Samuel 17: 38-39).

If you are endeavoring to copy or imitate someone, your listeners will quickly become aware of this. They will realize that your preaching is not wholly sincere and genuine. It communicates shallowness or superficiality. You will never be completely relaxed and at ease if you are not yourself. Your ministry will be stilted and artificial. You can certainly learn from hearing and observing other preachers but nothing is gained from trying to copy them. Determine to be yourself, and be the best you can be!

Be True To Yourself

Integrity and honesty are essential for a preacher. You are a channel for God - a mouthpiece, that He might speak to people through you. Therefore, He wants a vessel which is honest, free from hypocrisy and guile.

Be A Clean Vessel

It is unlikely that your hearers will rise higher than you. If your life is polluted, you will pollute your hearers. If there is bitterness in your spirit, you will communicate it to your listeners. If you are critical, this will come through your preaching, and your congregation will become critical too. If you allow yourself to be controlled by negative attitudes, the people will also become negative. You will always reproduce after your kind (Gen. 1:12, 21). You have a grave responsibility to BE the kind of person God wants to reproduce. The fruit of your ministry will be of that variety as well.

Be Sincere

Sincerity means: to be free from pretense or deceit. It means: to be the same person in reality as you are in appearance. Do not try to appear to be in public what you are not in private. Be genuine, honest and sincere. Many preachers develop a public image. They have a religious façade. Please avoid this – it is a religious hypocrisy and an abomination to God. God is certainly not impressed by such a false image and people are not fooled by it for very long either.

Have A Clear Purpose and Objective

The personality is properly shaped and developed when one has a real objective in life. If your life is truly dedicated to being an effective minister of God's Word, your personality will be developed to that end. It will take the shape best suited to a communication of truth. Such dedication will foster the development of your personality in the best manner suitable to be a spokesman for God.

Do not allow preaching to be a hobby for you. It is the highest calling of God available to man. If God has called you to declare His glorious truth, devote yourself wholeheartedly to pursue the ultimate development of that calling. It is the most important thing in your life. Never allow it to be relegated to a secondary position.

Be Wholehearted.

Nothing worthwhile is ever achieved by half-hearted people. Nothing of value is ever obtained without cost. Give yourself wholeheartedly to the great task of preaching. Let this goal be uppermost in your mind. Study everything you can on the subject. Let it absorb and motivate you. Make it the most important thing in your life, determine to be, in every way, worthy of the high calling God has put upon you.

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN PREACHING

Naturalness

Be relaxed and be yourself. God wants to use YOUR personality as a channel to communicate His Word. That is why He chose and called YOU. Do not be overly critical of yourself. Accept yourself. God has accepted you. No one can be YOU nearly as well as YOU!

Originality

Let your message and the manner in which you present it be your own unique product. God has made us different one from another. He enjoys our uniqueness and the variety this gives to the human race. Use the unique personality God has given to you, and allow Him to express His mind through your life in the special and unique way He has desired.

Simplicity

There is something extremely attractive and appealing about simplicity. Don't try to be overly complicated or profound. You don't have to impress people. You are there to minister to them, not to impress them.

Attractiveness

I am convinced that the most winsome and attractive personality this world has ever seen is Jesus Christ! I don't mean particularly in physical appearance. Isaiah said: "...when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him" (Is. 53:2). The attractiveness of Christ was not primarily in His physical appearance. It was His character and personality that were so appealing. The average people of His day responded to Him with great enthusiasm. The Bible says: "...the common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37). They flocked to Him. They were drawn like steel filings to a magnet. There was a sweet graciousness about Him which gave Him an enormous appeal. It was partly this personal magnetism which drew large crowds wherever He went. The Holy Spirit can develop a similar attractiveness in you!

Spontaneity

Don't act unnaturally. Be free and unimpeded, doing things naturally. Spontaneity means: that things happen easily without being forced or coerced. Don't develop a religious style which is heavy and unnatural. Let your style of communication flow freely and naturally. Don't let yourself be bound and restricted.

Adaptability

A good preacher must learn to be flexible and to adapt to many different circumstances. Every gathering you preach in will be different in some way from others. You need to be able to discern in each situation what the Holy Spirit is desiring to accomplish. God has a specific objective to achieve in every gathering of believers. The preacher is a very important key to the accomplishment of that purpose.

Try not to be too rigid or orthodox in your mental approach to a preaching occasion. Endeavor to keep your mind flexible and open. Learn how to wait on God continually in your spirit. Keep your spirit open to His still small voice within you. This can make all the difference between a very ordinary church service and a dynamic encounter with God through His Word. The Holy Spirit can create many different kinds of moods in the meetings. Sometimes they can be joyful and lively; at other times they will be quiet and reverent. The skill to recognize this, and take advantage of the unique situation created by the Spirit, can enable you to reap the results desired by God.

The key to success in Christian service is to "discern the way in which God is moving and move with Him."

Dynamic

There is a mysterious dynamic in preaching which is quite unique to this particular function – a dynamic expression of authority which can be quite awesome to witness. Peter illustrates this awesome dynamic on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Until this time, he had shown himself to be fearful and afraid. His cowardly denial of Christ had proven this. His refusal to acknowledge Christ even before a mere serving-maid reveals his timidity and insecurity. But he was transformed on the Day of Pentecost. We see a very different Peter as he stood to preach that morning. There is something glorious to behold about this man as he fearlessly proclaims the Word of God to a vast crowd.

There is a majesty which thrills the soul as we witness such a preacher in action. Who can explain just what constitutes this phenomenon? I clearly recall some of the times when I have been

privileged to hear Dr. Billy Graham. What power and authority is released through the preaching of this man! It is a combination of the power of God and the cooperation of man. Here is an example of how wonderfully a human being can become a channel for the wisdom and counsel of God to be brought to men.

Truly preaching is a high and holy task. A person called to this work must feel honored indeed. Anyone called to fulfill this role should surely dedicate himself wholeheartedly to ensure the highest possible level of effectiveness.

VITAL EQUIPMENT

Let's focus further on three things which are vital to effective preaching: VISION, VOCABULARY AND VOICE!

Vision

Every preacher needs a vision. By this I mean a concept of what his ministry can achieve in God. Our vision is that concept of the ultimate achievement towards which we move through life. You could say it is a dream of what you can ultimately be for God and the function you can fulfill to His glory.

Every preacher needs such a vision to motivate him. He needs a definite, ultimate goal to move towards – something to strive for, something to achieve; something for which it is worth sacrificing; a goal which will bring out the best in him.

Most preachers encounter plenty of discouragement one way or another. They need something which will counterbalance this and eventually make everything worthwhile. Unless you have an inner awareness of God's ultimate purpose for you, you could be overcome with discouragement and fail to achieve your divinely-appointed goal.

Vocabulary

A preacher's vocabulary is composed of the number of words he knows and with which he is familiar. Obviously, words are the tools which a preacher employs in the pursuit of his calling. The more words he knows and understands, the more fluent and expressive he can be.

Words are to the preacher what brush and paint are to the artist. A preacher can paint vivid pictures with words. As he describes a scene, his audience can almost see what he describes. Words are so important to an effective communicator. A preacher without words a tradesman without tools.

As a preacher, you must be interested in words. Try to read widely, for reading good literature will enrich your vocabulary. Whenever you encounter a word you are not familiar with, investigate it. Find out what it means. Add it to your collection. Begin to use it in right context and application. Build up your vocabulary; you will become more fluent as you do. People will listen to you with much more interest, if you can adequately communicate your topic.

Voice

Surely the voice is a preacher's greatest natural asset. Therefore, you should endeavor to take good care of it. You should always be aware of your voice and seek to improve your use of it.

PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Here are a few principles about which a public speaker should be mindful:

Breathing

Correct breathing is extremely important for a speaker.

Practice breathing through your nose.

Breathe deeply right to the bottom of your lungs.

Practice filling your chest and lungs with air.

Hold it and then breathe out slowly. Control the expiration.

Let the air come right up from the bottom of your lungs, through your larynx (voice box) and hit the roof of your mouth. The roof of your mouth should act as a sounding board.

When you bounce your voice off your palate, it will gain extra resonance. Learning to do this correctly will strengthen your vocal chords.

Articulation

Articulation is the art of uttering speech clearly. An articulate person speaks very clearly. He is easy to understand. He pronounces his words well. Every preacher should aim to become adept in this skill. He ought to be easy to listen to. It should not impose strain to listen to him; it should be a pleasure. Even in everyday conversation, he should practice speaking clearly.

Inflection.

Inflection in speech has to do with the pitch of your voice. The human voice has a very wide range of tones. If you speak at the same pitch and on the same tone all the time, your voice can sound very boring. You must develop the ability to modulate your voice. As a singer can go up and down the scale – giving forth a good variety of tones – so can the public speaker. If your voice tends to be naturally rather high-pitched, practice speaking in the lower registers. Develop a variety of pitch in your voice.

Speed of Delivery

Some people tend to speak at the same rate all the time. This too can become rather boring. You should endeavor to vary the speed at which you speak. Most of your messages will be delivered at a moderate rate which is easy to listen to. From time to time however, you should quicken or slow down the pace to give variety and added emphasis to your presentation.

Volume

This is another factor importance. Varying the volume of your voice can give added emphasis to a point you want to make. The major part of your message should be delivered at a conversational volume. This ensures that it is loud enough for all to hear, yet not so loud that it assaults the ears of your audience. Some preachers seem to feel it necessary to preach so loudly that they hurt the ears of their hearers. Try to avoid this.

If the whole of your message is delivered with loud volume, it is difficult to give special emphasis to those sections which are the most important. Endeavor to begin your message at conversational volume. Only turn the volume right up when you have a special point to emphasize strongly.

If you occasionally drop the volume, this will also serve to give special emphasis. Your congregation will give special attention when you drop the volume. They will endeavor to hang on to every word.

Pausing

Don't be afraid to pause once in a while. This can also give added emphasis to some point you make. Some preachers are frightened of quiet spots. Their delivery pours forth like a river, without any pause. This can be difficult for people to absorb.

Don't race through your message, keeping up a fast tempo and hardly pausing for breath. Your congregation needs time to think and consider what you have said. This helps to really absorb the truth of your message. You need to inform the mind as well as stir the emotions. The mind can absorb things only at a steady rate. If you preach too quickly without suitable pauses, you will leave your hearers behind.

Repetition.

A certain amount of repetition can be good. It helps to emphasize your point and fix in the minds of your listeners. This is kind of emphasis which you purposely give. You are aware that you are doing it, and have a good reason for doing so.

Try to present the same point in a variety of ways. You want the truth you are sharing to become part of the thinking and action of the people. In order to accomplish this, the mind needs an adequate exposure of truths and must be convinced.

SIMPLE TIPS FOR PREACHERS.

Be Yourself!

Don't try to project some image that is insincere. Being yourself is the only way to be completely relaxed. If you try to imitate some other preacher, this will be communicated to your audience. They will sense the artificiality of your preaching. Be the very best that you can be, but always be natural and be yourself.

Forget Yourself!

Self-consciousness can be a real hindrance in public speaking. It may produce hesitancy and uncertainty. Chronic self-consciousness can even make a person "tongue-tied." It can severely restrict your flow of speech. Your actions and demeanor will also be restricted. You should prepare yourself as thoroughly as possible in every necessary way. Let your study of the subject be adequate. Let your notes be comprehensive and clear. Be "prayed up" and filled with the Spirit. Be filled with the word of truth you intend to share. Pay attention to every area of preparation you are aware of, but when you stand to speak, forget about yourself. Be completely absorbed in what you have to share. Be aware of your audience rather than of yourself. You are a channel for God's Word to flow through. Just seek to be utterly yielded to Him, aware only of God and the people to whom you are speaking on His behalf.

Don't Develop A "Religious Voice" When You Are Preaching.

Some preachers do this, and it is most disconcerting. Their pulpit voice is so different from their normal one. This conveys a sense of insincerity. It is almost as though this person is "acting out a part." It also sets him apart from his congregation; they tend to see him as a different breed or species.

It almost seems as though he belongs to a different world than they. This makes it difficult for them to identify with him. Practice preaching in a normal voice – the same voice, accent and tone that you use every day in the normal communications of life. This conveys a sense of reality and sincerity.

4 Do Not Speak Too Softly.

Make sure that everyone in your audience can hear you clearly. Don't make them strain to hear your every word. If necessary, ask the crowd: "Can everybody hear me clearly?" It is pointless to proceed with your messages if part of your audience cannot hear well enough to follow you. This would be wasting your time and theirs.

Do Not Shout.

Endeavor to speak with normal conversational tone and volume, which may have to be increased somewhat according to the size of the crowd and whether or not you have the use of an amplifying system.

Remember To Vary The Speed and Pitch of Your Delivery to Avoid Monotony.

Get The Audience To Accept You.

Win their confidence. If they do not accept you, they probably will not accept your message either!

Dress Appropriately.

Your appearance should never detract from your ability to communicate with your audience. Ideally, you should dress rather modestly, in a manner which is not likely to offend anyone. What is the point of antagonizing your audience by your manner of dress? Your aim is to win and influence your listeners, not to antagonize them. Your clothing should not draw undue attention to you. If possible, you should be neatly, suitably and modestly attired. Certainly your dress should not be offensive to the culture of your audience.

Learn To Stand Properly.

On most occasions it is proper to stand when addressing an audience. You should stand firmly on both feet, giving yourself a good solid stance.

Stand upright, facing your audience. Avoid leaning on anything. If there is a pulpit or rostrum, by all means use this to place your Bible and notes on, but don't use it to lean on. Standing upright will help your breathing. It will also engender a feeling of quiet confidence as you face your audience.

Learn to Move Naturally.

Your body conveys a message as well as your voice. It is important how you conduct yourself while speaking. The key to proper movement is to let it be natural. Avoid unnecessary physical gesticulations. If you are verbally describing something, it is natural to also convey the idea with your hands. Let such descriptions come naturally and spontaneously. You can emphasise a point very forcibly with your hands. All hand movements should be appropriate to what you are emphasizing.

Establish and Maintain Eye Contact With Your Audience.

Your eyes convey a message too! Don't stare into space or above the heads of the listeners. Look directly at the people you are addressing. Let your glance rove around the congregation so that everyone feels that you are speaking to THEM. By this means, you will establish a good contact and rapport with the people.

Remember That Facial Expressions Are Important Too!

The look on your face conveys a message very eloquently. Avoid any extreme facial expressions unless you are emphasizing some particular point. Above all, let your facial expressions be natural, and let them be appropriate.

HOW TO PREPARE SERMONS AND BIBLE LESSONS

CHAPTER 1 - WHY SHOULD YOU PLAN AHEAD?

A young Bible college graduate was about to preach his first sermon before a congregation. It was his first church and he wanted to show the people that he knew the Word and was able to preach. He didn't want to read his message or use any notes. He wanted to speak entirely from his heart. So he had no notes, no outline, no helps of any kind.

He climbed into the pulpit to begin. However, he could not remember anything he wanted to say except for the verse that was his text. He hoped that quoting the verse would help him remember the rest of what he wanted to say, so he quoted the verse from Revelations "Behold, I am coming!" He still couldn't remember anything more, so he decided to try saying the verse again. "Behold, I am coming," he shouted. It was no use. He still couldn't remember anything more. He decided to try saying the text one more time, hoping and praying some other thoughts would return to his memory. "Behold, I am coming," he repeated desperately, leaning into the pulpit for effect. Right at that moment, the pulpit gave way and he fell into the lap of a lady sitting in the front row. He was very embarrassed. "I am so sorry," he said, looking up at the woman. "That's ok, preacher," she said. "I should have been ready – you warned me three times you were coming!"

Saturday Night Panic

You know what it's like. You've been busy all week counseling, working, teaching, doing all those things a minister has to do. You meant to spend more time getting ready for Sunday, but so many needs came up and you just had to meet them. Now, it's Saturday night and you still don't have a message or sermon ready for tomorrow.

You open your Bible, flip through the pages, look hopefully towards Heaven and pray: "Oh God, oh God! Let me hear Your voice!" However, it is almost impossible to prepare a great sermon on Saturday night or to get a lesson ready at the last minute. We have all suffered listening to preachers who obviously put their message together at the last minute. We have made people suffer listening when we didn't know exactly what we wanted to say, when our sermon wandered from thought to thought without any purpose.

There are many activities in a preacher's ministry, but there is no one activity people see more than his preaching. People tend to judge you as a minister by your ability to preach and teach. They expect you to deliver great messages week after week. And rightly so. The Bible exhorts us to give attention to the preaching of the Word. (See 1 Timothy 4:13 and 2 Timothy 4:2.) It is the one thing we do that can so powerfully bring people to the Lord.

If you follow the method I propose, you will always have good things to preach about. You will always have a storehouse of material, thoughts, insights, challenges an illustrations to build into a sermon, message or lesson.

Vegetables Or Weeds?

When I was a little boy, growing up on a farm, my parents planted a garden behind our house. After carefully plowing the soil, putting fertilizer on it and making the rows, we planted seeds along the furrows. A few weeks later, my parents were out in the garden pulling weeds.

Even though I was only about six or seven years old, I went out to help them. When I asked what I could do, my mother told me to pull the weeds so the vegetables could grow. As I remember it now, we were growing onions in the row I worked in. After several minutes, my mother, who was working in front of me, turned around to see how I was doing. "Oh no," she said, "You're pulling up the onions, not the weeds!" I didn't know the difference between a weed and an onion plant.

Not every idea that we get is a good one. Not every thought we think is from the Lord. Some ideas and thoughts are good ones; they bear fruit it time. But some are weeds. We need to allow them to grow long enough to be able to see the difference and then be experienced enough to know which ones to pull and which ones to leave to grow longer.

If you wait until the last minute to put together a sermon or lesson, you will inevitably serve up both weeds and vegetables to your congregation. If you begin preparing your sermons and lessons weeks and months in advance you'll have the time and experience to know the difference. You'll offer up only healthy meals to the people.

GOING TO WORK

Begin now to build sermons or lessons. On a piece of paper, write out at least seven ideas or topics for sermons or messages you would like to preach or lessons you would like to teach. If you are having a hard time getting started, use these questions to help you begin.

What do you feel strongly about right now? What gets you most excited? Angry? What moves you to action?

What do the people in your church or class want to know? What do they ask you about the most?

Can you preach a message or teach a class on one of those things they are asking for? Can you teach or preach more than one time on it?

List seven thoughts you have about one of those subjects.

How Great Sermons Are Made

Outside, it was hot and very humid; inside, the air conditioners made it quite comfortable. Outside, the noise of the car horns and noisy mufflers made it very difficult to talk; inside, people were singing praises so you didn't want to talk.

After an hour of worship and prayer, the interpreter stood to introduce the speaker. When the speaker began to share the Word, everybody listened. We forgot the humidity and the noise. We were listening to every word the speaker had to say. He was powerful. He possessed something special as a minister that made him so powerful. Yes, he knew the Word. His skill as a preacher was finely sharpened. You could feel his love for the people. But I sat there in that church, listening and trying to analyze what it was that made him different. After nearly an hour of listening, I realize what it was:

HE HAD THE ABILITY TO COMBINE THE WORD, EXPERIENCES FROM HIS OWN LIFE, AND THE SPIRIT TOGETHER TO CREATE A FORCEFUL, WELL-PRESENTED SERMON OR LESSON.

There are four parts to effective messages:

A knowledge of the subject you are preaching about.

The freshness of the Spirit in your life.

A vessel.

Experiences from life.

As we examine these one by one, you'll see how they fit together. The principle is illustrated based on a teapot heating up on a fire.

The first part is the Word. An effective teacher and preacher must have some knowledge of the subject he is teaching. If he is to be really effective, he will spend more time studying and meditating than he will ministering. That's why you must spend time in personal study, devotions and meditation. The effective church leader spends quality time studying the Bible. If he can get them, he read books that give him insight into life as it was in Bible times. He also learns to apply the Bible's message to life in practical ways.

Some of us were taught that to be really "anointed," you shouldn't use any notes when you teach, you shouldn't write anything down while you study, nor should you use an outline to speak from, "Open your mouth and the Lord will fill it," they said. However, if there is no life inside of us, no life will come out of our mouths. In our illustration we would compare the tea with the Word. Tea must be made from tea leaves. Good sermons must be made from the Word of God. But the Word alone is not nearly enough to make a sermon worth listening to. Information alone, no matter how good that information is, will not bring life to people. "The letter kills, but the Spirit give life" (2 Cor. 3:6b).

The second ingredient in our illustration is water. Tea leaves alone are not enough. The Pharisees of Jesus day knew the Law, but their lives were dry and lifeless because they had no personal fellowship with the Author of the Word. They knew the Bible, but they did not have the second ingredient that is necessary in effective preaching. There was no freshness, so no one listened to what they had to say. May be you've heard someone minister who said the right things, but he was so dry you could hardly stay awake.

What is the second ingredient? It is the Spirit.

The Bible contains everything man needs to know to please God and live a happy life. The directions are old, but they can be applied to life today. The secret of freshness is simple: be fresh yourself. Paul the apostle says that we should "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18). That is not something that happens just a once in a life-time. Instead, we should be before the Lord every day receiving from Him the freshness of Himself. The Spirit flows through our lives from God and out to others. One of the most effective tools of the enemy is to lock up the answers of the Bible in dry, religious terms. Preaching and teaching alone cannot change lives. The Pharisees of Jesus' day tried to change people by telling them the Word. It didn't work then and it won't work now. Good doctrine will not deliver people. It takes the Word and the power of God to change lives. If you don't have it in your life, you can't make it work for others by just talking about it.

The third part of effective teaching is a useful, willing vessel. The tea and the water are mixed together in a teapot. Once I conducted a teachers' training class for the teachers in our Christian school. As part of their training, I asked the teachers to answer these questions:

Write the title of every book you used in school.

Write the name of as many subjects you took that you can remember.

Describe special experiences that you remember.

Name every teacher you had and why you remember them.

Of the six people who took that training course, only one person could remember the name of a text book. Two more people could remember a few subject titles. Most could remember several special experiences and activities. Everyone could remember at least six teachers. Why? Because it is teachers who have the most impact on students, not the things they teach or the books they use. The teachers told stories about their live, they used words and expressions that were colorful and power-packed. Their classes were not just dry lessons; they were powerful experiences between themselves and their students.

That little activity proved to me that it is people who affect people. We are touched by the lives of others as much as we are touched by the things they say. An effective teacher imparts himself to others. "The disciple, after he is fully taught, will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40).

So, we have now examined three parts of good sermons, messages and lessons:

The Word

The Spirit

A vessel

In our illustration they would compare to the tea, the water, and the teapot. However, those ingredients are not yet tea. They need one more thing. Do you know what it is?

The fourth ingredient is heat or fire. The fires of life (our life's experiences) must be applied before tea leaves and water become something to drink. The one thing that made that preacher so dynamic was that he had lived through hard times so that the truth in the Book had become truth in his life. It is the heating that completes the process. Fired on the burner of God's stove, baked in the oven of trial and experience, knowledge becomes wisdom.

You may remember the life of Joshua. For 40 years he served Moses and the people in the wilderness. It was those 40 year that prepared him to lead the people into the promised land. You may know the Word fairly well. You may be alive with the Spirit. You may be a willing vessel. But you will never be completely effective unless and until those ingredients have brewed awhile. If you're feeling the heat now, relax. The Word and the Spirit are combining to make something very good. A minister will not be effective simply because he learns a workable method of sermon

and lesson preparation. Good tools help you minister better. There just isn't any substitute for an anointed, knowledgeable, Spirit-led preacher.

GOING TO WORK

You have already written out ideas you have for sermon or lessons. You have listed some of the things your people are asking questions about. Look at your list again. Which one(s) of the items on your list are you experiencing? How is God working truth into your life? Now write out some of the experiences you are having that illustrate and demonstrate God's Word in YOUR life. Try to use personal experiences.

Chapter 2 - HOW TO PLAN AHEAD

Learning To Hear The Lord Everywhere

The people lined the streets to shout praises to Jesus as He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Waving palm branches and crying "Hosannah! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord," they exalted Him. After a time of teaching by Jesus, God spoke from heaven.

The remarkable detail in this story isn't the fact that God spoke. The amazing point is that most people didn't recognize Him when He did speak. Some thought it was thunder, a few others thought it was an angel. They didn't recognize God's voice because it came from the sky and the only thing they had heard from the sky before was thunder. They, like us, are accustomed to hearing from God in only a few places. The problem is that we're not hearing Him when He does speak. If you are waiting for God to speak to you in some inner voice, or only through a Scripture that seems to jump from the page of your Bible, you will not hear God as often as He speaks.

On one occasion, God sent Jeremiah to the potter's house where He said He would announce His words to him. (Read Jeremiah 18:1-6). How? By letting Jeremiah observe a life experience that directly related to a spiritual principle. Some of the best ideas and illustrations for messages don't come from books, but from life as you watch it and live it. When you can find truth in life as we live it today, your people will be able to apply it to their own lives. Jesus used life as He lived it to explain truth.

For example, a few years ago I was preparing a sermon on leadership at home. I wanted to show husbands that wives find it nearly impossible to follow a man who can not make a decision. Some months before I preached this message, I was ministering in another city. While I was there, the host pastor took me to dinner at a restaurant. After our meal, we walked through the lobby on our way outside. On a platform in one corner of this very large room stood a newsstand. Since it was a major hotel, the operator of the newsstand had a dozen different. Newspapers from around the country were for sale. We stood for a few moments on the edge of the platform watching the movement of the crowd through the lobby. Just before we left, a couple walked past us toward the restaurant. As they got near the newsstand, the man stopped and said to the woman, "Wait a minute, I want to get a paper." She stood there while he walked over to the newsstand and picked up a newspaper. He looked it over and put it down, picking up another. He looked it over for a few seconds, then put it down and picked up yet another edition. He did the same thing several times. Picking up, looking, replacing. The woman became more exasperated each time he did it. Finally she blurted out, "For goodness" sakes, buy something!" She became frustrated when her husband could not make a decision.

There was an excellent illustration for a sermon I would preach sometime in the future. Some may have seen it and thought it was only something interesting to watch. It was God speaking in life. We may not hear Him because we aren't accustomed to hearing His voice there. He's speaking but we aren't listening.

Here's an exercise you may find useful. Leave your house and go out for a walk. Get away from your normal surroundings. While you're out walking, find one object or observe one event in which you can find some spiritual truth or principle. Then develop a message from what you saw, or use what you saw as an illustration in it. When a friend of mine did this, he found a rusty nail.

As he thought about it, he understood how something that was shiny and new could become rusty and worn. He then developed a message on how sin corrupts people.

Learn from other good communicators. Listen and read what other good speakers say. Nothing is original, so don't feel guilty about borrowing their ideas. If and when you do borrow, the ethical thing to do is to tell your congregation who said it. If a man is a good communicator, study his method, listen to the words he uses, and remember his choice of illustrations. May be there's a more forceful way to say what you need to say. Too many sermons and lessons are full of stammering and stuttering. If a man is a good communicator, learn from him.

Learn From My Mistake

It went like this. Church on Sunday, counseling and classes three nights a week. I taught in our Christian school, and worked on our new building on Saturday. Church on Sunday, counseling and more ministering...

I hope your schedule is less busy than mine was. Notice I said "was". After several years of it, I made some radical changes. I was so busy with church activities, I had no time to relax. I couldn't hear God speak anywhere else, because I could never go anywhere else except at a run. The pressure of my schedule kept me from enjoying the other dimension of my life. My wife, children, myself as an individual, my friends were blurred together. I was so busy I couldn't enjoy them.

The first revelation we have of God is in the book of Genesis. There He reveals His creative nature. Good sermons and powerful lessons require creativity. Creativity means: to make something new or to rearrange old things in a new way. Creativity begins to work in a relaxed environment. When you are not pressured, you can come up with some very creative ideas. How many times did Jesus teach His disciples and then take them off into the hills for a while? On more than one occasion, Jesus left a busy meeting and retreated to the hills. He needed to hear from His Father. So do we. Learn to relax.

When you begin to plan ahead, when you listen everywhere, when you learn to relax, it won't be long before you'll begin to gather a lot of ideas, thoughts, illustrations and principles. How will you keep track of them all? What will you do with them until you can put them into a sermon or lesson? You may be able to remember a few of them for a few days, but what will you do when you get so many, you can no longer remember them? How will you save them when you come across them so that you can find them later?

Here's a simple method to record and store all this material.

Use A Sermon And Lesson Plan

Since a good message takes several weeks or months to develop, you will need some way of keeping all those messages you are working on in some kind of order. I use a sermon/lesson plan, but I didn't buy it anywhere. It is a form I developed myself. I like to preach series, taking several weeks on a topic before moving on to another. So I included a place to write in the series name. For instance, one summer I preached two months on "The Weapons of our Warfare." On this form, the series name "Weapons of our Warfare" would go there.

Each sermon was given a title that would help people remember what it was about. So I included a place for the title on my form. The most important part of sermon and lesson preparation is to state its purpose. As you begin preparing a sermon or lesson, define the reason behind it. Why are you going to preach it? What do you want to happen as the result of your having taught it? What do you want it to accomplish for those who hear it?

There are three broad purposes for a sermon or lesson:

- to inform,
- to persuade,
- to motivate.

Every message will fall somewhere in these three categories. Some sermons or lessons may include more than one, but each will include at least one. Your statement of purpose should read something like this: "I want to motivate each person in my congregation to witness to at least two people this next week."

Preaching a sermon or teaching a lesson without a stated purpose is like firing a gun without a target. It makes a lot of noise and gets attention, but it captures no game. The sermons of the Bible show purpose. So do its books and letters. Read John 20:30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; and 1 Thessalonians 4:1.

If the most important part of sermon and lesson preparation is a stated purpose, the most important parts of preaching and teaching are the introduction and conclusion. Use an introduction that gets the people's attention, sets the mood for the message, and makes them want to hear more. Create a conclusion that sums up your purpose, provides an action step, and brings your thoughts to a crisp end. List several ways to introduce and conclude your message on the sermon plan.

On the rest of the page, write down any major thoughts you MIGHT include in your sermon or lesson. Don't worry about any particular order now, just write down anything that comes up. You'll choose the ones you'll use in your message later. Keep your stated purpose in mind. The sermon/lesson plan form is not your completed message. It is only a device to help you assemble all the parts into the finished product.

GO TO WORK

Make a sermon plan right now. Take a piece of paper and make a sermon plan like the one in the illustration. Then, take the ideas you gathered earlier and begin to plan a sermon or lesson. Be sure to:

Define the purpose of the message. I want to preach this message because...

List ideas, Scriptures and illustrations that apply to the message.

Plan a conclusion. How do you want the sermon to end? The conclusion should be an action step. Get your listeners to do something. Don't let them just listen to you. Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and do it.

Chapter 3 - HAVE A TIME AND A PLACE TO STUDY

Don't fool yourself; the people you speak to can tell when you've taken time to prepare and when you haven't. There are many pressing needs, but study is always important. Schedule a certain time every week to work on sermons and lessons. Notice I said "sermons and lessons," not just that week's message. You will work on the sermons and lessons you will deliver that week. You will also work on messages you'll deliver in the future, adding notes, Scriptures, illustrations, and polishing the form.

Let your family and your congregation know when and where you'll be studying. Encourage them to leave you alone during this time. You may have to do some adjusting until you find the best time for you, but don't be afraid to set a time and enforce it. There is a tendency to look at preparation time as not being "real ministry". But it is very important.

If it's important to set aside time, it's also important to set aside a place. This place may be study in your house or church. It may be a corner of a room, but it should be secluded and quiet. It should be a place that can be isolated from the activity of others. It should be comfortable.

Prepare your spirit to receive from the Holy Spirit. Spend some time praying and worshiping. It is the Spirit who will help you include exactly what needs to be in your message. The Bible is God's revelation to us. It is not just a book of history. It is the account of God's dealings with man and how He has revealed Himself to us. It is not the account of man's search for God. God was never lost. Man is lost, and the Bible tells us how God found him.

The test of an experience is its Biblical foundation. Many times we try to prove the Bible by our experiences. Instead, we must prove all our experiences by the Bible. I have read about people who claimed they had died and gone to a place full of light and nice music. Some Christians. In spite of their experience, the Bible does not say that the unsaved go to a nice place after they die. We should use illustrations from experience to illustrate our sermons and lessons, but be certain that those experiences are proven by the Scriptures. . . .

Study The Bible In These Ways

Read it all the way through. Get a look at the whole Bible. See how one book relates to another. Read each book. See the setting of the book, when it was written, and what was happening in history at the time it was written. Why was the book written? This is especially true when you are studying the lectures of the New Testament.

Let the Bible inspire you while you read it. Be challenged and lifted by its message. Read it and apply it to yourself, not just for your congregation. It is quite possible that a minister can study the Bible for others, but never let the Book touch him where he lives. He must be concerned that his message touches his congregation. He must always let it touch himself.

Study different subjects. For example, praise is a very exciting subject to study through all the Bible.

Study Words

Study the Bible carefully. Pay attention to detail, names, meanings and locations. Learn to read with emphasis like someone speaks. Study it prayerfully. Ask God to speak to you. Study it regularly. Be systematic.

Chapter 4 - PREPARING YOUR SERMON OR LESSON

Keeping Their Attention

Two men were ice fishing. They stood over an hour on the ice and caught nothing. However, they noticed that a man just a few feet away caught one fish after another. The two men decided to ask him his secret. They walked up to him and asked, "We couldn't help but notice that you are catching quite a few fish. Could you tell us your secret? We aren't catching anything." "Mmmphph," the successful fisherman replied. "Pardon us," the two said. "We couldn't understand you. What did you say?" "Mummmphph," he said again. "We're really sorry," they said. "We really didn't understand that. What was that you said?" At that point, the man spit something out of his mouth and stated, "You've gotta keep the worms warm." Keeping the attention and respect of any one group of people week after week is not easy. You can't afford to be careless in either what you preach or how you preach it. You've "gotta keep the worms warm." In your sermon/lesson plan, you worked on the introduction body and conclusion of your message. Now you will assemble them together into its finished form. I recommend you keep your sermon and lesson outlines. They are works of craftsmanship you have invested a great deal of time and effort into. It's my belief that a message doesn't get really good until it's been delivered two or three times.

Often you will remember some points you made in a sermon you preached sometime in the past, so you'll need some easy way to store them. I use an outline to preach from, but I don't get too concerned with following an exact outline form. You may choose to list the points down the page numerically. Or you may want to use letters. Find a form you can work with that serves the purpose.

In the introduction of your message, bait the hook. Spend a few minutes grabbing the attention of the congregation. God once used a burning bush to get Moses' attention. In the introduction, tell the people what you're going to tell them in the sermon.

In the body of the message, tell them. Build your message point by point toward your stated purpose. Set forth your major points. Let one point lead to the next or let each point support one major emphasis. Illustrations are windows into the truth. They let in light while you have been planning the message, you've had the time to gather several good stories and illustrations. Use them.

Limit yourself. Be careful not to wander away from your topic. It's easy to be drawn away into talking about something other than that which relates to your purpose. Limit yourself to a certain time, a certain subject, and your stated purpose.

In the conclusion, tell the people what you have told them. Sum up your points. Bring your thoughts to a logical conclusion. I've sat through a number of messages that had conclusions which had nothing to do with the message. Often we attempt an altar call based on the second coming of Christ when we never mentioned His coming in our message. Be consistent. Use an action step to prompt the people to do more than just listen. You may have the people come forward, lead them in some commitment to the Lord, or have them do something right then. A powerful action step makes the difference between a sermon and a lesson.

CONCLUSION

So there you have it: a simple, easy-to-use method of sermon and lesson preparation. Long-range planning, disciplined Spirit-led study, and careful work add up to effective preaching and teaching. You'll approach Sunday morning with more confidence. You'll find that you'll be able to apply theological truths in practical ways. Your people will be able to make the Christian faith work better for them.

You have learned easy-to-use methods to organize your thoughts, build sermons and lessons, and store completed outlines. Now you must put it into practice. If you have been working on a sermon or lesson along with this article, you are off to a great beginning!

TEACHING SUBJECTS OF OUR LORD JESUS AND PAUL

Our Lord's Personal Example In Teaching

This is another reason why a pastor cannot assign the responsibility of discipleship to someone else. He must first set the standard and pace by his own life. After Jesus or Paul did that, then they expected their disciple to disciple others. The Great Commission to the apostles was to go and make disciples. "Teach them to observe all things which I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:20).

Paul is saying the same thing to Timothy: "And the things that you have heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (II Tim. 2:2).

In Their Teaching

By walking and living with their disciples, Jesus and Paul touched on every issue and subject imaginable. They taught from the Word of God by their lives and example, by illustration and by parable. They either referred to past personalities, teachings, by eye-ball to eye-ball statements, by inference, but about every subject imaginable was covered. Senior pastors will never convey to their associates and disciples their thinking, plans, vision, dreams unless they spend time together.

Let us look at the variety of things Jesus and Paul shared with their disciples. The list is but a cursory glance over a vast field of topics, doctrines and everyday issues of life. They dealt with:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Jesus</u>	<u>Paul</u>
About Wisdom	Matt. 7:24	II Tim. 3:15
Abstinence from strong drink	Luke 1:15	Rom. 14:21
Accountability	Matt.12:36	Rom. 14:12
Backsliding	John 6:66	II Tim. 4:10
Baptism	Mark 16:16	Acts 22:16
Being helpful	Luke 10:34	I Cor. 16:15
Being teachable	Luke 11:1	Acts 9:6
Blasphemy against Holy Spirit	Mark 3:29	Eph. 4:30
Blood of Christ	Matt. 26:28	Rom. 5:9
Brotherly love	Matt. 22:39	1 Thess. 3:12
Called Lamb of God	John 1:29	I Cor. 5:7
Charitableness	Matt. 7:3	Gal. 6:1
Chastening	John 15:2	I Cor. 11:32
Children to esteem parents	Mark 7:10	Eph. 6:1-3
Christ is Saviour	Luke 19:10	I Tim. 1:15
Christ the Judge	John 5:22	II Tim. 4:1
Christ the Light of the World	John 8:12	II Cor. 4:6
Christ's love	John 15:9	II Cor. 5:14
Christ's power	John 10:18	Rom. 1:4
Civic duties	Matt. 22:21	Rom 13:1
Concern for the wayward	Matt. 23:37	Phil. 3:18
Concerning eating	Luke 10:8	I Cor. 10:25
Confession of Christ	Luke 12:8	Phil. 2:11
Consecration	John 15:13	II Cor. 8:9
Contends with saints	Luke 4:6	Eph. 6:12
Contentment	Luke 3:14	Phil. 4:11
Courage	John 19:11	Phil 1:28
Coveteousness condemned	Luke 12:15	Eph. 5:3
Danger of self-confidence	Matt.26:33	I Cor. 10:12
Delay	Luke 13:25	Heb. 12:17
Denial of Christ	Matt.10:33	II Tim. 2:12
Dependancy on Him	John 15:5	II Cor. 3:5

Divisions	Luke 11:17	I Cor. 3:3
Divorce	Mark 10:9	I Cor. 7:10-11
Don't be men pleasures	John 12:43	Col. 3:22
Don't trust in riches	Mark 10:24	I Tim 6:17
Doublemindedness	Luke 16:13	I Cor. 10:21
Duty of husbands	Mark 10:7	Eph. 5:25
Duty of wives	I Cor. 7:10	Eph. 5:22
Duty of enemies	Matt. 5:44	Rom. 12:20
Duty to neighbours	Mark 12:31	Rom. 13:10
Duty to resist	Luke 4:8	Eph. 4:27
Duty to seek God	Luke 11:10	Acts 17:27
Duty to weak	Matt. 25:35-36	Rom. 15:1
Encouragement	Matt. 14:27	Acts 27:22
Enduring hardness	Matt. 10:22	Heb. 12:7
Equality of man	Matt. 23:8	Rom. 10:12
Evil speaking	Matt. 12:34	Eph. 4:31
Evil thoughts	Matt. 15:19	Titus 1:15
Example of obedience	John 15:10	Rom 5:19
Examples (fasting)	Luke 4:1,2	Acts 9:9
Extortion	Matt. 23:25	Col. 4:1
Faith	Matt. 17:20	Eph. 6:16
False religion	Mark 7:6	Titus 1:16
Fasting and prayer	Matt. 17:21	I Cor. 7:5
Fear of men	John 12:42	Gal. 2:12
Flattery	Luke 20:21	I Thess. 2:5
Formalism	Matt. 23:33	Gal. 4:10
Fruitfulness	John 15:16	Phil. 1:11
Fuller revelation	John 16:13	I Cor. 13:12
Future of the wicked	Matt. 8:12	II Thess. 1:9
Giving liberally	Luke 6:38	II Cor. 9:7
Giving one's life	Matt. 16:25	Acts 20:35
God invisible	John 5:37	Col. 1:15
God uses the weak	John 6:9	I Cor. 1:27
God's wrath	John 3:36	Rom 1:18
Good for evil	Matt. 5:44	Rom 12:20-21
Good influence	Mark 9:50	I Cor. 7:16
Goodness of God	Matt. 19:17	Rom. 2:4
Gratitude	Luke 19:37	Col. 1:12
Half-heartedness in service	Matt. 25:27	Gal. 6:9
Haste	Matt. 28:7	Eph. 5:16
Helplessness of man	John 6:44	Rom. 7:18
Holy Spirit	John 14:17	I Cor. 6:16
Holy Spirit as leader	John 16:13	Rom. 8:14
Holy Spirit as teacher	John 14:26	I Cor. 2:13
Holy Spirit giver of life	John 6:63	II Cor. 3:6
Honesty	Luke 3:13	I Cor. 5:10
Human compassion	Luke 10:33-34	Acts 16:33
Humility	Luke 14:10	Rom. 12:3
Immortality	John 11:26	I Cor. 15:53
Impenitent suffer loss	Luke 16:26	Heb. 12:17
Importance of forbearance	Matt. 5:44	Col. 3:13
Importance of kindness	Luke 10:34	Acts 16:33
Importance of longsuffering	Luke 13:7-9	Rom. 9:22

Importance of meekness	Luke 6:29	II Tim. 2:25
Inconsistency	Luke 6:46	Rom. 2:1
Ingratitude	Luke 17:17-18	Rom. 1:21
Intercession	John 17:9	Rom. 8:34
Joy	John 15:11	Heb. 12:2
Judging forbidden	Matt. 7:1	Rom 14:13
Judgment	John 5:30	Rom 2:2
Judgment according to works	Matt. 16:27	II Cor. 5:10
Kingdom	Matt. 25:34	II Thess. 1:5
Kingdom Power	Mark 9:1	I Cor. 4:20
Knowledge withheld	John 16:12	II Cor. 13:12
Life out of death	John 12:24	II Cor. 4:11
Living unto God	Luke 20:38	Rom. 14:8
Man dead in sin	John 6:53	Eph. 2:1
Man of infinite value	John 3:16	I Cor. 6:20
Man's extremity	Mark 9:17	Acts 27:20
Mercy	Luke 1:50	Eph. 2:4
Mighty Name of Jesus	John 14:13	Phil. 2:9-11
Misery of Greed	Matt. 27:5	I Tim 6:9
Murmuring	John 6:43	I Cor. 10:10
Mysteries	John 3:8	Eph. 5:32
Neglect of salvation	Luke 14:18	Heb. 2:3
No condemnation to recipients	John 3:18	Rom. 8:1
No other way of salvation	John 6:68	I Cor. 3:11
Notable prayers	Matt.6: 9	Eph. 3:14
Obedience	Heb. 5:8	Acts 26:19
Offered Himself a sacrifice	John 15:13	Gal. 1:4
On drunkenness	Luke 21:34	Rom. 13:13
Our Heavenly Home	John 14:2	II Cor. 5:1
Our love to Christ	John 16:27	Eph. 6:24
Our spiritual foundation	Matt.7: 24	II Tim. 2:19
Painful memories	Luke 16:25	I Cor. 15:9
Patience	Luke 21:19	Rom. 12:12
Peace	Luke 1:78,79	Rom. 14:17
Peace promised believers	John 14:27	Phil. 4:7
Perils of riches	Mark 4:19	I Tim. 6:9
Persevering to the end	John 15:9	Gal. 6:9
Prayer	Matt. 26:41	Eph. 6:18
Prayerfulness	Luke 2:37	I Thess. 3:10
Pressures of duty	John 9:4	I Cor. 9:16
Procrastination	Luke 9:61	Acts 17:32
Promise of Inspiration	Luke 21:15	I Cor. 2:13
Promise to afflicted	John 14:1	II Cor. 4:17
Promises to God's workers	Mark 9:41	I Cor. 3:14
Promise to the tempted	Luke 10:19	I Cor. 10:13
Protects His own	Luke 12:7	II Tim 4:18
Purity	Matt. 5:8	I Tim 1:5
Purpose of coming	Matt.25:31-32	I Cor. 4:5
Receptivity of truth	Luke 10:39	I Thess. 2:13
Regeneration	John 1:13	II Cor. 5:17
Remember the poor	Matt. 19:21	Gal. 2:10
Remission of sin	Luke 3:3	Heb. 9:28
Repentance	Matt. 3:2	Acts 17:30

Repression of evil	Matt. 6:19	II Cor. 10:5
Reproof	Luke 17:3	I Thess. 5:20
Resignation in trial	Mark 14:26	Acts 21:14
Result of appearance	John 14:3	Col. 3:4
Resurrection	John 6:40	II Cor. 4:14
Retaliation	Matt. 5:39	Rom. 12:17
Reverential fear of God	Matt. 10:28	Rom. 11:20
Rewards for suffering endured	Matt. 5:11-12	II Tim. 2:12
Rewards of faithful	Mat. 25:23	Eph. 6:8
Righteousness essential	Matt. 5:20	I Cor. 15:24
Rules for giving	Matt. 6:3	II Cor. 9:7
Salvation available for all	Luke 3:6	Rom. 10:13
Salvation God's gift	John 4:10	Rom 6:23
Salvation through Christ	John 10: 9	Rom. 10:9
Sanctification	John 17:17	Eph. 5:26
Satan	Luke 4:13	Heb. 2:14
Search the Scriptures	John 5:39	Rom. 15:4
Second Coming	Luke 2:27	Heb. 9:28
Secret Sins	John 3:20	Eph. 5:11
Secret of the heart	John 2:25	Heb. 4:13
Self-denial	Matt. 16:24	Gal. 5:24
Self-exaltation	Matt. 23:12	Gal. 6:3
Self-examination	Matt. 7:5	II Cor. 13:5
Self-sacrifice	Matt. 16:25	I Cor. 10:24
Service	John 4:35	Acts 16:9
Shepherds to feed flock	John 21:17	Acts 20:28
Sickness	Matt. 8:17	Heb. 4:15
Sin	Matt. 15:19	Rom. 3:23
Sin forbidden	John 5:14	Rom. 6:12
Social and family prayer	Matt. 15:19	Acts 21:5
Solemn obligation of marriage	Matt. 5:32	Rom. 7:2
Soul-winning	John 4:35	Rom. 10:1
Sowing and Reaping	Luke 8:5	Gal. 6:8
Spiritual bankruptcy	Luke 15:14	Eph. 2:12
Spiritual darkness	John 3:19	I Thess. 5:4
Spiritual food	John 6:51	I Cor. 11:25
Spiritual fullness	John 15:11	Eph. 3:19
Spiritual riches	Matt. 6:20	Phil. 3:8
Stewardship	Luke 19:13	I Cor. 4:2
Strive to perfection	Matt. 5:48	Col. 1:28
Subdue fleshly lusts	Matt. 5:29	Rom. 13:14
Submission	Matt. 26:39	James 4:7
Submission to His will	Matt. 12:50	Eph. 6:6
Suffering for Christ	Matt. 5:11	Rom. 8:17
Suffering of Christ	Luke 22:44	Heb. 13:12
Supporting the Needy	Matt. 5:42	Acts 20:35
Temptation	Matt. 4:3	II Cor. 2:11
That God keeps the Book of Life	Luke 10:20	Phil. 4:3
The Last Judgment	Mattt.25:31-32	Heb. 9:27
The soul has enemies	Luke 22:31	Eph. 6:12
There is victory over the enemy	Luke 10:19	I Cor. 15:24
Time unknown	Luke 12:40	II Thess. 5:2
To redeem man (sacrifice)	John 12:23	II Cor. 5:15

True attitude re Christ's return	Matt. 24:44	I Tim. 6:14
True religion	Mark 12: 33	Rom. 13:10
Truth	John 14:6	Rom. 3:4
Unfruitfulness	Matt. 3:10	Heb. 6:8
Ungodly ambition	Luke 22:24	II Thess. 2:4
Universal call	Matt 22:9	John 7:37
Universal Love	John 3:16	Rom. 10:12
Unselfishness	II Cor. 8:9	I Cor.10: 33
Warned against evil association	Matt. 23:2-3	II Cor. 6:14
Warning concerning unbelief	John 3:36	Heb. 3:12
Warning to wicked	Mark 8:38	II Tim. 1:7-8
Willful ignorance	Matt. 13:15	Rom. 1:28
Women's ministry	Mark 14:3	Rom. 16:1-2
World-wide Missions	Mark 16:15	Acts 26:17-18
Worldliness	Matt.24: 38-39	Eph. 2:2
Worldly Care forbidden	Luke 21:34	Phil. 4:6

TEACHINGS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Subject	Reference
Abiding in Christ	John 15:4- 10
Ability	Matt. 25:14- 15
Ablution	Matt. 6:17- 18
Abode	John 14:23
Abraham	John 8:37, 56
Abstinence	Luke 21:34
Abundant life	John 10:10
Access to God	John 10:7, 9
Accountability	Luke 12:47- 48
Accusation, false	Matt. 5:11
Adultery	Matt. 5:27- 28
Adversity	Luke 24:46
Affliction	Matt. 24:7-12
Agreement	Matt. 18:19
Altar	Matt. 23:18- 19
Ambition	Luke 22:25-30
Angels	Matt. 13:39, 41
Anger	Matt. 5:22
Anxiety	Luke 12:22-31
Apostasy	Matt. 13:18-22; Luke 8:13
Apostles	Luke 11:49
Appearance	Matt. 6:16
Appearance outward	Matt. 23:27- 28
Authority	Matt. 21:24; Luke 10:19
Avarice	Luke 12:16-21
Backsliding	Luke 9:62
Baptism	Acts 1:5; Matt. 28:19
Beatitudes	Matt. 5:3-11
Beelzebub	Matt. 10:25
Begging	Luke 16:3
Beneficence	Matt. 5:42
Betrayal	Matt. 26:21
Bigotry	Luke 18:9-14
Birds	Matt. 8:20
Blasphemy	Matt. 12:31- 32
Blessings	Matt. 5:3-11
Blind guides	Matt. 15:14
Borrowing	Matt. 5:42
Bread of life	John 6:32-35
Brothers	Matt. 23:8
Builders	Luke 6:47-49; Matt. 7:24
Burdens	Luke 11:46
Burial	Matt. 8:22
Caesar	Matt. 22:21
Call of God	Matt. 20:16
Called ones	Matt. 22:14

Capital and labor	Matt. 20:1-15
Capital punishment	Matt. 26:52
Care of God	Matt. 6:30, 33
Caution	Mark 4:24
Celibacy	Matt. 19:11- 12
Character	John 1:47
Charity	Luke 12:33
Cheating	Mark 10:19
Chosen	Matt. 22:14
Church	Matt. 18:17
Circumcision	John 7:22- 23
Cleansing	John 15:3
Coin	Matt. 22:19-21
Coldness	Matt. 24:12
Communication	Luke 24:17
Compassion	Matt 15:32; Luke 10:33
Compromise	Matt. 5:25- 26
Conceit	Luke 18:10-12
Conduct Christian	Matt. 5:16
Confessing Christ	Matt. 10:32- 33
Confession of sin	Luke 18:13- 14
Confidence	Mark 10:24
Conflict	Matt 10:34-36
Conscience	John 8:7-9
Contention	Matt 18:15-17
Contentment	John 6:43
Conversion	Matt 13:15
Convict	John 16:8
Corruption moral	Luke 11:39
Courage	Matt. 9:22
Covenant	Mark 14:24
Coveting	Mark 7:21- 22
Cross-bearing	Matt. 10:378
Crucifixion	Luke 9:22
Cup of water	Matt 10:42
Dancing	Luke 15:25-27
Daniel	Matt. 24:15
Darkness	Luke 11:35
David	Matt. 12:3
Day	John 11:9
Deaf	Matt. 13:13-15
Death	Luke 9:22, John 8:51
Debts	Matt. 18:24
Deceivers	Matt. 24:4- 5
Decision	Matt. 6:24
Defilement	Matt. 15:11, 18- 19
Devil	Matt. 13:38- 39
Diligence	John 9:4
Disbelief	John 5:38
Discernment	Matt. 16:2- 3
Discipleship	Luke 14:33
Disputes	Mark 9:33- 34
Distress	Luke 21:23, 25

Divorce	Matt. 5:31- 32
Doctrine	Mark 7:7
Doubt	Matt. 21:21
Drunkard	Luke 7:34
Drunkenness	Luke 21:34
Dullness	Matt. 13:13
Duty	Luke 17:10
Dwelling places	John 14:2- 3
Earth	Matt. 5:18
Earthquake	Mark 13:8
Economy	Matt. 15:37; John 6:12
Elect	Matt. 24:24, 31
Election	Matt. 25:34
Elijah	Matt. 17:11, 12
Employer	Matt. 20:1-16
Encouragement	Matt. 9:2
Endowments	Matt. 25:14- 15
Endurance	Matt. 10:22; Luke 21:19
Enemies	Matt. 5:43- 44
Eternal life	Matt. 19:29
Eternal sin	Mark 3:29
Etiquette	Luke 10:8
Evil	Matt. 15:19
Exaltation	Matt. 23:12
Example	John 13:15
Excuses	Luke 14:18-20
Extravagance	Luke 15:11-14
Fainting	Mark 8: 2- 3
Faith	Matt. 6:25; Mark 11:22; Luke 7:50
Faithfulness	Matt. 25:21
Faithlessness	Matt. 25:24-30
False prophets	Matt. 24:11
False witness	Matt. 19:18
Farm	Matt. 22:2-6
Fasting	Matt. 6:16-18
Faultfinding	Matt. 7:3-5
Faults	Matt. 18:15
Fear of God	Matt. 10:28
Feast	Luke 14:8
Feet washing	John 13:12-15
Fellowship	Matt. 8:11
Flattery	Luke 6:26
Flesh	John 6:53
Flock	Matt. 26:31
Following Christ	Matt. 10:37- 38
Food	Matt. 6:11; Matt. 6:25; John 6:27
Fool	Matt. 5:22
Formalism	Matt. 23:23-28
Forsaking all	Luke 14:33
Foxes	Luke 9:58
Friends	Luke 11:5-8
Frugality	John 6:12
Fruitfulness	Matt. 13:23

Fruitlessness	Luke 13:6-9
Generosity	Matt. 25:34-40
Gentiles	Matt. 10:5-7
Gentleness	Matt. 5:5
Giving	Luke 6:38
Gladness	Luke 15:32
Glorifying God	Matt. 5:16
Gluttony	Luke 21:34
God	Matt. 19:17, 26
Godlessness	John 5:42, 44
Golden Rule	Matt. 7:12
Gospel	Luke 4:18
Grace	2 Cor. 12:9
Greatness	Matt. 5:19
Grumble	John 6:43
Guidance	John 16:13
Hairs numbered	Matt. 10:30
Hand of God	John 10:27-29
Happiness	Matt. 5:12; John 13:16- 17
Harlots	Matt. 21:31
Harvest	Matt. 9:37- 38
Hatred	John 15:18- 19
Healing	Matt. 10:7- 8; Mark 2:17
Heart	Matt. 13:19
Heaven	Luke 16:17; John 3:13
Hell	Matt. 5:22; Matt. 10:28
Helper	John 14:16; John 15:26
Helpless	John 6:44
Hireling	John 10:11-13
Holy Spirit	John 14:26
Home	Mark 5:19
Honesty	Luke 8:15, Mark 10:19
Honor of men	Matt. 6:2
Honor of parents	Matt. 15:3-6
Hospitality	Luke 14:12-14
Humility	John 13:14; Matt. 11:29
Hunger spiritual	Luke 6:21; Matt. 5:6
Hypocrisy	Matt. 6:5; Luke 6:42
Ignorance	Matt. 22:29
Immortality	Matt. 25:46; John 11:25-26
Impartiality of God	Matt. 5:45
Inconsistency	Matt. 7:3-5; Luke 6:41- 42
Indecision	Luke 9:42
Indifference	Matt. 24:12
Industry	John 4:36
Infidelity	John 3:18
Influence	Matt. 5:13
Ingratitude	Luke 17:17-18
Innocence	Matt. 10:16
Insincerity	Luke 16:15
Inspiration	Luke 12:12
Instability	Matt. 7:26-27
Instruction	John 6:45

Insufficiency	Mark 10:21
Integrity	Luke 16:10
Intercession	John 17:9
Investment	Matt. 6:19-20
Jealousy	Luke 15:25-30
John the Baptist	Luke 7:24-28
Jonah	Matt. 12:39-41
Joy	Matt. 25:21; Luke 15:7,10
Judge not	Matt. 7:1-2
Judgment	Matt. 11:24
Judgment day	Matt. 25:31-46
Justice	John 5:30
Justification, self	Luke 16:15
Killing	Matt. 5:21- 22
Kindness	Luke 10:30-35
Kingdom	Luke 7:28; John 18:36
Kiss	Luke 7:45
Knowledge	John 8:31, 32
Labor	Matt. 20:1-14
Laughter	Luke 6:21
Law	Luke 16:16
Lawsuit	Matt. 5:25, 40
Lawyers	Luke 11:46
Leaven	Matt. 16:6; Luke 13:20- 21
Lending	Luke 6:34- 35
Lepers	Matt. 10:7- 8
Levite	Luke 10:30-32
Liars	John 8:44, 45
Liberality	Luke 6:30, 38
Liberty	Luke 4:18
Life	Matt. 6:25; John 5:40
Light	Luke 11:33; John 8:12
Living water	John 4:10
Long	Luke 6:41- 42
Loneliness	John 16:32
Lord's supper	Matt. 26:26-29
Loss of soul	Matt. 16:25- 26
Lost opportunity	Matt. 25:7-12
Love	Matt.22:37-40
Lukewarmness	Matt. 26:40- 41
Lunatic	Matt. 17:14- 15
Lust	Mark 4:18- 19
Magistrates	Luke 12:11, 58
Mammon	Matt. 6:24
Marriage	Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 12:25
Martyrdom	John 16:1-3
Mary's choice	Luke 10:41- 42
Memorial	Matt. 26:13
Mercy	Matt. 5:7; Luke 16:24
Minister	Luke 10:2
Miracles	Matt. 12:28
Money lender Creditor	Luke 7:41- 42
Moses	Matt.19:8

Moses' Law	John 7:19
Mother	Matt. 10:37
Mourn	Matt. 5:4
Murder	Matt. 15:19
Mysteries of Heaven	Matt. 13:11
Narrow way	Matt. 7:13- 14
Neglect	Luke 12:47
Neighbor	Matt. 19:19
Neutrality	Matt. 12:30
New birth	John 3:3, 5-8
Noah	Luke 17:26- 27
Oath	Matt. 5:33-37
Obedience	Matt. 12:50
Offering	Matt. 5:25
Offerings	Luke 21:3- 4
Opportunity	Matt. 5:25
Parables	Mark 4:11- 12
Paradise	Luke 23:43
Pardoning	Luke 6: 37
Parents	Matt. 10:21
Patriotism	Matt. 22:21
Peace	Mark 9:50
Peacemakers	Matt. 5:9
Penitence	Luke 18:13
Perception	John 8:43
Perfection	Matt. 5:48
Persecution	Matt. 24:9
Perseverance	Matt.10: 22
Pharisaism	Matt. 23:2-33
Pharisee and tax collector	Luke 18:10-14
Pharisees	Matt. 5:20
Philanthropy	Luke 11:41
Physician	Matt. 9:12
Piety	John 1:47
Pleasing God	John 8:29
Pleasures	Luke 8:14
Poison	Mark 16:17- 18
Poll tax	Matt. 22:19-21
Polygamy	Matt. 19:8- 9
Poor	Mark 14:7
Power	Matt. 6:13
Prayer	Matt. 7:7-11; Matt. 6:9-13
Preaching	Mark 16:15- 16
Procrastination	Matt. 25:3
Profit and loss	Matt. 16:26
Prophets	Matt. 10:41; Matt. 7:15
Proselyte	Luke 23:15
Protection	Luke 18:3
Providence	Matt. 6:25-33
Prudence	Matt. 10:16-20
Punishment	Matt. 21:41
Purity	Matt. 5:8
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Reaping	John 4:35-38
Receiving Christ	Mark 9:37
Reconciliation	Matt. 5:23- 24
Regeneration	Matt. 19:28
Rejecting Christ	John 3:18
Rejoicing	Luke 10:20
Release	Luke 4:18
Religion	Mark 7:6-8; Matt. 25:34-36
Repentance	Matt. 11:21; Luke 13:28
Reproof	Matt. 11:21-23
Resignation	Matt. 26:39
Responsibility	Luke 12:47- 48
Rest	Matt. 26:45; Matt. 11:28-30
Resurrection	John 6:40
Retaliation	Matt. 5:39-44
Retribution	Matt. 23:34- 35
Reward	Matt. 10:42
Riches	Mark 4:19
Righteousness	Matt. 5:6, 20; John 16:10
Robbers	Luke 10:30; John 10:1
Robbery	Matt. 23:25
Sabbath	Matt. 12:5-8
Sackcloth	Matt. 11:21
Sacrifice	Matt 12:7
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Sadducees	Matt 16:6
Salt	Matt 5:13; Mark 9:50
Salvation	Luke 19:19; John 4:22
Samaritan	Luke 10:30-35
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Scripture	Matt. 21:42; Luke 4:21
Secrecy	Luke 12:2- 3
Security	Luke 6:47- 48
Seduction	Mark 13:22
Seeking the kingdom	Matt. 6:19-20
Self condemnation	Matt. 23:29-32; Luke 19:20-24
Self control	Matt. 5:21
Self deception	Luke 12:16-21
Self denial	Matt. 16:24-26
Self exaltation	Matt. 23:12
Self examination	Matt. 7:3-5
Selfishness	Luke 6:32-35
Self righteousness	Matt. 23:23-27
Self sacrifice	Matt. 16:25
Serpents	Matt. 23:33; John 3:14
Service	Luke 22:27
Sheep	Luke 15:4-7
Shepherd	John 10:1-18
Sickness	Matt. 10:8
Signs	John 4:48; Luke 11:16
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Sincerity	Matt. 5:13-16
Skepticism	John 20:27, 29
Slaves	Matt. 18:23; John 15:15
Sleep	Mark 4:26- 27; Mark 13:35- 36
Slothfulness	Matt 25:26-30
Son of Man	Luke 9:22
Sorrow	Matt. 19:22; John 16:6
Soul	Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:19- 20
Soul winners	Matt. 4:19
Sowing	Mark 4:14
Speech	John 8:43
Spirit	Matt. 26:41; Mark 5:8
Statement	Matt. 5:37
Steadfastness	Matt. 10:22
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Steward	Luke 12:42- 43; Luke 16:1-8
Stewardship	Luke 19:13-27
Stomach	Matt. 15:17
Strife	Luke 22:24
Stubbornness	John 5:40
Stumbling block	Matt. 23:13
Submission	Matt. 26:39, 42
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Teaching	Matt. 28:19- 20; John 13:13-15
Temperance	Luke 21:34
Temptations	Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 8:13
Thieves	Matt. 6:19; John 10:1, 8
Timidness	Mark 4:40
Tithes	Luke 18:11- 12
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Transgressions	Matt. 15:2
Treasures	Matt. 6:19-21
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Unchastity	Matt. 5:31- 32
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Wine	Luke 5:37-39
Wisdom	Luke 21:15
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Witness, false	Matt 19:18
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THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

PARABLE	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
1. Lamp Under a Basket	5:14-16	4:21, 22	8:16- 17 11:33-36
2. A Wise Man Builds on Rock and a Foolish Man Builds on Sand	7:24-27		6:47-19
3. Unshrunk (New) Cloth on an Old Garment	9:16	2:21	5:36
4. New Wine in Old Wineskins	9:17	2:22	5:37- 38
5. The Sower	13:3-23	4:2-20	8:4-15
6. The Tares (Weeds)	13:24-30		
7. The Mustard Seed	13:31- 32	4:30-32	13:18-19
8. The Leaven	13:33		13:20- 21
9. The Hidden Treasure	13:44		
10. The Pearl of Great Price	13:45- 46		
11. The Dragnet	13:47-50		
12. The Lost Sheep	18:12-14		15:3-7
13. The Unforgiving Servant	18:23-35		
14. The Workers in the Vineyard	20:1-16		
15. The Two Sons	21:28-32		
16. The Wicked Vinedressers	21:33-45	12:1-12	20:9-19
17. The Wedding Feast	22:2-14		
18. The Fig Tree	24:32-44	13:28-32	
19. The Wise and Foolish Virgins	25:1-13		
20. The Talents	25:14-30		
21. The Growing Seed		4:26-29	
22. The Absent Households		13:33-37	
23. The Creditor and Two Debtors			7:41-43
24. The Good Samaritan			10:30-37
25. A Friend in Need			11:5-13
26. The Rich Fool			12:16-21
27. The Faithful Servant and the Evil servant			12:35-40
28. Faithful and Wise Steward			12:42-48
29. The Barren Fig Tree			13:6-9
30. The Great Supper			14:16-24
31. Building a Tower and a King Making War			14:25-35
32. The Lost Coin			15:8-10
33. The Lost Son			15:11-32
34. The Unjust Steward			16:1-13
35. The Rich Man and Lazarus			16:19-31
36. Unprofitable Servant			17:7-10
37. The Persistent Widow			18:1-8
38. The Pharisee and the Tax Collector			18:9-14
39. The Minas (Pounds)			19:11-27

THE MIRACLES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Miracle	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1. Cleansing a Leper	8:2		5:12	
2. Healing a Centurion's Servant (of Paralysis)	8:5		7:1	
3. Healing Peter's Mother-in-law	8:14	1:30	4:38	
4. Healing the Sick at Evening	8:16	1:32	4:40	
5. Stilling the Storm	8:23	4:35	8:22	
6. Demons Entering a Herd of Swine	8:28	5:1	8:26	
7. Healing a Paralytic	9:2	2:3	5:18	
8. Raising the Ruler's Daughter	9:18,23	5:22, 35	8:40, 49	
9. Healing the Hemorrhaging Woman	9:20	5:25	8:43	
10. Healing Two Blind Men	9:27			
11. Curing a Demon-possessed, Mute Man	9:32			
12. Healing a Man's Withered Hand	12:9	3:1	6:6	
13. Curing a Demon-possessed, Blind and Mute	12:22		11:14	
14. Feeding the Five Thousand	14:13	6:30	9:10	6:1
15. Walking on the Sea	14:25	6:48		6:19
16. Healing the Gentile Woman's Daughter	15:21	7:24		
17. Feeding the Four Thousand	15:32	8:1		
18. Healing the Epileptic Boy	17:14	9:17	9:38	
19. Temple Tax in the Fish's Mouth	17:24			
20. Healing Two Blind Men.	20:30	10:46	18:35	
21. Withering the Big Tree	21:18	11:12		
22. Casting Out an unclean spirit		1:23	4:33	
23. Healing a Deaf Mute		7:31		
24. Healing a Blind Paralytic at Bethsaida		8:22		
25. Escape from the Hostile Multitude			4:30	
26. Draught of Fish			5:1	
27. Raising of a Widow's Son at Nain			7:11	
28. Healing the Infirm, Bent Woman			13:11	
29. Healing the Man with Dropsy			14:1	
30. Cleansing the Ten Lepers			17:11	
31. Restoring a Servant's Ear			22:51	
32. Turning Water into Wine				2:1
33. Healing the Nobleman's Son (of fever)				4:46
34. Healing an Infirm Man at Bethesda				5:1
35. Healing the Man Born Blind				9:1
36. Raising of Lazarus				11:43
37. Second Draught of Fish				21:1

FIRST MENTIONED THINGS IN THE BIBLE

Subject	Reference
Adultery	Ex. 20:14
Altar	Gen. 8:20
Angel	Gen. 16:7
Archer	Gen. 21:20
Bird	Gen. 1:21
Camp	Gen. 32:2
Cave dweller	Gen. 19:30
Chariot	Gen. 41:43
Child	Gen. 11:30
Child named before birth	Gen. 16:11
City builder	Gen. 4:17
Coffin	Gen. 50:26
Command	Gen. 1: 3
Congregation	Ex. 12:3
Dancing	Ex. 15:20
Darkness	Gen. 1:2
Death	Gen. 24:67
Dew	Gen. 27:28
Disaster	Gen. 19:19
Dream	Gen. 20:3
Drunk	Gen. 9:21
Dungeon	Gen. 40:15
Earth	Gen. 1:1
Emancipator	Ex. 3:7-22
Embalming	Gen. 50:2
Execution	Gen. 40:20-22
Family	Gen. 8:19
Farmer	Gen. 4:2
Father	Gen. 2:24
Fear	Gen. 9:2
Food	Gen. 1:29
Food Control	Gen. 41:25-27
Forgiveness	Gen. 50:17
Friend	Gen. 38:12
Game	Gen. 25:28
Gardener	Gen. 2:15
Gift	Gen. 9:3
God	Gen. 1:1
Gold	Gen. 2:11
Grace of God	Ezra 9:8
Grave	Gen. 23:6
Guilt	Gen. 26:10
Harlot	Gen. 34:31
Hate	Gen. 24:60
Healing	Deut. 32:39
Heart	Gen. 6:5
Heavens	Gen. 1:1
Heir	Gen. 15:2
Home	Gen. 27:5

Hunter	Gen. 10:8- 9
Husband	Gen. 3:6
Idols	Gen. 31:19
Jail	Gen. 39:20
Joy	Gen. 31:27
Kill	Gen. 4:8
King	Gen. 14:1
Kiss	Gen. 27:26
Man to interpret	Gen. 41:15
Man to wear a ring	Gen. 41:42
Murder	Gen. 4:8
Oath	Gen. 21:23-24
Pilgrim	Gen. 12:1-8
Prayer	Gen. 4:26
Preacher to become drunk	Gen. 9:20-21
Prophecy	Gen. 3:15
Purchase of Land	Gen. 23:3-20
Question	Gen. 3:1
Rain	Gen. 7:1-12
Rainbow	Gen. 9:13
Saddle	Gen. 22:3
Scribe	Ex. 24:4
Shipbuilder	Gen. 6:14,22
Sin	Gen. 3:1-24
Snake	Gen. 49:17
Sword	Gen. 3:24
Temptation	Gen. 3:1-6
Tower	Gen. 11:4-5
Veil	Gen. 24:65
Violence	Gen. 6:11
Wage contract	Gen. 29:15-20
War	Gen. 14:2
Wealth	Gen. 31:1
Well	Gen. 16:14
Wife	Gen. 2:24
Wind	Gen. 8:1
Wine	Gen. 9:21
Wish	Gen. 23:8
Witness	Gen. 21:30
Woman thief	Gen. 31:19
Words spoken to man	Gen. 1:28
Worship	Gen. 4:3-5

PROMINENT BIBLE CHARACTERS - Classified with meaning of their names

Prominent Characters of the Old Testament

THE PRINCIPAL PATRIARCHS

(Prior to the Exodus)

Enoch, dedicated, “the man who walked with God”

Noah, comfort, “the ark builder”

Abraham, father of many, “the spiritual pilgrim”

Isaac, laughter, “the long-looked-for son”

Jacob, the deceiver”

LEADERS IN EARLY HEBREW HISTORY

Joseph, he adds, “the youth whose dreams came true”

Moses, draw out, “the Christ like man”

Aaron, enlightened, “the first high priest.”

Joshua, the Lord is salvation, “A soldier of the Lord”

PRINCIPAL JUDGES

Othniel, lion of God, “the first judge” Deborah, a bee, “the patriotic woman” Gideon, tree-feller, “the mighty warrior” Jephthah, he opens, “the man of the foolish vow” Samson, sun-man, “the weak strong man”

Eli, lifting up, “the indulgent parent”

Samuel, heard of God, “the upright judge”

IV. KINGS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

Saul, asked for, “the king who lost a crown”

David, beloved, “the greatest of Israel’s kings”

Solomon, peaceful, “the man of wisdom and foolishness”

KINGS OF ISRAEL (All evil)

Jeroboam 1, struggler for the people

Nadab, liberal

Baasha, offensive

Elah, an oak

Zimri, famed in song, 1 Ki 16:9-20

Omri, handful

Ahab, uncle

Ahaziah, the Lord seizes

Joram, or Jehoram, the Lord exalted

Jehu, the Lord is He

Jehoahaz, the Lord seized

Jehoash, or Joash, the Lord is strong

Jeroboma II, struggler for the people

Zachariah, the Lord remembers

Shallum, recompense

Menahem, consoler

Pekahiah, the Lord opens eyes Pekah, open-eyed

Hoshea, deliverance

VI. KINGS OF JUDAH

Evil

Rehoboam, extension of the people
Abijah, or Abijam, the Lord is father
Jehoram, the Lord is exalted
Ahaziah, the Lord seizes
Athaliah, God is strong (queen)
Amaziah, the Lord has strength (partly evil)
Azariah, or Uzziah, strength of God (partly evil)
Ahaz, possessor
Manasseh, one who makes to forget
Amon, builder
Jehoahaz, or Shallum, the Lord holds
Jehoiakim, or Eliakim, the Lord will raise
Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, the Lord strengthens
Zedekiah, or Mattaniah, the Lord is righteous

Good

Asa, physician
Jehoshaphat, the Lord judges
Joash, or Jehoash, the Lord is strong
Jotham, the Lord is upright
Hezekiah, strength of the Lord
Josiah, the Lord heals

VII. POETS

David, beloved
Solomon, peaceful
Asaph, collector
Ethan, strong, Ps. 89; 1 Kin. 4:31
Heman, faithful, Ps 88
Job, he cries

VIII PRINCIPAL PROPHETS

Balaam, destruction, “the mercenary prophet” Elijah,
my God is the Lord, “the prophet of fire” Elisha, my
God is salvation, “the successor of Elijah” Nathan, he
gave
Isaiah, salvation of the Lord
Jeremiah, exalted of God
Ezekiel, the strength of God
Daniel, God is my judge, “The statesman prophet”
Hosea, deliverance
Joel, the Lord is God
Amos, one with a burden
Obadiah, servant of the Lord
Jonah, dove, “the reluctant missionary”
Micah, who is like the Lord
Nahum, comforter
Habakkuk, embrace
Zephaniah, the Lord hides
Haggai, festive
Zechariah, the Lord remembers
Malachi, messenger of the Lord

IX COURAGEOUS REFORMERS

Nathan, he gave, before King David, 2 Sam. 12:7
Elijah, My God is the Lord, before King Ahab, 1 Kin. 21:20
Micaiah, who is the like the Lord, before the King Ahab, 1 Kin. 22:14
Elisha, my God is salvation, before King Jehoram, 2 Kin. 3:14
Daniel, God is my judge, before King Belshazzar, Dan. 5:22
John the Baptist, before Herod, Mat. 14:4
Peter, a rock, and John, God is gracious, before the Sanhedrin, Acts 4:18-20
Stephen, crown, before the council, Acts 7:51

OTHER PROMINENT MEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Abel, vanity
Absalom, father of peace, son of
David Adam, red men
Ahasuerus, mighty man, or Xerxes, King
Ben-Hadad, son of Hadad Bezalel, under the shadow of God
Cain, possession, “the first murderer”
Caleb, a dog, “the vigorous old man”
Dathan, belonging to
law Abiram, high father
Eleazar, God helps, the son of Aaron
Esau, hairy, “the man who lost his inheritance”
Ezra, help, “the man who honored God’s Word”
Gehazi, valley of vision, servant of
Elisha Goliath, an exile, the giant
Haman, splendid
Ish-Bosheth, a man of shame, son of Saul
Ishmael, God hears, “the outcast”
Jesse, firm, father of David
Jethro, excellence, Moses’ father-in-law
Joab, the Lord is father, a great soldier
Jonadab, the Lord gives, the son of Recab
Jonathan, God is gracious, “the generous friend”
Judah, praise, son of Jacob
Korah, baldness
Laban, white, Jacob’s father-in-
law Levi, associated, son of Jacob
Lot, covering, “the worldly-minded believer”
Melchizedek, king of righteousness
Mephibosheth, one who blows upon shame, “the type of the redeemed sinner”
Mordecai, consecrated to
Merodach Naboth, fruits
Nadab, liberal
Abihu, he is father
Nehemiah, the Lord comforts, “the patriotic statesman”
Pharaoh, great house (?)
Phinehas, mouth of a serpent
Sennacherib, Sin (the moon-god) gives many brothers; king of Assyria
Shadrach, command of Aku (moon-god), a Hebrew captive
Uriah, God is my light, the Hittite
Zerubbabel, born at Babylon

Prominent Men of the New Testament

New Testament Characters

Jesus Christ, our Savior

The Twelve Apostles:

Peter, a rock, “the reed changed to a rock”

Andrew, manly, “the personal worker”

James, deceiver, the son of Zebedee

John, God is gracious, “the beloved disciple”

Philip, lover of horses

Bartholomew, son of Tolmai, or Nathanael, gift of God

Thomas, twin, the doubter

Matthew, gift of God, author of the gospel

James, deceiver, the son of Alphaeus

Thaddeus, man of heart

Simon, hearing, the Canaanite

Judas Iscariot, “the traitor”

Other Men Mentioned

Annas, he gave graciously, the high priest

Apollos, the orator

Aquila, an eagle

Aristarchus, ruling best, Paul’s companion

Augustus, renowned, a Roman emperor Barnabas,

son of consolation, co-worker with Paul Caesars,

Roman emperors

Caiaphas, depression, a high priest

Epaphroditus, handsome, a co-worker with Paul

Felix, happy, governor of Judea Festus, joyful,

governor of Judea

Gaius, I am glad, fellow laborer with Paul

Gamaliel, gift of God, a Jewish rabbi

Herods, the rulers of Palestine

John the Baptist, “the forerunner of Christ”

Joseph, he adds, the husband of Mary

Lazarus, help of God, Mary’s brother

Luke, the physician, author of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles

Mark, author of the gospel

Nicodemus, victor of the people, “the secret disciple”

Onesimus, profitable, a slave of Philemon Paul, little,

the apostle and missionary

Philip, lover of horses, “the evangelist”

Pontius Pilate, the governor who shirked responsibility”

Silas, belonging to a wood, Paul’s missionary associate

Simon, hearing, the leper

Stephen, crown, “the Spirit-filled business

man” Timothy, honoring God, Paul’s co-worker

Titus, a worker with Paul, to whom an epistle is addressed

Tychicus, fate, a companion of Paul

Zechariah, Jehovah remembers, father of John the Baptist

Zebedee, gift of God, father of James and John

Prominent Women

Of the Old Testament

Abigail, a father's joy
Athaliah, God is strong
Bathsheba, daughter of the oath, mother of Solomon
Deborah, a bee, "the patriotic woman"
Esther, a star, Queen
Eve, life
Hannah, grace or prayer, "the ideal mother"
Huldah, weasel, a prophetess
Jeal, wild goat
Jezebel, chaste, "the wicked queen"
Leah, antelope, wife of Jacob
Michal, rivulet, wife of David
Miriam, bitterness, sister of Moses
Naomi, pleasant, mother –in-law of Ruth
Rachel, ewe, wife of Jacob
Rahab, large, a woman of Jericho
Rebekah, a noose, wife of Isaac
Ruth, a friend, wife of Boaz
Sarah, princess, "the mother of the nations"
Vashti, beautiful, the dethroned queen

Of the New Testament

Anna, grace, a prophetess, Luke 2:36
Bernice, bringing victory, Acts 25:13
Dorcas, gazelle, raised from death
Elizabeth, oath of God, mother of John the Baptist
Eunice, happily victorious, mother of Timothy
Herodias, feminine of Herod Martha, lady, sister
of Lazarus
Mary, bitterness, mother of James
Mary, mother of Jesus
Mary of Bethany, "the woman immortalized by Christ"
Mary Magdalene, inhabitant of Magdala Priscilla,
ancient, wife of Aquila
Salome, peaceable, mother of James
Sapphira, beautiful, stricken for lying

GOLDEN BIBLE CHAPTERS (for study and meditation)

Ascension	Acts 1
Backsliders	Hosh. 14
Beatitudes	Matt. 5 - 7
Bread of Life	John 6
Brotherhood	Rom. 14
Builders	Neh. 4
Burden-bearers	Gal. 6
Call – universal	Is. 55
Call – worker's	Is. 6
Confession	Ps. 51
Consecration	Phil. 3
Curses – Blessings	Deut. 28
Converts	Ps. 32
Dependability	Ruth 1
Deliverance	Acts 12
Discipline	II Cor. 4; Hebr. 12
Divinity	John 1
Dominion – (man's)	Ps. 8
Duty	Rom. 12
Faith	Hebr. 11
Flood	Gen. 7
Frailty	Ps. 39
Friendship	I Sam. 20
Fruit	John 15
Gifts of the Spirit	I Cor. 12
Hallelujah	Rev. 19
Heaven	John 14; Rev. 7; 21-22
Holy Spirit	John 14-16; Rom. 8
Humility	John 13
Instruction	Prov. 1
Intercession	John 17
Joy	Is. 12
Jubilee	Lev. 25
Judgement	Matt. 25
Law	Ex. 20
Life Protection	Ex. 12
Love	I Cor. 13
Messianic	Is. 53
Ministers	I Cor. 4
Missions	Ps. 72; Rom. 10
New Covenant	Hebr. 8
Omniscience	Ps. 139
Over-comers	Rev. 2 – 3
Parables	Matt. 13
Passover	Ex. 12
Praise	Ps. 103
Prayer	Dan. 6; Luke 11, 18
Preparedness	Judges 7
Prosperity	Ps. 73

Providence	Ps. 121
Refuge	Numb. 35
Regeneration	John 3
Rest	Hebr. 4
Resurrection	I Cor. 15
Revival	II Chron. 30; Luke 3
Safety	Ps. 91
Service	Luke 10
Shepherd	John 10
Soldiers	Eph. 6
Teachers	I Cor. 2
Temperance	Prov. 23
Tithes	Mal. 3
Tongue	Jas. 3
Transfiguration	Matt. 17
Unity	Eph. 4
Vanity	Eccl. 2
Watchmen	Ezek. 33
Water of life	John 4
Wisdom	Prov. 3
Witness	Acts 2
Women	Prov. 31
Word of God	Hebr. 4; Deut. 6
Worship	Ps. 84

COMMANDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (Rev. 22: 14)

There are 1,050 commands in the N. T. for Christians to obey. Due to repetitions we can classify them under about 800 headings. They cover every phase of man's life in his relationship to God and his fellowmen, now and here after. If obeyed in the power of the Holy Spirit they will bring rich rewards here and forever; if disobeyed they will bring condemnation and eternal punishment. They are not to be confused with the 10 commandments.

They are divided below under their various headings:

7 "abstains" - abstain from:

- Idols (Acts 15:20)
- Fornication (Acts 15:20, 29; 1 Thes. 4:2-3)
- Strangled meats (Acts 15:20)
- Eating blood (Acts 15:20)
- Meats offered to Idols (Acts 15:29)
- All appearance of evil (I Thes. 5: 22)
- Fleshly lusts (I Pet. 2: 11)

7 things to avoid:

- Trouble makers (Rom.16: 17)
- Profane and vain babblings (1 Tim. 6:20)
- False science (1 Tim. 6:20)
- Unlearned questions (2 Tim. 2:23)
- Foolish questions (Tit. 3: 9)
- Genealogies (Tit. 3: 9)
- Arguments about the law (Tit. 3:9)

3 "ask's":

- Ask and ye shall receive (Matt. 7:7)
- Ask no return of goods (Luke 6:30)
- Ask life for backsliders (1 John 5:16)

2 things to awake to:

- Awake to righteous (1 Cor. 15:34)
- Awake to life (Eph. 5:14)

"be's" - be

- 1 Exceeding glad (Matt. 5:12)
- 2 Reconciled to a brother (Matt. 5:24)
- 3 Perfect (Matt. 5:48; 2 Cor. 13:11)
- 4 Wise as serpents (Matt. 10:16)
- 5 Harmless as doves (Matt. 10:16)
- 6 Ready for Christ's coming (Matt. 24:44; Luke 12:40)
- 7 Content with your wages (Luke 3:14)
- 8 Merciful as God (Luke 6:36)
- 9 Like faithful servants (Luke 12:36)
- 10 Thankful (Col. 3:15)
- 11 At Peace among selves(1 Thes.5:13)
- 12 Patient toward all men (1 Thes. 5:14; 2 Tim. 2:24)
- 13 No partaker of sin (1 Tim. 5:22)
- 14 Sober and hope (1 Pet. 1:13)
- 15 Sober and pray (1 Pet. 4:7)

Sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, charity, and patience (aged men) (Tit. 2:2)
 Sober, love husbands and children (young women) (Tit. 2:4)
 Sober minded (young men) (Tit. 2: 6)
 In behavior as becoming to saints (aged women) (Tit. 2:3)
 Discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good obedient (young women) (Tit. 2:5)
 Ready to give an answer of the hope that is in you (1 Pet. 3:15)
 Of good cheer (John 16:33)
 Baptized (Acts 2:38)
 Converted (Acts 3:19)
 Transformed (Rom. 12:2)
 Kind In brotherly love one to another (Rom. 12: 10; Eph. 4:32)
 Fervent in spirit (Rom. 12:11)
 Patient in tribulation (Rom. 12: 12)
 Given to hospitality (Rom.12:13)
 Afraid if lawless (Rom. 13:4)
 No idolater (1 Cor. 10:7)
 Followers of Paul as he followed Christ (1 Cor. 11: 1; Phil. 3: 17)
 Followers of God (Eph. 5:1)
 Followers of the faithful and the patient (Heb. 6:12)
 Children in malice (1 Cor. 14: 20)
 Men in understanding (1 Cor. 14: 20)
 Steadfast (1 Cor. 15:58)
 Unmoveable (1 Cor. 15: 58)
 Always abounding in God's work (1 Cor. 15: 58)
 Strong in the Lord (1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:10; 2 Tim. 2:1)
 Of good comfort (2 Cor. 13: 11)
 Of one mind (Rom. 12: 16; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:8)
 Separate from the unclean (2 Cor. 6: 17)
 Renewed in spirit (Eph. 4:23)
 Angry and sin not (Eph. 4:26)
 Tenderhearted one to another (Eph. 4:32)
 Filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18)
 Likeminded (Phi1. 2: 2)
 Of one accord (Phil. 2: 2)
 Anxious for nothing (Phil. 4:6)
 An example to believers in word, conversation, charity, spirit, faith, and purity (1 Tim. 4:12)
 A partaker of Christians sufferings (2 Tim. 1:8; Cp. 1 Pet. 4:1)
 Gentle to all men (2 Tim. 2:24)
 Apt to teach (2 Tim. 2:24)
 Instant in season, out of season (2 Tim. 4:2)
 Careful to maintain good works (Tit 3:8. 14. Cp. Matt. 5:16)
 Content with what you have (Heb. 13:5)
 Doers of the Word (Jas 1:22)
 Afflicted and mourn (Jas. 4: 9)
 Patient till Christ comes (Jas. 5:7-8)
 Holy in conversation (1 Pet. 1:15-16)
 Pitiful (1 Pet. 3: 8)
 Courteous (1 Pet. 3:8)
 Examples to the flock of God, not lords over it (1 Pet. 5: 3)
 Subject one to another (1 Pet 5:5)
 Clothed with humility (1 Pet.5:6)
 Sober (1 Pet. 5:8)

Vigilant (1 Pet. 5: 8)
Mindful of prophecies and commandments (2 Pet. 3:2)
Diligent to be found in peace (2 Pet. 3: 14)
Faithful to death (Rev. 2: 10)
Watchful strengthen self (Rev. 3:2)
Zealous and repent (Rev. 3:19)

"be not's - be not:

Like the Hypocrites in prayer (Matt. 6-.5)
Like the heathen in prayer (Matt. 6.8)
As hypocrites in fasting (Matt. 6:16)
Called "Rabbi" (Matt. 23: 8)
Called" Master- (Matt. 23: 9)
Afraid of men (Luke 12: 4)
Of doubtful mind (Luke 12:29)
Many teachers (Jas. 3: 1)
Afraid or terror (1 Pet. 3: 14)
Troubled (1 Pet. 3:14)
Ignorant or time with God (2 Pet. 3: 8; Cp. Is. 57:15)
Deceived: 10 classes not to inherit the kingdom (1 Cor. 6:9-10)
Conformed to world (Rom. 12:2)
Slothful in business (Rom. 12:11)
Conceited (Rom. 12: 16)
Overcome of evil (Rom. 12: 21)
Mere servants of men (1 Cor. 7:23)
Children in understanding (1 Cor. 14:20)
Deceived by evil companions (1 Cor. 15:33)
Unbelievers yoked together with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-15)
Entangled again with law keeping (Gal. 5:1)
Deceived; man will reap what he sows (Gal. 6:7-8)
Partakers with sinners (Eph. 5:7)
Unwise about God's will (Eph. 5:17)
Drunk with wine (Eph. 5:18)
Weary in well doing (2 Thes. 3:13)
A shamed of God (2 Tim. 1:8)
Slothful (Heb. 6:12)
Forgetful of strangers (Heb. 13:2)
Carried about with different strange doctrines (Heb. 13:9)

4 things to believe:

- 1 The gospel (Mark 1:15)
- 2 God's existence (Heb. 11:6)
- 3 On Jesus Christ (1 John 3:23)
- 4 God rewards diligent seeking (Heb. 11:6)

1 thing not to believe:

- 1 Believe not every spirit (1 John 4:1)

14 "beware's" – beware of:

False prophets (Matt. 7:15)
Men (Matt. 10:17)
Leaven (doctrine) of Pharisees (Matt. 16:6-12)
Leaven (doctrine) of Herod (Mark 8:15)

Hypocrisy (Luke 12:1)
Covetousness (Luke 12:15)
Scribes (Mark 12:38; Luke 20:46)
Lest you despise God and perish (Acts 13:40-41)
Dogs (false teachers, Phil 3:2; Is. 56:10)
Evil workers (Phil. 3:2)
The concision (Jews, Phil. 3: 2)
Being spoiled through philosophy (Col. 2:8)
Being spoiled through vain deceit (Col. 2:8)
Backsliding (2 Pet. 3:17)

2 classes to bless:

Them that curse you (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:28)
Persecutors (Rom. 12:14)

3 things to cast out or away:

Beam out of own eyes (Matt. 7:5; Luke 6:42)
Devils (Matt. 10:8)
All care upon God (1 Pet. 5:7)

thing not to cast away:

Your confidence in God (Heb. 10:35)

5 things to charge:

Men to be blameless (1 Tim. 5:7)
Rich to be humble (1 Tim. 6:17)
Rich to trust in God (1 Tim. 6:17)
Rich to do good works (1 Tim. 6:18)
Rich to lay hold on eternal life (1 Tim. 6:19)

2 classes to comfort:

One another – fellow Christian (1 Thes. 4:18; 5:11)
The feeble – minded (1 Thes. 5:14)

5 things to consider:

The ravens (Luke 12:24)
The lilies (Luke 12:27-28)
Truth (2 Tim. 2:7)
Self capable of falling (Gal. 6:1)
Christ (Heb. 3:1; 12:3)

3 things to continue in:

Love (John 15:9)
Prayer (Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2)
Truth (2 Tim. 3:14)

2 things to covet:

Best gifts (1 Cor. 12:31)
To prophesy (1 Cor. 14:39). Cp. Things not to covet (Ex. 20:17; Deut.5: 21)

10 “do’s” – do:

Good to them that hate you (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27)
To others what you expect of them (Matt. 7:12; Luke 6:31)
Violence to no man (Luke 3:14)

Good (Luke 6:35; Rom. 13:3)
This (put God first) and live (Luke 10:38)
All to God's glory (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17, 23)
All things without murmuring and disputing. (Phil. 2:14)
Those things seen and heard in me (Paul, Phil. 4:9)
Your own business (1 Thes. 4:11)
Work of an evangelist (2Tim 4:5)

10 “do not’s” – do not:

Alms before men (Matt. 6:1)
Sound trumpet before you when giving alms (Matt. 6:2)
Do works of Pharisees (Matt. 23:3-33)
Love in word only (1 John 3:18)
Give heed to fables (1 Tim, 1:4)
Give heed to genealogies (1 Tim. 1:4)
Err (Jas 1:16)
Commit adultery (Jas. 2:11)
Kill (Jas. 2:11)
Fashion self according to former lusts (1 Pet. 1:14)

2 things to endure:

Hardness (2 Tim. 2: 23)
Sufferings (2 Tim. 4: 5)

Whom to fear:

God (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5; 1 Pet. 2:17; Rev. 14:7)

3 things not to fear:

Man (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5)
Persecutors (Matt. 10:26)
No lack of provision (Matt. 10:31; Mark 6:8-9; Luke 12:7)

5 things to feed:

Enemies (Rom. 12:20)
Lambs (John 21:16)
Sheep (John 21:16-17)
Flock of God (1 Pet.,5:2)
The church (Acts 20:28)

4 things to flee from:

Fornication (1 Cor. 6:18)
Idolatry (1 Cor. 10:14)
Hurtful lusts (1 Tim. 6:9-11)
Youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22)

10 things to follow:

Christ (Matt. 4:19; 8:22;16: 24; Mark 8:34;10:21; Luke9:23; John 21:19)
Love (1 Cor. 14:1; 1 Tim, 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22)
Good (1 Thes. 5:15; 3 John 11)
Righteousness (1 Tim, 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22)
Godliness (1 Tim. 6:11)
Faith (1 Tim. 6:11; 2Tim. 2: 22)
Patience (1 Tim. 6:11)
Meekness (1 Tim. 6:11)

Peace (2 Tim, 2:22; Heb, 12:14)

Holiness (Heb. 12:14)

7 things about giving:

1 Commanded: give (Luke 6:38)

2 Whom to give to:

Him that asks (Matt. 5:42; Luke 6:30)

Needy saints (Rom. 12:13)

God (Col. 3:17; Rev. 14:7)

3 Whom not to give to:

Give not holy things to rebels (Matt. 7:6)

Give no place to Satan (Eph. 4:27)

4 What to give:

Holy things (Matt. 7:6; 10:8)

Give thanks (Eph. 5:20; Phil. 4:6; Col. 3:17; 1 Thes. 5:18)

Give time to reading, exhortation, doctrine (1 Tim. 4:13)

Give self wholly (1 Tim. 4:15)

Give glory to God (Rev. 14:7)

5 what not to give:

Give no offence (1 Cor. 10:32)

Give no heed to fables and commandments of men (Tit. 1:14)

6 How to give:

Freely (Matt. 10:8; 2 Cor. 9:6)

Good measure (Luke 6:38)

As God has prospered (1 Cor. 16:2)

Willingly (2 Cor. 8:12)

Cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7)

7 Blessings promised for giving:

Returns on the basis of giving (Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6)

Reward (Matt. 10:42)

All grace abounding (2 Cor. 9:9)

All sufficiency (2 Cor. 9:8)

Eternal righteousness (2 Cor. 9:9)

Increased fruits (2 Cor. 9:10)

Enrichment in all things (2 Cor. 9:11)

5 “go’s”

Go 2 miles (Matt. 5:11)

Go teach (Matt. 28:19-20)

Go preach (Mark 16:15)

Go not from house to house (Luke 10:7)

Go and do likewise (Luke 10:37)

7 “have’s” – have:

Faith (Mark 11:22; Rom. 14:22-23)

No fellowship with darkness (Eph. 5:11)

No respect of persons (1 Tim. 5:21; Jas 2:1-10)

Honest conversation (1 Pet. 2:12)

Compassion (1 Pet.. 3:8; Jude 22)

Good conscience (1 Pet. 3:16)

Fervant love (1 Pet. 4:8)

14 “hold’s” – hold:

Forth word of life (Phil. 2:12)
Fast to the good (1 Thes. 5:21)
Christian traditions (1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9)
Faith (1 Tim. 1:19)
A good conscience (1 Tim. 1:19)
Fast sound doctrine (2 Tim. 1:19)
Fast till Christ comes (Rev. 2:25)
Fast what you have (Rev. 3:11)
Your crown (Rev. 3:11)
Reputation of ministers (Phil. 2:29)
Eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12,19)
Hope (Heb. 6:18)
Confidence (Heb. 3:6,14)
What is heard and received (Rev. 3:3)

classes to honor:

- 1 Fathers (Luke 18:20; Eph. 6:2)
- 2 Mothers (Matt. 19:19; Mark 10:19)
- 3 Others (Rom. 12:10)
- 4 Widows indeed (1 Tim. 5:3)
- 5 All men (1 Pet. 2:17)
- 6 Kings – rulers (1 Pet. 2:17)

things to keep – keep:

Commandments (Matt. 19:17; John 14:15)
No company with the 6 classes of professed Christians of (1 Cor. 5:11)
Self pure (1 Tim. 5:22)
Gospel commandments till Christ comes (1 Tim. 6:14)
The good entrusted you (2 Tim. 1:14)
Self from idols (1 John 5:21)
Self in God’s love (Jude 21)

6 things to lay aside:

Wickedness (Jas. 1:21)
All malice (1 Pet. 2:1)
All guide (1 Pet. 2:1)
All hypocrisies (1 Pet. 2:1)
All envies (1 Pet. 2:1)
All evil speaking (1 Pet. 2:1)

100 “let’s” – let:

- 1 Light shine (Matt. 5:16; Luke 12:35)
- 2 Conversation be yea, nay (Matt. 5:37; Jas. 5:12)
- 3 Enemy have cloke (Matt. 5:40; Luke 6:29)
- 4 Blind leaders alone (Matt. 15:14)
- 5 Everyone deny self (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23)
- 6 Him take up cross (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; 10:21; Luke 9:23)
- 7 Him hear (Mark 4:23; Luke 14:35)
- 8 Him share with needy (Luke 3:11)
- 9 Loins be girded (Luke 12:35)
- 10 Everyone take purse and scrip (Luke 22:36)
- 11 Him sell garment, buy sword (Luke 22:36)

- 12 Love be genuine (Rom. 12:9)
- 13 Everyone obey civil laws (Rom. 13:1)
- 14 Everyone choose his own Sabbath day (Rom. 14:5-7; Col. 2:14-17)
- 15 Everyone take heed how he builds upon Christ (1 Cor. 3:10)
- 16 No man deceive himself (1 Cor. 3:18)
- 17 Everyman have own wife (1 Cor. 7:2)
- 18 Every woman own husband (1 Cor. 7:2)
- 19 The married satisfy each other in due relationship (1 Cor. 7:4-5)
- 20 Then who cannot restrain marry (1 Cor. 7:9)
- 21 Husband and wife remain unmarried if they separate or, be reconciled (1 Cor. 7:11)
- 22 The unbelieving depart who refuse to remain (1 Cor. 7:15)
- 23 Every man abide in his calling (1 Cor. 7:17-24)
- 24 No One seek to erase circumcision (1 Cor 7:18)
- 25 No one be circumcised (as a religious rite. 1 Cor. 7:18)
- 26 A father give daughter in marriage if she desires it (1 Cor. 7:36-38)
- 27 Him Who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (1 Cor. 10: 12)
- 28 No man seek wealth selfishly (1 Cor. 10:24)
- 29 The woman cut her hair if her head is uncovered (1 Cor. 11:6)
- 30 The woman wears a covering if cutting and shaving the hair be a shame (1 Cor. 11:6)
- 31 Everyone examine self when taking the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:28)
- 32 The hungry eat at home, not at the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:34)
- 33 The speaker in tongues pray for the interpretation (1 Cor. 14:13)
- 34 All things be done to edifying (1 Cor. 14:26)
- 35 No more than 3 messages in tongues be given in one service (1 Cor. 14:27)
- 36 One interpret (1 Cor. 14: 27)
- 37 The mind of Christ be in you (Phil 2:5)
- 38 Your moderation be known (Phil. 4:5)
- 39 Requests be known to God (Phil. 4:6)
- 40 No one judge you in meats, drinks, holy days, new moons and sabbath (1 Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 14:5-7)
- 41 No one rob you of your reward by some vain religion (Col. 2: 18)
- 42 Peace rule the heart (Col. 3:15)
- 43 The Word dwell in you (Col. 3:18)
- 44 Speech be with grace (Col. 4:6)
- 45 No one deceive but the day of Christ being at hand (2 Thes. 2:3)
- 46 No man despise youth (1 Tim. 4:12)
- 47 The speaker in tongues keep silent in church, speaking to himself and God if no interpreter present (1 Cor.14:28)
- 48 The prophets speak 2 or 3 messages and let others judge (1 Cor. 14:28)
- 49 Times be shared in revelations (1 Cor. 14:80)
- 50 Women learn quietly in church or at home (1 Cor. 14:37)
- 51 Everyone acknowledge regulation of spiritual gifts to be commandments of God (1 Cor. 14:37)
- 52 Rebels to truth remain ignorant (1 Cor. 14:38)
- 53 All things be done in decent order (1 Cor. 14:40)
- 54 Everyone give as God prospers (1 Cor. 18:2)
- 55 All things be done love (1 Cor. 16: 14)
- 56 Everyone give cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7)
- 57 Rebels to truth be accursed (1 Cor. 16:22: Gal. 1:8-9)
- 58 Everyone prove own work (Gal. 6:4)
- 59 Those taught support the teacher (Gal. 6:6)
- 60 The thief steal no more (Eph.4: 28)
- 61 The thief labor instead of stealing to have to give to others (Eph. 4:28)
- 62 No corrupt conversation come from your mouth (Eph. 4:29)

- 63 Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking, and malice be put away (Eph. 4:31)
- 64 No man deceive you with vain words (Eph. 5:6)
- 65 Wives be subject to husbands (Eph.5: 22, 24; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1-6)
- 66 Husbands love wives (Eph. 5:25, 28, 33; Col. 3: 19; 1 Pet. 3:7)
- 67 Wives reverence husbands (Eph. 5:33)
- 68 Conversation become the gospel (Phil. 1:27)
- 69 Nothing be done through Strife or vain glory (Phil. 2:3)
- 70 Each esteem other better than himself (Phil 2: 3)
- 71 Worthy elders be doubly honored (1 Tim. 5: 17)
- 72 Servants honor masters (1 Tim. 6:1)
- 73 Masters respect servants (1 Tim. 6:2)
- 74 Every Christian depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19)
- 75 No man despise you (Tit. 2:15)
- Brotherly love continue (Heb. 13-1)
- Conversation be without covetousness (Heb. 13: 5)
- Patience work perfectly (Jas. 1:4)
- One who lacks, ask for wisdom (Jas. 1:5)
- Him ask in faith (Jas. 1:6)
- The exalted rejoice (Jas. 1:9)
- The humble rejoice (Jas. 1:10)
- No road by temptation to God (Jas. 1:13)
- Everyone be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath (Jas. 1: 19)
- The wise demonstrate wisdom and knowledge (Jas. 1:13)
- The sinning light hearted be come remorseful (Jas.4: 9)
- The afflicted pray (Jas. 5:13)
- The merry sing psalm (Jas. 5:13)
- The sick call elders (5:14)
- Elders pray for sick, anointing with oil (Jas. 5:14-15; Cp. Mark 6:13)
- Adorning be more inward than outward (1 Pet. 3:3-4; 1 Tim. 2:9-10)
- Everyone refrain tongue from evil, and lips from guide (1 Pet: 3-10)
- Everyone shun evil, do good, seek peace and pursue it (1 Pet. 3:11)
- Ministers speak for God (1 Pet. 4:11)
- No one suffers as a murderer, thief, evildoer, or busybody (1 Pet. 4:16)
- No one be ashamed to suffer as a Christian but be thankful (1 Pet. 4:16)
- Christian sufferers commit their souls to God (1 Pet. 4:19)
- Eternal life abide in you (1 John 2:24-25)
- No man deceive you about being righteous (1 John 3:7)
- Him that hath an ear, hear (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6, 13, 22)

12 “let not’s” – let not:

- 1 Left hand know that what the right hand does (Matt. 6:3)
- 2 Man put the married apart (Matt. 19:6)
- 3 Good be evil spoken of (Rom. 14:16)
- 4 Sin reign in the body (Rom. 6:12)
- 5 Him that eats despise him that does not (Rom. 1:3)
- 6 Him that eats not judge him that does (Rom. 14:3)
- 7 The wife depart from her husband (1 Cor. 7:10)
- 8 The husband put away his wife (1 Cor. 7:11)
- 9 The Christian put away the unsaved companion who wishes to remain (1 Cor. 7: 12,13)
- 10 The sun go down on wrath (Eph. 4: 26)
- 11 Fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking and jesting be mentioned among you as become the saints (Eph. 5:3-4)
- 12 Unworthy widows be supported by the church (1 Tim. 6:9-16)

42 "let us's" - let us:

- 1 Walk honestly (Rom. 13: 12)
- 2 Cast off works of darkness (Rom. 13:12)
- 3 Put on armour of light (Rom.13:12)
- 4 Follow things of peace (Rom 14:19)
- 5 Follow things that edify (Rom. 14:19)
- 6 Please neighbor for good (Rom. 15:2-3)
- 7 Be Sincere (1 Cor.5:8)
- 8 Not commit fornication (1Cor. 10:8)
- 9 Not tempt Christ (1 Cor. 10:9)
- 10 Not murmur (1 Cor. 10:10)
- 11 Cleanse self from filthiness of body and spirit (2 Cor. 7:1)
- 12 Perfect holiness (2 Cor. 7:1)
- 13 Walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25)
 - Not desire vain-glory (Gal 5:26)
 - Not provoke one another (Gal. 5:26)
 - Not envy one another (Gal. 5:26)
 - Not be weary in well doing (Gal. 6:9)
 - Do good to all men (Gal.6:10)
 - Do good especially to fellow Christians (Gal. 6: 10)
 - Who are perfect press forward toward the mark (Phil. 3:14-15)
 - Walk by the same rule (Phil. 3:16)
 - Mind me same thing (Phil. 3:16)
 - Not sleep spiritually (1 Thes. 5:6)
 - Watch and be sober (1 Thes. 5:6,8)
 - Be content with food and raiment (1 Tim. 6:8)
 - Fear losing the soul (Heb.4:1-2)
 - Labor to be saved (Heb. 4:1-2)
 - Hold fast our profession (Heb.10-.23)
 - Come boldly to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16; 10:19-23)
 - Go on to perfection (Heb. 6:1)
 - Draw Dear to God (Heb.10: 22)
 - Provoke to love and good works (Heb. 10:24)
 - Not forsake assembling together in worship (Heb. 10:24)
 - Exhort one another (Heb. 10:25)
 - Lay aside every weight (Heb. 12:1)
 - Lay aside besetting sin (Heb.12:1)
 - Run race with patience (Heb.12:1)
 - Look to Jesus (Heb. 12:2)
 - Have grace to serve God (Heb. 12:28)
 - Bear Christ's reproach (Heb.13:13)
 - Offer sacrifice or praise to God continually (Heb. 13: 15)
 - Love one another (1 John 4:7,11)

8 "let us not's" -let us not:

- Walk in rioting (Rom. 13: 13)
- Walk in drunkenness (Rom. 13:13)
- Walk in chambering (Rom. 13: 13)
- Walk in wantonness (Rom. 13:13)
- Walk in strife (Rom. 13:13)
- Walk in envying (Rom. 13:13)
- Judge one another in doubtful things (Rom.14:13)
- Cause others to stumble (Rom. 14:13)

3 ways to live:

Peaceably (Rom. 12:18; 1 Cor. 13:11)
Free from anxiety and undue care (1 Cor. 7:28-35)
No longer in lusts of sin (1 Pet. 4:2)

4 commands to “love” – love:

Enemies (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27, 35)
Fellow Christians (John 13:34; 15:12, 17; Gal. 5:14; 1 Pet. 2:17; 1 John 3:23; 2 John 5)
The brotherhood (1 Pet. 2:17)
Your brother (1 John 4:21)

2 things not to love:

The world (1 John 2:15)
Things in the world (1 John 2:15)

3 ways to love:

1 Fervently (1 Pet. 2:22)
2 With a pure heart (1 Pet. 2:22)
3 As brethren (1 Pet. 3:8)

1 person to pray to:

Pray to thy Father (Matt. 6:6; 9; John 10:23-26)

3 things to pray for:

Your persecutors (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:28)
For laborers (Matt. 9:38; Luke 10:2)
For one another (Jas. 5:16)

2 ways not to pray:

Use not vain repetitions like the heathen (Matt. 6:7)
Do not pray as hypocrites (Matt. 6:5)

3 ways to pray:

After this manner pray (Matt. 6:9-13)
Ask, seek, knock (Matt. 7:7-11)
Pray in the Spirit (Jude 20)

4 things to prove:

Yourself (2 Cor. 13:5)
What is acceptable to God (Eph. 5:10)
All things (1 Thes. 5:21)
Accusations against elders (1 Tim. 5:19)

8 “put away’s” – put away:

Wicked men from church (1 Cor. 5:13)
Lying (Eph. 4:25)
All bitterness (Eph. 4:31)
Wrath (Eph 4:31)
Anger (Eph 4:31)
Glamour (Eph 4:31)
Evil speaking (Eph 4:31)
All malice (Eph 4:31)

6 “put off’s” – put off:

The old man (Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9)
Anger (Col. 3:8)
Wrath (Col. 3:8)

Malice (Col. 3:8)
Blasphemy (Col. 3:8)
Filthy conversation (Col. 3:8)

12 “put on’s” – put on:

Christ (Rom. 13:14)
The armour of light (Rom. 13:12)
The new man (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10)
Whole armour of God (Eph. 6:11,13)
Bowels of mercy (Col. 3:12)
Kindness (Col. 3:12)
Humility (Col. 3:12)
Meekness (Col. 3:12)
Long suffering (Col. 3:13)
Love (Col. 3:14)
Breastplate of faith and love (1 Thes. 5:8)
The hope of salvation (1 Thes. 5:8)

1 class not to rebuke:

1 Elders (1 Tim. 5:1)

3 things to rebuke:

1 Sinning professors (1 Tim. 5:20)
2 Rebels (Tit. 1:13)
3 Works of darkness (Eph. 5:11)

2 ways to rebuke:

1 With all authority (Tit. 2:15)
2 With all longsuffering (2 Tim. 4:2)

2 commands to rejoice:

1 Rejoice (Matt. 5:12; Rom. 15:10)
2 Rejoice evermore (1 Thes. 5:16)

things to rejoice in:

1 Hope (Rom. 12:12)
2 Blessings of others (Rom 12:15)
3 The Lord (Phil 3:1; 4:4)
4 Suffering for Christ (1 Pet. 4:13)

things to remember:

1 What you are saved from (Eph. 2:11-12)
2 Those who suffer (Heb. 13:3)
3 Those who rule you (Heb. 13:7)
Truth (Jude 17-18; Rev. 3:3)
Backslidings, and repent (Rev. 2:5)

4 things to seek:

1 God’s kingdom first (Matt. 6:33; Luke 12:31)
2 God in prayer (Matt. 7:7)
3 To edify the church (1 Cor. 14:12)
4 Things above (Col. 3:1)

1 command to stand fast:

Stand fast, and hold Christian traditions (2 Thes. 2:15)

things to stand fast with: 1

Loins girt about with truth

2 Breastplate of righteousness

3 Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:14-15)

things to stand in: 1

Faith (1 Cor. 16:33) 2

Liberty (Gal. 5:1)

3 One spirit (Phil. 1:27)

4 One mind (Phil. 1:27)

5 The Lord (Phil. 4:1)

8 things to think on:

1 Things about true self (Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 3:18)

2 Things true

3 Things honest

4 Things just

5 Things pure

6 Things lovely

7 Things of good report

8 Things of virtue (Phil. 4:8)

1 way to think:

Think soberly (Rom. 12:3)

5 commands to “submit”:

Submit one to another (Eph. 5:21)

Submit to God (Jas. 4:7)

Submit to every ordinance of man (1 Pet 2:13-14; Rom, 13:1-8)

Younger submit to elder (1 Pet. 5:5)

Wives submit to husbands (Eph. 5:22; Col 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1-6)

12 “take’s” – take:

1 No anxious thought for necessities of life (Matt. 6:25, 31; Luke 12:22-30)

2 No anxious thought of tomorrow (Matt. 6:34)

3 No anxious thought of defense (Matt. 10:19; Mark 13:9-11; Luke 12:11-12; 21:14)

4 My yoke upon you (Matt. 11:29)

5 Advantage of freedom (1 Cor. 7:21)

6 The Lord’s Supper in remembrance of Christ (1 Cor. 11:24-26)

7 The shield of faith (Eph. 6:16)

8 The helmet of salvation (Eph. 6:17)

9 The sword of the spirit (Eph. 6:17)

10 Oversight of the flock willingly (1 Pet. 5:2)

11 Oversight of the flock without thought of personal gain (1 Pet 5:2)

12 A humble seat (Luke 14:8)

18 “take heed’s” – take heed:

1 That you do not alms to be seen of men (Matt. 6:1)

2 Not to despise little ones (Matt. 18:10)

3 Not to be deceived (Matt. 24:4; Mark 13:5; Luke 21:8)

4 What you hear (Mark 4:24)

5 How you hear (Luke 8:18)

6 To walk in light (Luke 11:35)

7 To rebuke and forgive (Luke 17:3)

8 Not to get drunk (Luke 21:34)

- 9 Not to surfeit (Luke 21:34)
- 10 Not to be overcome with cares (Luke 21:34)
- 11 To yourself (Mark 13:9; Luke 17:3; 21:34; Acts 20:28)
- 12 To the flock of God (Acts 20:28)
- 13 Lest you fall (1 Cor. 10:12; Rom, 11:21)
- 14 Lest you fall (1 Cor. 10:12; Rom 11:21)
- 15 To your ministry (Col 4:17)
- 16 That you destroy not one another (Gal. 5:15)
- 17 To self and doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16)
- 18 Not to backslide (Heb. 3:12)

4 “thou shalt’s” – thou shalt:

- Worship God only (Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8)
- Serve God only (Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8)
- Love neighbor as self (Matt. 5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Rom, 13:9; Gal. 5:14)
- Love God whole-heartedly (Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27)

8 “thou shalt not’s” – thou shalt not:

- 1 Tempt the Lord (Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12)
- Kill (Matt. 5:21; 19-18; Mark 10-19; Luke 18:20; Rom. 13:9)
- Commit adultery (Matt. 5:27-28; 19:18; Luke 18:20; Rom. 13:9)
- Pray to be seen of men (Matt. 6:5)
- Steal (Matt. 19:18, Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Rom. 13:9)
- Bear false witness (Matt. 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Rom 13:9)
- Covet (Rom. 13:9)
- Muzzle the ox treading corn (1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Tim. 5:18)

ways not to walk:

- As sinners (Eph. 4:17)
- 2 As fools (Eph. 5:15)

7 things to walk in:

- The Spirit (Gal. 5:16)
- Love (Eph. 5:2)
- The light (Eph. 5:8-9; 1 John 1:7)
- Watchfulness (Eph. 6:18)
- Christ (Col. 2:6-7; 2 Cor. 5:17-18)
- Wisdom (Col. 4:5)
- Honesty (1 Thes. 4:12)

200 miscellaneous commands:

- 1 Abhor that which is evil (Rom. 12:9)
- 2 A bishop must be (see qualifications of, 1 Tim. 3:2-7; Tit. 1:6-9)
- 3 Abide in Christ (John 15:4)
- 4 Abide with worthy ones (Matt. 10:11-13; Mark 6:10; Luke 9:4; 10:5-8)
- 5 Accuse none falsely (Luke 3:14)
- 6 Add to Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:5-7)
- 7 Admit unprofitableness (Luke 17:10)
- 8 Admonish one another (Col. 3:16)
- 9 Admonish the unruly (2 Thes. 3:15)
- 10 Agree with your adversary (Matt. 5:25)
- 11 Allow no liberty to ensnare you to commit sin (1 Cor. 10:25-30)
- 12 Allow no lust of evil in the body (1 Thes. 4:5)
- 13 Allow no cursing and blessing from the same mouth (Jas. 3:10)

14 Anoint head and wash face when fasting (Matt. 6:17)
 15 Arm self with a mind to suffer for Christ (1 Pet. 4:1)
 16 Avenge not self (Rom. 12:19)
 17 Awake from death to light (Eph. 5: 14)
 18 Beat one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2)
 19 Behave like men (1 Cor. 16:13)
 20 Bid no false teacher God speed (2 John 10-11)
 21 Bring proof of repentance. (Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8)
 22 Bring children up in the Lord (Eph. 6:4)
 23 Build up your faith (Jude 20)
 24 Call the poor to feast (Luke 14:13)
 25 Children obey parents (Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20)
 26 Cleanse lepers (Matt. 10:8)
 27 Cleanse hands you sinners (Jas.4:8)
 28 Cleave to good (Rom. 12:9)
 29 Collect just dues only (Luke 3:13)
 30 Come out from among them (2 Cor. 6:17)
 31 Command and teach these things (1 Tim. 4:11; 6: 2)
 32 Commit truth to faithful teachers (2 Tim. 2:2)
 33 Confess faults one to another (Jas. 1:2)
 34 Count it joy when tempted (Jas. 1:2)
 Cut off offending members (Matt. 5:29-30; 18:8-9)
 Deacons must be (see 1 Tim. 3:8-12)
 Defraud not (Mark 10:19)
 Desire spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 14:1)
 Desire milk of word (1 Pet. 2:2)
 Despite not prophesying (1 Thes. 5:20)
 Destroy none with non-essentials (Rom. 14: 15; 1 Cor. 8:13)
 Draw nigh to God (Jas. 4:8)
 Eat own bread in quietness (2 Thes. 3:12)
 Earnestly contend for faith (Jude 3)
 Edify selves with singing (Eph. 5:19)
 Edify one another (1 Thes. 5:11)
 Enter straight gate (Matt. 7:13; Luke 13:24)
 Examine self as to faith (2 Cor. 13:5)
 Exercise in godliness (1 Tim. 4:7-8)
 Exhort servants to obey (1 Tit. 2:9-10)
 Exhort one another daily (Heb. 3:13)
 Fear not (Luke 12:32)
 Fight the fight of faith (1 Tim. 6 :12)
 Follow peace and holiness (Heb. 12:14)
 Forbear one another (Col. 3:13)
 Forbid not children (Matt.19:14; Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16)
 Forbid not to tongues (1 Cor. 14:39)
 Forget not to share (Heb. 13:16)
 Forgive 490 times (Matt. 18:22)
 Forgive (Mark 11:25-26; Luke 6:37; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13)
 Fret not in servitude (1 Cor. 7:21)
 Gird up loins of mind (1 Pet. 1:3)
 Give place to wrath (Rom. 12:19)
 Give enemy drink (Rom. 12:20)
 Give no occasion to the adversary (1 Tim. 6:14)
 Glorify God in body and spirit (1 Cor. 6:20; Cp. Rom. 12:1-2)

- 67 Grieve not Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30)
- 68 Grow in grace and knowledge (2 Pet. 3:18)
- 69 Grudge not against another (Jas. 5:9)
- 70 Harden not your hearts (Heb. 3:8-15)
- 71 Hate flesh spotted garments (Jude 23)
- 72 Have no respect of persons (1 Tim. 5:21)
- 73 Have same love (Phil. 2:2)
- 74 Have no fellowship with works or darkness (Eph. 6:11)
- 75 Heal the sick (Matt. 10:8; Luke 10: 9)
- 76 Help propagate truth (3 In. 8).
- 77 Humble selves (Jas.4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6)
- 78 Husbands love wives (Eph. 5:25, 28; Col. 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:7)
- 79 Husbands be not bitter against wives (Col. 3: 19)
- 80 Instruct rebels in meekness (2 Tim. 2:25)
- 81 Intreat others according to 1 Tim. 5:1-2
- 82 Judge not (Matt.7:1; Luke 6:37)
- 83 Have faith before God for things not condemned in Scripture (Rom.14: 22-23)
- 84 Know how to control body (1 Thes. 4:4)
- 85 Lay not up treasures on earth (Matt. 6:19)
- 86 Lay up treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20; Luke 12:33-34)
- 87 Lay hold on eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12)
- 88 Leave parents and cleave to wife (Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:7; Eph. 5:31)
- 89 Lend, hoping for nothing again (Luke 6:35)
- 90 Lie not (Col. 3:9)
- 91 Lift up hands that hang down (Heb. 12:12)
- 92 Look not everyone on own things only (Phil. 2:4)
- 93 Look diligently not to fail of grace (Heb. 12:15).
- 94 Look diligently lest any root of bitterness defile (Heb. 12:15)
- 95 Look diligently lest any be a fornicator (Heb.12:16-17)
- 96 Look to yourselves to lose reward (2 John 8)
- 97 Look for mercy unto eternal life (Jude 21)
- 98 Lust not after evil things (1 Cor. 10:6)
- 99 Make tree good or corrupt (Matt. 12:33)
- 100 Make no provision for lusts (Rom. 13:14)
- 101 Make full proof of ministry (2 Tim. 4:5)
- 102 Make straight paths (Heb. 12:13)
- 103 Make trouble makers (Rom.16:17; Phil. 3:17)
- 104 Mark the unruly (2 Thes. 3:14)
- 105 Marvel not if hated by world (1 John 3:13)
- 106 Masters, be good to servants (Eph. 5:9; Col 4:1)
- 107 Meditate upon things of 1 Tim. 4:15
- 108 Mind not high things (Rom. 12:16)
- 109 Minister as good servants (1 Pet. 4:10)
- 110 Mortify offending bodily members (Col 3:5; Rom. 8:12-13)
- 111 Neither be of doubtful mind (Luke 12:29)
- 112 No man is to defraud brother (1 Thes. 4:6)
- 113 Neglect not spiritual gifts (1 Tim. 4:14. CP. 2 Tim. 1:6)
- 114 Obey your rulers (Heb. 13:17)
- 115 Offer other cheek (Matt. 5:39; Luke 6:29)
- 116 Ordain no one in a hurry (1 Tim. 5:22)
- 117 Owe nothing but love (Rom.13: 8)
- 118 overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21)
- 119 Pass time in fear (1 Pet. 1: 17)

120 Pay taxes (Rom. 13:6)
 121 Pay just dues (Rom. 13:7)
 122 Praise the Lord (Rom. 15:11)
 123 Preach (Matt. 10:7, 27; Mark 16: 15; 2 Tim. 4:2)
 124 Present your body to God (Rom. 12:1)
 125 Provide things honestly (Rom. 12:17)
 126 Provoke not children to wrath (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)
 127 Purge out old leaven (1 Cor. 5:7)
 128 Purify hearts of doubt (Jas. 4:8)
 129 Put others in remembrance or essentials (2 Tim. 2:14)
 130 Quench not the spirit (1 Thes. 5:19)
 131 Raise the dead (Matt. 10:8)
 132 Receive weak brethren (Rom 14:1)
 133 Receive one another (Rom. 15:7)
 134 Receive word with meekness (Jas. 1:21)
 135 Reckon self dead to sin (Rom. 6:11)
 136 Reckon self alive to God (Rom. 6:11)
 137 Recognize truth (1 Cor. 10:15)
 138 Redeem time (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5)
 139 Reject heretics (Tit. 3: 10)
 140 Refuse to support young widows from church funds (1 Tim. 5:11)
 141 Remind men of the 7 things of Tit. 3:1-2
 142 Render no evil for evil (1 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 12:17)
 143 Repent (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38; 3:19; Rev. 2:16; 3:19)
 144 Resist not evil (Matt. 5:38-39)
 145 Resist the devil (Jas. 4:1; 1 Pet. 5:9)
 146 Restore backslider in meekness, considering own self (Gal. 6:1)
 147 Run to obtain (1 Cor. 9:24)
 148 Salute none by the way (Luke 10:4)
 149 Salute your rulers (Heb. 13:24)
 150 Sanctify God in heart (1 Pet. 3:15)
 151 Save some with fear (Jude 23)
 152 Search Scriptures (John 5:39)
 153 Seek not eats and drinks (Luke 12:29)
 154 Sell to help needy (Luke 12:33)
 155 Serve the Lord (Rom. 12:1)
 Servants, obey masters (Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-25; 1 Pet. 2:18)
 Set the least to judge (1 Cor. 6:4)
 Set affections above (Col. 3: 2)
 Shake dust off feet (Matt. 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5; 10:10-11)
 Show charity to other ministers (Luke 9: 49-50)
 Show self a pattern (Tit. 2:7)
 Show 4 things of Tit. 2:7-8
 Sin not (1 Cor. 15:34)
 Sing with grace in heart (Col. 3:16)
 Shun vain babblings (2 Tim. 2:16)
 Speak and do things in view of judgment (Jas. 2:12)
 Speak truth (Eph. 4:25)
 Speak sound doctrine (Tit. 2:1)
 Speak no evil of brethren (Jas. 4:11)
 Stablish your hearts (Jas 5:8)
 Strength feeble knees (Heb. 12:12)
 Strive together for gospel faith (Phil. 1:27)

173 Study to be quiet (1 Thes. 4:11)
174 Study to show self approved (2 Tim. 2:15)
175 Support the weak (1 Thes. 5:14)
176 See that none render evil for evil (1 Thes. 5:15)
177 Swear not (Jas. 5:12; Matt. 5:33-36)
178 Tarry one for another (1 Cor. 11:33)
179 Tarry for power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8)
180 Teach one another (Col. 3:16)
181 Teach no other doctrine (1 Tim. 1:3)
Tell brother his fault alone first (Matt. 18:15-17)
Trust God for needs as you work (Matt. 10:9; Luke 9:3; 10: 4)
Understand will of God (Eph. 5:17)
Use not liberty as occasion to sin (Gal. 5:13; 1 Pet. 1:16)
Use hospitality without grudging (1 Pet. 4:9)
warn the unruly (1 Thes. 5:14)
Watch and pray (Matt. 24:42; 25:13; Mark 13:33,35; 14:38; Luke 21:36; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2)
Watch in all things (2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Cor. 16:13)
Weep with others (Rom. 12:15)
Withdraw from disorderly brethren (2 Thes. 3:6, 14)
Withdraw from evil men (1 Tim. 6:3-6)
Wives or deacons must be (see 1 Tim. 3:11)
Wives submit to husbands (Eph. 5: 22; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1-6)
Work with own hands (1 Thes. 4:11)
Work or do not eat (2 Thes.3: 10-11)
Work out own salvation (Phil. 2:12)
Yield not members to sin (Rom. 6:13)
Yield self to God (Rom. 6: 13)
Yield members to righteousness (Rom. 6:13)

NEW TESTAMENT PROMISES (Rev. 22:20)

Promises In Matthew:

- 1 Salvation from sin (1:21)
- 2 Spirit baptism (3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; 24:49; John 1:33; 7:37-39; Acts 1:5, 8, 2:17-21, 38-39; 11:16; Gal. 3:14)
- 3 Life by the Word (4:4; Luke 4:4)
- 4 Protection by angels (4:6; Luke 4:10-11; Heb. 1:14)
- 5 Soul-winning power (4:19; Mark 1:17)
- 6 Kingdom of heaven (5:3,10; 7:21; 8:11; 19:14; 25:34; Mark 10:14; Luke 6:20; 12:32; 13:29; 18:16; Jas. 2:5)
- 7 Comfort (5:4; Luke 6:21; 2 Cor. 1:4, 7; 7:6)
- 8 Earth as an Inheritance (6: 5)
- 9 Filling of righteousness (5:6; Luke 6:21)
- 10 Mercy (5:7; Luke 1:50 Jas. 5:11)
- 11 A visible God (5:8; Rev. 22:4)
- 12 Son-ship (5:9,45; Luke 6:35; John 1:12; Rom. 8:14, 16; Gal. 3:7-9, 26; Heb. 3:6; 1 John 3:2, 10)
- 13 Blessing for persecution (5:11)
- 14 Great rewards (5:12; 6:4, 6, 18; 10:42; Mark 9:41; Luke 6:23,35; 14:14; John 4:36; 1 Cor. 3:8-15; 15:58; Eph. 6:8; Col 3:24; Heb. 10:35; Jas 1:25)
- 15 Greatness (5:19; 18:4; Luke 9:48)
- 16 Forgiveness of sins (6:14; 12:31; 18:35; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 5:24; Acts 10:43; 13:38-39; 26:18; Rom.3:25; 4:7-8; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; 1 John 1:9; 2:12)
- 17 Necessities of life (6:30, 33; Luke 11:9-13; 12:31)
 - Answers to all prayers (7:7-11; 17:20; 18:19; 21:21-22; Mark 9:23; 11:22-24; Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-8; John 14:12-14; 15:7, 16; 16:23-26; Rom. 8:32; Heb. 11:6; Jas. 1:17; 1 Pet. 3:12; 1 John 3:20-22; 5:14-15)
 - All good things (7:11)
 - Punishment in hell for rebels (7:22-23; 8:11-12; 13:41-42, 49-50; 25:41,46; Mark 9:42-49; Luke 3:17; 12:46; 1 Cor. 3:17; 6:9, 13; Jas. 2:13; 2 Pet. 2:12-13; Rev. 14:9-11; 20:10-15; 21:8; 22:15; Cp. Is. 66:22-24)
 - Bodily healing (8:18; 9:29; 13:15; 17:20; 21-22; Mark 9:23; 11:22-24; 16:15-20; Luke 4:18; John 10:10; 14:12; Acts 28:27; Rom. 8:11; Jas. 5:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:24)
 - Answers to prayer according to faith (9:29; Heb. 11:6 Jas. 1:5-8)
 - Degrees of punishment in hell (10:15; 11:22,24; 12:41-42; 23:14)
 - Inspiration (10:19; Luke 12:12)
 - Final salvation at the end of a life of sowing to the spirit (10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Rom. 6:16-23; 8:23-25; Gal. 6:7-8; 1 Pet 1:5, 9, 13)
 - Second advent of Christ (10:23; 16:27; 23:39;24:27-31;25:31-46;26:54; Mark 13:24-27; 14:62; Luke 21:27-28; Acts 1:11; 3:20-21; Rom 11:26; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; 2:8-12; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 9:28; 10:37)
 - Exposure of all secrets (10:26; Luke 12:3; Mark 4:22; Rom. 2:12-16)
 - Providence of God (10:29; Luke 12:6, 24, 28; Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Pet. 5:7)
 - Divine recognition (10:32; Luke 12:8; Rev. 2:5)
 - Divine denial (10:33; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 12:9)
 - Life or death (10:39; 16:25; Mark 4:35; Luke 9:24; John 12:25)
 - Prophet's reward (10:41)
 - Righteous man's reward (10:41)
 - Soul rest (11:28-30; Heb. 4:9)
 - Only one unpardonable sin (12:32; Mark 3:28; Luke 12:10)
 - Judgment of minutest details (12:36-37; 15:13; Mark 9:47; Rom. 2:16)
 - Increased or decreased blessings (13:12; 25:29; Mark 4:24-25; Luke 8:18; 19:26)

- 38 Conversion upon obedience (13:15; Acts 3:19; Jas. 5:19-20)
- 39 Exaltation of righteous (13:43)
- Segregation of good and bad (13:41-43, 49-50)
 - Building of a church (16:18)
 - A victorious church (16:18)
 - Power to bind and loose (16:19; 18:18; John 14:12; 20:23)
 - Rewards according to works (16:27; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10)
 - Unlimited power (17:20; 18:18; Mark 9:23; 11:22-24; 16:15-20; Luke 10:19; 17:6; 24:49; John 14:12; Acts 1:8)
 - Reception of Christ (18:5; Luke 9:48)
 - Salvation of the lost (18:11; Luke 5:32; John 5:25; 10:9; Rev. 22:17)
 - Divine presence now (18:20; 20:23) and hereafter (Rev. 7:15; 21:3-7)
 - Material blessings (19:29; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Matt. 21:21-22)
 - Eternal life (19:29; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:29-30; John 3:15-16, 36; 4:14; 5:24; 6:27, note, 47,50,58; 8:51; 10:27-29; 20:31; Rom. 2:7; 6:22-23; Tit. 1:2; 1 John 2:25; 5:11-12)
 - Exaltation through humility (19:30; 20:16; 23:12; Mark 10:31; Luke 13:30; 14:11; 18:14; Jas. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6)
 - A ransom (20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Tim. 2:6)
 - No marriages among resurrected people (22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35)
 - God's word unchangeable (24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33; 1 Pet. 1:25)
 - Ruler-ship for saints (25:21, 23; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:10)
 - Atonement (26:28; Luke 22:19-20; John 1:29; Rom. 3:25; 5:11; Eph. 1:7)
 - Food for the next life (26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:16, 18,30; Rev. 2:7, 17; 7:11; 19:7-10)

Promises listed under the following headings are those only which have not been listed under a previous heading.

Promises in Mark:

- 58 Reaping what is sown (4:24; Luke 6:38; Gal. 6:7-8)
- 59 Persecution (10:30)
- 60 Signs of the gospel (16:15-20)

Promises in Luke:

- 61 An eternal kingdom to Christ and His saints (1:32-33; 12:32; Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 22:4-5)
- 62 Deliverance from enemies (1:74)
- 63 Peace (1:79; John 14:27; 16:33)
- Joy (2:10-11; 1 Pet. 4:13-14)
 - Universal salvation (3:6; Acts 10:35; 13:26, 47; 15:17; 28:28; Rom. 1:16; 10:9-13; Gal. 3:22)
 - Now as the acceptable time (4:18-19; 2 Cor. 6:2)
 - Preservation (9:56; 21:18)
 - Personal responsibility (12:48)
 - Immortality of body (20:36, Rom. 2:7, 1 Cor. 15:42-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-8)
 - Wisdom (21:15; Jas. 1:5)
 - Rapture of all saints (21:36; John 14:1-3; 16:16; 1 Cor. 15:23, 51-58; Eph. 5:27; Phil.3:21; Col. 3:4; 1 Thes. 3:13; 4:13-17; 5:9-10, 23; 2 Thes. 2:7; Jas. 5:7; 1 John 3:2)

Promises in John:

- freedom from condemnation (3:16-18; Rom. 8:1; Heb. 9:13-16)
- A State of no hunger or thirst (4:14; 6:35)
- The resurrection of all men (5:28-29; 6:40,44; 14:19; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:20-58)
- Assurance (6:37; Phil. 1:6; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2:11-13; Heb. 6:1-20; 1 Pet. 1:5,9,13)
- An indwelling Christ (6:56-57)
- Knowledge (7:17; 14:20, 26; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2:12; 12:8-11)

78 Light of life (8:12)
 79 Freedom (8:32,36)
 Honor (12:26; Rom. 2:8-10)
 Universal dealing (12:32)
 Mansions (14:1-3)
 Greater works (14:12)
 Love of God (14:21)
 Manifestation of God (14:21)
 Abiding Presence (14:23; 15:10; Phil. 4:9)
 Purging (15:2)
 Fruitfulness (15:5; 2 Pet. 1:8)
 The Holy Spirit in a measure (16:7-13; Rom.8:14-16) and in all fullness (Luke11:13;
 24:49; John7:37-39; 14:12-18,26; Acts 1:8; 2:16-21,38-39; 5:32)
 Guidance (16:13-15)

Promises in Acts:

91 Justification (13:38-39; Rom. 2:13; 3:24-28; 4:25; 5:1-2; 8:33; Gal. 2:16; 3:24)
 92 Restoration of Israel (15:16-17; Rom. 11:25-29; Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27)
 93 Nearness of God (17:27; Eph. 2:13; Jas. 4:8)
 94 Edification (20:32)
 95 An eternal inheritance (26:17; 1 Cor. 2:9; Eph. 1; 1 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 21:7)
 96 Deliverance (26:18; Rom. 8:21)

Promises in Romans:

97 Goodness of God (2:4; 11:22)
 98 Justice (2:6; 12-16; 8:33; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 4:5; 11:31)
 Indignation and wrath (2:8-9)
 Glory and honor (2:10; 8-18)
 Impartiality of God (2:11)
 Righteousness (3:22; 4:5, 16, 24; 5:19; 1 Cor. 1:30)
 Salvation by grace through faith, not of works (3:24-31; Eph. 2:8-9; 2 Thes. 2:13; Tit. 2:11-12)
 God for all men (3:29-30)
 Salvation from wrath (5:9-10)
 Victory (5:17; 8:4, 13; 8:37; 2 Cor. 2:14; 1 John 5:4)
 Abundant grace (5:20-21)
 Newness of life (6:5, 8)
 A spiritual mind (8:6)
 Restoration of creation (8:21; Eph. 1:10, 12; Rev. 21:3-7; 22:3)
 Divine help (8:26-27,31,34; 14: 4; 1 Cor. 10:13)
 A short work of God (9:28)
 Salvation of Gentiles (9:25-26; 11:11-12; 15:21)
 Salvation of Israel (9:27; 11:23-29; Heb. 8:10-12; 10:17)
 Boldness (not ashamed of Christ. 9:33; 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:6)
 End of law in Christ (10:4)
 Word near all men (10:8)
 Simplicity of salvation (10:9-10; 1 Cor. 15:2; 1 John 1:9; 2 Thes. 2:13)
 Faith (10:17; 1 Cor. 12: 9)
 Holiness (11:16; Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Col. 1: 22; Cp. Heb. 12:14)
 God unchangeable (11:29)
 God's vengeance (12:19)
 Blessing or cursing (13:2-3)
 Joy, righteousness, and peace in the Holy Ghost (14:17)
 Coming Messiah to reign (15:12)

Satan's defeat (16:20; Cp. Rev. 12:7-12; 20:1-10)

Promises in 1 Corinthians:

- 127 Confirmation (1:8)
- 128 God to be faithful (1:9; 10:13; 1 Thes. 5:24; 2 Thes. 3:3; Heb. 10:23; 13:5)
- 129 Christ to be our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1:30)
- 130 Unlimited blessings (3:21-23; Eph. 1:3)
 - Nine spiritual gifts (12:8-11)
 - Baptism in one body (12:13)
 - Eternal love (13:8)
- 136 Perfection (13:10; 1 Pet. 5:10)
- 136 We shall know as know (13:12; 15:35-54)
- 137 Putting down of rebellion on earth (15:24-28; Eph. 1:10; Rev. 21-22)
- 138 Destruction of death (15:26)

Promises in 2 Corinthians:

- 139 All promises true (1:20)
- 140 Removal of blindness when the heart turns to God (3:16)
- 141 Liberty (3:17; Gal. 5:13)
- 142 Transformation (3:18)
- 143 Constant physical degeneration and spiritual renewal (4:16-17)
- 145 Divine fellowship (6:16; Heb. 8:10; Jas. 4:8; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 3:20)
- 146 Divine reception (6:17)
- 147 Divine Fatherhood (6:18; Matt. 7:11; Luke. 11:13; Heb. 12:5-10)
- 148 Riches (8:9)
- 149 Bountiful reaping (9:6)
- 150 All sufficiency (9:8)
- 151 Eternal righteousness (9:9)
- 152 Increased righteousness (9:10)
- 153 Enrichment in all things (9:11)
 - Spiritual weapons (10:4-5; Eph. 6:10-18)
 - Perfect strength (12:9)
 - Life by God's power (13:4)

Promises in Galatians:

- 157 Deliverance from the present evil world (1:4)
- 158 Abraham's blessing (3:14)
- 159 Heir-ship (3:29; Rom. 8:17; Tit. 3:7)
- 160 Adoption as sons (4:5-7,31; Eph. 1:5)
- 161 Eternal death for sin (5:21)

Promises In Ephesians:

- 162 Redemption (1:7, 14; Col.1:14; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 2: 9-15; 9: 11-15)
- 163 Restitution of all things (1:10; Acts 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 21)
- 164 Boldness and access to God (2:18; 3:12; Heb. 4:14-16; 10:19-23)
- 165 Heavenly citizenship (2:19; Phil.3:20)
- 166 God's infinite power (3: 20)
- 167 Sealing (4:30; 1:13; John 6:21; Rom. 4:11; 2 Cor. 1:22)
- 168 Sanctification (5:26; Heb.10:10)
- 169 Long life (6:3)

Promises in Philippians and Timothy:

- 170 Peace shall keep you (Phil. 4:7)

- 171 Needs supplied (Phil. 4:19)
- 172 God's will to save all men (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9; Rev. 22:17)
- 173 Profit in godliness (1 Tim. 4:8)
- 174 Power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7)
- 175 Honor and usefulness (2 Tim. 2: 1)
- 176 Crowd of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8)

Promises in Hebrews:

- 177 Angel ministers (1:14)
- 178 Help in temptation (2:18)
- 179 Partaking of Christ (3:14)
- 180 A high priest (4:14-16; 6:20)
- 181 Uttermost salvation (7:25)
- 182 A better covenant (1:6)
 - A new covenant (8:8-12; 10:16-17)
 - Personal representation (9:24)
 - Eternal substance (10:34)
 - Holy City (11:10-16; 13:14)
 - A better thing (11:40)
 - Discipline (12:6, 11; Rev. 3:19)
 - Jesus to be the same (13:8)

Promises in James:

- 190 God to be the same (1:17)
 - Liberal answers to prayer (1:5-8; Heb. 11:6; Matt. 21:21-22)
 - Crown of life (1:12; Rev. 2:10)
 - Grace (4:6; 1 Pet 1:13; 5:5)
 - Satan to flee when resisted (4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9)
 - God to have pity on sufferers (6:11)

Promises in 1 and II Peter:

- 196 New birth (1 Pet. 1:23; 1 John 5:1)
- 197 Crown of glory (1 Pet. 5:4)
- 198 All things (2 Pet. 1:3)
- 199 Great promises (2 Pet. 1:4)
- 200 The divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4)
- 201 Escape from the corruption of the world (2 Pet. 1:4)
- 202 Security (2 Pet. 1:10)
- 203 Abundant entrance into the kingdom of God (2 Pet. 1:11)
- 204 New Heaven and New Earth (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21-22)

Promises in 1 and 2 John:

- 205 Cleansing from sin (1 John 1:7, 9)
- 206 An advocate with God (1 John 2:1-2)
- 207 Boldness in judgment (1 John 4:17)
 - Witness of son-ship (1 John 5:10-11)
 - Renewed life (1 John 5:16; Jas. 5:19-20)
 - Eternal truth (2 John 2)
 - Both God and Christ (2 John 9)

Promises in Revelation:

- 212 Blessing by reading (1:3)
- 213 The tree of life (2:7; 22:2)

214 Escape from hell (2:11)
 215 A white stone (2:17)
 216 A new name (2:17)
 Power to rule nations (2:26-27; 3:21; 5:9-10; 22:4-5)
 The morning star (2:28)
 White robes (3:4-5; 7:9; 19:8)
 Name retained in the book of life (3:5. Cp. Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:25-28)
 A place in God's temple (3:12)
 Eternal abiding in God's temple (3:12; John 14:1-3)
 The name of God (3:12)
 The name of God's city (3:12)
 Christ's new name (3: 12)
 The descent of the Holy City to earth (3:12; 21:2, 9-10)
 Eternal supply (7:16)
 No more heat (7:16)
 Divine shepherding (7:17)
 No more tears (7:17; 21:4)
 Defeat of all earthly kingdoms (11:15; 19:11-21; 20:1-10)
 Rest from hard labor (14:13)
 Works will be manifest (14:13)
 Kingship and priesthood (20:4-6; 1:5-6; 5:10; 22:4-5)
 God's tabernacle with men (21:3)
 No more death (21:4)
 No more sorrow (21:4)
 No more pain (21:4)
 All things new (21:5)
 Water of life (21:6; 22:3, 17)
 Eternal nations to be lived and multiply forever (21:24-27; 11:15; 22:4-5)
 Eternal healing (22:2)
 No more curse (22:3)
 A right to the tree of life (22:14)
 A right to enter the Holy City (22:14; Cp. 21:8; 22:15)
 Plagues of Revelation upon rebels (22:18-19)
 Names of rebels blotted out of the book of life (22:19; Cp. 3:5; Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:25-29)
 Rebels lose their right to the Holy City (22:19)
 Rebels will be denied the blessings of Revelation (22:19)
 Soon return of Jesus Christ to fulfill all the above promises (22:7, 12, 20. Cp. 3:11)

LIST OF SINS COMMITTED AND RECORDED IN SCRIPTURE (370 Kinds)

- 1 Eating of tree of knowledge (Gen.3)
- General wickedness (Gen. 6:5-7)
- Drunkenness (Gen. 9:21; 19:33-38; 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19-21)
- Defiance of God (Gen. 11:1-9)
- Deceit (Gen. 12:12-13; 20:2; 26:7-8; 27:14, 27)
- Hatred (Gen. 27:41; Cp. Gal. 5:20)
- Sodomy – homosexuality (Gen. 19; Rom. 1)
- Incest (Gen. 35:21-22; 1 Cor. 5)
- Taking advantage of others (Gen. 25:29-34; 27:35-36; 29:23-25)
- Lying (Gen. 26:7-8; 27:19-21)
- Jealously (Gen. 31:1-2; 1 Sam. 18:8-11)
- Rape (Gen. 34:2; 2 Sam. 13:20)
- Plotting murder (Gen. 37:18-22)
- Envy (Gen. 37:11; Rom. 1:29; 2 Cor. 12:10)
- Mockery (Gen. 37:19; Prov. 17:5)
- Kidnapping (Gen. 37:27-28; 1 Tim 1:11)
- Adultery (Gen. 38:13-18; 1 Sam. 11:4)
- Murmuring (Gen. Ex. 3:11, ref. 5:19)
- Rebellion (Ex. 32:1-6; Jude 2:11-13)
- Bearing false witness (Ex. 20:16; Prov. 35:11)
- Idolatry (Ex. 32:1-6; Jude 2:11-13)
- Blasphemy (Lev. 24:10-23)
- Despising God (Numb. 11:20)
- Breaking Sabbath (Numb. 15:32-36)
- Provoking God (Deut. 9:7-8, 22; 32:16-21)
- Covetousness (Josh. 7:1 Kings 21:1-4)
- Robbery (Josh. 7:21; 1 Cor. 6:9)
- Forsaking God (Judg. 2:11-13)
- Rejection of God (Judg. 2:16-19)
- Breaking God's covenant (Judg. 2:1-20)
- Making leagues with heathen (Judg. 2:2)
- Refusing to destroy alters (Judg. 2:2)
- Immoral acts to idols (Judg. 2:17)
- Bowing to gods (Judg. 2:17)
- Turning quickly out of way (Judg. 2:17)
- Breaking commandments (Judg. 2:17)
- Corrupting selves (Judg. 2:19)
- Serving gods (Judg. 2:19; 3:6)
- Selfishness (Judg. 2:19)
- Stubbornness (Judg. 2:19)
- Forgetting God (Judg. 3:7)
- Making men abhor God (1 Sam. 2:17)
- Looking into ark (1 Sam. 6:19-20)
- Turning aside after lucre (1 Sam. 2:17)
- Taking bribes (1 Sam. 8:3)
- Perverting judgment (1 Sam. 8:3)
- Eating blood (1 Sam. 14:32)
- Rejecting Word of God (1 Sam. 15:23)
- Practising witchcraft (1 Sam. 28)

50 Intruding into priest's office (1 Sam. 13:1-14)
 51 Driving men from own inheritance and true worship (1 Sam. 22:1-4)
 52 Causing division among God's people (1 Sam. 22:1-4)
 53 Sowing seeds of hatred (1 Sam. 22:7)
 54 Despising husband (2 Sam. 22:7)
 55 Making others drunk (2 Sam. 11:12-13)
 Imitating true worship (1 Kings 12:28-33)
 Building high places (1 Kings 14:22)
 Making images (1 Kings 14:23)
 Making groves (asherahs, 1 Kings 17:8)
 Fearing other gods (1 Kings 17:7)
 Walking in statues of heathen (2 Kings 17:14)
 Burning incense to gods (2 Kings 17:11)
 Refusal to hear God (2 Kings 17:14)
 Hardheartedness (2 Kings 17:14; Ezek. 3:7)
 Vanity (2 Kings 17:15)
 Making human sacrifices (2 Kings 17:17)
 Divination (2 Kings 17:17)
 Enchantments (2 Kings 17:17)
 Worshipping planets (2 Kings 17:16)
 Observing times (2 Kings 21:6)
 Traffic with demons (2 Kings 21:6)
 Consulting wizards (2 Kings 21:6)
 Seduction to sin (2 Kings 21:9)
 Refusing to humble self (2 Chron. 7:14)
 Pride (2 Chron. 26:16)
 Destruction of holy things (2 Chron. 28:24)
 Closing place of worship (2 Chron. 28:24)
 Making alters to gods (2 Chron. 28:25)
 Turning backs on God (2 Chron. 29:6)
 Despising God's Word (2 Chron. 36:16)
 Irreverance (2 Chron. 36:16)
 Inter-racial marriages (Ezra 9)
 Turning God's glory to shame (Ps. 4:2)
 Loving vanity (Ps. 4:2)
 unfaithfulness (Ps. 5:9; 78:57)
 Inward wickedness (Ps. 5:9)
 Vileness of speech (Ps. 5:9)
 Flattery (Ps. 5:9; 12:2-3)
 Mischief and falsehood (Ps. 7:14)
 Violence (Ps. 7:16)
 Persecution of poor (Ps. 10:2)
 Setting snares for just (Ps. 10:2)
 Evil imaginations (Ps. 10:2)
 Boastfulness (Ps. 10:2)
 Plotting against others (Ps. 10:8)
 Taking advantage of other (Ps. 10:8)
 Cruelty (Ps. 10:10)
 Double talking (Ps. 12:2)
 Speaking proudly (Ps. 12:3; 17:10)
 Oppression (Ps. 12:5)
 Being Corrupt (Ps. 14:1; 73:8)
 Rewarding evil for good (Ps. 35:12)

- 103 Rejoicing in adversity of others (Ps. 35:15)
- 104 Lack of fear of God (Ps. 36:1)
- 105 Bragging on self (Ps. 36:2)
- 106 Abandonment to evil (Ps. 36:3)
- 107 Devising mischief (Ps. 36:4)
- 108 Loving evil (Ps. 36:4)
- 109 Refusing to live in peace (Ps. 55:20)
- 110 Covenant breaking (Ps. 55:20; 2 Tim. 3:3)
- 111 Working wickedness (Ps. 58:2)
- 112 Delighting in lies (Ps. 62:4)
- 113 Causing fear in others (Ps. 64:1)
- 114 Regarding iniquity in heart (Ps. 64:1)
- 115 Tempting God (Ps. 78:18,41,56)
- 116 Rejecting salvation (Ps. 78:22)
- 117 Grieving God (Ps. 78:40)
- 118 Limiting God (Ps. 78:41)
- 119 Turning again to folly (Ps. 85:8)
- 120 Speaking hard things (Ps. 94:4)
- 121 Working iniquity (Ps. 94:4)
- 122 Destroying saints (Ps. 94:5)
- 123 Afflicting God's heritage (Ps. 94:5)
- 124 Misusing the law (Ps. 94:20)
- 125 Destroying innocent (Ps. 94:21)
- 126 Ignoring God's miracles (Ps. 106:7)
- 127 Forgetting mercy (Ps. 106:7)
- 128 Forgetting God's works (Ps. 106:13)
- 129 Ignoring God (Ps. 106:13)
- 130 Lusting for flesh (Ps. 106:14)
- 131 Eating unlawful sacrifices (Ps. 106:37)
- 132 Inventing sin (Ps. 106:29,39)
- 133 Sacrificing children to devils (Ps.106:37)
- 134 Hating without cause (Ps. 109:3)
- 135 Despising the love of good men (Ps. 109:4)
- 136 Returning evil for good (Ps. 109:5)
- 137 Returning hatred for love (Ps.109:5)
- 138 Love cursing (Ps.109:17,19)
- 139 Reproaching good men (Ps. 109: 20)
- 140 Continually making war (Ps.140:2)
 - Walking with sinners (Prov.1:10-19)
 - Scorning religion (Prov. 1:22)
 - Hating knowledge (Prov. 1:24,29)
 - Setting aside counsel (Prov. 1:25,30)
 - Rejecting reproof (Prov. 1:25, 30)
 - Forsaking parental advice (Prov.2:17)
 - Frowardness - perverseness (Prov. 3:32)
 - Winking with eyes (Prov. 6:13)
 - Looking proud (Prov. 6:16 -17)
 - Gadding about (Prov. 7:11-12)
 - Being boisterous and loud (Prov. 7:11)
 - Despising neighbors (Prov. 14:21)
 - Despising parent (Prov. 15:32; 23:22; 30:17)
 - Giving heed to false lips (Prov. 17:4)
 - Justifying the wicked (Prov.17:13)

156 Condemning the just (Prov.17:15)
 157 Finding fault with God (Prov. 19:3)
 Intemperance (Prov. 23:30-35)
 Giving heart to know madness and folly (Eccl. 1:17; 2:3)
 Giving heart to know sinful mirth and pleasure (Eccl. 2:3)
 Giving heart to wine and drunkenness (Eccl. 2:3)
 Setting heart on riches, singing, music, and such like – reveling (Eccl. 2:3)
 Giving self over to unbridled lusts and passions (Eccl. 2:10)
 Applying heart to wickedness of folly and foolishness of madness (Eccl. 7:25)
 Worship of own works (Is. 2:8)
 Disregarding God’s works (Is. 5:12)
 Impenitence (Is. 9:13-16; 22:12-14)
 Making unrighteous laws (Is. 10:1)
 Injustice (Is. 10:2)
 Hypocrisy (Is. 9:17; Matt. 6:1-8; 23:1-33)
 Speaking folly (Is. 9:17)
 Despising God's Word (Is. 30:12)
 Trusting in wickedness (Is. 30:12)
 Being obstinate (Is. 48:4)
 Addiction to sorcery (Is. 57:3)
 Walking after own thoughts (Is. 65:5)
 Eating unclean food (Is. 65:4)
 Boasting personal holiness (Is.65:5)
 Walking after vanity (Jer. 2:5)
 Refusal to enquire after God (Jer. 2:6)
 Prophesying by Baal (Jer. 2:20)
 Walking after unprofitable things (Jer. 2:8)
 Playing the harlot (Jer. 2:20)
 Multiplying god (Jer. 2:28)
 Teaching wickedness (Jer. 2:33)
 Refusal of correction (Jer. 5:3)
 Swearing by false gods (Jer. 5:7)
 Dealing treacherously (Jer. 5:11; Hos. 5:7; 6:7)
 Stupidity and silliness (Jer. 5:21)
 Lying in wait to sin (Jer. 5:26)
 Tolerating wicked men (Jer. 5:26)
 Setting traps to cause others to sin (Jer. 5:20)
 Walking after false gods (Jer. 6:9)
 Hating God’s Word (Jer. 6:10)
 Refusal to respond to God (Jer. 6:13)
 Dealing falsely (Jer. 6:13)
 Trusting in lying (Jer. 7:8)
 Swearing falsely (Jer. 7:9)
 Claiming obligation to sin (Jer. 7:10)
 Wilful ignorance (Jer. 8:7-8)
 Disobedience (Jer. 9:13; 11:8)
 Forsaking God’s law (Jer. 9:13)
 Walking after the imagination of own hearts (Jer. 9:13)
 Conspiring against God. (Jer. 11.9)
 Multiplying altars to false gods (Jer. 11:13)
 Committing lewdness (Jer. 11:15)
 Rejoicing in iniquity (Jer. 11:15)
 Forbidding the preaching of God’s Word (Jer. 11:21)

209 Questioning God's Word (Jer. 17:15)
 210 Walking after own devices (Jer. 18:12)
 211 Defaming (Jer. 23:10)
 212 Pastors destroying and scattering the sheep (Jer. 23:1)
 213 Causing men to err (Jer. 23:13)
 214 Aiding and abetting sin (Jer. 23:14)
 215 Prophesying lies (Jer. 23:25)
 216 Tolerating false prophets (Jer. 29:8)
 Propagating lies (Jer. 29:25-29)
 Instigating rebellion (Jer. 29:3)
 Pretending to be true prophets (Ezek. 13:1-10)
 Trusting in own beauty (Ezek.16:15)
 Living un true to own companion (Ezek.16: 32)
 Turning from righteousness (Ezek. 3:20: 18:16 –24; 33:12-18)
 Polluting sabbaths (Ezek. 20:16-21)
 Vexing orphans and widows (Ezek. 22:7)
 Despising holy things (Ezek.22:8)
 Taking interest may (Ezek. 18:8, 13, 16-17; 22:12)
 Extorting from others (Ezek. 22:12)
 Profaning God (Ezek. 22:26)
 Union with monstrous woman (Ezek. 18:6)
 Withholding pledges (Ezek.18:7, 12,16-17)
 inhospitality (Ezek. 18:7, 12, 16)
 Casting God away (Ezek. 23: 35)
 Trusting in own righteousness (Ezek. 33:13)
 Failure in duty (Ezek. 34:2-6)
 Polluting house of God (Ezek. 44:7)
 Desecrating holy vessels (Dan.5:23)
 Eating sin offerings (Hos. 4:8)
 Setting heart on sin (Hos. 4:8)
 Inquiring of Idols (Hos. 4:12)
 Divining with rods (Hos. 4:12)
 Prayerlessness (Hos. 7:7,10, 14)
 Indifference (Hos. 7:2; 10:12)
 Plundering (Hos. 7:1)
 Surmising (Hos. 7:15)
 Having an unruly tongue (Hos. 7:16)
 Being past feeling (Hos. 7:11)
 Being obstinate (Hos. 7:10, 14;11:5)
 Being self – willed (Hos. 8:4; 10:13)
 Allowing selves to be misled (Hos. 9:7-9)
 Making unholy alliances (Hos.12:1)
 Self -destruction (Hos. 13:9)
 Acting unwisely (Hos.13:13)
 Selling men (Joel 2:6)
 Turning aside the way of the meek (Joel 2:7)
 Giving Nazarites drink (Joel 2:12)
 Forbidding preaching (Joel 2:12)
 Abhorring preachers (Amos 5:10)
 Afflicting the just (Amos 5:12)
 Taking right from pool (Amos 5:12)
 Fooling selves to believe there is no judgment (Amos 6:3)
 Living in luxury and sin (Amos 6:4-6)

Hardening the conscience (Amos 6:5-6)
 Rejoicing in idols (Amos 6:13)
 Swallowing up the needy (Amos 8:4)
 Causing poor to fail (Amos 8:4)
 Longing for sin (Amos 8:5-6)
 Giving judgment for reward (Mic. 3:11)
 Ministers teaching for hire (Mic. 3:11)
 Prophets divining for money (Mic. 3:11)
 Hating good and loving evil (Mic. 3:2)
 Abhorring judgment (Mic. 3:9)
 Perverting all justice (Mic. 3:9)
 Spoiling and violence (Hab. 1:3)
 Being contentious (Hab. 1:3)
 Making God a liar (Mal. 1:2)
 Despising God's name (Mal. 1:6)
 Offering polluted sacrifices (Mal. 1:7-8)
 Holding table of God contemptible (Mal. 1:7)
 Profaning God's holiness (Mal. 2:11)
 Robbing God (Mal. 3:10-13)
 Covering up sin (Mal. 2:16)
 Wearing God with words (Mal. 2:17)
 Resisting God (Mal. 3:13)
 Massacre of children (Matt. 2:16)
 Parading prayers (Matt. 6:5)
 Making vain repetitions (Matt. 6:7)
 Having un-forgiveness (Matt. 6:14-15)
 Worry and fretting (Matt. 6:25-34)
 Attributing to Satan the works of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:24-32)
 Seeking vengeance (Matt. 13:24-30)
 Teaching false doctrines (Matt. 16: 6- 12)
 Rebuking the lord (Matt. 16:22- 25)
 Being unmerciful (Matt. 18:23- 35)
 Worship of possessions (Matt. 19: 16-22)
 Murmuring over wages (Matt. 20: 1-16)
 Self – seeking for place (Matt. 20: 20-23)
 Jealousy among brethren (Matt. 20: 24-28)
 Shifting responsibility (Matt. 23: 1-4)
 Working for praise (Matt. 23: 5)
 Loving chief seats (Matt. 23: 6)
 Loving human praise (Matt. 23: 7)
 Loving human titles (Matt. 23: 7-12)
 Shutting heaven against men (Matt. 23: 13)
 Living pretentious lives (Matt. 23: 14)
 Zeal in making men sinful (Matt. 23: 15)
 Making false vows (Matt 23: 16- 22.)
 Strictness in non-essentials, looseness in morals (Matt. 23: 23-24)
 Zeal for outward show, but not inward cleansing (Matt. 23: 25-26)
 Being self-conceited (Matt. 23: 29-33)
 Un-readiness (Matt. 25:1-13)
 Un-watchfulness (Matt. 25:1-13)
 Slothfulness in business (Matt. 25: 14-30)
 Unfaithful in trust (Matt. 25: 45-51)
 Denial of Christ (Matt. 26: 69-75)

- 315 Denial of resurrection of Jesus (Matt.28: 12-15; I Cor. 15: 1-19)
- 316 Striving over leadership (Luke 22: 24- 27)
- 317 Willful blindness to truth (John 9: 41; 15: 22-24)
- 318 Betraying Jesus (John 19:11)
- 319 Arresting Jesus (John 19:11)
- 320 Crucifixion of Jesus (Acts 2:23; 3: 14-19)
- 321 Lying to the Holy Ghost (Acts 5: 3)
- 322 Being stiff-necked (Acts 7:51)
- 323 Martyrdom of Christians (Acts 7: 60)
- 324 Persecution of Christians (Acts 8: 1-3; 9: 1-2; Gal. 1: 13; I Tim. 1: 13)
- 325 Seeking to buy power (Acts 8:18-23)
- 326 Opposition to the gospel (Acts 13: 6-12)
- 327 Failure to glorify god (Rom. 1:21)
- 328 Un-thankfulness (Rom. 1:21)
- 329 Professing to be wise (Rom. 1:22)
- 330 Changing God's glory (Rom. 1:23)
- 331 Abandonment to lust (Rom. 1:24)
- 332 Changing truth to lies (Rom. 1:23)
- 333 Worshipping and serving creation more than the Creator(Rom. 1:25)
- 334 Vile affections (Rom. 1:26)
- 335 Living contrary to nature (Rom. 1:26)
- 336 All unrighteousness (Rom. 1:29)
- 337 Fornication (Rom. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5)
- 338 Wickedness (Rom. 1:29)
- 339 Maliciousness (Rom. 1:29)
- 340 Murders (Rom. 1:29; Gal. 5:21)
- 341 Debates (Rom. 1:29; 2 Cor. 12:20)
- 342 Malignity (Rom. 1:29)
- 343 Whisperings (Rom. 1:29)
- 344 Backbiting (Rom. 1:30)
- 345 Hatred of God (Rom. 1:30)
- 346 Despitefulness (Rom. 1:30)
- 347 Pride (Rom. 1:30)
- 348 Boastings (Rom. 1:30)
- 349 Evil inventions (Rom. 1:30)
- 350 Disobedience to parents (Rom. 1:30)
- 351 Without natural affection (Rom. 1:30)
- 352 Implacableness (Rom. 1:31)
- 353 Unbelief (Rom. 3:3; 11:20)
- 354 Cursing and bitterness (Rom. 3:14)
- 355 Divisions (1 Cor. 1:10; 3:3)
- 356 Effeminacy (1 Cor. 6:9)
- 357 Reviling (1 Cor. 6:9)
- 358 Extortion (1 Cor. 6:9)
- Counterfeiting Christian work (2 Cor. 11:12-20)
- Wraths (2 Cor. 12:20; Gal. 5:19-21)
- Strifes (2 Cor. 12:20; Gal. 5:19-21)
- Swellings (2 Cor. 12:20)
- Tumults (2 Cor. 12:20)
- Un-cleanliness (2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5: 19-21)
- Perverting the gospel (Gal. 1:7-11; 2:11-14)
- Living in the flesh (Gal. 3:3; 5:16-26; Rom. 6: 14-23; 8: 1-13)
- Being puffed up (1 Cor. 4:18)

Falling from grace (Luke 8:13; Gal. 1: 6-8; 4: 9-11; 5: 1-4; Col. 1: 23; Heb. 12: 12-15; II Pet. 4-11; 2: 20-22; Rev. 2: 5)
Loving money (1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17-19)

The sins above are most of those actually committed as recording in scripture. The 2713 commands of the law of Moses and the 1050 commands of the N.T. reveal many hundreds of other kinds of sins that condemn men in every age.

See the following list of soul damning sins: (Mark 7:19-21; Rom. 1:29-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 2 Cor. 12:20-21; Gal. 3:19-22; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:3-21; Col. 3:5-10; 1 Tim. 1:8-21; 4:1-8; 5:11-13; 6:3-10; 2 Tim. 3:1-13; 4:1-4; Heb. 12:12-17; 1 Pet. 3: 8-13; Rev. 21:8; 22:15)

THIS IS BOOK NO:

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OF A SET OF 16 BOOKS IN TOTAL, to be studied together in the Ministry and Leadership Training Course, which is a “One-Time-Only” – Project of M.L.T.C.- Ministries.

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